

Glasgow City Council

Council Health and Safety Group

# Health and Safety Policy

Date of issue: 01.01.2024

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# Health and Safety Policy

This policy is supported by a number of detailed health and safety management standards.

Under the terms of this policy each council service, supported by the Council Health and Safety Group will maintain on their service connect page, a health and safety section containing:

- a service health and safety system management standard detailing the organisational structure in place to deliver the requirements of the council's health and safety management system and service;
- detailed information on health and safety responsibilities within the service;
- detailed information pertaining to health and safety management documentation in use within the service;
- detailed information on the service health and safety committee structure and consultation arrangements; and
- access to the detailed health and safety management standards pertaining to their activities and guiding their risk assessment process.

This policy has been developed to take into account new legislation and the re-organisation of Glasgow City Council Services, including the Council Health and Safety Group, since the last policy.

Any enquiries or points of clarification in respect of the Council's Health and Safety Policy should be directed to:

## **Council Health and Safety Group**

**City Chambers**  
**George Square**  
**Glasgow, G2 1DU**  
**Phone 0141 287 3734**  
[www.glasgow.gov.uk](http://www.glasgow.gov.uk)

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# Health and Safety Policy

## 1. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Glasgow City Council to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of its employees and all persons likely to be affected by its undertakings. The council accepts the aims and provisions of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and aims to comply with all other relevant statutory obligations. The successful management of health and safety contributes to the overall performance and objectives of the council.

The council is committed to:

- developing a positive health and safety culture in all undertakings which secures the commitment and participation of all employees;
- assessing the risks to the health and safety of its employees and to anyone else who may be affected by its undertakings with the aim of eliminating or controlling the hazards/risks, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- making arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures identified as being necessary by the risk assessments;
- providing information, instruction, training, and supervision to employees and others as is necessary to implement and maintain high standards of health and safety;
- establishing arrangements for making sure safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- providing and maintaining a working environment for employees that is safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards to facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work, so far as is reasonably practicable;
- developing procedures for joint consultation with employees or their representatives;
- making sure that where any service of the council enters into an arrangement on partnership working, agreement must be reached with all partners, prior to commencement, to determine how health and safety will be managed and the standards to be met.

As a minimum standard, the council's policies and arrangements for securing health and safety will be maintained; and

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- promoting positive policies regarding health and safety concerns at work. Each employee, regardless of status, is responsible for strictly adhering to the council's policies and procedures that are identified in documentation held at designated council premises.

The policy will be reviewed annually and amended when necessary.



Signed

Annemarie O'Donnell, Chief Executive

Date: 01.01.2024

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## 2. ORGANISATION RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for all health and safety issues within the council and will provide effective leadership and direction for the implementation of this Policy. The Chief Executive will make sure, via Executive Directors and the Head of Human Resources, that responsibilities are met and that adequate resources are made available to enable this policy to be implemented.

### 2.2 Executive Directors

The Executive Director of each council service has overall responsibility for implementing this policy within their service. This includes the ongoing maintenance of their service health and safety management standards and that appropriate measures are in place to ensure the information contained within these documents are available and communicated throughout their service.

The service health and safety management standards will contain details of the management organisation and responsibilities for health and safety, and detail the service specific arrangements to comply with council policy.

Through these management standards the Executive Director's responsibility for health and safety is shared. This will make sure that Service Executive Directors, Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Management, Managers and Supervisors within their areas of responsibility will be accountable for the health and safety of employees and other persons who may be affected by the service's undertakings.

Professional advice with regard to their health and safety responsibilities is available from their respective health and safety contacts within the Council Health and Safety Group.

The Executive Director of each service will:

- provide effective leadership and direction to ensure the policy is implemented;
- appoint a Senior Officer at Directorate/Head of Service level to have overall responsibility for implementing and coordinating the service health and safety organisation and arrangements. This officer will represent the service on the Joint Council Health and Safety Forum;
- make sure there is the provision of adequate financial resources for health and safety management;
- make sure arrangements are in place for the ongoing development and implementation of a risk assessment strategy that meets the requirements of the council health and safety policy as it relates to their service activities. The risk assessment strategy will make sure that line



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management identify the relevant preventive and protective measures required to safeguard employees and anyone else who may be affected by the service activities;

- make sure arrangements are in place for implementing the health and safety control measures which follow on from the risk assessment strategy. The Executive Director will also ensure that their service develops a Safety Improvement Plan. This will be driven by the risk profile of their respective service, and progress measured against defined objectives as set out within the council's key strategic themes.

These Safety Improvement Plans will be submitted for consideration to the Joint Council Health and Safety Forum and the arrangements will cover the Plan-Do-Check-Act approach, adhering to the council health and safety management system. This will make sure that the preventive and protective measures identified are in place, working effectively and regularly monitored;

- make sure arrangements are in place so all employees, including temporary workers, are familiar with the health and safety policy, and that they are provided with relevant information and training on the use of equipment, plant, substances and machinery and are competent in their jobs to avoid risks; and
- make sure arrangements are in place for a service health and safety committee structure to facilitate joint employee/employer participation and collaboration on health and safety matters in all service areas.

