



D O W N H A M
M A R K E T

T O W N C O U N C I L

HEALTH & SAFETY AT WORK POLICY

Date of Adoption: 12 December 2023

Review: Three years unless changes in legislation necessitate review

1. POLICY AIM

The aim of this policy is to assist Downham Market Town Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) in providing a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for all its employees and to protect all other persons not employed by the Council but who may be affected by their work activity.

2. SUMMARY

This Policy provides the framework by which the management of health and safety within the Council will be carried out, including all necessary arrangements and organisation.

Effective communication and competence throughout the organisation will be essential to the success of the policy.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Council is committed to meeting its responsibilities to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its employees, councillors, contractors, volunteers, agency staff and any other person who may be affected by its activities.

To enable the Council to carry out these responsibilities it will, so far as is reasonably practicable, take steps to:

- . make the workplace safe and without risks to health where possible;
- . ensure that plant and machinery are safe and that safe systems of work are set and followed;
- . keep dust, fumes and noise under control;
- . ensure that articles and substances are stored, moved and used safely;
- . provide adequate welfare services;
- . provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as needed;
- . provide free, any protective clothing or equipment required by law and determined by suitable and sufficient risk assessments;
- . report certain injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority;
- . provide adequate first aid facilities;
- . consult with staff about matters affecting employees' health and safety.

The Council delegates the main responsibility for health and safety to the Town Clerk, but in order for this policy to be successful, it is the personal responsibility of each employee, councillor, contractor, volunteer and agency staff member to:

- . take reasonable care in carrying out their activities to minimise the risk to their own health, safety and welfare and that of their colleagues or others who may be affected by their actions;
- . co-operate with management and colleagues in the carrying out of their duties to establish the safe systems of work;
- . bring to the attention of the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk any hazards, dangerous practices, accidents or incidents of which they come aware.

The allocation for safety matters and the particular arrangements that the Council will make to implement the policy are set out below. The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the organisation changes in nature and size. The policy and the way it is operated will be reviewed annually.

4. ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 THE COUNCIL

The Council will make sure that sufficient budget is made available annually for the purposes of meeting health and safety obligations in relation to Council activities.

The Council, through the Human Resources Committee, will monitor health and safety issues and compliance with this policy.

The Committee will:

- . review accident and “near miss” incident data;
- . receive and consider reports from the Town Clerk, Health and Safety Executive and Trade Union representatives;
- . receive and consider policies and procedures developed by the Town Clerk, before passing them to Full Council for approval;
- . assist in the development of safety rules;
- . monitor and review health, safety and welfare training.

4.2 THE TOWN CLERK

The Council has the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the Council fulfils its legal obligations, the policy’s objectives are achieved and that effective management is in place to secure its implementation and review as appropriate.

To these ends, delegated authority is given to the Town Clerk to ensure the allocation of the resources necessary to maintain sound and efficient health and safety arrangements on an operational basis. The Town Clerk supported by staff will:

- . make sure that staff implement the requirements of the Council’s Health and Safety Policy;

- . make sure assets are maintained, repaired and operated in a safe manner;
- . make sure that all risk assessments are undertaken and safe systems of work established, for all tasks and places of work and that the significant outcomes of the risk assessments are made known to employees and any other parties who may need to be made aware;
- . make sure all current and past risk assessments are stored using an appropriate format for recording all the relevant risk assessments;
- . make sure that risk assessments are reviewed regularly, or immediately after an accident/'near miss' incident or change in work process;
- . make sure authorised, qualified and competent people are assigned tasks and that appropriate safe systems of work are in place with consideration to any potentially vulnerable people (e.g. expectant and nursing mothers, young persons, and persons with a disability) and any appropriate levels of supervision are provided;
- . report and investigate accidents, "near misses", ill health and incidents of violence or abuse, to the Human Resources Committee and/or Full Council;
- . make sure that all employees accept their own health and safety responsibilities and that induction and training initiatives are developed which provide safe working practices considering hazardous operations, substances, machinery or equipment;
- . make sure appropriate personal protective equipment is made available (free of charge), suitable and worn as identified by the process of risk assessment, and that records are held of this equipment and it is replaced as required;
- . take appropriate action and ensure prompt attention on any representation submitted by any employee who has comments or concerns regarding health and safety;
- . make sure that existing fire procedures are adhered to, including conducting fire risk assessments annually for all Council premises;
- . establish emergency and evacuation plans for all premises;
- . ensure that all fire safety tests and drills are routinely carried out and logged in a records book;
- . undertake regular checks to ensure that fire exits, corridors, stairs, landings and walkways in offices are kept clear at all time;
- . identify training needs through risk assessment and performance review processes;

