

# General Health & Safety Policy Statement



## **General Statement by the Chief Executive**

This policy aims to ensure that you can work in a safe and healthy manner and in a safe and healthy environment and try and make sure that at the end of each day, you can go home to your family and friend's in much the same condition as you arrived! This can only be done with your active participation and co-operation.

Along with my Management colleagues I aim to ensure that health and safety risks are identified and suitably managed so that Council employees, Members, contractors, visitors, customers and other people who may be affected by the Councils work are adequately protected.

To achieve these broad aims I will endeavour to ensure that all managers play their part in meeting the following general objectives:

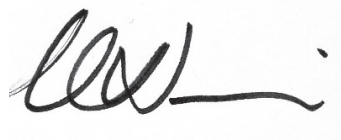
- To establish and review standards for health and safety to meet legal requirements and best practice.
- To provide the necessary resources and training to allow managers to carry out risk assessments for their areas of responsibility.
- To consider managers requests for additional resources to manage identified risks.
- To ensure that employees and others who may be affected by the Council's work are properly informed of the risks to their health and safety and how those risks might be avoided or reduced.
- To ensure that all employees are made aware of their health and safety responsibilities, and are properly trained and informed to fulfil them.
- To ensure that all employees have the opportunity to raise health and safety concerns at any time.
- To ensure that there is full and proper consultation with the Health and Safety Risk Management Group where the introduction of any equipment or working practice could significantly affect health and safety of our employees.
- To take appropriate action where health and standards fall below the expectations of this policy.

However, we can only succeed in our aims and objectives, if everybody makes a personal commitment to this policy by giving health and safety reasonable consideration at all times.

You can also help by telling your manager of any hazard, unsafe act or anything else that could endanger the health and safety of anybody on Council property or by making suggestions to help improve our health and safety arrangements.

This health and safety policy is for your protection; please take some time to read this and the health and safety policies and procedures that you can find on e link at <http://elink/staff/index.asp#449>. Please ask your manager or the Council's Health and Safety Advisor if there is anything that you do not understand.

Finally, if you have raised any health and safety concerns and do not feel that these have been properly addressed, please feel free to raise this matter with me personally and I will investigate the matter on your behalf and provide you with a written response.



Sandra Dinneen  
Chief Executive  
September 2014  
01508 533601  
[sdinneen@s-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:sdinneen@s-norfolk.gov.uk)

## **Statement by Health and Safety Advisor**

The standards of health and safety that you enjoy are the result of a process of continual improvement over the last 200 years or so. The health and safety laws in place today have been hard fought for and are among some of the highest standards in the world. You owe it to yourself and your family to work safely and to follow the procedures that we have put in place to protect your health and safety.

My job is to do my best to ensure your health and safety while at work and to that end I aim to provide impartial advice and practical assistance to both employees and their managers that is proportionate to the risks involved. Please feel free to speak to me at any time if you have any health and safety concerns or have any ideas for improvements to our policies and procedures that can be found on e link at <http://elink/staff/index.asp#449>



Philip Rose  
Health & Safety Advisor  
September 2014  
01508 533667  
[prose@s-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:prose@s-norfolk.gov.uk)

## **The Chief Executive**

The overall responsibility for ensuring that adequate health and safety arrangements are provided lies with the Chief Executive who will:

- Ensure that responsibilities are properly assigned and accepted at all levels.
- Take an interest in health and safety activities and provide support and encouragement to those carrying out health and safety duties.

However, as the Council is a large and diverse organisation it is normal practice to delegate much of the day-to-day responsibility for implementing the Health and Safety Policy and procedures to managers, supervisors and other officers as detailed below.

Where a responsibility has been delegated to an Officer, the Council has imposed an obligation upon that individual and he or she may be held accountable by the Council for any failure to do so.

## **The Council & Cabinet**

The Council, Cabinet and its Committees will ensure that:

- Adequate time and resources are provided to meet current health and safety standards.
- Health and safety implications are taken into account when considering reports.

## **Executive Directors**

Being responsible for increasing the performance management and improving the corporate well being of the Council they will:

- Monitor and support their Directors and Heads Of Service to ensure that they are performing their health and safety responsibilities
- Support the Chief Executive in the overall direction of the Council's Health and Safety activities

## **Directors and Heads of Service**

Are responsible for implementing the Health and Safety policy within their service and will ensure that:

- That they and their staff are aware of and follow the Council's policies and procedures that can be found on e link at <http://elink/staff/index.asp#449>
- Adequate resources are provided to achieve the specific and overall requirements of the Council's health and safety policies and procedures
- Their managers are suitably trained to carry out risk assessments, that risk assessments are carried out and identified risks are effectively managed
- Their staff are competent and adequately supervised

- They consult with the Health and Safety Risk Management Group when considering any changes that may significantly affect the health and safety of employees and to do this before committing to, or implementing those changes

