

Corporate Health & Safety Policy

2024 - 2026

Document information

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Purpose	To set out the Council's corporate approach to ensuring compliance with current health & safety legislation, our arrangements for doing so, and identifying key people with responsibilities within the organisation.		

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1 Health & Safety Policy Statement

Sandwell Council recognises the importance of ensuring the health, safety and welfare of our employees and fully accepts our statutory obligations both to employees and others who may be affected by our activities.

To meet these obligations, we've set the following objectives and will:

- Ensure that health & safety is embedded into all our activities and that effective health & safety management systems are in place,
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments and controls are in place to minimise risk and to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Consult with our employees and their Trade Union representatives on matters affecting their health & safety.
- Promote a positive health & safety culture where employees and their representatives can raise health & safety issues and are empowered to work safely.
- Provide information, instruction, and supervision for employees to enable them to do their work safely.
- Ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks and are given adequate training.
- Provide and maintain safe plant & equipment and ensure that substances are handled and used safely.
- Ensure premises under our control are maintained and their condition does not give rise to health and safety risks and there are sufficient facilities and welfare arrangements.
- Regularly review our health & safety performance by monitoring, auditing and benchmarking

The council is committed to continuous improvement in health & safety and will develop a policy, systems and procedures to achieve this aim. The council is also committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for employees and all who use our services; this will be achieved by:

- Effective leadership by senior managers
- Participation of all employees
- Open and responsive communication channels

Overall accountability for health & safety and this policy rests with the Chief Executive and the Leadership Team. To ensure that the Leadership Team is kept informed of and alert to relevant health & safety issues, a 'Nominated Director', from within the Leadership team, will be charged with ensuring that health & safety risk management systems are in place and remain effective.

On a practical level, any strategic health & safety issues affecting the Council will, in the first instance, be considered by the Corporate Health & Safety Board (CHSB), which is also charged with ensuring best practice in health & safety across the council. The CHSB will be attended by the Nominated Director and each directorate will nominate a 'Lead Officer' from their directorate management team to attend the Board. The level of participant attending will allow direct input to both Leadership Team and Directorate Management Teams (DMT). In addition, if appropriate, policy and reports can be considered by councillors through the executive decision-making process.

The council's core "arrangements" for managing health & safety are outlined in section 5 of this policy. Each Director/Head teacher must ensure that managers and employees are aware of these arrangements and put in place systems to implement them locally. In addition, directorates/schools should publish supplementary arrangements / procedures to help manage local risks not covered by corporate arrangements / guidance and must ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place. All systems, procedures and assessments must be kept up to date, monitored and regularly reviewed.

Assistance

Without detracting from the primary responsibility of managers and supervisors for safe conditions of work, competent persons have been appointed to support the council in meeting its health & safety obligations.

The corporate health & safety unit (HSU), based in Chief Executive directorate, will co-ordinate corporate health & safety matters, carry out audits, and provide an advisory service across the whole of the council. The team will work closely with directorates, and colleagues within those directorates, on all health, safety and welfare matters.

To support directorates, a range of health & safety management training is provided corporately. These 'core' courses will be identified through regular training needs analysis, based upon current legislation and the council's health and safety management system.

Co-operation, consultation and communication

The successful implementation of this policy requires total commitment at all levels. ALL employees are reminded that they have a legal duty to take reasonable care of themselves, those they work with and any other person that could be affected by their work. They also have a duty to co-operate with their employer on matters of health & safety to help ensure that we comply with our legal duties.

The council will co-operate fully in the appointment of safety representatives by recognised Trade Unions, and will provide them, where necessary, with reasonable facilities to carry out their duties.

Every employee will be made aware of this policy statement and it will be available on the [council's intranet](#). It will be monitored and reviewed regularly and, if necessary, revised in the light of legislative or organisational changes.



