

ALCESTER TOWN COUNCIL

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



Version 3 – June 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Alcester Town Council ("the Council") recognises that it has a legal duty of care to protect the health and safety of its employees and others who may be affected by the Council's activities.

The Council regards the promotion of health and safety as a mutual objective for all employees in all Council activities.

Reference to employees also applies to volunteers and/or councillors acting on behalf of the Council where appropriate.

2. OBJECTIVES

The Council shall:

- Provide an organisational structure that defines the responsibilities for health and safety.
- Provide adequate resources to control the health and safety risks arising from its activities.
- Encourage staff to identify and report hazards so that everyone can contribute towards improving safety.
- Maintain premises and provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for employees.
- Provide adequate training and ensure that all employees are competent to do their tasks.
- Carry out and regularly review risk assessments to identify proportionate and pragmatic solutions to reducing risk.
- Only engage contractors who are able to demonstrate due regard to health and safety matters.
- Review this policy at least annually and revise to reflect changes to the activities and any changes to legislation. Any changes to this policy will be brought to the attention of all employees.

3. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Full Council has ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Alcester Town Council but discharges this responsibility through the Town Clerk to individual employees.

The Council shall ensure that:

- It will provide the lead in developing a positive health and safety culture through the organisation.
- All its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions.

- Adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety.
- It will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance.

The Town Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with Health and Safety legislation. In the Town Clerk's absence, the designated person is the Deputy Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk shall ensure that:

- This policy is implemented, monitored, developed and communicated effectively.
- Adequate insurance cover is provided at all times.
- There is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety matters.
- Safe working practices are developed, implemented and maintained.
- Accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents are recorded, investigated and reported.
- Safety issues are thoroughly investigated and where necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff.
- All employees receive adequate training, information and supervision to maintain safe standards.
- Suitable budgetary provision is made for health and safety.

All Council employees are required to:

- Make themselves familiar with and conform to this policy.
- Take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions.
- Observe safety rules at all times.
- Conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others.
- Where required, wear protective clothing and use appropriate safety devices provided.
- Maintain all equipment in good condition.
- Report to the Town Clerk all accidents, injuries to persons and damage to vehicles/plant/equipment.
- Know the location of First Aid facilities.
- Report all safety hazards as a matter of urgency to the Town Clerk.
- Attend as requested any health and safety training course.
- Know what to do in the case of fire, or other emergency and the location of fire fighting equipment.
- Maintain good housekeeping at all times.
- Observe safe standards of behaviour and dress.

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES

The Health and Safety rules for Alcester Town Council for the attention of all employees are set out in Appendix 1.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

The detailed Health and Safety arrangements for Alcester Town Council are set out in Appendix 2.

APPENDIX 1 – HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES

Reference to employees also applies to volunteers and/or councillors acting on behalf of the Council where appropriate.

General

- It is the duty of all employees to co-operate in fulfilling the Council's legal obligations in relation to health and safety.
- Employees must not intentionally or recklessly interfere with anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare.
- Employees are required to notify the Town Clerk of any unsafe activity, item or situation.

Working Practices

- Employees must not operate any item of plant or equipment unless they have been trained and authorised.
- Employees must make full and proper use of all equipment guarding.
- Employees must not clean any moving item of plant or equipment.
- Employees under the age of 18 years must not operate any item of plant or equipment unless they have received sufficient training or are under adequate supervision.
- Employees must not make any repairs or carry out maintenance work of any description unless authorised to do so.
- Employees must use all substances, chemicals, liquids etc, in accordance with all written instructions.
- Employees must not smoke or vape except in prescribed areas.

Hazard / Warning Signs and Notices

- Employees must comply with all hazard/warning signs and notices displayed on the premises.

Working Conditions / Environment

- Employees must make proper use of all equipment and facilities provided to control working conditions/ environment.
- Employees must keep stairways, passageways and work areas clear and in a clean and tidy condition.
- Employees must dispose of all rubbish, scrap and waste materials within the working area, using the facilities provided.