## 2.3 Appointed Senior Officers

The senior officer with overall responsibility for implementing the service health and safety organisation and arrangements will advise the Council Health and Safety Manager and the respective Service Health and Safety Manager of significant business changes/practices likely to impact on the council health and safety management system. This should be conducted at the earliest opportunity.

The senior officer will also appoint Service Health and Safety Champions whose main role is to facilitate the gathering of the required information for the governance key risk question sets and the management compliance review programme.

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## 2.4 Head of Human Resources

The Head of Human Resources has responsibility for administering and positively monitoring the implementation of the council health and safety policy. To this end an annual health and safety report will be published containing details of the council's aims, goals, targets and performance.

The Head of Human Resources will make sure, without detracting from the primary responsibility of Executive Directors, Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Management, Managers and Supervisors, the provision of competent technical advice and support on health and safety matters through their designated health and safety contacts within the Council Health and Safety Group.

The Council Health and Safety Manager (Head of Corporate Asset Governance) supported by the respective Health and Safety Managers from each service will provide the competent assistance within the meaning of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

## 2.5 Employees

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 states that:

*"It shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work."*

*"As regards any duty or requirement imposed on their employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, co-operate with them, as far as is necessary, to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with."*

*"No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions."*

All employees, regardless of status, must observe the following:

- take reasonable care to avoid injury to themselves and others;
- report to their supervisor all hazards which they cannot eliminate or control themselves;
- correctly use all work items (including personal protective equipment) provided by the council in accordance with the training and the instructions they receive to enable them to use the items safely;
- accept the need for safety training;
- report all accidents, incidents or near misses to their supervisor;



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- seek first aid treatment for any injury sustained at work;
- work safely and do not remove any safety device/guard provided for the safety of themselves and others;
- co-operate in joint consultation on health and safety matters;
- cease any work activity or leave any work area where the employee or their representative believes there is serious/imminent danger to themselves or others. No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee who reasonably ceases a work activity for health and safety reasons; and
- co-operate directly and fully with any investigation into the circumstances of any incident in which they are involved.

## **2.6 Disciplinary Procedures**

Disciplinary action may be initiated against all employees who knowingly violate or fail to implement safety procedures or standards or fail to use personal protective equipment or the work equipment provided.

The Council's Code of Discipline and Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

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## 3. MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Where major risks or hazards are identified, the Council Health and Safety Group will develop service specific health and safety management standards. These documents will contain detailed information, and where necessary, supporting specific guidance documents to enable council services to comply with these health and safety management standards.

The management standard documents will set out the relevant council policy objectives and provide a reference for legal obligations. The documents will clearly set out the responsibilities of council management through the provision of detailed advice on best practice and the council management system control arrangements.

The documents will be produced by the designated service health and safety contacts within the Council Health and Safety Group in consultation with the appropriate service personnel.

The health and safety management standard documents will be service specific and will have a direct influence on the implementation of council policy. They will be provided for all topics that require management action, risk assessment provision and associated health and safety management system documentation.

It is the intention that these documents will provide a standard of control to be achieved throughout the respective service.

Service risk assessments can, where necessary, implement further controls or take any such alternative action which will achieve the same level of control in their specific circumstances. Where this is the case then the rationale for the actions taken should be fully documented in the risk assessment process.

The following health and safety management standards will be produced for inclusion within the service connect health and safety pages and can be accessed electronically. Each service may provide additional management standards pertaining to any activity which is particular to their own service. Details of all service management standards will be stated within their specific service Health and Safety System Management Standard.

- 3.1 Health and Safety System
- 3.2 Asbestos
- 3.3 Construction Work (CDM)
- 3.4 Control of Contractors
- 3.5 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health
- 3.6 Display Screen Equipment
- 3.7 Electricity
- 3.8 Employability Skills - Work Placements

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- 3.10 First Aid and Medical Attention
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- 3.35 Hybrid Working

## 3.1 Health and Safety System

The service specific Health and Safety System Management Standard provides detailed information on the service management structures and specific roles and responsibilities. The management standard will also document the key elements of the health and safety management system within the respective services.

## 3.2 Asbestos

The council acknowledges the health hazards arising from exposure to asbestos and will protect those employees and other persons potentially exposed to asbestos as far as is reasonably practicable.

Exposure will be minimised through the use of proper control measures and work methods supported by the training of employees. Each Service will appoint a responsible person for coordinating the control and management of asbestos.

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No work shall commence on asbestos material or materials thought to contain asbestos until it is sampled and an assessment of the potential exposure of employees and others, as a result of that work, is undertaken. A suitable plan of work shall be made before the work commences.

### **3.3 Construction Work (CDM)**

Executive Directors whose service is involved in construction work will take appropriate steps to make sure that such work is planned in accordance with relevant standards or statutory provisions which are principally the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations.