## **Line Managers and Supervisors**

Being responsible for the day to day supervision and management of their staff, Line Managers, and supervisors have a crucial role to play in ensuring that health and safety risks are identified and managed and will ensure that:

- That they and staff are aware of and follow the Council's policies and procedures that can be found on e link at <http://elink/staff/index.asp#449> and that where their staff do not have access to e link that the policies and procedures are circulated as necessary.
- Their staff are competent to do their work and that they are adequately supervised at all times.
- They carry out risk assessments for their area of responsibility and take any necessary measures to eliminate or reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable.
- They inform their staff of any risks identified and how those risks can be avoided or reduced.
- Their staff are made aware of what to do in the event of a fire, particularly the location of the fire fighting appliances, fire exits and assembly points.
- Their staff are made aware of how they can get first aid assistance and how to report accidents.
- The correct protective equipment is available and used.
- Where any unsafe act or condition is brought to their attention, that steps are taken and if necessary stop any activity until remedial action is taken.
- Their staff are released from normal duties to attend relevant health and safety training.

## **The Director of Finance, Property and Information Technology**

The Director of Finance, Property and Information Technology will:

- Ensure that adequate and appropriate insurance policies are provided to meet the Council's health and safety obligations.
- Ensure that all buildings owned or managed by the Council are maintained in a safe condition and that any works are carried out in a safe manner and that the safety file is kept up to date
- Periodically review insurance claims and advise the Management Team and/or the Cabinet when adverse trends arise.

## **Health and Safety Advisor**

The Health and Safety Advisor will:

- Develop and advise on the implementation of policies to meet or exceed the requirements of current legislation and best practice.
- Provide impartial advice and practical assistance to all services on health and safety matters that affect employees or other people who may be affected by the Councils activities.
- Ensure that adequate information and publicity is provided for health and safety.
- Arrange instruction and training as required or requested.
- Provide advice and assistance to the Health and Safety Risk Management Group.
- Report any concerns to the appropriate officer and if necessary to the Chief Executive or appropriate Member of the Council.
- Carry out inspections and advise where remedial action is necessary.

## **Employees responsibilities**

Employees also have obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and must:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their work.
- Co-operate with the Council on health and safety by following the Council's safety procedures and correctly using work and safety equipment and clothing provided by the Council.
- Not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety, such as the removal of guards or the overriding of any safety device.
- Tell their manager or the Health and Safety Advisor of any shortcomings in health and safety arrangements, even where no immediate danger exists, so that the Council can take any remedial actions necessary to ensure the health and safety of employees or other people affected by the Council's work.

## **Employees will also:**

- Familiarise themselves with the contents of the Health and Safety Policy and policies, procedures and risk assessments that can be found on e link at <http://elink/staff/index.asp#449>
- Use or wear any equipment or clothing required for their health and safety.
- Observe all safety rules, safety signs and instructions.
- Report to their Supervisor all accidents and incidents and near misses
- Attend health and safety training as requested.
- Familiarise themselves with fire routes, exits and alarms.
- Not engage in horseplay/practical jokes that may endanger themselves, work colleagues or other people.

## **Client Officers**

Client officers are responsible for ensuring that contractors that they have appointed are competent and suitable to carry out the work that they are being employed to carry out and will in particular ensure that contractors:

- Comply with health and safety legislation and where appropriate the Council's Health and Safety Policy
- Are properly controlled and supervised as necessary
- Are properly covered by Employers and Public Liability Insurance
- Are made aware of any hazards and risks that they may be exposed to while carrying out work for the Council or while working on Council premises
- Provide the client officer with information regarding any hazards or risks that they may create while carrying out their work
- Using warning signs where necessary or appropriate
- Report any fatalities, major injuries or dangerous occurrences that are reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases or Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) to the Council's Health and Safety Advisor

## **Alterations and maintenance work to Council buildings**

The Property and Facilities Team are to be consulted before any significant alterations or maintenance is carried out on Council owned or managed buildings such as:

- Works that may affect the structure of the building
- Any 'hot works' that involve use of blow torches, welding equipment etc where there is a significantly increased risk of fire
- Work on electrical systems
- Work on water, heating, air conditioning and refrigeration systems
- Working at height
- Work that may disturb any asbestos containing materials

## **First Aiders and Appointed Persons**

First Aiders and Appointed Persons will provide first aid assistance to employees who are injured or become ill at work and to visitors while they are on Council premises.

## **Review**

This policy statement and other health and safety policies and procedures will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they remain effective and comply with current legislation and best practice.

