

Harborough District Council
Health and Safety Policy



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1.0 Health & Safety General Statement of Intent

Harborough District Council acknowledges and fully accepts its responsibilities under the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and other relevant legislation. We are committed to protecting the health, safety, and welfare of all our employees and others who may be affected by the Council's activities, as far as is reasonably practicable.

We recognise that each one of us at Harborough District Council has a personal responsibility for our own health and safety and that of other people who could be affected by our work. Therefore, we must all adhere to safe working practices and co-operate fully on all matters relating to health and safety.

Our Corporate Management Team is committed to providing effective and visible leadership in health and safety and ensuring it is given the same prominence as the Council's other management functions. The Corporate Management Team and Elected Members will ensure the provision of adequate resources and competent advice and ensure that employees receive the instruction, information, training, and supervision they need to work safely.

Our key commitments are to:

- 1) Provide competent technical advice on health and safety matters via the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and Occupational Health Provider to assist managers in their task of ensuring healthy and safe conditions of work.
- 2) Provide, manage, and maintain our workplaces, grounds, and properties so that they are, as far as reasonably practicable, safe and that risks to health are controlled.
- 3) Promote a positive health and safety culture across our workforce and provide a supportive working environment, in order to prevent occupational diseases and promote the health and well-being of all our employees.
- 4) Ensure that all service areas have suitable and sufficient risk assessments for their operations and activities, with effective risk control measures in place. Significant health and safety risks will be escalated and recorded in line with the Council's corporate risk management arrangements where appropriate.
- 5) Ensure that sufficient contractor monitoring arrangements are in place to ensure requirements are met and assure compliance for all large Council contracts.
- 6) Ensure the competence of our employees through the provision and monitoring of adequate health and safety instructions and mandatory health and safety training.
- 7) Consult and communicate with our employees on matters that may affect their health, safety, and wellbeing, both directly and through the Health and Safety Committee.
- 8) Conduct a regular programme of inspections and audits to measure compliance, assess risk, identify and eliminate unsafe conditions/practices and to control any hazards found in the working environment.
- 9) Ensure that accidents, incidents of violence and aggression, occupational health issues and near misses are adequately investigated to determine their cause and prevent re-occurrence.

Harborough District Council is committed to this policy and expects all employees, partners, suppliers and contractors to meet the standards set out within it.

This policy will be communicated to employees, made available on the Council's intranet and supported by relevant procedures, guidance and documented responsibilities.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where required due to operational, organisational or legislative changes.

Signed: 

John Richardson
Chief Executive

Date: 18th May 2026

2.0 Health and Safety Responsibilities

2.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive takes overall and final duty-holder responsibility for health and safety, and

- Advises the Council of the Council's responsibilities under this policy statement.
- Makes arrangements to ensure the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety policy.
- Ensures that Health & Safety matters are discussed at Management Team meetings when the occasion requires and that each team member understands their responsibilities under this policy statement.
- Ensures the provision of adequate resources to enable the delegation of health and safety responsibilities.
- Ensures the monitoring of health and safety arrangements, including progress against the corporate health and safety action plan.
- Leads and promotes the safety culture within the Harborough District Council and encourage employee involvement in improving health and safety standards.
- Collaborates with the Corporate Health & Safety Officer on Health and Safety matters.

2.2 Corporate Management Team

The Corporate Management Team is responsible for the management of health and safety risks at a corporate and directorate level and for ensuring that health and safety is managed in accordance with this policy.

The Chief Executive and Directors must ensure that suitable health and safety management arrangements are in place within their areas of responsibility and that these align with this policy and associated procedures and guidance.

They must ensure that adequate resources are provided to manage health and safety effectively and promote a positive approach to health, safety and welfare across the Council.

The Corporate Management Team will cooperate with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and consider competent health and safety advice when managing significant risks, setting priorities and making decisions that may affect health, safety and welfare.

2.3 Heads of Service

Heads of Service are responsible for managing health and safety risks created within their service area.

Heads of Service will:

- Implement this policy and associated procedures within their service area.
- Put suitable arrangements in place to identify, assess and control risks arising from their service activities.
- Make sure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed, reviewed and communicated within their service area.
- Make sure that managers and team leaders within their service area understand and carry out their health and safety responsibilities.
- Provide employees with suitable information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to work safely.
- Allocate suitable resources to manage health and safety risks.
- Develop local procedures or safe working instructions where required for service-specific risks identified through risk assessment.
- Take reasonable measures to make sure contractors under their control are suitably managed and made aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Make sure incidents are reported and investigated in accordance with Council procedures.
- Escalate significant risks or unresolved health and safety matters to the corporate management team and corporate health and safety officer where required.
- Cooperate with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and act on relevant advice and recommendations, so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.4 Corporate Health & Safety Officer

Harborough District Council has employed a Corporate Health and Safety Officer on a part-time basis to provide competent health and safety advice in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work

Regulations 1999. This role assists the Council in identifying the measures it needs to take to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed by relevant statutory provisions, so far as is reasonably practicable.