They must make sure that persons at all levels have the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out their duties. In the case of individual work groups, they must have the organisational capability. Employees must be provided with the necessary information relating to any risks arising out of the work, the preventive or protective measures to be taken, and the procedures required in the event of serious or imminent danger.

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations place duties on clients, principal designers, designers, principal contractors, contractors and the self-employed, all of whom are required to work together in order that health and safety is incorporated into projects as early as possible. These members of the construction team must also make sure that safety management systems are established to control all project activities.

These regulations also contain specific provisions relating to how all construction work is carried out.

Inter-Service organisation and arrangements must be in place to make sure that relevant duties are allocated to competent persons where a council service performs a multi-functional role for CDM (i.e. any combination of the following Dutyholders - clients, principal designers, designers, principal contractors, and contractors).

The person or section with skills, knowledge and experience must be provided with adequate resources to carry out those duties. Arrangements must be in place to make sure duties are clear, concise and there is no ambiguity between Dutyholders.

### **3.4 Control of Contractors**

The council through the provisions detailed in the service Control of Contractors Management Standard will make sure that all contractors working on council premises are robustly vetted from a health and safety perspective.

The council will monitor the activities of contractors on site to minimise the risks presented to employees and to other persons or within council buildings including members of the public. The council contractor management group meets on a six-monthly basis to discuss policy, the ongoing management of contractors working in council premises, reported incidents and contractor performance.

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## **3.5 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health**

Executive Directors shall have procedures in place to make sure that no work is carried out which is liable to expose any employees or others to any product, chemical or substance hazardous to health, unless a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks created by that activity, and of the steps needed to reduce the risks have been made.

Exposure to hazardous products, chemicals or substances will either be prevented or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled. Measures introduced to control exposure will be maintained, examined and tested to ensure their continued effectiveness.

Information, instruction and training will be given to employees exposed to substances hazardous to health. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided only as a last resort means of controlling exposure to substances.

## **3.6 Display Screen Equipment**

Where Display Screen Equipment (DSE) is utilised by council employees, a workstation assessment with regard to the use of DSE will be carried out by trained assessors and reviewed in accordance with the service DSE Management Standard.

Employees designated as 'users' will be entitled to eye and eyesight tests every three years and to corrective appliances where they are specifically required for DSE work.

## **3.7 Electricity**

The council will make sure that all electrical equipment and systems are properly constructed, installed and maintained and that installations are suitable for the environment in which they are used. Suitable protective equipment will be provided where necessary and maintained in good condition. Work on electrical equipment and systems can be hazardous and service management will therefore, reduce the risks, as far as is reasonably practicable.

All persons carrying out electrical work will be competent for the tasks assigned to them. All fixed electrical systems and portable appliances utilised by employees will be inspected and tested at the statutory intervals. Records will also be stored and maintained.

## **3.8 Employability Skills - Work Placements**

The council recognises its responsibility to make sure that young people are protected at work from risks to their health and safety. This will be achieved through specific measures included within the risk assessment process.

The council owes a common law duty of care to all school students. This duty extends into the work experience or vocational training placement, and places an obligation on the council to make sure that



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any placement made under either of these initiatives is without significant risk to the health, safety or welfare of the student. This will be achieved through the risk assessment process.

## **3.9 Fire Safety**

The council's first objective with regard to fire safety is fire prevention through the systematic application of the fire management measures detailed in the service Fire Safety Management Standard.

Each council premise will maintain a fire precautions register detailing the monitoring and maintenance arrangements, and managerial responsibilities for the control of fire within the premises.

Should a fire break out, all council premises will have arrangements in place to make sure that:

- fire can be detected in a reasonable time and people can be warned reliably;
- people who may be in the building can get out quickly and safely;
- staff in the building know what to do if there is a fire, and that all premises have suitable and sufficient emergency procedures;
- there are an appropriate number of staff trained in fire safety in accordance with the emergency procedures; and
- there are adequate supplies of first aid fire equipment available.

## **3.10 First Aid and Medical Attention**

First Aid requirements will be identified through a risk assessment process to make sure there is appropriate first aid personnel, equipment and facilities.

Sufficient numbers of trained First Aid personnel and equipment to deal with injuries, accidents and ill health will be provided by each service. To this end, the council will provide information and training on First Aid to employees to make sure that statutory requirements and the needs of the organisation are met.

## **3.11 Gas Safety**

This policy sets out the minimum requirements for the safe installation and use of gas appliances, fittings and pipework in all council premises. In particular, it outlines the requirements for services to have adequate arrangements in place for responsibilities, record keeping, inspection, maintenance, repair, competence and training. It also includes information for emergencies and unsafe situations.



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## 3.12 Incident Reporting and Investigation

The council's incident reporting procedure as detailed in the relevant management standard document must be followed at all times. All council employees should have ready access to a council accident book (where applicable), the council's **HANDS** Management System and paper Incident Report Forms (where applicable).