## **Terms of Reference**

The main aim of the group is to provide the statutory means for the Council to consult with employees on health and safety matters and assist the Council to meet its corporate objectives and will:

- Meet monthly
- Promote co-operation across the Council for the completion of risk assessments and the implementation of suitable and sufficient measures to eliminate or control risks that will ensure the health and safety of employees while at work and other people that may be affected by the Council's activities.
- Keep abreast of changes in health and safety legislation and good practice and advise/remind the Corporate Management Team of their legal obligations and how these may be met
- Advise managers on the training required to meet the requirements of legislation, good practice and the Health and Safety Policy
- Review and maintain the Health and Safety Policy
- Promote the accurate recording and investigation of work related incidents, accidents and ill health
- Consider comments, reports and Enforcement Notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive and Fire Authority and advise the appropriate Manager or the Management Team of the necessary remedial action required
- Consider comments or reports from Union appointed Health and Safety Representatives
- Maintain contact with the Health and Safety Executive, the Fire Authority, the Council's insurer and other external organisations concerned with health and safety
- To co-operate with the Corporate Risk Management Group and the Emergency Planning Team on matters of mutual interest

## **Membership of the Health, Safety and Risk management Group**

The group will be made up of the following:

- Union Health and Safety Representatives appointed by a union recognised by the Council
- A staff safety representative from each service
- A member of the Corporate Management Team to provide the group with strategic direction and provide a link to the Corporate management Team
- The Council's Emergency Planning Manager
- The Technical Services Manager
- The Council's Health and Safety Advisor who will advise the group on legislation, legal standards, best practice, risk management etc.

Where representatives are unable to attend meetings of the group, they are encouraged to nominate a substitute to attend in their place.



Other people may attend the group to assist in the understanding of particular items of its business or assist with specific projects.

## **Functions of 'Safety Reps'**

Union appointed Safety Representatives have 'functions' that do not impose any duty upon them; these are to:

- Investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace (whether or not they are drawn to his attention by the employees he represents) and to examine the causes of accidents at the workplace
- Have the opportunity to carry out inspections of the workplace
  - With reasonable notice to the Council and no more than every 3 months;
  - When there has been a substantial change to the conditions of work;
  - When there has been an accident or dangerous occurrence.
- Investigate complaints by any employee he represents relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work
- Make representations to the employer on matters arising out of the above· Make representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the employees at the workplace
- Represent the employees they are appointed to represent in consultations at the workplace and with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority
- Receive information from HSE inspectors
- Attend meetings of the Health and Safety Risk Management Group in connection with any of the above functions

## **Staff Safety Representatives**

Staff safety representatives will perform a similar role to union appointed Safety Representatives for the staff within their service whether or not they are members of a trades union, as follows:

- Communicate the activities of the group within their service area
- Represent the health and safety interests of the staff within their service area
- Help to co-ordinate health and safety activities and promote good practice
- Attend meetings of the Health and Safety Risk Management Group
- Investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace
- Investigate employees complaints regarding health and safety and welfare at work and where necessary raise these with the Health and Safety Advisor or through the Health and Safety Risk Management Group

## **Providing assistance**

The Council and individual Officers have a legal obligation to provide reasonable 'assistance' to Union appointed Health and Safety Representatives so that they may perform their functions.

## **Access to Information**

Union appointed Safety Representatives shall, with reasonable notice be given access to documents relevant to the workplace or to the employees they represent, and to take copies of them to allow them to perform their functions. They will be given access to records such as:

- Accident and RIDDOR reports
- Engineers reports on lifting equipment
- Records of maintenance of machinery or electrical equipment
- Workplace inspections
- HSE enforcement notices, reports etc.

### **They are not entitled to have access to information:**

- That does not relate to health, safety or welfare at work
- Relating specifically to an individual unless that individual has consented in writing to the disclosure (this does not apply to accident or RIDDOR reports)
- Obtained by the Council for the purpose of bringing or defending a legal proceeding

## **Time off work**

The Council will allow Safety Representatives and other members of the Health, Safety and Risk Management Group to take such time off with pay, during working hours to allow them to carry out their functions and roles above, to attend training and to attend meetings of the Health and Safety Risk Management Group. When carrying out their functions and roles, Safety Representatives and other members of the Health and Safety Risk Management Group will be paid either their normal rate of pay or their average hourly pay, whichever is the greater. They may also claim expenses such as travel and subsistence in accordance with the normal Council policies.

## **Member Involvement**

Council Members will be kept informed of health and safety issues either through broadcast or individual e-mails, e link, or reports to the Council, Cabinet or Joint Consultative Committee.

## **Minutes**

Minutes of the groups meetings will be distributed to members of the group and members of the Strategic and Corporate Management Teams and published on e link.

## **Consultation process**

The Council will consult with the workforce through the Health and Safety Risk Management Group on health and safety matters such as the introduction of health and safety policies and procedures or the proposed introduction of new work practices, equipment, substances etc. that are likely to have a significant impact on the health, safety or welfare of employees. The consultation process is shown below.