Shokat Lal

Chief Executive Officer
January 2024

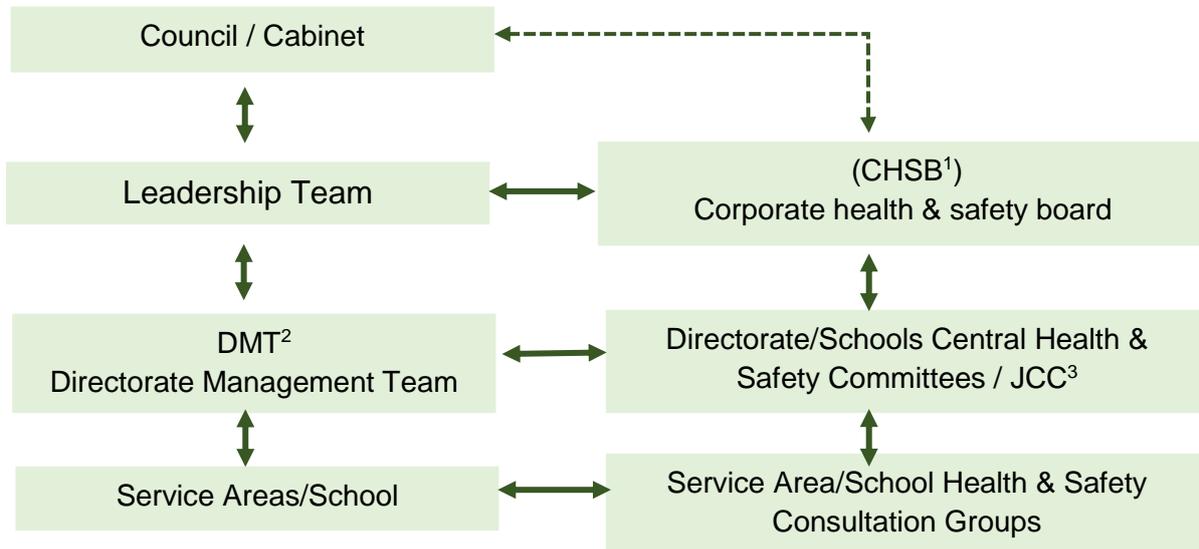


Councillor Kerrie Carmichael

Leader of the Council
January 2024

2 Health & safety communication and monitoring model

The following diagram outlines the communication and monitoring model the council follows to help ensure relevant health & safety information is considered at the right level. See Health & safety duties and responsibilities section for further detail.



Notes:

¹ Chaired by Leadership Team's "nominated H&S director" who keeps Leadership/Elected members informed of and alerted to relevant health and safety issues. Meets every quarter and supported by corporate health & safety manager/officer.

² Or equivalent where no DMT

³ Chaired or attended by each directorate's "lead officer" for health & safety, who represents the directorate at CHSB and keeps their DMT informed of and alerted to relevant health & safety issues. Supported by corporate health & safety officer every quarter (termly for schools).

3 Health & Safety Duties and Responsibilities

This section of the health & safety policy outlines our legal duties (as set out in the Health & Safety at Work Act and associated legislation), both as an employer and as employees.

The next section outlines accountability/responsibilities for health & safety from the Chief Executive to front line employee

3.1 Responsibilities – introduction

Sandwell Council is a large organisation with a complex structure; consequently, any attempt to document all individual responsibilities in detail would tend to be both overly bureaucratic and out of date almost immediately.

For the purposes of health & safety, accountability/responsibilities have been grouped into logical levels, namely:

- The council (employer's duties) and councillors/school governors
- Chief executive, Assistant Chief Executive, Leadership team, 'nominated' director
- Directors, directorate management teams (DMTs) and head teachers
- Service/Operational managers, heads of department
- Line managers/supervisors
- All employees

Regardless of job title, the overriding principle is that work, and the workplace should be safe, and managers/supervisors must take responsibility for any people, premises, plant or processes under their control.

3.2 The council (employer's duties) and councillors/school governors

As an employer the council, as a corporate body, has the employer's responsibilities; that is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others who might be affected by its activities. If it neglects those duties, it could face prosecution or, if anyone is injured, civil claims for negligence.