Protective Clothing and Equipment

- Employees must use all items of protective clothing/equipment provided as instructed.
- Employees must maintain protective clothing/equipment in good condition.
- Employees must report any damage, loss, fault or unsuitability of protective clothing/equipment to the Town Clerk.

Fire Precautions

- Employees must comply with all emergency procedures.
- Employees must not obstruct any fire escape route, fire equipment or fire doors.
- Employees should receive Fire Awareness training
- Employees must not misuse any fire fighting equipment provided.
- Employees must report any use of fire fighting equipment to the Town Clerk.

Accidents

- Employees must seek medical treatment for work related injuries they receive by contacting a designated first aider. Upon returning from treatment they must report the incident to the Town Clerk.
- Employees must ensure that any accident or injury treatment is properly recorded in the Accident Book.

- Employees must notify the Town Clerk of any incident in which damage is caused to property.

Health

- Employees must report to the Town Clerk any medical condition or medication which could affect the safety of themselves or others.
- Employees must co-operate with the Town Clerk on the implementation of the medical and occupational health provisions.

APPENDIX 2 – HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

Reference to employees also applies to volunteers and/or councillors acting on behalf of the Council where appropriate.

Accident, Incident and Ill-Health Recording, Reporting and Investigation

An accident is an unplanned event that causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both.

A near miss/incident is an unplanned event that does not cause injury or damage but could do so.

A work-related illness is a prescribed illness that is obtained by an employee through the course of work or from a non-employee as a result of activities carried out by the Council.

All accidents resulting in personal injury must be recorded in the company's Accident Book which is located at Globe House.

Accident Books are also located at the Eric Payne Community Centre and the Greig Hall squash courts and completed accident forms should be delivered to the Town Clerk at the earliest opportunity.

Employees must ensure that they are aware of the location of the Accident Books.

Incidents and work-related ill-health need to be reported directly to the Town Clerk.

Asbestos

The Council will protect employees and other persons potentially exposed to asbestos as far as is reasonably practicable. Everyone who needs to know about the presence of asbestos will be alerted. No one will be allowed to start any work that could disturb asbestos unless the correct procedures are to be employed.

If you notice any material that causes you concern or you become aware of any damage to asbestos material you must report it immediately to the Town Clerk.

Selection and Control of Contractors to Work on Asbestos-containing Materials

When contractors are engaged to work on the premises, adequate steps will be taken

to ensure the contractors are competent and have sufficient skills and knowledge to do the job safely and without risks to health.

Only contractors licensed by the HSE will be used for the removal of asbestos-containing materials, unless the work involves the removal of materials in which:

- Asbestos fibres are firmly linked in a matrix
- The exposure during the removal process is likely to be sporadic or of low intensity

Contractors hired to carry out building or allied trade work that will involve minor work with asbestos must comply with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

Contractors

When working on our premises it is considered that contractors are joint occupiers for that period and therefore both the Council and the contractor have joint liabilities in “common areas”. In order to meet the Council’s legal obligations with regard to contractors it will ensure, prior to engaging any contractor, that they are competent and ensure during their period of employment that any works are carried out safely.

The following factors will be considered as part of the Council’s procedures for vetting contractors:

- Sight of the contractor’s own safety policy, risk assessments, method statements, permits to work, etc as applicable
- Clarification of the responsibility for provision of first aid and fire extinguishing equipment
- Details of articles and hazardous substances intended to be brought to site, including any arrangements for safe transportation, handling, use, storage and disposal
- Details of plant and equipment to be brought onto site, including arrangements for storage, use, maintenance and inspection
- Clarification for supervision and regular communication during work including arrangements for reporting problems or stopping work in cases where there is a serious risk of personal injury
- Confirmation that all workers are suitably qualified and competent for the work (including a requirement for sight of evidence where relevant)
- Evidence showing that appropriate Employers and Public Liability Insurance is in place

Clearly, it will not be necessary to go to such elaborate lengths if the contract is very short and will not create hazards of any significance. The complexity of the

arrangements will be directly proportional to the risks and consequences of failure.

Similarly, the Council has a parallel duty to the contractor and must ensure that the contractor is not put at risk by its own activities for the duration of the contract.

