

Atherstone Town Council



Health & Safety Policy 2021-23

Reviewed and Adopted July 2021



Atherstone Town Council Health & Safety Policy

PART A - POLICY

The Policy which is approved and supported by the members of the Atherstone Town Council and its senior officers hereafter called **The Town Council**, is as follows:

The Town Council wishes to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all its employees and those of companies which from time to time work for and/or are controlled by it, and to protect the public against risk to their safety and health in order:-

- (i) to reduce to the minimum injury, distress or other hardship to employees and their families or members of the public.
- (ii) to keep the quality of performance and contentment in their work of all employees on the highest possible level.
- (iii) to avoid the costs arising from accidents to people, to structures, to equipment and to stock.

It is therefore **The Town Council Policy** so far as is reasonably practicable to:-

- 1 Encourage amongst all employees; an awareness of the importance of safe working, of safety and health consciousness in individual action and of co-operation in accident prevention.
- 2 Provide and maintain equipment, workplaces, together with the safe access and egress from them, environments and work systems (including the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances) that are safe and without risk to health.
- 3 To ensure that safety and health factors are taken fully into account when new structures, methods, products, processes, equipment or changes in existing ones are being planned so that health and safety becomes an integral part of normal working practice, and to ensure the co-operation of designers, manufacturers and suppliers in this respect.
- 4 Provide and maintain adequate welfare and First-Aid facilities and arrangements.
- 5 Conduct operations and maintain premises without prejudice to the health and safety of employees and non-employees alike and prevent, by the best practicable means, emissions of harmful or offensive substances and to neutralise any such emissions as may be produced.

- 6 Combat such hazards as cannot be completely eliminated, by the provision of protective clothing and equipment. **Removing such hazards must be the prime objective.**
- 7 Provide any necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to achieve the fulfilment of this Policy and to include safety training in the induction programme of every new and transferred employee.
- 8 Give to the Safety Adviser responsibility for ensuring that arrangements are made for the fulfilment of this Policy and for monitoring its implementation and effectiveness.
- 9 Give to all Members and Officers responsibility, within their sphere of jurisdiction, for carrying out this Policy and to make it clear to them that their responsibilities in this field are no less than in any other function.
- 10 Require every employee as a **Condition of Employment** to observe safe working practices at all times and comply with any published rules or procedures in furtherance of his/her duties under the law, to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself/herself and his/her fellow workers or other persons who may be affected by his/her actions at work, and to co-operate with any other employee to enable statutory duties or requirements to be fulfilled.
- 11 Encourage the co-operation of all employees by discussion and consultation with a view to promoting and developing measures to ensure health & safety.
- 12 Investigate accidents where injury or damage results or where there was a 'near hit ' situation, keep and analyse records and require all employees to co-operate in these tasks with the object of reducing the reoccurrence of accidents.
- 13 Revise this written Statement of Policy of the Council and its arrangements for carrying it out as often as is appropriate and to bring the statement and any revisions of it to the notice of all employees.
- 14 Augment this statement with more detailed documents regarding arrangements to be provided by each of the sections which shall be similarly revised as necessary and communicated to section employees.
- 15 Any area of work not specified in this document is deemed to be covered in so far as safe working practices are to be followed by all employees irrespective of their precise location.

PART B - ORGANISATION

- (1) **The Town Clerk** is responsible on behalf of the Members for ensuring that adequate attention is paid throughout the **Council** to health, safety and welfare, in fulfilment of this policy. He/she will monitor performance and effectiveness in these matters and recommend to the Members changes in policy and organisation and the arrangements for carrying out such changes.
- (2) **The Town Clerk** will ensure that adequate supervision is given to all employees particularly to those that are inexperienced, and that an induction programme is arranged for new employees.
- (3) The necessary provision for the maintenance of equipment for preventing and dealing with outbreaks of fire will be monitored regularly.

Each employee of the Town Council:

- (a) Will be responsible for taking reasonable care for his/her acts or omissions and co-operating with Management and Supervision to achieve Policy. This will include following instructions issued by superiors, using safety clothing and equipment provided and taking proper care of it, undergoing training or retraining where deemed necessary by Management.
- (b) Attention is drawn to **Part A, Paragraph 10.**
- (c) Appropriate action will be taken against any employee who is in breach of his/her responsibilities for safety, health and welfare, e.g. by failure to use equipment in the appropriate manner as prescribed by the manufacturer/supplier.

Delegation of responsibility

- (a) Any person who delegates responsibility for health, safety and welfare must ensure that the recipient is competent to assume it, that he/she has clear instructions regarding the nature and extent of the responsibility and adequate facilities (including status) for executing it. The delegator must ensure that the responsibility is being properly discharged, and that all legal requirements are adhered to.

- (b) Any person to whom responsibility has been delegated who finds that he/she cannot fully meet it, must report the fact immediately to the delegator.