Councillors (and Governors in schools) also have an important role. While not in day-to-day control, councillors need to satisfy themselves that risks are considered as part of their decision-making process and are sensibly managed.

The council acts through the collective decisions of councillors and those decisions may affect the overall safety management of the council and hence be relevant in any legal proceedings taken against it; however, it should be noted that councillors are not employees but elected office holders and as such have no personal duties under health & safety at work legislation. However, councillors have an important role in championing, and showing their commitment to, health & safety; to that end our policy statement is signed by both the chief executive and leader of the council.

3.3 Chief executive, Leadership Team, 'nominated' director,

Overall accountability for health & safety and this policy rests with the chief executive and the Leadership Team. More specifically, the chief executive and Leadership team are accountable for:

- Approving the Health & Safety Policy Statement
- Ensuring that the council has the necessary resources to successfully implement the policy and achieve the objectives
- Promoting a positive health & safety culture and leading by example

- Ensuring that there is effective health & safety communication
- Monitoring and reviewing the council's health & safety performance

To ensure that Leadership is kept informed of and alert to relevant health & safety issues, a 'Nominated Director', from the Leadership Team, is charged with ensuring that health & safety risk management systems are in place and remain effective. The assistant chief executive has been designated the council's health & safety champion. In addition to their general health & safety duties, they are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating the council's health & safety objectives
- Chairing the corporate health & safety board
- Reporting on health & safety performance to Leadership Team, Elected Members and other interested parties

(See also **Health & safety management model** above)

3.4 Directors, DMTs, 'lead officers' for health & safety, head teachers

Within each directorate/school the director, supported by their directorate management team (DMT) or head teacher has overall responsibility for health & safety and implementing the council's health & safety policy and management system.

More specifically, directors, DMTs and head teachers are responsible for:

- Implementing our health & safety policy & procedures (including any relevant local arrangements), to achieve the council's objectives.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to meet health & safety obligations.
- Ensuring that health & safety is embedded into all directorate activities and that the health & safety management system is implemented.
- Ensuring that health & safety requirements, reporting lines and monitoring arrangements are built into any partnership working.
- Promoting a positive health & safety culture and leading by example.
- Ensuring that there is effective health & safety communication and consultation with employees and their representatives.
- Monitoring and reviewing the directorate's/schools health & safety performance.
- Providing the nominated director with performance information as required.

Note: Directors/DMTs/head teachers must retain ownership of all health & safety issues within their control; whilst tasks can be delegated to competent employee's, accountability/responsibilities cannot.

To ensure that DMTs are kept informed of and alert to relevant health & safety issues, each directorate will appoint from their directorate management team a 'Lead Officer' for health & safety. The role of this lead officer is to champion health & safety

across the directorate; they will also represent their directorate at the CHSB and attend local health & safety consultative groups and other agreed forums.

In addition to their general health & safety duties, the lead officers are responsible for:

- Co-ordinating each directorate's health & safety activities, including any health & safety plans and/or objectives
- Chairing/attending local health & safety consultative groups
- Reporting on health & safety performance to DMTs, the CHSB and other interested parties

3.5 Assistant Directors, Service/Operational managers, Heads of department

As senior managers of the council, assistant directors, service/operational managers, and heads of department are responsible for health & safety matters within their areas of control.

More specifically, assistant directors, service/operational managers, heads of department are responsible for:

- Implementing the council's health & safety policy and procedures
- Ensuring that adequate resources are allocated to meet health & safety obligations
- Ensuring that health & safety is embedded into all activities and that effective health & safety management systems are in place for both normal and emergency situations
- Ensuring that their managers have suitable and sufficient risk assessments and controls in place to minimise risk and to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.
- Ensuring that appropriate health & safety requirements and monitoring arrangements are included in all work carried out by contractors or in conjunction with partner organisations
- Promoting a positive health & safety culture and leading by example
- Ensuring that there is effective health & safety communication and consultation with employees
- Ensuring that employees have appropriate information, instruction and supervision to enable them to do their work safely
- Ensuring all employees are competent and are given adequate training, especially for new or changed procedures, to undertake their tasks
- Ensuring employees are aware of their responsibilities and that employees with specific health & safety roles clearly understand them
- Ensuring that safe plant & equipment is provided, maintained and used correctly and that substances are handled and used safely
- Monitoring health & safety performance against council objectives
- Ensuring that their managers' report and investigate accidents, incidents and near misses