The Council will stop contractors working immediately if their work appears unsafe. Staff should report any concerns to a manager immediately.

Construction work and the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

Where any construction work is carried out, to fulfil the Council's legal duties as a "client" under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 the Council will:

- Make suitable arrangements for the management of the project and review those arrangements throughout the project to ensure that they are still relevant
- Ensure that all duty holders that the Council appoints have the necessary skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their roles safely
- Appoint in writing the Principal Designer and Principal Contractor sufficiently early in the project to allow them to carry out their duties properly
- Notify the HSE in writing for projects where required
- Ensure that relevant pre-construction information is passed to all designers and contractors
- Ensure that the Principal Designer and Principal Contractor carry out their duties
- Ensure that adequate welfare facilities are provided for the contractors
- Ensure that no construction commences until an adequate health and safety plan and construction phase plan covering the work has been prepared
- Ensure that any health and safety file passed to the Council is kept securely and readily available for inspection by anyone who requires it to fulfil their legal duties, and, if the Council chooses to dispose of the building, to pass the file to any person or company who acquires the building
- Cooperate fully with all other duty holders and provide all relevant information and instruction promptly and clearly

Communication and Consultation

It is a legal requirement for the Council to establish arrangements to communicate and consult with employees on issues affecting their health and safety and to take account of their views.

To achieve this objective the Council will:

- Establish effective lines of communication
- Involve and consult with employees through:
 - Individual conversations
 - Notice boards
 - Internal publications
 - Staff meetings
 - Health and safety meetings
- Display the 'Health and Safety Law – What You Need To Know' poster
- Consult with employees when changes to processes, equipment, work methods etc. are to be introduced that may affect their health and safety

Disabled Persons

The Council will give full and proper consideration to the needs of disabled employees and visitors. To achieve this, the Council will:

- Treat all disabled employees and visitors with respect and dignity, both in the provision of a safe working environment and in equal access to the organisation's facilities
- Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken of the special needs of the disabled and carry out reasonable adjustments to the premises and/or employment arrangements
- Encourage employees with special needs to suggest any premises or task improvements to their line managers
- Ensure suitable plans are in place which will assist disabled people to leave the premises swiftly during an emergency evacuation

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

All reasonable steps will be taken by the Council to secure the health and safety of employees who work with display screen equipment.

To achieve this objective the Council will carry out an assessment of each user's workstation and implement necessary measures to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment.

The Council will follow the advice contained in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002 (DSE) and where assessment indicates a need, it will offer staff free eyesight tests and a contribution towards corrective spectacles. It will also provide footrests and document holders where a need is recognised, and the

opportunity for staff to take rest-periods away from the workstation.

Workstation users will be provided with suitable training and information regarding their workstation and will be given a copy of HSE Guidance Note INDG 36 "Working with VDU's".

Drugs and Alcohol

Alcohol

Employees must not drink alcohol whilst at work on the Council's premises or the premises of its customers or clients without express permission from the Town Clerk.

Any employee who is found consuming alcohol on the Council's premises or the premises of its customers and clients without permission or is found to be intoxicated at work will normally face disciplinary action on the ground of gross misconduct under the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Drugs and medication

The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on the Council's premises is strictly forbidden and is a gross misconduct offence.

If you are prescribed drugs by your doctor which may affect your ability to perform your work you should discuss the matter with the Town Clerk.

If the Council suspects there has been a breach of this policy or your work performance or conduct has been impaired through substance abuse, the Council reserves the right to require you to undergo a medical examination to determine the cause of the issue.

Medical Examination

Existing and prospective employees may be asked to undergo a medical examination which will seek to determine whether he/she has taken a controlled drug or has an

alcohol abuse problem.

A refusal to give consent to such an examination or a refusal to undergo the screening will result in the immediate withdrawal of any offer made to prospective employees and will normally be treated as gross misconduct for employees.

If, having undergone a medical examination, it is confirmed that you have been positively tested for a controlled drug, or you admit there is a problem, the Council reserves the right to suspend you from your employment (with or without pay) to allow the Council to decide whether to deal with the matter under the terms of the Council's disciplinary procedure and/or to require you to undergo treatment and rehabilitation.

