

Health and Safety Policy

Policy Statement

Bishop Auckland Town Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to provide a safe and healthy workplace and environment for all its employees and to ensure that members of the public are not exposed to risks to their health or safety by its activities.

The Council will take all measures necessary to provide adequate resources to meet this responsibility, particularly with regard to the following:-

- a. Plant, equipment and systems of work which are safe.
- b. Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- c. Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and make a positive contribution to their own health and at work.
- d. A safe place of work with safe access to and egress from it.
- e. A healthy working environment.
- f. Adequate welfare facilities.
- g. Monitoring this safety policy at all levels throughout the Council.

In accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, Bishop Auckland Town Council will, in conjunction with any consultants it engages, provide competent health and safety assistance to supervisory staff in discharging their duties and responsibilities for ensuring safe conditions of work.

No safety policy can be successful unless it actively involves those who carry out the work. Therefore, Bishop Auckland Town Council will co-operate fully with employees and will provide, where necessary sufficient facilities and training to carry out this task.

However, the Council would remind its employees of their own duties under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act, and under Regulation 12 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, to take care for their own safety and that of other workers, and to co-operate with the Council to enable it to successfully discharge its own responsibilities as an employer.

A copy of this statement will be issued to all employees and will be reviewed at least annually or whenever there have been changes in legislation or other circumstances. This policy will be supplemented where necessary, by further statements relating to particular activities.

Health and Safety Policy

1. Objectives

The health and safety objectives of Bishop Auckland Town Council are defined as follows:-

- a. to minimise exposure to hazards and risk of injury to all persons employed by the Council and others who may be affected by its activities;
- b. to ensure the Council discharges its legal obligations towards its employees and others who may be affected by its activities and
- c. to reduce the costs arising from injury, ill health, damage or wastage caused by accidents at work.

2. General Duties

Bishop Auckland Town Council shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that employees are provided with:-

- a. plant, equipment and systems of work which are safe and without risks to health;
- b. adequate facilities for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- c. sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision which is necessary for their health and safety at work;
- d. a safe working environment with adequate arrangements for their welfare at work.

3. Employees Responsibility

To ensure this Policy provides the basis for the successful management of health and safety, Bishop Auckland Town Council is resolute that all employees cooperate to meet its objectives of providing a safe and healthy working environment by :-

- a. carrying out their duties without creating risks to either themselves, their colleagues or the general public;
- b. adhering to all information, instruction and training provided for their health and safety, including all statutory provisions, codes of practice, guidance notes, etc;
- c. assisting in the implementation of this policy and any other safety policies introduced.

4. Procedure

The Town Council is responsible for its Health and Safety Policy and will ensure that its responsibilities are properly assigned and accepted at all levels.

The Council's Policy and Resources Committee will work to ensure that this general Health and Safety Policy is carried out.

The Town Clerk is the person responsible for the general implementation of this policy and associated procedures.

5. Consultation

This Policy provides that the Policy and Resources Committee will work to ensure that the general Health and Safety Policy is fully implemented. The Policy and Resources Committee will consider items related to the health, safety and welfare of employees whenever necessary.

Individual employees can raise matters with the Town Clerk for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee.

6. Procedure for Raising Safety Issues

It is also recognised that an individual employee or groups of employees may consider urgent attention and action is needed to remedy a deficiency or, alternatively, that a relatively simple or minor matter needs to be rectified. In this type of situation the following procedure, should be followed:-

- a. The employee(s) should discuss the matter with the Town Clerk.
- b. The Town Clerk should reply verbally as soon as possible and in any case before the end of the next working day. The Town Clerk may seek appropriate advice if he considers it necessary.
- c. If the employee(s) is dissatisfied with the response, he or she should speak to the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee.
- d. If an employee continues to be dissatisfied, he or she should submit the matter in writing to the Mayor. The employee and his representative [if any] should keep a copy of the written submission.
- e. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved by the Mayor, then it will be referred to the next meeting of the Town Council.