- Informing DMT/head teacher of any health & safety problems/concerns as appropriate
- Seeking professional advice as necessary
- Providing the lead officer and/or nominated director with performance information as required

Note: Assistant Directors, service/operational managers, heads of department must retain ownership of all health & safety issues within their control; whilst tasks can be delegated to competent employees, accountability cannot.

3.6 Line managers/supervisors

At all levels, managers must accept accident prevention, health, safety and welfare as part of their responsibilities.

More specifically, line managers/supervisors should:

- Ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments and controls are in place to minimise risk and to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- Regularly monitor and review working methods and inspect workplaces to ensure that controls remain effective and safe working procedures are being implemented
- Ensure that adequate resources are allocated to meet health & safety obligations
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for employees to enable them to do their work safely
- Ensure all employees are competent and given adequate training, especially for new or changed procedures, to undertake their tasks
- Ensure employees are aware of their responsibilities - wherever practicable these should be included in Job Descriptions/Person Specifications. In addition, employees with specific health & safety roles must clearly understand them - and these must be included in Job Descriptions/Person Specifications
- Ensure that employees are made aware of health & safety issues (including control measures) and consulted on issues that affect them
- Provide and maintain safe plant & equipment and ensure that substances are handled and used safely
- Ensure that appropriate safety equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided and used
- Ensure that health & safety is regularly discussed at staff meetings and employee appraisals
- Ensure employees report accidents, incidents and near misses
- Ensure that accidents, incidents and near misses are recorded, reported and investigated in accordance with internal procedures and RIDDOR
- Respond to any safety concerns raised by employees, trade union colleagues, or service users in an appropriate timescale

- Notify their line manager(s) of health & safety problems/concerns as appropriate
- Demonstrate commitment to health & safety by setting a good example
- Recognise their limitations and seek professional advice as necessary

3.7 All employees

As employees, we all have duties; these are to:

- Take reasonable care of ourselves - this includes having a tidy and safe work area, and maintaining reasonable standards of personal hygiene
- Not to put our colleagues or others who our work affects at risk
- Co-operate with our employer on health & safety matters
- Follow/adhere to verbal and/or written instructions, safe working procedures - including using any safety equipment or personal protective equipment provided
- Not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for health & safety purposes (guards on machines, signs on the wall, etc.); and
- Inform our employer about any health & safety problems or loss/damage to safety equipment
- Report any accident, incident, or near miss to our line manager immediately
- Not carry out any work unless we are competent to do so - this is particularly important when dealing with dangerous equipment or hazardous chemicals.

3.8 Specific responsibilities

Over and above the general duties and responsibilities outlined above, managers must identify individuals/sections with specific/specialist health & safety roles and ensure that these roles are suitably publicised. This could include delegated responsibility for:

- Risk assessment (general and topic specific)
- Premise issues - including fire safety, asbestos and Legionella management, maintenance of plant & equipment - including co-ordination of statutory inspections, etc.
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH)
- Providing information, instruction & supervision
- Assessing competency & arranging training
- Emergency procedures - including fire & evacuation, first aid (e.g. fire marshal, first aid personnel)

Note: managers must retain ownership of all health & safety issues within their control, they must also ensure that anyone assigned specific/specialist roles is competent to undertake them.

3.9 The corporate health & safety unit (HSU)

Without detracting from the primary responsibility of managers and supervisors for safe conditions of work, competent persons have been appointed to support the council in meeting its health & safety obligations.

The corporate health & safety unit, based in the Chief Executive directorate, will coordinate all the council's health & safety matters, carry out safety management audits, and provide an advisory service across the council. The team will work closely with directorates, colleagues within those directorates, and trade union representatives on all health, safety and welfare matters.