All RIDDOR reportable incidents must be notified to the Council Health and Safety Group within the detailed timescales. The Service Health and Safety Managers will make arrangements to make sure that reportable incidents are reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

Suitable arrangements will be put in place to inform the appropriate trade union or employee representative of reported incidents.

Service management has the responsibility to conduct an appropriate investigation of all accidents, dangerous occurrences or near misses with the objective of identifying the cause and the appropriate steps needed to prevent a recurrence. In addition, health and safety staff from the Council Health and Safety Group may further investigate serious accidents/incidents and make recommendations to prevent a recurrence.

## 3.13 Infection Control

The council recognises the benefits to staff and service users (pupils, clients etc.) of controlling infections in the workplace. This will be addressed through all workers adopting appropriate precautions, consistently and responsibly in their day-to-day practices.

The precautions should largely prevent the spread of the majority of infections, particularly viruses such as SARS-Cov-2, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) as well as bacterial infections such as MRSA.

## 3.14 Legionella

The council recognises the risk of infection from legionella bacteria and will take all reasonable steps to implement an appropriate health and safety management system for water systems within council premises. This will ensure that the necessary measures are implemented to prevent, or adequately control the risk from exposure to legionella bacteria.

The management system for legionella will:

- identify and assess sources of risk - this includes checking whether conditions are present which will encourage bacteria to multiply, if there is a means of creating and disseminating breathable droplets, and if there are susceptible people who may be exposed to the contaminated aerosols;

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- prepare a scheme for preventing or controlling the risk, where applicable;
- implement, manage and monitor precautions; and
- keep records of the precautions;
- and appoint a person to be managerially responsible.

## 3.15 Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment

The council recognises that it has a duty to reduce the risks to employees and others from lifting operations. In order to assist the council in discharging this duty, all services must make sure that all lifting equipment provided for use at work is:

- strong and stable enough for the particular use and marked to indicate safe working loads;
- positioned and installed to minimise any risks;
- used safely, i.e. the work is planned, organised and performed by competent people; and
- subject to ongoing thorough examination, and where appropriate, inspection by competent people.

## 3.16 Lone Working

The council recognises that lone workers face particular difficulties and will not require an employee to work alone where a risk assessment considers there is an unacceptable risk. The council will make sure that all lone workers are appropriately trained, receive regular supervision and are instructed in all matters relating to their health and safety at work.

## 3.17 Manual Handling

The council recognises that manual handling is one of the most common causes of absence through injury in the workplace and must be avoided, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where it is not possible to eliminate manual handling, assessments will be undertaken to determine the level of risk. Suitable controls will be introduced to reduce the risk of injury, including the risk of repetitive strain injury. This will be to the lowest extent that is reasonably practicable, including training, mechanical aids, automation, redesigning the system of work or even the workplace itself.

In most cases manual handling assessments will be incorporated into generic risk assessments, however, a specific manual handling assessment will be carried out when required.

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## **3.18 Medication (Management and Administration)**

The council recognises that today's medicines are powerful compounds that control disease, ease discomfort and prolong life for millions of people and are generally beneficial.

Services that are responsible for management of medicines to other people, whether young, old, healthy or sick, will follow a set of general principles to make sure that this is done safely. It will make sure there is a structured approach in order that management and staff can apply consistent and effective practices in respect of the management of medication.

## **3.19 New and Expectant Mothers**

The council recognises risks associated with working operations that may pose risk to a new or expectant mother or to that of her baby. It will make sure that decisions on how to manage those risks are made in an informed, rational and structured manner as determined by a specific risk assessment.

## **3.20 Noise**

The council will take all reasonable steps necessary to make sure that the risk of hearing damage to employees who work with noisy equipment or in a noisy environment is reduced to a minimum. Noise assessments will be carried out to estimate the magnitude of the problem. Methods of reducing noise levels and/or exposure times will be implemented as alternatives to personal protective equipment.

Ear defenders will be provided only as a 'last resort means' of controlling exposure to noise.

Services will provide adequate training. In particular all employees who are subject to high levels of noise will be provided with readily understood information about the harmful effects of noise and what they must do in order to protect themselves and meet the requirements of council policy.

Where it is required by risk assessment, the service will make arrangements for employees to be included in a health surveillance programme provided by the council's occupational health provider.

## **3.21 Personal Protective Equipment and Respiratory Protective Equipment**

The council accepts that the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE) is a last resort, and is committed to continuing to seek and introduce alternative methods for reducing risks as far as is reasonably practicable.

The council will provide suitable and sufficient PPE/RPE where risks cannot be removed or adequately controlled by other means.

When PPE/RPE is to be provided as a control measure, services are instructed, in consultation with employees and their representatives, to carry out a full assessment in accordance with the service 'Personal Protective Equipment and Respiratory Protective Equipment Management Standard'.