Reasonable Grounds

The Council reserves the right to search you or any of your property held on Council's premises at any time if there are reasonable grounds to believe that this policy is being or has been infringed or for any other reason. If you refuse to comply with these search procedures, your refusal will normally be treated as gross misconduct.

The Council reserves the right to inform the police of any suspicions it may have with regard to the use of controlled drugs by its employees on the Council's premises.

Electricity

All reasonable steps will be taken to secure the health and safety of employees who use, operate or maintain electrical equipment.

To ensure this objective the Council will:

- Ensure electrical installations and equipment are installed in accordance with the Wiring Regulations (BS 7671) published by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET)
- Maintain the fixed installation in a safe condition by carrying out routine safety tests
- Inspect and test portable and transportable equipment as often as required to ensure safety
- Promote and implement a safe system of work for maintenance, inspection and

testing

- Forbid live working unless absolutely necessary, in which case a permit to work system must be used
- Ensure employees who carry out electrical work are competent to do so
- Maintain detailed records

Employees must:

- Visually check electrical equipment for damage before use
- Report any defects found to the Town Clerk
- Not use defective electrical equipment
- Not carry out any repair to any electrical item unless qualified to do so
- Switch off non-essential equipment from the mains when left unattended for long periods
- Not bring any electrical item onto the Council premises until it has been tested and a record of such a test has been included in the appropriate record
- Not leave electric cables in such a position that they will cause a tripping hazard or be subject to mechanical damage

Fire

All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent a fire occurring.

In the event of fire, the safety of life will override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.

In order to prevent fire and to minimise the likelihood of injury in the event of a fire the Council will:

- Assess the risk from fire at Council premises and implement appropriate control measures
- Ensure good housekeeping standards are maintained to minimise the risk of fire
- Provide and maintain safe means of escape from the premises
- Develop a fire evacuation procedure for all buildings
- Provide and maintain appropriate fire-fighting equipment
- Regularly stage fire evacuation drills as required depending on the premises, inspect the means of escape and test and inspect fire-fighting equipment, emergency lighting and any fire warning systems
- Provide adequate fire safety training to employees, plus specialist training to those with special responsibilities
- Make arrangements for the safe evacuation of deaf or otherwise disabled persons
- Make arrangements for ensuring all visitors are made aware of the fire evacuation

procedures

- Display fire action notices
- Keep fire safety records

The Council does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire but extinguishing action may be taken if it is safe to do so with a small fire.

Immediate evacuation of the building must take place as soon as the evacuate signal is given. All occupants, on evacuation, should report to the pre-determined assembly points.

Re-entry of the building is strictly prohibited until the fire brigade officer or a senior person present declares it is safe to do so.

Employees are encouraged to report any concerns regarding fire procedures so the organisation can investigate and take remedial action if necessary.

First Aid

The Council is committed to providing sufficient provision for first aid to deal with accidents and injuries that arise at work.

To achieve this objective the Council will:

- Appoint and train a suitable number of first aid personnel to cover all work patterns
- Display first aid notices with details of first aid provision
- Provide and maintain suitable and sufficient first aid facilities including first aid boxes
- Provide any additional first aid training that may be required to deal with specific first aid hazards

The minimum first aid provision is an adequately stocked first aid box at each premises (which is inspected regularly and refreshed after use) and an Appointed Person to take charge of the first aid arrangements.

Appointed Person

The Appointed Person duties include:

- Taking charge when someone falls ill or is injured, including calling an ambulance

- if required
- Looking after and maintaining the first aid box and contents

The Appointed Person will not be required to provide treatment for which they have not been trained.

First Aiders

First aiders are qualified personnel who have received training and passed an examination in accordance with HSE requirements.

The numbers of first aid personnel at each location will be determined by individual circumstances, the level of risk and in line with current government guidance.

First aid personnel will be provided with refresher training at regular intervals to keep their skills up to date.