In addition to the above, the team:

- Maintains the council's health & safety management systems (HSMS),
- Develops, and assists directorates with, health & safety procedures, guidance and strategies
- Monitors the implementation of the corporate health & safety policy and management systems through a corporate HSMS auditing programme
- Reviews health & safety performance
- In conjunction with the council's learning and development team, design, deliver and/or commission a range of "core" statutory health & safety courses, both corporately and for schools.
- Assists in the investigation of accidents and incidents where appropriate
- Assists directorates in monitoring the health & safety performance of contractors on site
- Monitors (where appropriate) health & safety aspects of partnership working
- Supports and advises safety committees and CHSB, and report to Leadership Team as necessary
- Are authorised to stop any work where there is a serious or imminent danger

Contact details, policy, guidance and other useful resources are available on the council's intranet: https://intranet.sandwell.gov.uk/info/20169/health_and_safety¹

3.10 Corporate Health & Safety Board (CHSB),

The council has a legal duty to establish safety forums and consult employees on matters of health & safety. The CHSB will be the primary forum where the corporate health & safety management system is consulted upon and approved.

The CHSB, chaired by the 'nominated' director, takes a strategic overview of health & safety issues affecting the council; it is also charged with ensuring best practice in health & safety across the council.

CHSB reports to Leadership Team and is charged with ensuring health & safety arrangements are managed effectively.

To ensure that health & safety is considered at the very highest level, CHSB chair has direct input into Leadership Team. If appropriate, issues such as new and revised procedures can also be considered by councillors/cabinet.

¹ Schools resources can be found on the PPS website: [Health and Safety | Payroll People Solutions \(payroll-hr.co.uk\)](https://www.payroll-people.co.uk/)

3.11 Trade Union Consultation Forum/Health & safety committees/JCC

The council has a legal duty to establish safety committees and consult employees on matters of health & safety. Due to the size and nature of the organisation, each directorate has established either Health & Safety Committee(s) or Joint Consultative Committees (JCC), to ensure effective communication

To ensure appropriate influence, directorate safety committee/JCC should be chaired/attended by each directorate's lead officer for health & safety (any other sub-committees should also be chaired by an appropriate level manager). The lead officer should be a member of the directorate management team and represent the directorate at CHSB.

Note: Directorate health & safety committees/JCC are established as a means of local consultation it is not their role to decide corporate policy, allocate or prioritise work. In this respect, they should not detract from managers' primary duty to manage health & safety.

3.12 Safety representatives

The council and directorates have a duty to consult Safety Representatives on matters/changes to working practices that will affect the health & safety of our employees.

In addition, safety representatives have a number of important functions; they can:

- Investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences in the workplace
- Examine the causes of accidents
- Investigate employee complaints relating to health, safety or welfare
- Make representations on behalf of employees
- Carry out inspections of the workplace
- Represent employees if the council is inspected by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

Safety representatives will be appropriately trained and are encouraged/will be supported to act as safety champions in the workplace.

Further advice can be obtained from your Trade Union.

4 Organisation – Health & Safety Management System

This section of the policy explains the council's health & safety management system, which is aligned to HSE's guidance "Managing for health & safety" (HSG65) and follows the **Plan, Do, Check, Act** approach to management.

4.1 Policy development

We will keep our health & safety policy (including organisation/responsibilities, and arrangements) and health and safety management system (including procedures and guidance) under regular review to ensure they remain current and effective.

When developing our policy and other health & safety procedures and guidance, we will have due regard to equality issues; for instance, guidance on fire safety will include reference to PEEPs (personal emergency evacuation plans for disabled people), and risk assessment guidelines will ask managers to consider any additional issues raised by a person's requirements under the Equalities Act.

The corporate policy, procedures, guidance, and revisions to them will, where appropriate, be authorised by the chief executive or, appropriate director (for any directorate specific documents). Documentation will be dated to help ensure effective document control and outdated documents will be removed from the HSU intranet pages/general circulation.

4.2 Cooperation, consultation and communication

We will consult with employees and appropriate trade unions representatives in the development and monitoring of our health & safety systems, policy, procedures and risk assessments.