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This will determine its suitability and compatibility with other items of PPE/RPE, the identification and provision of adequate storage, training and maintenance arrangements, which will be provided, at no cost to the employee.

## **3.22 Risk Assessment**

Risk assessments will be conducted for all activities within the council and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

The council risk assessment process which includes management system documentation, trained risk assessors and consultation with all stakeholders is aimed at providing effective risk control for all significant hazards.

Specific management standard documents on significant hazards are available to inform the process.

## **3.23 Safety Representative and Safety Committees**

The council acknowledges the importance of employee involvement in health and safety matters and the importance of the positive role played by safety representatives. As such, the council will provide the facilities and assistance that safety representatives will reasonably require in order to carry out their functions.

## **3.24 Safety Signs and Signals**

All safety signs and any safety signals used within the council will comply with the Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations. Appropriate safety/warning signs must be provided and maintained, where any risks identified by the risk assessment cannot be controlled by other means.

## **3.25 Security Threats**

All managers are responsible for the security of their work areas which should include arrangements for bomb threats, fires, intruders and other potential security issues, for example, firearm and weapons attacks. The specific responsibilities and procedures to be implemented are detailed within the Resilience Unit's Security Threats Management Standard.

## **3.26 Smoke and Vape Free Workplace**

The Smoke and Vape Free Workplace policy seeks to guarantee employees the right to work in air that is free of tobacco smoke and vapours/chemical emissions of e-cigarettes and other electronic nicotine delivery products. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations place stringent requirements on employers to assess risks and ensure that non-smokers are protected from the dangers of tobacco smoke whilst at work. This also precludes the use of electronic cigarettes within the workplace.

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The Smoking, Health and Social Care (Scotland) Act and the Prohibition of Smoking in Certain Premises (Scotland) Regulations prevents employees, customers and visitors from smoking in wholly or substantially enclosed premises.

Executive Directors, Directors, Heads of Service, Senior Management, Managers and Supervisors will be responsible for enforcing the Smoke and Vape Free Workplace policy within their respective areas. It is the responsibility of employees to comply with the terms and conditions of the policy.

## **3.27 Stress**

The council recognises that, whilst a degree of pressure can be a positive force at work, excessive pressure can have a negative effect on health and performance at work.

The council is also committed to promoting good health at work and to provide suitable support mechanisms for employees suffering from the effects of stress.

Council services will identify stressful jobs and situations, through risk assessment, with the objective of reducing harm from stress, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The council will make sure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that excessive pressure is eliminated from the work environment, and that the necessary risk assessments are completed and acted upon in the case of workplace stressors.

To assist in this process the council will:

- provide suitable support mechanisms for employees suffering from the effects of stress;
- encourage a working environment where employees who feel they are suffering from the effects of stress can approach their managers in confidence, in order that necessary support mechanisms can be put in place;
- encourage a culture where stress is not seen as a sign of weakness or incompetence;
- ensure adequate rehabilitation of employees returning to work after periods of absence due to stress;
- offer suitable training to enable employees and managers to recognise symptoms of stress, the effects of stress at work, effective communication, handling difficult situations, time management and employee relations;
- undertake general health promotion activities within the workplace; and



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- where employees are suffering from stress, the council will provide the necessary mechanisms to promote a return to full health as quickly as possible. Employees are encouraged to seek assistance from any one of the following:

Line Manager;  
Senior Manager; and  
Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

Any contact will be dealt with in complete confidence. Employees will be offered any relevant counselling, help with stress reduction techniques and a full appraisal of their work situation.

### 3.28 Training and Induction

The council recognise and accepts that for health and safety training to be successful, its role within the council must be understood. Training is provided as identified through the risk assessment process, not just to satisfy legal requirements but also to drive and support the council health and safety management system.

The training offered by the Council Health and Safety Group for example, health and safety management training and also hazard specific training such as manual handling, fire safety, display screen equipment assessors etc. provides staff who have key health and safety responsibilities with the knowledge, skills and competency to perform their duties successfully.

Executive Directors will make sure that all new employees joining the service, and all employees commencing work in an area where they may be exposed to new risks, are given appropriate induction training.

New employees are known to be more likely to have accidents than those who have had time to recognise the hazards of the workplace. Formal health and safety training is a legal requirement and will therefore form part of all council service induction programmes.

### 3.29 Transport Safety

Every year, there are accidents involving transport in the workplace, some of which result in people being killed. People are knocked down, run over or crushed against fixed parts by vehicles (e.g., HGVs, lift trucks etc.), plant and trailers. People also fall from vehicles – whether getting on or off, working at height, or when loading or unloading.

The vast majority of these accidents are preventable. The council is committed to making sure there are high standards of health, safety and welfare for all employees, and others, who may be affected by council activities when vehicles are used as part of their work activities.

Managing workplace transport safety usually involves controlling a wide range of interlinked matters including vehicle safety, driving, loading and unloading, towing etc.



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Service management will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all employees and provide the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision required for this purpose.