First Aid Boxes

First aid boxes will be provided within the workplace to ensure there are adequate supplies for the nature of the hazards involved. All boxes will contain at least the minimum supplies suggested by L74: First Aid at Work Approved Code of Practice. Only specified first aid supplies will be kept. No creams, lotions or drugs, however seemingly mild, will be kept.

Gas Installations and Appliances

The Council will ensure that all work carried out on gas fittings and appliances are in accordance with the requirements of the regulations and the Safety in the Installation and Use of Gas Systems and Appliances Manual.

The Council is committed to achieving high standards of health and safety for all staff, visitors, customers and others. For these reasons employing, training, and arranging the assessments of operatives that are competent to work on gas installations and appliances – servicing, repairing or installing, is highly significant to supporting these aims.

The Council supports the aims of:

- Reducing the waste of fuel and material
- Increasing operational efficiency

- Eliminating unnecessary emission of atmospheric pollutants
- Reducing the risk to death, injury and distress to members of the public, staff and others who may be affected

The Gas Safe Register (GSR) is the governing body approved by the Health and Safety Executive to register and monitor the activities of gas installation and use. Gas fitting operatives carrying out work on behalf of the Council will be registered with the GSR.

No person shall interfere with any gas appliance or gas fitting or pipe work unless qualified and competent to do so.

Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure all exposure of employees to substances hazardous to health is prevented or at least controlled to within statutory limits.

The company will give sufficient information and training to ensure full understanding of the hazards to health posed by substances in the workplace and the importance of the control measures provided.

Information will also be given to others who may be affected such as contractors, temporary staff and visitors where appropriate.

Employees should not use any hazardous substance unless they have received the information and training for the safe use of that substance.

Health, Safety and Welfare

The Council is committed to providing suitable health, safety and welfare facilities in line with current legislation, in particular the provision of:

- Adequate maintenance of workplace and equipment
- Appropriate ventilation, temperature control and lighting
- Suitable cleanliness and housekeeping standards
- Adequate workspace allocation
- Properly designed workstations
- Well maintained traffic routes and floors
- Appropriate fall protection
- Suitable glazing
- Safe access and egress (well maintained exits and entrances)
- Appropriate sanitary and washing facilities
- Separate toilet facilities for men and women with the exception of disabled toilets

- Plentiful drinking water supply
- Seating with an incorporated back rest
- Accommodation for keeping clothing clean and dry
- Facilities for changing, rest periods, hot drinks and meals preparation
- Showering facilities if the nature of an employees work requires this
- Appropriate first aid provision
- Appropriate emergency, fire and evacuation equipment and procedures

Home Working

Most of the Regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act apply to home workers as well as to employees working at an employer's workplace.

The Council highlights particular regard to the provisions of:

- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

Lone Working

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety.

The Council will determine, by risk assessment, those activities where work can actually be done safely by one unaccompanied person. This will include the identification of hazards from means of access and/or egress, plant, machinery, goods, substances, environment and atmosphere, etc.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- The remoteness or isolation of workplaces
- Any problems of communication
- The possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons
- The nature of injury or damage to health and anticipated "worst case" scenario

Information and Training

Employees and others will be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.

Employees will be required to follow the safe working procedures devised including:

- When working alone, e.g. in an isolated area of a building with all doors closed, ensure that someone is aware of your presence
- Check that work being done has been subject to risk assessment and check the assessment yourself – some work may have been identified as requiring the assistance of a second person
- If possible and arranged beforehand, keep in regular contact with someone else, e.g. use a mobile phone to call a designated person, that can be a colleague, friend or family member for instance
- Do not put yourself at risk; if you do not feel safe discuss the situation with your manager
- Report all accidents, injuries, near-misses and dangerous occurrences to your manager

Manual Handling

To prevent injuries and long term ill-health from manual handling the Council will ensure that operations which involve manual handling are eliminated, so far as is reasonably practicable. Where it is not practical, the Council will carry out an assessment to determine what control measures are required to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

To implement this policy the organisation will ensure that:

- Manual handling assessments are carried out where relevant and records are kept
- Employees are properly supervised
- Adequate information and training is provided to persons carrying out manual handling activities including details of the approximate weights of loads to be handled and objects with an uneven weight distribution
- Any injuries or incidents relating to manual handling are investigated, with remedial action taken
- Employees adhere to safe systems of work
- Safety arrangements for manual handling operations are monitored and reviewed
- Where relevant, employees undertaking manual handling activities are suitably screened for reasons of health and safety, before doing the work
- Special arrangements are made for individuals with health conditions which could be adversely affected by manual handling operations

Reducing the risk of injury

In considering the most appropriate controls, an ergonomic approach to designing the manual handling operation will optimise the health, safety and productivity associated with the task.