Our policy, procedures, guidance and template forms/assessments will be made available to employees via the intranet. Employees will be made aware of any policy/procedure/assessment appropriate to their post by their line manager.

Additional guidance for Sandwell schools is available on the [PPS website](#).

4.3 Planning & prioritising

We will ensure that health & safety is embedded into all our activities and that effective health & safety management systems, including (where identified) health & safety objectives are in place.

Planning will be carried out at the relevant H&S consultation forums at regular intervals and will involve objective setting, identification of expected outcomes, allocation of resources and assignment of tasks.

We will ensure that suitable risk assessments and controls are in place to minimise risk and to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health.

4.4 Measuring health & safety performance

We will undertake a range of **active** and **reactive** monitoring of our health & safety performance.

Active monitoring – will include regular inspections of the workplace by managers to ensure our premises and systems of work are safe.

Reactive monitoring – will include regular reviews of our accident, near misses, aggression and other incident reports by senior management teams and our health & safety committees/CHSB to ensure appropriate remedial action is taken to help prevent recurrence.

4.5 Auditing/inspecting health & safety performance

As part of our active monitoring, regular HSMS audits of our health & safety management systems will be carried out by the corporate health & safety team on a prioritised basis.

4.6 Reviewing health & safety performance

Our health & safety performance, including progress on our health & safety objectives, active and reactive monitoring outcomes and any policy or procedure reviews will be reviewed and evaluated by CHSB, JCC and health & safety committees as appropriate. The findings of our H&S reviews will be used to identify improvements and amendments to our HSMS.

5 Arrangements

The arrangements outlined below along with our policy, [safety management procedures \(SMPs\)](#), and [safety management guidance \(SMG\)](#), published by the corporate health & safety unit all constitute part of the council's safety management system. Directors/head teachers must ensure that management systems are put in place across their directorate/school to implement this system and ensure it is followed by all employees.

These arrangements cover most general issues applicable across the council. Each Directorate should develop, consult upon and publish supplementary arrangements/procedures to help manage any local risks not covered by corporate procedures/guidance and must ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place.

In some instances, corporate arrangements may need to be adapted to suit local needs or to comply with specific external requirements (e.g. CQC, OFSTED); however, this should only be with the agreement of the corporate health & safety unit, directorate management teams/service/operational managers, as appropriate, and should not lead to a reduction in the overall corporate standards of health & safety protection.

5.1 [Accidents and aggressive/violent incidents](#)

- All employees are made aware of the need to report all accidents and aggressive/violent incidents as part of their induction.
- Any incident subject to RIDDOR² (i.e. fatality, 'specified' injury, over-seven-day injury, hospitalised member of the public and specified occupational diseases/dangerous occurrences) will be reported to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) without delay.
- Other, non-RIDDOR, incidents will also be recorded locally.
- Following any accident (excluding "rough and tumble" incidents in schools), aggressive incident or near-miss, an Accident and Incident Report Form will be completed, and a copy sent to the health & safety team for monitoring purposes.

² The Reporting of Injuries, Disease and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

- All incidents will receive an appropriate level of investigation in accordance with our “Incident Investigation Responsibilities” matrix, found in the safety management procedure.
- Accident and aggressive incidents will be monitored and reported to Leadership Team and health & safety committees in order to identify issues/trends and put in place measures to reduce the number of incidents.
- Additional advice and guidance regarding what is reportable under RIDDOR, along with support in investigating serious incidents is available from the corporate health & safety team if required.