To achieve this, the Corporate Health and Safety Officer will:

- Provide advice and guidance on health, safety and welfare matters to the Chief Executive, Corporate Management Team, Heads of Service, managers, team leaders and employees.
- Periodically review corporate health and safety policies, procedures, templates and guidance.
- Provide support with risk assessments where significant or complex risks are identified.
- When requested, advise managers on general risk assessment, safe systems of work and control measures.
- Monitor health and safety standards through audits, inspections, incident data and health and safety committee reporting.
- Review incident data, including accidents, near misses, violence and aggression incidents and occupational health concerns, to identify trends and areas for improvement.
- Provide advice on incident investigation and support serious investigations where required.
- Report relevant incidents to the Health and Safety Executive where required under RIDDOR.
- Liaise with enforcing authorities and other external bodies where appropriate.
- Advise on health and safety training needs and recommend suitable training where required.
- Support the Health and Safety Committee by providing reports, updates and advice.
- Provide updates on relevant changes in legislation, guidance and good practice.
- Bring significant health and safety risks, concerns or areas of non-compliance to the attention of the Corporate Management Team where senior management oversight, resources or action may be required.
- Recognise the limits of their own competence and recommend external specialist support where specific technical advice is required, such as fire safety, asbestos, legionella, noise, vibration, CDM or other specialist matters.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of relevant health and safety legislation, guidance and good practice, and advise the Council of significant changes where required.

The Corporate Health and Safety Officer provides technical advisory support, guidance, monitoring and assurance. The Corporate Health and Safety Officer does not own or manage the operational risks within service areas. Responsibility for managing those risks and implementing suitable controls remains with the relevant service area.

2.5 Human Resources (HR) Service

The HR Service provides information and support in relation to employee health, safety and welfare.

HR will:

- Support managers with attendance, ill health, medical referrals, return to work matters, reasonable adjustments and occupational health referrals where required.
- Manage health surveillance provided by the Council's contracted Occupational Health Provider.
- Support managers with employees who have disabilities, including exploring reasonable adjustments and other appropriate support.
- Support managers to identify employees who may require additional consideration, including young workers, disabled employees, pregnant employees or employees returning to work following ill health.
- Support managers with agile, flexible, part-time, home and hybrid working arrangements where these may affect health, safety or welfare.
- Provide advice to managers to help maintain competent, suitably qualified and experienced teams through recruitment, selection, induction, day-to-day management and formal processes such as attendance and capability management.
- Cooperate with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and act on relevant advice and recommendations, so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.6 Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders

Managers, supervisors and team leaders are responsible for managing health and safety within the activities, employees, premises, equipment and materials under their control.

Managers, supervisors and team leaders will:

- Follow this policy and any relevant health and safety procedures, guidance and safe systems of work.
- Cooperate with their head of service to assist them in meeting their health and safety responsibilities.
- Make sure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place for activities under their control.

- Make sure risk control measures are implemented, communicated and reviewed, and escalate any resource issues to their Head of Service where these may prevent effective control of risk.
- Provide employees with suitable information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to work safely.
- Monitor health and safety standards within their area of responsibility, including checks or inspections where appropriate.
- Make sure employees cooperate with health and safety arrangements and follow any relevant safe systems of work.
- Consult employees on health and safety matters at an operational level and raise relevant matters where required.
- Make sure accidents, incidents, near misses and violence and aggression incidents are reported in accordance with Council procedures.
- Carry out proportionate investigations and review relevant risk assessments and control measures to help prevent recurrence.
- Make sure contractors and service providers under their control are suitably managed before and during work.
- Cooperate with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and act on relevant advice and recommendations, so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.7 Employees

- Take responsibility for their own Health and Safety and of others who could be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Co-operate with Harborough District Council management on the implementation of safety.
- Not interfere or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety, and welfare.
- Report anything which is unsafe to their line manager, the corporate health and safety officer or to a member of the Health & Safety Committee.
- Report accidents and near miss incidents immediately to their line manager and complete the relevant form located on the intranet.
- Report anything which they are asked to do by their line manager which is unsafe.
- To ensure that, as appropriate, safe systems of work and risk assessment guidance is followed.
- To ensure that they work in accordance with health and safety training that they have been provided with.
- Cooperate with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and act on relevant advice and recommendations, so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.8 Partners, contractors, suppliers, and agencies

Partners, contractors, suppliers, and agencies will be expected where appropriate to abide by the Health & Safety Standards laid out in this document, and associated arrangements, including policies, procedures, and guidance.

2.9 Health and Safety Committee

- The Health and Safety Committee will comprise the following: -
- Corporate Health & Safety Officer
- Chief Executive (Chair)
- Trade union Health and Safety Representative
- Corporate Asset Management Representative
- Human Resources Representative
- X 6 Volunteers Representatives
- Administrator (Minutes and Action Tracker)

The Committee may also invite representatives of contractors where items of mutual interest are to be discussed.

The Health and Safety Committee will meet on a quarterly basis or occasionally more frequently should the need arise.

The Objectives of the Safety Committee

The Health and Safety Committee is the focal point for health, safety, and welfare. It aims to support and ensure that there is a coordinated approach across the Council.

