



Health and Safety Policy

Contents.

1. Statement of Intent.....	3
2. Responsibilities for Health and Safety	4
2.1. Chief Executive’s Responsibilities	4
2.2. Executive Directors’ Responsibilities	4
2.3. Head of Service Responsibilities	5
2.4. Line Managers’ Responsibilities	5
2.5. Employees Responsibilities	6
2.6. Safety and Resilience Manager	7
3.0. Arrangements for Health and Safety.....	7
3.1. Risk Assessments	7
3.2. Training.....	8
3.3. Consultation.....	9
3.4. The Health and Safety Committee.....	9
3.5. Safety Representatives.....	10
3.5. Health and Safety Concerns.....	10
3.6. Evacuation.....	10

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1. Statement of Intent

Our Health and Safety Policy is to:

- Put in place, implement and maintain a health and safety management system based upon the Health and Safety Executive's HSG65 "Managing for Health and Safety". The Council will use the Plan, Do, Check, Act process for ensuring continual improvement.
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Investigate adverse events.
- Identify, assess and provide adequate control of occupational health and safety risks arising from our work activities, ensuring risks are dealt with sensibly, responsibly and proportionately to eliminate or minimise risks.
- Provide clear instructions, information, adequate training and supervision to ensure employees are competent to do their work, and services are delivered without risk to health.
- Maintain arrangements for the co-ordination and co-operation with other employers where employees or clients are in shared premises, facilities or activities with persons working in other organisations.
- Provide personal protective equipment.
- Engage and consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- Provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- Ensure safe use, handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances.
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions.
- Implement emergency procedures, including evacuation in case of fire or other significant incidents.
- Review and revise this policy and associated guidance biennially.

Signed:



John W Mundell, OBE
Interim Chief Executive

Date: 2 March 2021

Review Date:

2. Responsibilities for Health and Safety

2.1. Chief Executive's Responsibilities

The Chief Executive, so far as is reasonably practicable, is responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of all Council employees and others who may be affected by the Council's work operations. This will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that adequate resources are made available to enable the Council's policy to be implemented and to address any exceptional and / or urgent issues that arise when Council Services have exhausted all avenues within their power e.g. process for use of the Chief Executive's emergency powers and / or other processes for escalation.
- Ensuring that health and safety is an integral part of the overall management culture and developing a positive attitude to health and safety among employees by visibly demonstrating personal commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance.
- Appointing competent persons to assist the Council to apply the provisions of health and safety legislation.
- Ensuring the establishment and maintenance of health and safety management systems within Services, which will ensure the assessment of risks and the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures necessary to control the risks.

Whilst the Chief Executive retains responsibility for Health and Safety within the Council practical day to day responsibility for enacting this Policy is delegated to Executive Directors, Heads of Service and line managers for areas under their control.

2.2. Executive Directors' Responsibilities

Executive Directors are, so far as is reasonably practicable, responsible for ensuring the health and safety and welfare at work of all employees in their respective Services. They should:

- Prepare and revise as necessary, service management arrangements which set out the organisation and arrangements within the Service through which the Council's Health and Safety Policy will be implemented.
- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable the service management arrangements to be implemented. Where this is not possible Council services should engage with the Chief Executive on issues.
- Visibly demonstrate commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance within their services and develop a positive attitude to health and safety among employees.
- Implement health and safety management systems within services, which will ensure the assessment of risk and the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures necessary to eliminate or control the risks.
- Assist the Council's Safety and Resilience Manager to prepare an annual report evaluating the health and safety of each service.
- Assist the Council's Safety and Resilience Manager to prepare a biennial plan targeting health and safety improvements within each service.

- Executive Directors must implement systems through service management teams to ensure that all adverse events occurring in relation to their service's work activities are recorded and investigated in accordance with the Adverse Event and Investigation Reporting Guidance.

An Executive Director will be appointed by the Senior Management Team (SMT) as the 'Health and Safety Director' in accordance with Health and Safety Commission guidance.

2.3. Head of Service Responsibilities

Heads of Service are, so far as is reasonably practicable, responsible for ensuring the health and safety and welfare at work of all employees in their respective services. They are / should:

- Responsible for the implementation, maintenance and monitoring the health and safety policy arrangements within their service at an operational level.
- Ensure key occupational health and safety risks related to their service delivery and work tasks are identified and eliminated, reduced or controlled.
- Ensure proper control, including management, of contractors' activities.
- Represent management at health and safety committees.
- Ensure the availability of accurate and accessible information on the incidence and of work-related accidents and occupational ill-health, with the setting of clear priorities, targets and strategies for their reduction.
- Ensure effective management of employee workload to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between work and life outside.
- Nominate responsible persons for delegated health and safety duties in establishments including a premises responsible person. Ensure mechanisms are in place in shared premises for the communication and co-ordination with defined roles and responsibilities.
- Implement systems to ensure that all adverse events occurring in relation to their area of the service's work activities are recorded and investigated in accordance with the Adverse Event and Investigation Reporting Guidance.
- Ensure effective discussion and communication of health and safety issues and performance at health and safety committees, senior management and workplace meetings.
- Undertake assessment of the effectiveness of health and safety management within their related service. Ensuring that compliance checks on the health and safety management systems are received and corrective action implemented.