## **3.30 Vibration**

The council recognises that occupational exposure to vibration can cause discomfort and adverse health effects. The council will comply with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations by identifying and assessing the magnitude of existing vibration risks and to implement control measures to eliminate or reduce those risks, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Service management will have a strict purchasing strategy in relation to any tools and equipment which may expose employees to vibration. In addition, service management will make sure that competent persons are designated to assess the vibration levels of work equipment (including existing work equipment or sample equipment being assessed for purchase) to make sure that vibration levels remain within safe limits.

Where it is required by risk assessment, the service will make arrangements for employees to be included in a health surveillance programme provided by the council occupational health provider.

## **3.31 Violence**

The council does not accept that it is part of any employee's duty to be subjected to verbal abuse, threats or physical assault. If or when such abuse is experienced, the council will provide such personal support and guidance as is necessary to the employee to make sure that the effect of such abuse is minimised.

The council, in providing services to the community, expects that members of the public will treat its employees with courtesy and respect, and equally expects employees to show courtesy and respect to members of the public.

It should be made clear to all clients, customers and service users of council facilities and services that violent or aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated and that any assaults on council employees will, in all appropriate circumstances, lead to a police investigation and possible criminal proceedings.

Employees are encouraged to report incidents of violent behaviour to which they have been subjected, to their manager/supervisor who will discuss/investigate the incident and where possible, take action to prevent a recurrence. The action taken or the action proposed should be recorded.

All employees will receive appropriate training related to their duties to make sure they have the skills and knowledge to perform their duties.

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## 3.32 Work at Height

Work at height is another major cause of workplace deaths and injuries.

Executive Directors shall identify through risk assessment, all areas of the service operations where employees are expected to work at height and comply with the Work at Height Regulations insofar as:

- avoiding work at height where they can;
- use work equipment or other measures to prevent falls where they cannot avoid working at height; and
- where they cannot eliminate the risk of a fall, use work equipment or other measures to minimise the distance and consequences of a fall should one occur.

## 3.33 Work Equipment

All council services are required to develop their work equipment purchasing policy and associated arrangements in compliance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations.

Services must make arrangements for assessing the suitability of work equipment with respect to its initial integrity, the place where it will be used and the purpose for which it will be used.

Services must make arrangements for the suitable maintenance, inspection, information, instruction and training.

Services must also make specific provision for conformity with the UK Conformity Assessed (UKCA) requirements, specific dangers, markings and warnings, and mobile work equipment.

## 3.34 Workplace Welfare

The council will make sure that a safe working environment is maintained in each area under its control through the maintenance of an effective monitoring regime that should include health and safety inspections and audits.

Services must also make provision for a number of additional specific requirements relating to their service Workplace Welfare Management Standard. Examples of this are, the maintenance of the workplace, equipment, devices and systems, the conditions of floors and organisation of traffic routes, falls or falling objects, homeworking etc.

The council is committed to reducing the number of slip and trip accidents as part of a national strategy to reduce occupational injuries and ill health as well as to meet council targets for reductions in accidents.

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### **3.35 Hybrid Working**

Hybrid working has always existed, but its prevalence has been exaggerated by the pandemic and subsequent remote working experience.

It is therefore important to ensure that robust working at home arrangements are in place which protect employees from any foreseeable risks which may arise when working at home, so far as is reasonably practicable. The specific responsibilities and procedures to be implemented are detailed within the Hybrid Working Management Standard.

# Health and Safety Policy

## 4. COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY GROUP

The role and function of the Council Health and Safety Group is to support the Head of Human Resources, the council service Directorate and the associated ALEO Directors with the responsibility to administer and positively monitor the implementation of the council's health and safety policy.

The Council Health and Safety Group, through its governance and service functions, will also take the necessary actions to ensure that all council services apply the council health and safety policy appropriately.

### 4.1 Health and Safety Service Provision

This includes:

- developing council health and safety policy and advising on service management standards, guidance documents and the council health and safety management system;
- monitoring the implementation and application of the council health and safety policy, reporting to Executive Directors on any matters requiring action;
- assisting with the development, implementation and application of service health and safety management systems as detailed in their service health and safety management standards;
- providing advice and support to management to enable them to meet their health and safety responsibilities;
- advising council services and ALEOs on new legislation, regulations, codes of practice and guidance notes relevant to their operations;
- providing advice and support in the formulation and implementation of safe systems of work, health and safety management standards and health and safety guidance documents;
- monitoring the assessment of risks to the health and safety of employees and others who may be affected by the services work activities, for example, noise, COSHH, vibration, etc.;
- monitoring the implementation of control measures which follow on from the risk assessment programme;
- making sure the council's health and safety management system and arrangements are adhered to, using a Plan-Do-Check-Act approach;
- delivering health and safety training for all levels of employee and any specialised training where required;

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- advising the Joint Council Health and Safety Forum and Elected Members in relation to health and safety matters;
- promoting health and safety education programmes to develop health and safety awareness at all levels within the council;
- ensuring that appropriate accidents/incidents within council services are reported to the enforcing authority;
- providing statistical analysis on reportable accidents occurring within the council; and
- liaising with outside bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Institute of Occupational Safety and Health etc.