The principal objectives of the Health and Safety Committee are to act as a means of consultation and communication and to promote the health, safety, and welfare of all Council employees, as well as others that may be affected by activities such as visitors and contractors.

Monitor, action and feedback to the Health and Safety Committee in line with the terms of reference for the committee.

2.10 Shared site users

Where two or more employers share a workplace, each employer shall co-operate with the other employers concerned to enable them to comply with their duties under health and safety legislation. Where HDC is the primary site user it will have the lead responsibility.

All shared users of the site must agree to:

- Co-operate and co-ordinate with the District Council on health and safety matters.
- Provide information relating to any additional risks or procedures which will be new or unusual to those of the District Council that may arise from their activities.
- Maintain a standard of health and safety which is reasonably practicable and at least equivalent to the standard maintained by the Council so as to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all staff and service users.
- Meet the insurance requirements of the Harborough District Council.
- Familiarise themselves with and communicate to their employees/users the District Council's health and safety arrangements.

Harborough District Council will ensure that:

- Premises are in a safe condition for the purpose of use.
- Adequate arrangements for emergency evacuation are in place and communicated.
- Users are consulted with on health and safety matters.
- The Council's health and safety arrangements are made available to shared users.

3.0 General Arrangements

This section provides a brief overview of the Council's general health and safety arrangements. More detailed procedures, guidance and templates are available on the HDC intranet under the Health and Safety section where appropriate.

3.1 Sources of Information

The Corporate Health and Safety Officer is appointed to provide competent technical advice on health and safety matters at work. The Corporate Management Team, Heads of Services, Managers, Team Leaders and Employees may consult the Corporate Health and Safety Officer where they require advice or support in understanding and meeting their health and safety responsibilities.

Relevant health and safety information, including policies, procedures, templates and guidance, is also available on the HDC intranet.

3.2 Consultation

Harborough District Council will consult employees on health, safety and welfare matters where required. Consultation may take place through:

- Direct communication from the Chief Executive, including all-staff briefings or email updates.
- Line management.
- The Corporate Health and Safety Officer.
- Employee health and safety representatives.
- Trade union safety representatives, where applicable.
- The Health and Safety Committee.
- The Council's intranet, newsletters or other internal communication channels.

3.3 Risk assessment

The Council is required under Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to make suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to employees and others who may be affected by its activities.

Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed, reviewed and communicated within their service area. The task of completing a risk assessment may be delegated to a competent manager, supervisor or team leader.

The latest Council risk assessment template should be used when completing or reviewing risk assessments. This is available in the templates folder on the HDC intranet under the Health and Safety section.

Managers, supervisors and team leaders who are responsible for completing or reviewing risk assessments should complete the General Risk Assessment Training for Managers module on Learning Pool where required.

Where further support is required, managers should arrange a support consultation with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer to discuss how to complete or review the risk assessment. This may include advice on identifying hazards, assessing risk, selecting suitable control measures and recording significant findings.

Employees must be made aware of the significant findings of relevant risk assessments, and the control measures they are required to follow. This may be done through induction, training, team meetings, one-to-one discussions, safe working instructions or other suitable communication methods.

Risk assessments must be reviewed at suitable intervals and following significant changes, accidents, incidents, near misses, changes in work activity, or where there is reason to believe the assessment is no longer valid.

Completed risk assessments should be sent to the Corporate Health and Safety officer for filing and reference allocation.

3.4 Training, Instruction and Supervision

The authority recognises its responsibility for training, instruction and supervision in health and safety for all employees. All employees must cooperate in undergoing such training and instruction as is deemed necessary. Training, instruction, and supervision should be provided particularly where employees are new, transferred from other workplaces or jobs, before using new plant and equipment, use of chemicals and personal protective equipment where appropriate.

The induction training course includes health and safety information and is mandatory for all new employees. Additional job-specific health and safety training will be identified through risk assessment and arranged where required. Health and Safety training for all employees within Harborough District Council will be organised jointly between the line manager and HR taking advice from the Corporate Health & Safety Officer. Individual training records must be kept for all health and safety training and this must be auditable.

3.5 Emergency Arrangements

Harborough District Council will maintain proportionate emergency arrangements for Council premises, activities and events where required, including where an activity presents a significant risk. These arrangements may include fire evacuation, first aid, accident and incident response, bomb threats, suspect packages, security or terrorism-related incidents, severe weather, utility failures or other foreseeable emergency situations.

3.6 Monitoring and Review of Planning and Implementation

Health and safety planning and implementation will be monitored and reviewed to check that arrangements remain suitable, effective and proportionate to the Council's activities and risks.

Monitoring and review may include inspections, audits, incident reviews, risk assessment reviews, training records, Health and Safety Committee reports and management review.

The findings from monitoring and review will be used to identify further actions, update risk assessments, improve procedures and inform future health and safety planning.

3.7 Accidents and Incidents

All accidents, incidents, near misses and work-related violence or aggression incidents must be reported in accordance with the Council's incident reporting procedures.

