

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy 2021



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1 Commitment

The Council is committed to achieving effective control of risk by working to the health and safety (H&S) management performance standards contained within the H&S policy. These standards relate to:

- clear definition of responsibilities for securing the health, safety and wellbeing of all stakeholders;
- leadership, resource allocation, and consideration of health and safety implications arising from business decisions;
- setting objectives for planned and continuous improvement of health and safety performance;
- the establishment and implementation of effective and sensible risk control measures and systems;
- competence of those involved in making decisions on health and safety and of all those involved in delivering the Council's undertakings;
- encouraging ownership of health and safety issues throughout the organisation by effective communication and consultation with all stakeholders; and
- taking appropriate corrective and preventative action based on the monitoring, auditing and investigating of activities and incidents.

This policy applies to every aspect of the Council's business, including the activities it undertakes in partnership with other organisations.

2 Organisation and Responsibilities

2.1 Chief Executive

Ultimate responsibility for health and safety within Cambridgeshire County Council rests with the Council's Chief Executive. The Chief Executive is accountable to elected members for health and safety performance in all aspects of the Council's undertakings. Under the Council's Strategic Management Team (SMT) arrangements, the Chief Executive has delegated authority for the successful and consistent delivery of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Safety Management System to the Corporate Director: Corporate & Customer Services.

2.2 Corporate Director: Corporate & Customer Services

The Corporate Director: Corporate & Customer Services will take responsibility for chairing the Council's Strategic Health and Safety Co-ordinating Group and for the delivery of the aims and objectives of that Group.

2.3 Executive Directors and Service Directors

Executive Directors and Service Directors are responsible for supporting the Chief Executive in their role as key duty holder for health and safety. They shall discharge this responsibility by achieving compliance with the Council's health and safety policy and the associated safety management system within their own areas of accountability.

Executive and Service Directors should appoint a competent person, a Service Health and Safety Coordinator, of sufficient authority (at Assistant Director / Head of Service level) to assist in co-ordinating health and safety and to help them oversee the following activities in their areas of accountability:

- setting, measuring and reviewing health and safety performance and objectives (a Service Health and Safety Action Plan);
- establishing arrangements, including a Service Health and Safety Coordinating Group, to achieve compliance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and the Council's Safety Management System within their own areas of accountability;
- publishing a written statement describing the health and safety arrangements within their areas of accountability;
- allocating resources to manage risks effectively including those risks related to any plant, equipment or buildings for which they are responsible;
- ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place to manage emergencies effectively in order to reduce the potential impact on the health, safety and welfare of people covered by this policy to a tolerable level;
- consulting with workers and Trade Union representatives on matters of health and safety;
- reporting progress relating to the implementation and achievement of their Service's Health and Safety Action Plan to the Strategic Health and Safety Coordinating Group; and

- submitting an annual report to the Strategic Health and Safety Coordinating Group that summarises performance and defines plans for improvement.

Executive / Corporate Directors should ensure that Service Health and Safety Coordinators receive adequate information, instruction and training and the required resources (e.g. time, finance and assistance) to fulfil their coordinating role properly. Assistance should be in the form of appointed competent workplace health and safety coordinators.

2.4 Assistant Directors, Heads of Service, managers, team leaders and supervisors

Employees in an Assistant Director, Head of Service or a management or supervisory position are accountable for the health and safety of the people and activities that they supervise including, where applicable, those related to the management of plant, equipment and buildings. They must comply with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Safety Management System and any other relevant arrangements within their area or activity. Responsibilities will include:

- identifying all work-related hazards falling under their control and undertaking suitable and sufficient risk assessments of those hazards;
- developing local procedures and safe working practices in line with the Council's Safety Management System and local risk assessments;
- ensuring sure that they and their workers have adequate levels of competency to complete their work tasks safely;
- ensuring that local health and safety systems are maintained;
- reporting and investigating incidents in accordance with the Council's incident reporting systems; and
- ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place to manage emergencies effectively in order to reduce the potential impact on the health, safety and welfare of all persons covered by this policy to a tolerable level.

2.5 Headteachers (Community and Voluntary-Controlled Educational Settings)

The County Council is the employer in Community and Voluntary-Controlled schools and as such has overall responsibility for health and safety matters in those educational settings. Day to day responsibility for health and safety management in these areas is devolved to the Headteacher. Headteachers are responsible for achieving compliance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and the associated Safety Management System within their own areas of accountability. These responsibilities will include:

- setting, measuring and reviewing health and safety performance and objectives;
- establishing arrangements to achieve compliance with Council Health and Safety Policy and the Council's Safety Management System within their own areas of accountability;
- publishing a written statement describing the arrangements within their areas of accountability;

- allocating resources to manage risks effectively including those risks related to any plant, equipment or buildings for which they are responsible;
- ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place to manage emergencies effectively in order to reduce the potential impact on the health, safety and welfare of people covered by this policy to a tolerable level;
- consulting with workers and Trade Union representatives on matters of health and safety; and
- submitting an annual report to their Governing Body that summarises performance and defines plans for improvement.