PART C - ARRANGEMENTS

Training

- (a) Management will treat training as a major requirement. The scope shall cover all levels of existing and new job holders, persons changing jobs and those being given additional duties. Line management will decide the needs after assessing the responsibilities and specific hazards involved in the jobs of the individuals concerned and their knowledge and experience. Records of training will be maintained.
- (b) The development amongst all employees of awareness of the importance of safe working, of safety and health consciousness in individual action and of co-operation in accident prevention is to be encouraged by Management and Supervision as a continuing exercise by example and by explanation of hazards and remedial action needed, and by effective Management and Supervision.

Health and Safety Hazards and Counter- Measure Needed

The Town Clerk will:

- (a) Ensure that all employees are acquainted with health and safety hazards and likely consequences of accidents arising from their jobs, and the remedial action needed to prevent accidents.
- (b) Ensure the issue and observance of adequate written instructions for safe working covering all work situations including general ones such as the use of equipment and electricity (including isolation) and chemicals; work in confined spaces; tidiness and 'good housekeeping'; maintenance, cleaning and repair; the use of protective clothing and safety equipment; manual handling; the correct use of vehicles.
- (c) Electrical systems should conform to the requirements of **The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989** and associated guidance notes, which will apply to all workplaces covering every type of electrical equipment at all voltages. The general rules include the construction, operation, use and maintenance of an electrical system and work done near to it;

strength and capabilities of systems not to be exceeded; conductors to be suitably covered with insulating material; and no one to be engaged in any work where technical knowledge or experience is necessary unless they possess those qualifications.

The criteria for application in each case is the test as to whether "**danger.....**" may arise.

Environmental Pollution

(e.g. Dust, noise, waste and other materials etc.)

- (a) Management will take all reasonable practicable steps within their power to prevent pollution from harmful or offensive sources or to neutralise its effects by e.g. careful operation of plant, suitable/lawful disposal, etc.
- (b) The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 1988 are designed to protect employees and others, including members of the public, from the effects of work with substances hazardous to health, either immediate or delayed, which enter the body by inhalation, ingestion, absorption through the skin or contact with it.

"Substances hazardous to health " means:

- (i) substances listed under the classification, Packaging and Labelling Regulations 1984 as very toxic, harmful, corrosive or irritant;
 - (ii) any substances for which a Maximum Exposure Limit (MEL) or Occupational Exposure Standard (OES) has been set;
 - (iii) substantial quantities of any dust;
 - (iv) micro-organisms;
 - (v) any other substance creating a comparable hazard.
- (c) Before work involving exposure to such substances may commence an assessment of the risks created must be carried out, and where these are apparent they must be prevented where possible or if this is not reasonably practicable, then

adequately controlled. For those substances hazardous through inhalation which have been assigned MELs, exposure must not exceed those limits and should be reduced below them to the greatest extent that is reasonably practicable. In all cases, prevention or adequate control of exposure should be achieved by measures other than personal protective equipment to the greatest extent which is reasonably practicable, i.e., by modifications to the process or engineering and procedure controls.

- (d) Every control measure which is provided must be properly used and be maintained in efficient working order. Examinations and test of controls must be carried out periodically. Respiratory protective equipment should be examined at suitable intervals and for all control measures a record of results of examinations must be kept for at least 5 (five) years.
- (e) Monitoring of exposure should be carried out when necessary to ensure that exposure is adequately controlled to protect the health of employees. A record should be kept showing when it was done, what procedures were adopted and what the results were.
- (f) Where the assessment shows that health surveillance is appropriate for the protection of the employees it should be carried out. Surveillance is appropriate where:
 - (i) a disease or adverse effect may be related to the exposure; and
 - (ii) it is likely that this could arise in the circumstances of the work; and
 - (iii) there are valid techniques for detecting the disease or effect.

Any decision on surveillance must be related to the nature and degree of exposure. Copies of an employee's health record should be kept for at least 30 years from the final entry.

- (g) Information, instruction and training on the risks to health and the precautions to be taken must be given to the employees or persons on the premises where the work is done. This should include the results of monitoring and collective results of health surveillance, where the procedures are used. Anyone carrying out tasks for an employer under the regulations must

also have the necessary information, instruction and training to do the job properly.

- (h) The risk of permanent damage to hearing as well as other associated factors such as nervous irritability, stress and distraction which can develop from excessive noise levels at work are recognised, together with the necessity of complying with the Noise at Work Regulations 1989 and associated guidance, the main requirements being:
 - (i) to reduce the risk of hearing damage to the lowest level reasonably practicable;
 - (ii) to carry out assessments where the daily personal noise exposure is likely to be 85dB(A) or above, e.g., if people have to shout or have difficulty being understood by someone about two metres away;
 - (iii) to reduce exposure so far as is reasonably practicable where it is at 90dB(A) by means other than by ear protectors, i.e., by engineering controls;
 - (iv) to provide employees who requested them and who are exposed to between 85dB(A) and 90dB(A) with ear protectors;
 - (v) to demarcate and sign "ear protection zones" where exposure is at or above 90dB(A) and ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that protectors are being worn;
 - (vi) to ensure that all equipment provided is maintained, and
 - (vii) to provide information, instruction and training to employees on hearing risks, how it can be minimised, how to obtain ear protectors and on their statutory duties under the regulations.

Inspections and reports (Risk Assessments)

Council will ensure generic and specific Risk Assessments are undertaken and reviewed regularly.