Incidents will be investigated proportionately by the relevant line manager. The aim of the investigation is to understand what happened, identify any underlying causes and take reasonable steps to prevent recurrence. The Council's Accident Policy and Procedure is available on the intranet.

Sufficient trained first aiders or appointed persons are provided at each Council site. Where appropriate, a treatment/first aid room will be maintained. First aiders will be employee volunteers. Job-specific first aid requirements are identified through risk assessment and arranged by line managers where required.

Post-incident support and counselling can be provided through the HR Team. The Council's Employee Assistance Programme also provides employees with information, advice and support 24 hours a day.

Where an incident is reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR, this will be reported by the Corporate Health and Safety Officer.

3.8 Fire Safety Management

Harborough District Council acknowledges its duties under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to take general fire precautions and ensure that Council premises are managed to reduce the risk from fire, so far as is reasonably practicable.

This is achieved by:

- Completing suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments for Council premises where the Council has responsibility.
- Reviewing fire risk assessments where required, including following significant changes, fire-related incidents or where there is reason to believe the assessment is no longer valid.
- Identifying appropriate fire controls through fire risk assessment and implementing them through the Facilities Management Team or other responsible service area where applicable.
- Progressing significant findings and actions identified through fire risk assessments.
- Maintaining suitable means of escape, including access and egress routes, emergency exits and fire doors.
- Ensuring escape routes are checked by nominated persons at suitable intervals.
- Maintaining fire detection, alarm systems, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment where provided.
- Ensuring fire extinguishers are maintained under a service contract by competent engineers.
- Testing fire alarms on Council owned or controlled premises at suitable intervals, taking account of the fire risk assessment and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.
- Testing emergency evacuation arrangements at suitable intervals.
- Ensuring employees are provided with suitable fire safety information, instruction and training.
- Ensuring suitable emergency evacuation arrangements are in place and communicated to employees, visitors, contractors and shared site users where relevant.
- Ensuring Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans are considered and implemented where employees or regular building users may require assistance to evacuate safely.
- Managing contractors and maintenance works so that fire safety precautions are not compromised.
- Controlling ignition sources, combustible materials and housekeeping arrangements.
- Cooperating and coordinating with other employers, occupiers or shared site users where premises are shared.
- Emergency evacuation will be tested two times in 12-month period.
- All staff are made aware of fire risks and evacuation procedures on induction and refresher training.

Each Council owned or controlled premises will have its own fire procedures, available through the HDC intranet or from the relevant manager responsible for day-to-day operations.

The Finance Department is responsible for communicating any relevant fire safety requirements from the Council's insurers to the appropriate service areas and providing information to insurers where required.

3.9 Personal Protective Equipment

- Systems of work shall be selected which avoid the use of PPE wherever reasonably practicable. PPE shall be regarded as the last resort to protect against risks to Health and Safety.
- PPE shall be supplied free of charge to all employees. Service areas are responsible for obtaining and paying for PPE required by their staff, to include any storage and maintenance required.
- Head of Service must identify the need for any PPE in a suitable and sufficient risk assessment. The risk assessment should identify:
 - that the equipment is appropriate to risk and working conditions;
 - that it does not increase risks or place any unreasonable demands on the user's health and ability to work safely;
 - it adjusts/fits properly;
 - compatibility of different items of PPE used together.
- Staff must be properly informed and trained in the use of PPE.
- All PPE must be maintained and stored properly in accordance with supplier's instructions.
- Staff must follow instructions on when/how to use PPE if the need has been identified.
- Staff must treat PPE supplied to them with care and report defects immediately.

3.10 Visitors

All visitors (including temporary staff on council properties) must sign in to any Harborough District Council premises and be made familiar with safety routines on site. If required they will be issued with an ID card to be worn at all times.

3.11 Contractors

Where contractors are engaged by the Council, the relevant contract manager, project lead or competent person from the relevant service area must take reasonable steps to ensure that contractors are competent and able to carry out their work safely.

Contractors are required to provide relevant health and safety information before work begins, such as:

- health and safety policy and arrangements
- risk assessments and method statements
- evidence of competence, qualifications or training
- public liability insurance
- relevant accident or enforcement history

The relevant contract manager, project lead or nominated competent person from the service area must ensure that contractor health and safety information is received, suitable, and sent to the Facilities Officer and M&E Engineer or Building & Assistant Facilities Officer for filing.

Before contractors attend or carry out work at Council sites, the Facilities Officer and M&E Engineer or the Building & Assistant Facilities Officer must be notified and approval must be obtained. This is to ensure that contractor health and safety information, site access, emergency arrangements, welfare arrangements, known hazards, permits, isolations and any local site rules are properly considered before work begins.

Contractors must receive an appropriate site induction before starting work. This must include relevant site-specific information, such as emergency arrangements, accident and incident reporting requirements, welfare arrangements, known hazards and any local rules that apply. Contractor inductions must be refreshed annually and delivered by a competent person who possesses relevant site knowledge, including the site hazards, risks and control measures.

All facilities-related contractor work must be coordinated through the Facilities Officer and M&E Engineer or Building & Assistant Facilities Officer.