7. Penalty for not complying with the Policy

The Council's Disciplinary Procedure will apply in respect of any breaches of this and/or any health, safety and welfare policy.

All employees will be provided with a copy of the Disciplinary Procedure.

8. Organisation and Administration

- a. Supervisory staff will ensure all employees are conversant with, and fully comply with, the Council's Health and Safety Policy at all times.
- b. A copy of the Council's Health and Safety Policy will be issued to all employees. A clause concerning the Health and Safety Policy is included in the Contracts of Employment of all employees.
- c. **Duties and Responsibilities of the Town Clerk**
The Town Clerk will:-
 - i. Ensure that formal Risk Assessments required by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 are carried out and their recommendations are implemented. (See form at Appendix A).
 - ii. Carry out inspections of Council property, equipment, working procedures and welfare facilities to ensure compliance with the relevant statutory standards.
 - iii. Ensure all statutory certificates and registers are maintained and up to date.
 - iv. Investigate accidents, dangerous occurrences or similar incidents and prepare reports for submission to the Council or Health and Safety Executive as necessary. Ensure compliance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, and make recommendations to prevent reoccurrence where appropriate (see Accident Report form at Appendix B and Violent Incident Report form at Appendix C).
 - v. Provide, or seek, advice to individuals on sound Health and Safety practices.
 - vi. Shall be consulted at the planning and subsequent stages on the proposed construction of new property, re-vitalisation, adaption or extension of existing property to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and

other relevant statutory provisions, ie., the Construction (Design and Management Regulations) 1994.

- vii. Advise on new plant, equipment and use of chemicals.
- viii. Attend, if requested, any Policy and Resources Committee meetings.
- ix. Advise on appropriate training of employees and assist in its implementation.
- x. Arrange for the promotion and publicity of health and safety matters.
- xi. Ensure the Council fully complies with the requirements of the First Aid at Work Regulations 1981.

d. Duties and Responsibilities of the Supervisory Staff

While in the employ of the Council, they shall:-

- i. Be familiar with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and ensure all employees comply with this Policy.
- ii. Investigate all accidents and violent incidents promptly to discover their cause, and report any fatality, major injury or dangerous occurrence immediately to the Town Clerk.
- iii. Ensure adequate supervision is available at all times, particularly where young or inexperienced people are involved and that all employees receive adequate levels of health and safety training.
- iv. Ensure all employees are familiar with the facilities available for First Aid treatment and know the procedure for reporting accidents or violent incidents. In the absence of a fully qualified First Aider, they must ensure the First Aid Box contents are kept up to date.
- v. Ensure all employees are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures from their place of work, particularly regarding new employees.
- vi. Maintain good housekeeping standards in their places of work at all times.

e. Duties and Responsibilities of All Employees

All employees are required to:-

- i. Take reasonable care for the health and safety at work of themselves and of any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- ii. Co-operate fully with the Health and Safety Policy and carry out their duties in accordance with any statutory requirements.
- iii. Not interfere with or misuse any equipment or safe systems of work provided by the Council in order to comply with any statutory requirement.
- iv. Observe safety rules at all times, wear safety equipment and use safety devices where required.
- v. Report any accidents, unsafe practices or systems or work, damages to or damaged machinery, plant and equipment to their supervisor.
- vi. Bear in mind that the final level of responsibility for complying with the policy is that of the individual.

9. Allocation of Resources

a. Time

Employees will be allocated sufficient time to familiarise themselves with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and to discharge their responsibilities under this Policy.

- b. **Finance**
Financial resources will be met from appropriate budget heads.
- c. **Materials and Information**
Supervisory staff will have access to all information and items of equipment appertaining to Health and Safety,

10. Safety Training

- a. Health and Safety training may be necessary for employees during the course of their employment.
- b. Prior to the introduction of any new machinery or changes in working practices, Management should identify appropriate training requirements.
- c. On entering the employment of the Council, employees will be required to undertake safety induction training, especially where machinery or hazardous working conditions are prevalent.