2.4. Line Managers' Responsibilities

Line Managers are, so far as is reasonably practicable, responsible for ensuring the health and safety and welfare at work of all employees under their responsibility. They are / should be:

- Responsible for the implementation, maintenance and monitoring of the health and safety policy arrangements in their area of responsibility.

- Responsible for ensuring that appropriate health and safety arrangements are in place, ensuring that any health and safety responsibilities delegated to staff within their area are clearly identified, relayed and undertaken.
- Undertake and ensure valid risk assessments are available, and regularly reviewed, for activities undertaken by the service and pertinent findings of risk assessments and any changes to work practices communicated to staff. These risk assessments should be recorded and reviewed in line with the Council's Health and Safety Risk Assessment Guidance.
- Ensure the provision and maintenance of safe vehicles, plant and equipment and ensure safe handling, transportation, storage and use of substances.
- Ensure that all staff are, and remain, competent to carry out any activities required as part of their duties and responsibilities through the provision of appropriate information, instruction training and supervision.
- Responsible for recording and investigating adverse events to identify remedial actions and trends to prevent reoccurrence as set out in the Council's Adverse Event Reporting and Investigation Guidance.
- Encourage each employee to co-operate in incident and near miss prevention and to exercise personal responsibility to avoid accidents to themselves and others.
- Actively monitor and review health and safety performance and act as appropriate.
- Monitor working conditions and environment, undertake and arrange, where appropriate, referrals and health surveillance through occupational health provider.
- Implement and monitor employee attendance management, regularly review workload and working hours in line with legal requirements and corporate policy taking remedial action where necessary.
- Ensure compliance with all relevant Council guidance documents and procedures.
- Motivate and empower employees to work in a safe and healthy manner in order to encourage a positive attitude towards health, safety and welfare in the workplace.
- Ensure effective discussion and communication of health and safety issues and performance at health and safety committees, senior management, workplace meetings and discussions.
- Undertake assessment of the effectiveness of health and safety management within their related service delivery.

2.5. Employees Responsibilities

All employees will be expected to co-operate in the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy by:

- Acting in the course of their employment with due care for their own safety and that of others, who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Co-operating, so far as is necessary, to enable the Council to perform any duty or to comply with any requirements, as a result of any health and safety legislation which may be in force, and in compliance with Risk Assessments, Method Statements etc. and as instructed by a line manager or other appropriate delegated person.
- Using correctly all work items provided by the Council in accordance with the training and the instructions they receive to enable them to use the items safely.

- Informing the Council without delay of any work situation which might represent a serious or imminent danger.
- Notifying their line manager or other appropriate delegated person of any shortcomings in health and safety arrangements, even when no immediate danger exists, so that the Council can take remedial action if needed. This would include reporting any near-miss incidents.
- Not to compromise the health and safety of persons working with or around them through negligent acts or omissions.
- Completing all the required online iLearn health and safety training modules, including refresher training at the appropriate intervals, as well as any other training required by the Council.
- Taking reasonable care of their own health and safety.
- Using any personal protective equipment (PPE) as instructed and reporting any lost PPE or PPE with obvious defects prior to starting work that requires the use of that PPE.

2.6. Safety and Resilience Manager

The Safety and Resilience Manager will:

- Provide competent occupational health and safety advice to members of the Council, Corporate Management Team, operational line management and employees.
- Provide up to date information on changes to legislation.
- Develop corporate policy, procedures and guidance that will ensure compliance with statutory requirements and applicable codes of practice.
- Co-ordinate, interpret, progress enquiries from enforcing authorities and support Directorates in addressing actions.
- Independently assess health and safety management system compliance within the organisation.
- Undertake proactive and reactive monitoring, analysis and evaluation of health and safety performance to check compliance and identify remedial actions.
- Prepare of an annual corporate health and safety management report and a biennial improvement plan intended to ensure that safety standards are raised or maintained throughout the Council.
- Actively promote and develop a positive health and safety culture within the organisation.
- Assist in the enhancement of the organisations occupational health and safety management system to improve health and safety performance within the organisation.
- Identify and implement proactive health and safety workplace initiatives and campaigns.

3.0. Arrangements for Health and Safety

3.1. Risk Assessments

The identification and assessment of risks associated with all activities of the Council with the aim of eliminating or controlling the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable shall be undertaken through the production of health and safety risk assessments.

The Council's Health and Safety Risk Assessment Guidance provides further details and a template for completion of all risk assessments.

3.2. Training

Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring that their employees receive all relevant health and safety training as deemed necessary for them to carry out their work duties in a safe manner.

Senior officials (e.g. the Health and Safety Elected Member, the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Heads of Service) should receive Health and Safety training and refresher training, as appropriate, to enable appreciation and discharge of both their organisation's and personal responsibilities for health and safety.

Managers and supervisors should also receive relevant Health and Safety training in relation to their respective areas of work so that they can ensure statutory compliance.