Relevant managers, contract managers or Facilities representatives must monitor contractor activities proportionately to the level of risk and take appropriate action where unsafe working practices are identified.

Contractors who fail to meet required health and safety standards may be stopped from working or prevented from carrying out further work for the Council.

3.12 Permits to Work

Certain types of work are carried out very infrequently and by their nature often have different risks each time they are done.

These types of work include:

- working in confined spaces
- hot work (e.g. cutting and welding etc.)
- non-routine electrical work (high voltage)
- working at heights
- excavations

There may be no written safe working procedure for these tasks, and verbal instructions are notoriously unreliable. In these cases, a written permit to work system should be used. The authorised person in control of the permit system will be a Facilities Officer and M&E Engineer.

They may designate suitable "competent" people to operate the system with them. No other people are allowed to approve and authorise this type of work.

Where access may be required to any confined space, as defined in Confined Space Regulations 1997, then a permit to work must be raised before any such work is carried out.

3.13 Construction, Maintenance and Project Works

Where Harborough District Council commissions construction, refurbishment, maintenance or other building-related works, the Council will ensure that its duties under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 are considered and discharged.

For most Council-led projects, HDC will act as the commercial client. The relevant project lead, contract manager or service area responsible for the works must ensure that suitable arrangements are in place for managing the project. This includes appointing suitable designers and contractors, allowing sufficient time and resources, providing relevant pre-construction information, and ensuring that suitable welfare and construction phase arrangements are in place before work begins.

Where a project involves, or is likely to involve, more than one contractor, the Council must ensure that a Principal Designer and Principal Contractor are appointed in writing where required. Project leads must also ensure that relevant health and safety information is obtained, shared, reviewed and retained, including the health and safety file where applicable.

For larger, complex or higher-risk projects, external competent support may be appointed where the Council requires additional specialist advice, technical support or assurance to help discharge its CDM duties.

The Corporate Health and Safety Officer can provide general health and safety advice where required. However, responsibility for managing construction and project-related risks remains with the relevant service area, project lead, contract manager and appointed CDM duty holders.

3.14 Contracted Service Providers

Where services are delivered on behalf of Harborough District Council by a contracted service provider, the service provider remains responsible for managing health and safety risks arising from their own undertaking, employees, activities, equipment, premises and working methods.

The relevant contract manager or service area must take reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the contracted service provider has suitable health and safety arrangements in place. This may include reviewing relevant policies, risk assessments, safe systems of work, training records, accident and incident data, insurance, competence evidence and other relevant documentation.

The Council may carry out proportionate monitoring, inspections, audits or contract review meetings to obtain assurance that health and safety standards are being maintained. The level of monitoring will be proportionate to the nature of the service, the level of risk and the terms of the contract.

Where significant concerns are identified, these must be raised with the contracted service provider and escalated through the relevant contract management arrangements where required.

3.15 Night working

It is the responsibility of each line manager to identify all night workers (usually those working between 10.00 pm and 7.00 am). All works must be arranged with line managers beforehand and suitable arrangements need to be in place. Facilities Management are to be notified in plenty of time so that key arrangements can be reviewed. Where required, the Lone Working policy should be adhered to.

3.16 Waste

The majority of waste produced by Harborough District Council is defined as controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990. It will be disposed of in accordance with the duty of care imposed by these regulations.

On the occasion that special waste has to be disposed, advice should be sought from the Corporate Health & Safety Officer, the Environmental Health team, and Environmental Services.

4.0 Specific Hazards and Activities

4.1 Housekeeping and Premises

Good housekeeping and the maintenance of premises in a safe condition will be a responsibility of Directors, Heads of Service and Managers.

4.2 Electrical Equipment

As part of the Mechanical & Electrical contract, managed by the Corporate Asset Management team, all sites have access to competent electricians who will carry out all electrical and related work.

NO PERSON SHOULD CARRY OUT ANY ELECTRICAL WORK FOR WHICH THEY HAVE NOT BEEN TRAINED

All portable electrical equipment must be individually numbered and placed on a register. Starting at a minimum of 12 months after purchase of new equipment, all such equipment must be checked regularly, for electrical safety which is dependent upon its usage. Any faults found must be rectified. Results of checks and repairs will be recorded in the record log, which will be kept on site.

This is managed by the Corporate Asset Management through FM and M&E contracts. Records of equipment tests and repairs will be kept by the FM department.

All fixed electrical equipment must be adequately labelled and recorded. Starting from 5 years after installation, all such equipment must be checked every 5 years for electrical safety. Any faults found must be rectified. Results of checks and repairs will be recorded and kept on site.

This is managed by the Corporate Asset Management through FM and M&E contracts. Records of equipment tests and repairs will be kept by the FM department.

4.3 Work Equipment

The use of all machinery/equipment which is assessed as being more hazardous than low risk will be covered by either a manufacturers or in-house safe working procedure. These are detailed in the relevant Site Notices. Procedures also cover the routine maintenance of the equipment. Where the equipment needs to be certified and examined e.g. lifts/lifting tackle/pressure vessels, this will be arranged by nominated persons on each site or, in the case of remote sites, by the Council in conjunction with the Finance Department. The nominated person, as applicable, keeps all required records at the relevant site.