Safety and Anti-weather Clothing and Equipment

- (a) The need to use such items should be eliminated so far as is reasonably practicable by modification of plant and work systems etc.
- (b) Managers will provide free, suitable items where the law so requires or it is considered necessary, and will ensure that adequate reserve stocks are kept at each workplace. Personal issues are to be made at appropriate intervals against the recipient's signature. The availability of such items and the need to use them must be explained to the employees concerned by the Manager or Supervisor, who will by example and persuasion encourage their use. In the case of safety clothing and equipment which is made available free of charge, whether such clothing or equipment is required by legislation or not, such items will always be worn when circumstances require it, or management deems it necessary. Failure to wear the same will be dealt with under the Group's disciplinary procedure.
- (c) The Construction (Head Protection) Regulations 1989 make the wearing of safety helmets compulsory on Construction sites.

This will apply to the Cemetery where digging and tree surgery occurs. Under the provision of HSW Act 1974, suitable footwear must be worn at these and all other suitable locations under the control of the Town Council.

Contractors on Site

- (a) It shall be written into contracts that Contractors shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that their operations shall not affect the health and safety of our employees, and of non-employees or damage to our property, and that instructions issued to them by or on behalf of our Management, shall be followed. Contractors shall report to the Manager or the member of staff responsible before commencing work.
- (b) Contractors or hirers will be required to report accidents which occur on our premises to the Manager or Supervisor responsible.

- (c) Management will ensure that any of the Company's facilities or any other property (e.g. ladders, electrical items etc.) which are made available, are safe and without risk to health.

Safety of Other non-Employees

- (a) **Hirers**
Hirers of the Town Hall facilities must be made aware of the General Health and Safety Policy of the Town Council.
- (b) **Town Council's Own Promotions**
Personnel must be made aware of the Town Council's Health and Safety Policy, and more specific regulations appertaining to their particular circumstance, (i.e. Electrical, Fire, etc.)

Provision and Use of Articles and Substances at Work

Persons ordering such items will obtain from suppliers all written information necessary to ensure there are no risks to safety and health when the items are properly used, and will pass on all information to all users.

Lifting of Weights

Existing statutory requirements relating to manual handling are contained in the Factories Act; the Offices, Shops and Railways Premises Act. These provide that "no person shall be required to lift, carry or move any load so heavy as to be likely to cause injury to that person". Before requiring manual handling work to be carried out by employees, Managers should take account of the following:

- (a) **the nature of the load**, i.e. weight, size, shape, stability of contents, physical and chemical properties (whether it has sharp edges or contains dangerous chemicals etc.);
- (b) **the working conditions**, i.e. layout and general conditions of the workplace, lighting and temperature conditions, and to the precise location at which the handling is to take place;
- (c) **the personal limitations of individuals**, i.e. capacity depending on age, strength, degree of bodily movement, general state of health, training and experience.

Where a risk cannot be avoided and heavy weights have to be lifted or moved, suitable systems of work should be employed to minimise that risk.

Fire Prevention, Fire Fighting, Means of Escape

The Town Clerk will ensure that:

- (a) all requirements of the Fire Regulations are met and,
- (b) all reasonable practicable steps are taken to prevent fire, especially regarding electrical faults, accumulations of rubbish and combustible spillage, careless smoking and exposure of naked flames, welding and metal cutting operations;
- (c) an adequate supply of suitable fire extinguishers, properly sited and serviced at least annually is available for primary fire fighting needs. Their location and means of operation shall be known to all employees. Procedures for action and evacuation in the event of a fire outbreak shall be prepared wherever such action is not obvious and shall likewise be made known by means of bi-annual training sessions, employees joining the group to attend an induction session within one month of start;
- (d) adequate means of escape from fire are maintained; these shall always be clearly marked **"Fire Exit"** and be readily usable;
- (e) fire alarms where applicable (Town Hall) are tested weekly (see (f) below);
- (f) At least twice a year a practice fire drill should be carried out with full evacuation from the premises. The local fire service is promptly notified of all fires without delay.

Accident Investigation, Accident Recording and Reporting

All accidents and dangerous occurrences shall be recorded and investigated. Reports of all accidents which result in any absence from work; all accidents, dangerous occurrences and occupational diseases which are required to be notified to the HSE by legislation; and all "near-hit" incidents which, in the opinion of responsible person, had the potential for causing a fatality, serious injury and or serious

damage to equipment/plant given different circumstances, shall be promptly reported..

First Aid

First Aiders should be identified to hirers of the Town Hall.

Medical Fitness

Management will not employ people who are unfit for the duties involved where this apparent to a layman in medical terms. Where there are reasonable grounds for doubting the answer of an employee or prospective employee regarding medical fitness for new duties or for believing that an employee's health has deteriorated to an extent detrimental to himself/herself or to his/her duties, Management shall consult with the individual in the first instance and may request them to undergo a medical examination.

Resolved and adopted at the Town Council Meeting on 21st July 2021

Signed M.P. 

Date

Chairman of Council Cllr Mark Jordan

Document Review Date: no later than July 2023