- . ensure that the Council's Health and Safety Policy is available to new, temporary employees and volunteers, and that health and safety awareness is included in the Council's induction training;
- . maintain corporate accident and "near miss" incident sheets;
- . review accident and incident data to identify trends and any appropriate remedial action as necessary;
- . review contents of first aid kits annually.

4.3. EMPLOYEES/COUNCILLORS (where applicable)

All employees have a duty of care to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others and to co-operate with the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk on health and safety issues. All employees must ensure that they will:

- . carry out all work and tasks in the prescribed manner and follow any training, information and instruction provided;
- . use equipment correctly at all times and not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare (for example fire-fighting equipment, protective guards or devices, personal protective equipment, warning signs etc.);
- . familiarise themselves with the evacuation procedures on the sites they work from or visit regularly;
- . make themselves familiar with the Health and Safety Policy, health and safety information and any other documents provided for their safety;
- . wear or use appropriate personal protective equipment as provided;
- . maintain good housekeeping;
- . know the location of first aid facilities;
- . know what to do in the event of fire, or other emergency and know the location of fire fighting equipment;
- . report immediately to the Town Clerk/Deputy Town Clerk all accidents, incidents, unsafe acts or damage including any "near misses";
- . co-operate in the investigation of accidents with the objective of introducing methods to prevent re-occurrence;
- . report any of the following to the Town Clerk:
 - . incidents of any pain or discomfort arising out of the carrying out of their work activity;

- . any physical injury resulting from the carrying out of their work activity;
- . any incident of violence or abuse aimed at the employee;
- . all cases where work equipment or personal safety equipment becomes defective;
- . take part in risk assessments, workplace inspections and audits where necessary;
- . observe safe systems and methods of working at all times, avoiding taking short cuts which would entail unnecessary risks;
- . ensure that when driving while at work that they are fit to do so and drive in a safe and proper manner.

4.4 CONTRACTORS

Contractors will be reminded of all their legal obligations, including the reporting of accidents and “near miss” incidents. All contractors must take reasonable care to make sure their employees and others are safe in and about their work, and competent to undertake the work required. To fulfil these obligations the contractor must provide:

- . competent employees who have received adequate training to enable them to safely perform the job;
- . adequate supervision of untrained staff or young workers;
- . safe plant, i.e. equipment and appliances in good working order;
- . safe system of work;
- . adequate third party liability insurance as specified by any contract.

Any employee of the Council, who brings in a contractor to carry out works for and on behalf of the Council, is responsible for ensuring that contractor, and any sub-contractors they appoint, are competent to undertake the necessary works. They must also ensure that suitable systems are in place before the work starts to ensure the contractor undertakes work as per their documented health and safety procedures, and that all work is carried out in a safe manner.

4.5 AGENCY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Agency staff and volunteers will be reminded of their legal obligations, including the reporting of accidents and “near miss” incidents. All agencies and voluntary agencies (where involved) must ensure the individuals they appoint to work for the Council are competent to undertake the work required.

A copy of this policy will be given to all staff, councillors and contractors undertaking duties and tasks on behalf of the Council.

This policy will be monitored periodically by the Council to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance to changes in the law. This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed in full every three years.

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