4.4 Work at Height

Harborough District Council will avoid work at height where reasonably practicable. Where work at height cannot be avoided, the relevant manager, project lead or service area representative must ensure that the work is properly planned, risk assessed, supervised and carried out by competent persons. Suitable control measures must be selected in accordance with the hierarchy of control, including avoiding work at height, preventing falls where work at height cannot be avoided, and minimising the distance and consequences of a fall where the risk cannot be eliminated.

Work equipment used for work at height, including ladders, access equipment, scaffolding, mobile towers and mobile elevated work platforms, must be suitable for the task, inspected where required, maintained and used in accordance with relevant training, instruction and safe systems of work.

All ladders on Council premises must be clearly marked and entered onto a register. Ladders should be inspected monthly as part of compliance checks by a nominated competent person, with the results recorded. Damaged or defective ladders must be clearly marked and removed from use until repaired or disposed of. This is managed by the Facilities Officer and M&E Engineer through FM and M&E contracts.

Where work at height presents significant risk, is non-routine, or requires additional controls, a permit to work may be required in accordance with the Council's permit to work arrangements.

4.5 Hazardous Substances

Within Harborough District Council it will be each line manager's responsibility to undertake and/or oversee that an assessment of all hazardous products used has been carried out in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). It will also be their duty to take reasonable steps to ensure that any external organisations that handle or store such hazardous products upon the premises do so in a safe manner that will not expose Harborough District Council employees to any associated risk.

In the case of remote sites, the manager has the responsibility of risk assessment for their site as required. They also have access to competent advice from the Corporate Health & Safety Officer. The manager will also take reasonable steps to ensure contractors have also carried out a risk assessment and a copy will be kept at the individual site.

On other sites a nominated manager(s) will carry out COSHH assessments in conjunction with the Corporate Health & Safety Officer. Assessments must be carried out before a hazardous substance may be used. The assessment must then be reviewed if there is a significant change, e.g. more of the substance is used or after 2 years. Records of the assessment must be kept by the Service Manager concerned.

Any local exhaust ventilation used must undergo a statutory inspection at least once every 14 months. Records must be kept by the relevant Service Manager.

4.6 Pressurised Systems and Gas Cylinders

The use of liquefied petroleum gas, gas cylinders, compressed air and other pressurised systems should be avoided where reasonably practicable. Where their use is necessary, they must be risk assessed, stored, used and maintained in accordance with relevant legislation, manufacturer's instructions and industry guidance.

A written safe working procedure must be in place where significant risks are identified.

Where gas cylinders, LPG or other flammable gases are stored or used, the fire risk assessment must consider the associated fire and explosion risks, including storage location, ventilation, ignition sources, emergency arrangements and arrangements for notifying the emergency services where required.

Where pressure systems are used at work, they must be managed in accordance with the Pressure Systems Safety Regulations 2000 where applicable, including suitable inspection, maintenance and written schemes of examination where required.

4.7 Food Handling

Facilities for employees to store and prepare food for their own consumption are provided within all sites, where it will be the responsibility of the manager to take reasonable steps to ensure they are kept clean and hygienic. The majority

of the large sites utilise an outside contractor to provide catering for meetings. Where Harborough District Council staff do handle and prepare food for sale (either external or internal) they must have obtained an approved food hygiene and safety certificate.

4.8 Display Screen Equipment

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 require employers to assess which employees use DSEs for a significant part of their work and to eliminate or if not possible, minimise, some of the associated risks. There is a separate DSE policy, which details these arrangements.

The specification and provision of new equipment and software will be the responsibility of the ICT Services. Standard furniture will be provided by the Corporate Assets and Facilities Management team. Any individual equipment is purchased through Corporate Asset Management but paid for by the individual service areas.

4.9 Manual Handling Operations

Harborough District Council will avoid hazardous manual handling activities where reasonably practicable. Where manual handling cannot be avoided, managers and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that suitable risk assessments are completed and appropriate control measures are implemented to reduce the risk of injury.

Control measures may include the use of handling aids or equipment, safe systems of work, suitable staffing arrangements, information, instruction, training and supervision. Employees must follow any manual handling training, risk assessments and safe working procedures provided, use equipment correctly and report any manual handling concerns, discomfort or incidents to their manager.

Further information is provided in the Council's Manual Handling Policy and Procedure.

4.10 Storage of Petrol and Diesel

The storage and use of petrol, diesel and other fuels must be suitably assessed and controlled by the relevant site manager, line manager or Head of Service. Fuels must be stored in suitable containers, in appropriate locations, and in quantities that are justified by operational need.

Where petrol, diesel or other flammable substances are stored or used, the fire risk assessment and any relevant risk assessments must consider the associated risks, including ignition sources, ventilation, spill control, security, emergency arrangements and environmental protection.

Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that suitable controls are implemented and reviewed. The Corporate Health and Safety Officer can provide advice and support where required.