## 4.2 The Role of the Council Health and Safety Manager

The role of the Council Health and Safety Manager (role fulfilled by the Head of Corporate Asset Governance) is to:

- set the strategic direction for the delivery of the council's aims and objectives via the council's current health and safety strategy;
- establish and maintain effective health and safety policy and supporting management standards across all council services;
- provide guidance and support in ensuring senior management implement their service's Safety Improvement Plans;
- develop and drive key initiatives which will positively impact on health and safety performance across all services; and
- provide information on health and safety performance through statistics and trend analysis at various strategic committees.

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## 4.3 Powers of the Council Health and Safety Group

To effectively implement the provisions of the council health and safety policy, the Council Health and Safety Group will have the following powers:

- the right to enter any council premises at any time if it is safe to do so;
- to inspect and audit all council premises;
- in the event of major incident/accident to require that plant and equipment is not disturbed, to enable measurements, statements, photographs and any other relevant information to be collated;
- to take away or impound any machine, substance or product which is required to complete an investigation;
- to issue an inspection report which should be implemented in situations where staff from the Council Health and Safety Group are of the opinion that a breach of statutory requirements or Council Policy has or is likely to take place;
- where, in the opinion of the Council Health and Safety Group there is an immediate risk of serious personal injury, then they will, in consultation with management, take action requiring the immediate cessation of any activity;
- where staff from the Council Health and Safety Group are of the opinion that a building or structure is a serious danger to employees or others, then they will, in consultation with management, take action which may include the temporary closure of a premises in extreme situations;
- to require those with possible knowledge or information relevant to an investigation, to give that knowledge/information either verbally or in a written statement. The Council Health and Safety Group member of staff has the discretion to allow another to be present during questioning and the taking of a written statement;
- to inspect and take copies of books or documents required by them as part of their investigation; and
- to require assistance within a person's limits of responsibility/authority.



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## 4.4 Health and Safety Monitoring

The Head of Human Resources will ensure that the health and safety performance within council services is effectively monitored and improved on an ongoing basis.

Regular programmed premises audits and inspections will be conducted by the Council Health and Safety Group on an ongoing basis as detailed within the service specific health and safety management standards.

Relevant management information collated from the completed audit documents will be presented at the Council Health and Safety Management Groups to provide an oversight of the health and safety management system across the services.

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## 5. TRADE UNION HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

The council recognises the importance of employee involvement in health and safety matters and the positive role played by trade union safety representatives appointed under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

It is the council's intention to provide such facilities and assistance so that safety representatives can reasonably carry out their functions.

### 5.1 Arrangements for Consultation and Co-operation for the Health and Safety of Workers

The arrangements are as follows:

- management must consult with safety representatives over issues related to health, safety and welfare. They will also provide the necessary information that safety representatives require in order to carry out their functions. Examples of this are risk assessment, PPE/RPE, work equipment etc.;
- safety representatives are required to give management reasonable notice of their intention to carry out inspections, to provide written reports following such inspections and to adhere to the council's procedures when disputes over health and safety issues arise;
- management must give careful consideration to the movement of safety representatives from their work location. This would include exploring all other available options before the employee is moved for operational reasons;
- management must consult with safety representatives prior to employees moving into a new office, premises or location. This is to ensure that the safety representatives can comment on the standard of the new premises with particular reference to the welfare facilities and health and safety measures;
- management must co-operate with safety representatives in the completion of Council Safety Representative Inspection Reports. It is important that managers take a proactive role in dealing with the matters brought to their attention via safety inspection forms and that they conform to the necessary timescales; and

# Health and Safety Policy

- management within each service must make arrangements to establish and actively encourage a service health and safety committee structure to facilitate consultation and co-operation on health and safety matters in all service areas.

## 5.2 The Function of Safety Representatives

The functions of safety representatives under the terms of legislation and as applied by this policy are:

- to carry out inspections of the workplace every three months or immediately following notifiable accidents or dangerous occurrences. It is important that management bring accidents to the attention of the safety representatives as soon as practicable;
- to investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace and to examine the cause of accidents at the workplace;
- to investigate complaints by any employee they represent, relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work;
- to bring to the employer's notice, in writing, any unsafe or unhealthy conditions or working practices or unsatisfactory arrangements for welfare at work; and
- to encourage safe practices among the employees they represent.

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## 6. CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Corporate Management Team, led by the Chief Executive, consists of the Executive Directors of each of the five services and other Senior Council Officers as appropriate.

One role of the Corporate Management Team is to ensure that the council meets its statutory duties in respect of health and safety management and they will meet as necessary on a schedule to precede the consultative Joint Council Health and Safety Forum.