All staff should receive suitable health and safety training in relation to the hazards and risks identified, by risk assessment, in their place of work.

Corporate Services devise, implement and make available corporate health and safety training programmes to staff.

Council services are responsible for ensuring that service specific specialist training is made available to staff.

The following is recommended as a starting point criterion for general Health and Safety training at Orkney Islands Council:

- Executive Directors, Heads of Service and Head Teachers of schools with Business Managers – IOSH Leading Safely or IOSH Health and Safety for Senior Executives.
- Elected Member with special Health and Safety responsibility - IOSH Leading Safely or IOSH Health and Safety for Senior Executives.
- Service managers, Team managers, School Business Managers, managers of predominately medium to high risk work operations – IOSH Managing Safely.
- Office Managers, managers of predominately low risk work operations – IOSH Working Safely.
- Supervisors and key workers identified by risk assessment as requiring general health and safety competency – IOSH Working Safely.
- Employees with the responsibility for carrying out health and safety risk assessments – IOSH Working Safely plus additional 'in house' risk assessment training.
- All Employees – iLearn Core Health and Safety and Wellbeing; iLearn Fire Safety Awareness; iLearn Manual Handling; plus job specific training as required by risk assessment and as essential development as identified by Performance Review.

The above iLearn courses must be completed as part of the induction process and refreshed accordingly. (Fire Safety Awareness – annually and the remainder – two yearly).

Through the annual budgetary process, the Senior Management Team, and ultimately the Council, are responsible for ensuring that funding is in place to facilitate all necessary health and safety training.

3.3. Consultation

The Council will consult with its staff through a series of formats. Each service will hold Management meetings at which health and safety will be a standing agenda item.

The main Council Offices at School Place, Kirkwall will have a quarterly Health and Safety Forum where health and safety issues within the building are discussed.

3.4. The Health and Safety Committee

The law sets out important duties relating to Health and Safety arrangements and engagement.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Section 5 states:

(1). Every employer shall make and give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the nature of his activities and the size of his undertaking, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures.

(2). Where the employer employs five or more employees, he shall record the arrangements referred to in paragraph (1).

The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended) and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (as amended) will apply to all services within Orkney Islands Council.

The Health and Safety Executive Approved Code of Practice L146, (2nd edition, 2014) will provide further guidance on these arrangements and compliments HSE HSG263 – Involving your workforce in health and safety.

The principal objective of the Orkney Islands Council Safety Committee will be the promotion of co-operation between the Council and its employees in investigating, developing and carrying out measures to ensure the health and safety at work of employees.

The terms of reference of the Safety Committee have been agreed and are contained within the constitution which is available in the health and safety section of the Council's Intranet. The main duties will be:

- To study accidents, incidents, and notifiable diseases, statistics and trends, so that reports can be made to management on unsafe and unhealthy conditions and practices, together with recommendations for corrective action.
- To examine safety audit reports on a similar basis.
- To consider reports and factual information provided by inspectors of the enforcing authority under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- To consider reports which Safety Representatives might wish to submit.
- To assist in the development of works safety rules and safe systems of works.

- To monitor the effectiveness of the safety content of employee training.
- To provide a link with the appropriate inspectorates of the enforcing authority.

3.5. Safety Representatives

The Council will consult safety representatives appointed by the relevant trade unions with regard to:

- Introduction of measures which may substantially affect the health and safety of employees.
- Arrangements for appointing competent health and safety advisers and persons to implement emergency procedures.
- Provision of health and safety information required under the relevant statutory provisions.
- Provision of health and safety training required under the relevant statutory provisions.
- The health and safety consequences of new technologies introduced into the workplace.

The Council will provide such facilities and assistance as safety representatives may reasonably require to carry out their functions.

Safety representatives appointed by recognised trade unions will be allowed to inspect any statutory document, which the Council is required to maintain and will also be given on request any information necessary to carry out their functions.

3.5. Health and Safety Concerns

Should an employee require to raise a health and safety concern, the procedure detailed below should be followed:

- **Stage 1.** Raise concern with Supervisor. If not resolved:
- **Stage 2.** Raise concern with Manager. If not resolved:
- **Stage 3.** Raise concern with Safety Representative. If not resolved:
- **Stage 4.** Health and Safety Representative should raise with relevant line management and if not resolved can raise concerns at the relevant health and safety committee or Management Team. If the matter is not resolved after three meetings:
- **Stage 5.** Matter is referred to the corporate Health and Safety Committee.

At any stage during this process, any employee / safety representative can contact the Safety and Resilience service for further guidance.

Processes or jobs where health and safety concerns that could result in loss of life or major injuries are identified, should be immediately stopped until Senior Management and Safety and Resilience service can advise.

3.6. Evacuation

The management of fire within council workplaces will be undertaken in line with corporate policy, procedure and guidance. Each establishment will produce a local Fire Safety Policy

and Emergency Fire Action Plan that will ensure arrangements are in place for the maintenance of fire safety measures and any required emergency evacuation.

The fire risk assessment programme will be managed by the Safety and Resilience Manager. Fire risk assessments will be undertaken and provided to services for action and retaining on the premise.