4.11 Noise

Harborough District Council will seek to eliminate or reduce exposure to excessive noise, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where work activities, equipment or environments may expose employees to noise levels that could affect their hearing, the relevant manager must ensure that the risk is assessed in accordance with the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

Where noise levels are suspected to be close to, or above, the relevant exposure action values, a suitable noise assessment must be carried out by a competent person. Control measures may include quieter equipment, maintenance, changes to working methods, limiting exposure time, providing hearing protection where required, and providing employees with suitable information, instruction and training.

4.12 Vibration

Harborough District Council will seek to eliminate or reduce employee exposure to hand-arm vibration and whole-body vibration, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Where work activities, equipment or vehicles may expose employees to vibration risks, the relevant manager must ensure that the risk is assessed in accordance with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005.

Where exposure may be significant, a suitable vibration assessment must be carried out by a competent person. Control measures may include selecting lower-vibration equipment, maintaining tools and vehicles, limiting exposure time, rotating tasks where appropriate, providing suitable information, instruction and training, and monitoring employees for symptoms where required.

Employees must use equipment correctly, follow safe working procedures and report any symptoms such as tingling, numbness, loss of grip strength, pain or discomfort that may be linked to vibration exposure.

4.13 Legionella

Harborough District Council does not own, or have control of, any evaporative cooling towers or condensers and so the risk from Legionella is fairly low. However, a legionella risk assessment has been carried out at all major sites and an assessment will be undertaken by a competent contractor at all council premises where the Council is the duty holder. Where identified through risk assessment sites are tested for Legionella bacteria and other bacteria and there is a routine of disinfecting/sterilising the water supplies. It is the responsibility of the Corporate Assets and Facilities Team to arrange legionella risk assessments and ensure required remedial action is taken. The Council has a Control of Legionella Policy which should be referred to.

4.14 Asbestos

Harborough District Council has a wide range of properties within its estates portfolio and asbestos may be present in some of these properties. An asbestos management survey is to be undertaken by a competent contractor for each Council owned/ managed property built or refurbished before 2000, where the Council is the Duty Holder.

Where asbestos is known or suspected to be present, an asbestos management plan, including an asbestos register and assessment of risk, will be put in place for the property, with a copy kept by the Corporate Assets and Facilities Team and a copy kept on site by the person in control of the premises. The asbestos management survey enables the Council to produce the management plan and register and assess the risk. The plan will be regularly reviewed. Information in the asbestos management plan for the relevant property must be provided to anyone who might disturb the asbestos, including employees, contractors, maintenance workers, and tenants, with a signed record of this kept. When refurbishment of a new or existing property is planned, or a property is to be demolished, a refurbishment and demolition survey will be undertaken by a competent company as a part of the design/ demolition process.

Where asbestos is known or suspected to exist, it will be managed in accordance with the premises asbestos management plan and risk assessment. If suspect material is found during refurbishment, work is immediately halted, and an accredited inspection company is called in to carry out a survey and analysis. Removal of asbestos will be carried out in accordance with HSE guidance and, where required, by an approved, licensed contractor.

Asbestos Surveys and required works will be arranged by the FM team. There is a separate Asbestos Management Procedure, which details arrangements.

4.15 Adverse Weather

Harborough District Council recognises that adverse weather, including snow, ice, flooding, high winds, extreme cold and heavy rain, may affect employee safety, travel, service delivery and the safe use of Council premises.

Managers and Heads of Service are responsible for considering the impact of adverse weather on their service areas and implementing proportionate controls where required. This may include home working, adjusting work activities, delaying non-essential travel, providing suitable PPE, reviewing staffing levels, gritting arrangements and supporting vulnerable employees.

Employees are expected to make reasonable efforts to attend work where it is safe to do so and must follow management instructions, travel advice and relevant Council guidance.

4.16 Unacceptable Customer Behaviour, Violence and Aggression

Harborough District Council recognises that employees may be exposed to unacceptable customer behaviour, including abuse, threats, aggression or violence, when carrying out Council duties.

Managers and Heads of Service are responsible for assessing foreseeable risks of violence and aggression within their service areas and implementing suitable control measures. Staff will be provided with training where appropriate, including how to avoid confrontation wherever possible, withdraw to a place of safety and not retaliate.

Control measures may include local procedures, dynamic risk assessment, lone working arrangements, panic alarms in some Council buildings, personal attack systems where required, and incident reporting arrangements.

Where a customer presents a credible and continuing risk to employee safety, the Council may use the Customer Caution Register to record relevant information and identify suitable precautions for future contact. The Register must be used in accordance with Council procedures and data protection requirements.

Further information is provided in the Council's Policy on Dealing with Unacceptable Customer Behaviour.

4.17 Office Temperature and Heat

Harborough District Council will take reasonable steps to maintain a suitable working temperature within Council workplaces. Where employees may be exposed to excessive heat or uncomfortable working temperatures, managers are responsible for considering the risks and implementing proportionate controls.

Control measures may include access to drinking water, ventilation, blinds, fans, suitable rest breaks, use of cooler work areas, temporary adjustments to dress expectations, home working where appropriate, and additional measures for outdoor workers or employees who may be more vulnerable to heat.