11. Safety Representation

The Council will consult with all employees to ensure the effective promotion and development of measures for Health, Safety and Welfare at Work.

The Policy and Resources Committee will deal effectively with any item placed on its agenda(s) concerning Health, Safety and Welfare.

12. First Aid

- a. First Aid facilities will be established with the Council so as to be reasonably accessible to all employees in accordance with the Health and Safety (First Aid) regulations 1981 and associated guidance.
- b. The names, locations and telephone numbers of those persons qualified in First Aid will be displayed in the work place.
- c. The qualified person responsible for First Aid will ensure that the facility is fully equipped at all times.
- d. An injury record book will be maintained by the qualified person and be kept in a central location. This book will be signed by the Town Clerk following any accident and be made available to the Council.
- e. All accidents are to be reported in the laid down procedure below, but serious cases of injury should receive formal medical attention and the Town Clerk informed immediately.
- f. First Aid treatment should ideally only be carried out by qualified persons. To this end, training courses will be held as required with an HSE approved trainer to ensure sufficient numbers of qualified persons are available to meet the Council's needs and conform to statutory requirements.

13. Accident Reporting

All work related accidents to employees which may occur on or off Council premises (but are work related) must be reported in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

The Council's accident report form must be completed by the employee and passed to the Town Clerk in order for an investigation to take place to identify the cause of the accident, and measures needed to prevent a reoccurrence.

14. Provision and Use of Protective Clothing and Equipment

- a. Personal protective clothing and equipment will be supplied by the Council where required by legislation and will be in accordance with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.
- b. The Town Clerk is authorised on behalf of the Council to insist that all employees wear protective clothing and use protective equipment when required to do so.
- c. The Town Clerk will carry out a survey into all operations carried out by staff under their control to identify appropriate personal protective clothing and/or equipment necessary to do the work safely.
- d. Not only will the work be surveyed with regard to the safety of the users but also others who may be affected by the operations.
- e. Records will be kept of personal protective equipment and employees instructed and trained in their use in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1994.
- f. Employees must sign that they have received the equipment and understand its use and must use it according to instructions. Any loss, wear or damage **MUST** be reported by the user to the Town Clerk immediately, who will take appropriate steps to repair or replace as necessary.

15. Maintenance of Safe Working Conditions

Action will be taken to ensure a safe and healthy working environment. This will be achieved by regular inspections of the work activities by the Town Clerk

16. Safe Systems of Work

It is the responsibility of the Council to provide and maintain safe systems of work. The Town Council will assess all new and existing work operations in accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, and identify risks not only to employees, but also to any other person who may be affected by the work.

Safe working procedures must be introduced by the Town Clerk. Training will be given to ensure users work safely as required and supervised where necessary. Copies of the Risk Assessment Forms will be made available to all employees and will be reviewed before work operations change or new ones are introduced (but at least on an annual basis).

17. Safety Records

Accident records will be maintained by the Town Clerk and reports submitted to the Council as appropriate, so the effectiveness of the policy can be reviewed.

18. Emergency Procedures**a. Evacuation Procedures**

In accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1992, the Council will ensure emergency procedures are drawn up and employees are aware of and understand the procedure. Employees must familiarise themselves with the procedure and their means of escape.

b. Bomb and Incendiary Devices Plan

The Town Council will be responsible for establishing an action plan and must ensure all employees are familiar with the procedure.

c. Fire

The Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring employees are aware of and understand the procedures to be taken in the event of fire (the evacuation procedure

above will cover much of this ground). Employees must be instructed in the procedure and know their escape routes.

Employees must be aware of the location of fire alarm call points, extinguishers, hoses, blankets etc. and be instructed in their use. Training and demonstrations will be provided as necessary.

d. Members of the Public

Employees must be aware of the emergency procedures and must follow the laid down procedures. They must escort any members of the public who may be in the vicinity with them, should an emergency occur.

19. Legal Duties

No employee shall suffer any financial loss solely as a result of an Improvement or Prohibition Notice issued by the Health and Safety Executive.