### 6.1 The Function/Remit of the Corporate Management Team

The function/remit of the Corporate Management Team in respect to health and safety management is to:

- examine health and safety statistics and identified trends within the council;
- discuss and validate council health and safety policy and management system documents;
- review ongoing enforcement actions taken against the council;
- monitor progress of council health and safety strategy, key initiatives and projects;
- monitor progress of the service Safety Improvement Plans; and
- perform as the final arbitration point for issues referred from service strategic health and safety committees.

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## 7. SERVICE HEALTH AND SAFETY CHAMPIONS

The main function of the Service Health and Safety Champion role is to facilitate the gathering of the required information for corporate and service led key health and safety initiatives/work programmes. This will be achieved through liaising with relevant service personnel and the Council Health and Safety Group.

They are also required to set up appropriate reporting structures and information gathering arrangements within their service and to populate the ongoing reporting information matrices for key risk subjects.

The Champion's role will also be a key appointment within the service to drive forward health and safety priority action plans and to be a guiding influence in promoting positive health and safety cultural change across their respective services.

### 7.1 The Function/Remit of the Health and Safety Champion

These are as follows:

- act as an interface between their service and Council Health and Safety Group in supporting and driving forward the council's health and safety strategy and key objectives;
- support the development of the service led Safety Improvement Plans in conjunction with service management teams and their designated governance health and safety lead;
- make sure that service specific arrangements are in place to facilitate the ongoing gathering of the required governance key risk question sets/management compliance information that is required;
- represent their service at the council's key risk strategic management groups, acting as influencers in driving forward actions and escalating through the appropriate channels where required; and
- promote ongoing key health and safety initiatives developed by both the Council Health and Safety Group and service management in driving forward the council's health and safety change agenda and resulting actions, as required.

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## 8. JOINT COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY FORUM

The council has established a Joint Council Health and Safety Forum. This forum will meet four times per annum and will be chaired by the Workforce Convenor.

The forum will be supported by the Head of Corporate Asset Governance and the Head of Human Resources. It will comprise of Elected Members, representatives from the Council Management Team, the Service Health and Safety Managers, and Senior Trade Union Representatives.

The purpose of the forum is to provide a vehicle for joint participation in health and safety matters to enable Elected Members, unions and management to exchange views and reach a better understanding on all matters and procedures related to health and safety.

The trade union safety representatives and the Council Health and Safety Manager (Head of Corporate Asset Governance) will have a meeting prior to the Council's Joint Health and Safety Forum to discuss health and safety issues and prepare items for the agenda.

The forum will have no decision-making power on behalf of the council. However, recommendations from the forum can be submitted to the relevant committees of the council. Where appropriate, papers submitted to the relevant committees of the council will note that the Joint Council Health and Safety Forum have considered the content.

### 8.1 The Function/Remit of the Joint Council Health and Safety Forum

These are as follows:

- discuss council health and safety policy and associated health and safety management standard documents;
- examine statistics and trends of incidents;
- review results of health and safety premises audit reports and the reported proposed remedial actions;
- discuss reports and factual information provided by the Council Health and Safety Group or enforcing authorities such as the Health and Safety Executive, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service etc.;
- discuss issues which trade union appointed safety representatives may wish to submit which have not been resolved at a service level;



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- present reports on serious incidents, dangerous occurrences or other serious matters involving council services; and
- discuss reports from directorate where prohibition or improvement notices are issued or where the enforcement authorities intend to prosecute an individual, the service or the council in respect of their undertakings.

# Health and Safety Policy

## Document Information

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## Version History

Issue Date	Version	Issued By	Authorised	Comments
Dec 14	1.0	Annemarie O'Donnell	John Paterson	Health and Safety Policy (1st Issue).
Feb 17	2.0	Annemarie O'Donnell	John Paterson	Document Control Sheet added. S6.0 'Joint Council Senior Management Team' title changed to Corporate Management Team. S6.0 Role of Health and Safety Manager moved to S4.2 and re-written. S7.0 Service Health and Safety Coordinator role/remit added. Minor typos/edits throughout.
08.10.21	2.1	Annemarie O'Donnell	John Paterson	Minor changes to job titles throughout (Assistant Directors changed to Executive Directors, Health and Safety Officers changed to Senior Health and Safety Advisors and Health and Safety Coordinator changed to Health and Safety Champion etc.). Head of Corporate Asset Governance title added as this is the Council H&S Manager. 3.35 Hybrid Working (Pilot) section added. S1.0 Change to numbering.
01.01.22	3.0	Annemarie O'Donnell	John Paterson	Reviewed without amendments.
01.01.23	4.0	Annemarie O'Donnell	John Paterson	3.35 The Hybrid Working 'Pilot' has ended however Hybrid Working will continue.

## Health and Safety Policy

01.01.24	5.0	Annemarie O'Donnell	John Paterson	S3.26 Updated to 'Smoke and Vape Free Workplace Policy'. S3.29 Statistics deleted from 'Transport Safety Policy'.
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