Employees are expected to make reasonable use of the measures provided, report concerns to their manager, and take steps to protect their own health and safety during periods of hot weather.

Further information is provided in the Council's Office Temperature (Heat) Policy.

4.18 Lone Working

The Council has adopted a lone working policy for employees. This policy requires each appropriate service area to action risk assessments for identified lone workers and implement control measures as appropriate.

4.19 Stress and Workplace Wellbeing

Harborough District Council recognises that work-related stress is a health and safety issue and will take reasonable steps to identify and manage workplace stressors, so far as is reasonably practicable.

Managers are responsible for monitoring work-related stress risks within their teams, including workload, working hours, communication, support, role clarity, working relationships, organisational change and lone working arrangements. Where concerns are identified, managers should seek advice from Human Resources and consider whether a stress risk assessment, occupational health referral, reasonable adjustments or other support may be required.

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns about excessive pressure or work-related stress at an early stage with their line manager, Human Resources, trade union representative, Health and Safety Committee representative or the Corporate Health and Safety Officer.

Further information is provided in the Council's Stress Policy, which sets out responsibilities for managers, Human Resources, the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and employees, including the use of stress risk assessments, action plans, occupational health referrals and employee support arrangements.

4.20 Event/Project Management

Where events or projects are organised by, or on behalf of, Harborough District Council, the relevant event manager, project lead or service area must ensure that health and safety risks are considered at the planning stage.

Suitable and sufficient risk assessments must be completed before the event or project takes place. These should consider the nature of the activity, location, employees, contractors, volunteers, visitors, members of the public and any other persons who may be affected.

Where required, suitable arrangements must be put in place for matters such as emergency procedures, first aid, fire safety, crowd management, traffic or pedestrian management, contractor control, manual handling, work equipment, temporary structures, welfare and communication.

Event and project managers must ensure that relevant control measures are communicated and implemented. Where an event or project is complex, higher risk or involves specialist activities, competent advice or external support should be obtained where required.

Following significant events or projects, arrangements should be reviewed where appropriate to identify lessons learned and any improvements required for future activities.

4.21 Driving for work

Harborough District Council recognises that work-related driving can create risks to employees, passengers, pedestrians and other road users. Employees who drive for work must be authorised to do so and must hold a valid driving licence, suitable insurance, MOT where required, and ensure their vehicle is roadworthy.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees who drive for work are aware of the Council's requirements and that relevant checks are completed where required. Employees must drive safely, comply with road traffic law and the Highway Code, avoid unnecessary journeys where suitable alternatives are available, and must not drive where they are unfit to do so due to alcohol, drugs, medication, fatigue or a relevant medical condition.

Employees must not use handheld mobile phones while driving and should avoid any activity that may distract them from driving safely. Any accident or incident that occurs while driving for work must be reported in accordance with Council procedures.

Further information is provided in the Council's Driving for Work Policy and Staff Guidance.

5.0 Performance Measurement and Review

It will be essential for good health and safety management that safety arrangements and performance standards are measured and their success in complying with the standards / reducing risk are assessed.

5.1 Active Monitoring

Systems used are:

- Systematic inspection of premises and equipment by line managers.
- Setting and monitoring of performance objectives for managers and employees.
- Inclusion of health and safety objectives in job specifications and appraisals.
- Formal audit systems

5.2 Reactive Monitoring

Systems to be used are:

- Near miss / non injury incident reporting statistics in accordance with the Council's Accident Policy and Procedure.
- Accident and incidents of violence and aggression reporting in accordance with the Council's Accident Policy and Procedure.
- Accident, violence, and aggression and near miss reporting data will be reviewed quarterly at the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.

5.3 Auditing

Auditing aims to provide an independent assessment of the validity and reliability of the management planning and control systems. An audit programme will be developed and carried out by the Corporate Health & Safety Officer.

Auditing shows the degree of compliance with both internal and external standards. The difference between actual and theoretical standards coupled with risk analysis will highlight those areas where further work is needed.

- Reactive systems for monitoring accidents are in place.
- Systems for identifying and dealing with 'near misses' have been instituted.
- Active systems for inspection of all premises/equipment on an annual basis with results detailed on check lists report forms.
- An auditing programme will be developed and implemented by the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and approved by the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.

5.4 Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Corporate Management Team (CMT) Meetings

The Corporate Health and Safety Officer may attend Senior Leadership Team and/or Corporate Management Team meetings periodically, or when requested, to provide health and safety updates.

This may include reporting on health and safety performance, accident and incident trends, audit findings, significant risks, progress against agreed actions, changes in legislation or guidance, and any matters requiring senior management oversight, support or decision-making.

The Corporate Management Team and/or Heads of Service are responsible for considering relevant health and safety information presented at these meetings and ensuring that agreed actions are progressed within their areas of responsibility.

5.5 Strategic Review

An annual statement of health and safety will be produced by the Corporate Health & Safety Officer. It will include work completed, issues and recommendations and will be reported to the Corporate Management Team. The Corporate Management Team will ensure actions are allocated, progressed and monitored.