In larger schools, Headteachers should consider appointing a competent person of sufficient authority to assist them in co-ordinating their health and safety responsibilities.

2.6 People

Every individual worker, elected member, visitor or contractor has a responsibility to take care of his / her own health and safety, to take due consideration for the health and safety of others, and to not interfere with or to misuse facilities that are provided in the interests of health and safety. Each individual must comply with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Safety Management System, and the relevant arrangements in force for the area they work in or activity they undertake for, or on behalf of, the Council.

3.0 Arrangements

The Council will develop and implement effective management structures, arrangements and systems for delivering the aims and objectives of this policy and for allowing all people affected by this policy to make a responsible and informed contribution to the health and safety effort. Those with defined accountabilities for health and safety shall have the appropriate authority to ensure that they can fulfil their accountabilities effectively. Health and safety issues shall be addressed at the specification, design, development and implementation phases in all planning, projects and working practices within the Council and in its dealings with suppliers and contractors.

3.1 Safety Management System

Detailed arrangements for securing health, safety and welfare will be set out in the Council's [Safety Management System](#) (SMS). The SMS will detail how the Council will secure:

3.2 Leadership

Members of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team (Chief Executive, Executive, Corporate and Service Directors), Headteachers, Heads of Service, managers and supervisors shall support this policy, influence the planning of improvements, and allocate resources according to risk priorities. The health and safety implications of business decisions shall be considered and addressed at the

specification and design stages as well as at the development and implementation phases of all service / business activities and initiatives.

3.3 Planning, Objective Setting, and Review

There shall be processes for objective setting, planning and resource allocation to ensure that action is taken to achieve satisfactory health and safety performance in general and control of risk in particular. These shall be based on the findings of reviews of the effectiveness of the management of health and safety and of the control of risk.

3.4 Trade Union Safety Representatives

Trade Union Safety Representatives are fully consulted on matters affecting the health and safety of employees they represent, in compliance with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977. Formal consultation with Trades Unions on health and safety takes place at Strategic and Service level through the various health and safety groups.

3.5 Risk Control

Appropriate precautionary measures shall be taken to minimise significant risks to the health and safety of all persons so that they are not exposed to sources of imminent danger. The range of measures that are used to mitigate specific risks will be formalised as risk control systems. Risk control systems and associated precautionary measures must, as a minimum, meet the requirements set out in legislation and associated approved codes of practice and will follow the recognised hierarchy for risk control. Where appropriate, risk control systems will take into account the individual needs and abilities of the people that those systems are designed to protect. Wherever practicable, the risk systems should take account of recognised best practice.

Risk assessment techniques shall be used to confirm that arrangements for risk control are appropriate. Where uncertainty exists about the degree of hazard, measures for risk control shall be adopted that should protect people from harm despite the uncertainty.

3.6 Competence

The Council will ensure that competent advice on health and safety matters is available and is taken into consideration when making decisions. The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team provide the competent Advice for all health, safety & wellbeing matters. Workers will be supported and developed to ensure that they are competent to carry out their activities safely without harm to themselves or others. Workers will be provided with appropriate information, instruction, and training and will be effectively supervised by persons who are competent to do so.

Workers appointed to carry out health and safety coordinating roles will be supported by senior management and will be provided with the necessary information, instruction, training, supervision and resources to carry out their duties competently.

Where the Council engages third parties to carry out works the Council will ensure that those third parties are competent and have adequate resources to carry out their works safely.

The Council will also ensure that visitors and contractors are provided with necessary information, instruction and supervision to ensure their health, safety and welfare whilst on Council premises.

3.7 Property Compliance

The Council will ensure that competent advice on property compliance matters is available and is taken into consideration when making decisions. The County Council Property Compliance team provide the advice for [Asbestos](#), [Fire Safety](#) & [Legionella](#).

3.8 Ownership

The Council will encourage ownership of health and safety among workers through the pooling of knowledge and experience, and the establishment of formal structures involving senior managers for consultation with Trade Union representatives. Workers shall be consulted and informed about health and safety issues that affect them. Health and safety information shall be kept up to date and shall be communicated as appropriate.

3.9 Corrective / Preventative Action, Monitoring, and Audit

The Service and Strategic Health and Safety Coordinating Groups will implement a planned programme of monitoring of the ongoing effectiveness of measures that are critical for the control of risk. On a day to day basis, workers will be encouraged to report to management any unplanned events that indicate shortcomings in risk control. Where such reports are received then investigations shall be carried out and action shall be taken to correct unsafe situations and to prevent further unplanned events.

Compliance with the policy and the safety management system will be periodically audited and the findings of audits will be reported across the organisation.