Techniques of risk reduction will include:

- Mechanical assistance
- Redesigning the task
- Reducing risk factors arising from the load
- Improvements in the work environment
- Employee selection

No employee will be required to lift any item that they do not feel confident of doing without risking personal injury.

Personal Protective Equipment

The Council provides personal protective equipment (PPE) when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by other means. When it is provided, it is because health and safety hazards have been identified that require the use of PPE and it is therefore necessary to use it in order to reduce risks to a minimum.

Employees provided with PPE must:

- Wear the PPE as instructed or where indicated by signage
- Maintain it in good condition
- Report any defects to the Town Clerk
- Ensure the PPE fits correctly, is comfortable and fully adjusted

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a systematic examination of what within the Council's business can cause harm to people and helps to determine whether the Council is doing enough or further actions are required to reduce the likelihood of injury or ill health.

The Council's policy is to complete a general risk assessment of all known and reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards covering the Council's premises, equipment and activities in order to plan and prioritise the implementation of the identified control measures.

More detailed specific risk assessments will also be carried out as determined by the general assessment to address those premises, equipment, people or activities to comply with specific legislation or to proactively manage health and safety risks.

The Council will ensure that:

- Assessments are carried out and records are kept
- Control measures introduced as a result of assessments are implemented and followed
- Employees are informed of the relevant results and provided with necessary training
- Any injuries or incidents lead to a review of relevant assessments
- Assessments are regularly monitored and reviewed
- Suitable information, instruction and training will be provided to all persons involved in the risk assessment process

Smoking

Exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not stop potentially dangerous exposure.

It is the policy of the Council that all of its workplaces are smoke-free and that all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment.

Smoking is prohibited throughout the entire workplace and this includes the use of all artificial smoking aids (electronic or otherwise) with no exceptions. This policy applies to all employees, customers and visitors.

Implementation

All staff are obliged to adhere to and facilitate the implementation of the policy.

The Council will ensure that all employees and contractors are aware of the policy on smoking. They will also ensure that all new personnel are given a copy of the policy on recruitment or induction.

Appropriate 'no smoking' signs will be clearly displayed at or near the entrances to the premises.

Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to

excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

Stress at work can come about for a variety of reasons. It may be excessive workload, unreasonable expectations, or overly-demanding work colleagues.

Employees who experience unreasonable stress which they think may be caused by work should raise their concerns with the Town Clerk or through the Council's grievance procedure.

Following action to reduce the risks, the risks shall be reassessed. If the risks remain unsustainable by the employee concerned, efforts shall be made to reassign that person to other work for which the risks are assessed as tolerable.

Training

Training in health and safety is a legal requirement and also helps create competent employees at all levels within the Council to enable them to make a far more effective contribution to health and safety, whether as individuals, teams or groups.

Competence of individuals through training helps individuals acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude which will be promoted by managers and supervisors throughout the organisation.

The Council's training objectives will cover three areas, that of the organisation, the job and individuals. All employees will need to know about:

- The Health and Safety policy
- The structure and system for delivering this policy

Employees will need to know which parts of the system are relevant to them, to understand the major risks in the Council's activities and how they are controlled.

Managers and supervisors training needs will include:

- Leadership and communication skills
- Safety management techniques
- Skills on training and instruction
- Risk assessment
- Health and safety legislation
- Knowledge of the Council's planning, measuring, review and audit arrangements

Employee training will include:

- Relevant health and safety hazards and risk
- The health and safety arrangements relevant to them
- Communication lines to enable problem solving

All employees will receive induction training. Such training will cover:

Fire procedures, warning systems, actions to be taken on receiving warning, locations of exits/escape routes, evacuation and assembly procedures, first aid/injury reporting procedures, names of first aiders/appointed persons, instruction on any prohibition areas (i.e. no smoking), issue of protective clothing/equipment and its use, instruction under COSHH, mandatory protection areas, thorough instruction applicable to their particular duties at work etc.

Training needs will be reviewed as a result of job changes, promotion, new activities or new technology, following an accident/incident and performance appraisal.

Records of training will be kept for all employees.

Employees must:

- Participate in the induction training activities they have been required to attend or carry out
- Work according to the contents of any training they receive
- Ask for clarification of any points they do not fully understand
- Not operate hazardous plant or equipment, use hazardous chemicals or carry out any hazardous activity unless they have been appropriately trained and instructed

Visitors

In the interest of safety and security, the Council will take the necessary measures to protect staff and visitors from any accidents or incidents that may occur during visiting.

Employees hosting visitors must ensure that:

- They are authorised to enter the premises or be accompanied
- They adhere to applicable health and safety instructions and rules during their visit
- Adequate information is passed to ensure their safety including emergency information
- Any protective clothing required is provided and worn
- Any accidents / incidents involving visitors are reported through the accident reporting arrangements

Employees aware of people on the premises who may be unauthorised should report these to their manager for action.

Emergency Action

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, all visitors should be escorted to the assembly point by their host. Visitors should not leave the area before notifying the senior person present.

Work At Height

The Council will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe working environment for all employees who may be affected by work at height activities.

The Council will ensure that:

- All work activities that involve work at height are identified and assessed
- The need to undertake work at height will be eliminated whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so
- Adequate and secure working platforms with guard rails and toe boards will be used in preference to ladders which will be used for light, short duration work only and secured to prevent displacement
- When necessary, only scaffolds and scaffold towers that have been erected by a competent person will be used
- Roof lights and other fragile surfaces will be protected to prevent falls
- Fall arrest equipment will be used if other means of prevention (safety nets, harnesses with running lines, etc.) are not practical or justified
- Risks associated with those activities where work at height cannot be eliminated are evaluated and steps are taken to control them
- All the necessary equipment to allow safe access to and egress from the place of work is provided
- All the necessary equipment to ensure adequate lighting and protection from adverse weather conditions is provided
- Suitable plant machinery is provided to enable the materials used or created in the course of the work are safely lifted to and from the workplace and stored there if necessary
- Any working platform and its supporting structures are selected and/or designed in accordance with current standards
- Regular inspections of all equipment required for working at height are undertaken
- Competent persons are appointed to be responsible for the supervision of all work at height and associated activities

- Any contractors from whom they procure services comply with this policy

Information and Training

The Council shall provide any information, instruction and training required to work in a safe manner when working at height.

Work Equipment

The Council will provide a safe working environment in relation to work equipment safety and ensure all employees receive appropriate safety information and training in their work equipment.

To achieve this objective the Council will:

- Provide work equipment that is suitable for the purpose and compliant with the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
- Retain and make available the manufacturer's instruction manual for each item of equipment, where relevant
- Before using any item of work equipment, ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and brought to the attention of relevant employees
- Inspect all equipment at installation and prior to first use
- Regularly inspect work equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Maintain work equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Keep records of all inspections and maintenance
- Provide adequate instruction, information and training to employees to enable the work equipment to be used and maintained safely
- Provide refresher training as appropriate and as determined necessary by workplace inspections

Young Workers

Whilst precautions taken to protect the health and safety of the workforce as a whole will, in many cases, also protect young persons, there are occasions when different and/or additional measures will be necessary due to their lack of experience, knowledge or absence of awareness of potential risks.

A 'young person' is defined as one who is below the age of 18 years. To ensure the safety of young persons the organisation will:

- Carry out risk assessments to cover the activities of young persons
- Implement the actions determined by the risk assessment process
- Inform the young persons of any risks associated with their work and the control measures taken to protect them
- Provide a copy of the risk assessment to the parent/guardian of any young person below the school leaving age
- Provide additional appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training, etc as determined by the risk assessment