5.2 Asbestos management (for premises built before 2000)

- For all our buildings built before 2000, an asbestos survey has been carried out by a competent, asbestos surveyor and an asbestos register is in place showing the location of known asbestos containing materials (ACMs). Any areas of our buildings that were not surveyed are presumed to contain ACMs and managed accordingly.
- The surveys/registers are reviewed regularly to ensure that it has been kept up to date (e.g. when ACMs have been removed).
- Risk assessments have been carried out and asbestos management plans have been produced. ACMs in poor condition will be removed; those in good repair will be left in place and monitored for damage/deterioration by suitably trained employees. All monitoring is recorded.
- An asbestos management plan will be produced for each premise containing ACMs with assistance and guidance from the asbestos team/surveyor setting out how the risks identified from asbestos will be managed.
- Any removal of, or work on, ACMs is carried out by licensed asbestos removal contractors. When ACMs are removed, our asbestos registers are updated, and evidence of air testing is kept showing that the area was safe for reoccupation.
- Premise managers and/or Facilities Management/facilities staff manage any ACMs on the premises they occupy or have responsibility for; these employees will have asbestos awareness training. Other employees who deal with ACMs or who may accidentally come into contact with them will also receive information / training as appropriate.
- Before contractors are allowed to work on our buildings, they are made aware of any ACMs they could potentially disturb and the precautions they should follow. All liaison/sharing of information is via premise managers/Facilities Management/facilities staff, as appropriate.
- A refurbishment or demolition survey will be carried out prior to any major work, e.g. extensive refurbishment or demolition, to identify any hidden or inaccessible ACMs.
- If ACMs are accidentally damaged, we will: evacuate the area immediately; arrange for an air test to determine the level of asbestos contamination; ensure a licensed contractor carries out a thorough environmental clean of the area and

removes or seals the damaged ACMs as appropriate; and, arrange for further air tests after cleaning to prove the area is safe for reoccupation.

5.3 Control of contractors/Construction Design and Management (CDM)

- We will ensure that any work done on our behalf by contractors is safe and does not put the health & safety of our employees or others using our premises at risk. We will also ensure that we inform contractors of any issues on site that might affect their health & safety.
- Where work is commissioned via our Strategic Assets and Land (SAL)/Property Services/Urban Design arrangements, they will undertake health & safety checks on the contractors and monitor their performance, including supervision arrangements, on site.
- Where work is commissioned via other routes we will ensure that appropriate health & safety checks on the contractors take place. This includes checks on policies, method statements and monitoring of health and safety performance, including supervision arrangements, on site.
- We will ensure that we notify HSE of any planned construction work that will last longer than 30 working days and involve more than 20 workers at any one time; or where the work exceeds 500 individual worker days.
- Before contractors are allowed to start on site, they must submit risk assessments and method statements for all works they will carry out. We will carry out our own risk assessment based on the information provided.
- A Contractor Work Registration Form describing the work; materials, equipment and services to be used; hazardous operations involved; hazards on site; and general arrangements will be completed for all major works carried out by contractors.
- High risk activities (e.g. hot work, work at heights) will be subject to a permit to work procedure.
- Contractors will be shown the Asbestos Register, if appropriate.
- Contractors must ensure that they share all relevant information with any sub-contractors they use.
- Regular site meetings will be held for larger projects.

5.4 Control of substances hazardous to health (CoSHH)

- Where it is appropriate for the protection of the health of employees who are, or are liable to be, exposed to a substance hazardous to health, we shall ensure that such employees are given suitable health surveillance.
- Wherever possible, we will use non-hazardous products and substances.
- All hazardous substances used will have a CoSHH assessment undertaken before they are brought into use.
- Managers should ensure that an audit is carried out and an inventory kept ensuring that all hazardous substances used in their section/area have appropriate assessments that are reviewed regularly.
- All hazardous substances will be stored appropriately and securely when not in use.

- Employee's will be informed how to use any hazardous products safely and will receive training if appropriate.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided and if the assessment indicates PPE is required, employees must use it.

5.5 Display screen equipment (DSE)

- A DSE assessment will be completed for all employees identified as "users" who use DSE (such as desktop computers and laptops).
- 'Users' are entitled to assistance with eye and eyesight tests and with the purchase of any spectacles required for use with DSE.
- Any problems highlighted by the assessments or eyesight tests should be brought to the attention of the user's line manager so that suitable control measures can be put in place.

5.6 Driver & Vehicle safety

- We will develop and implement a driver & vehicle safety procedure.
- Any vehicles provided by the council as part of our fleet will be regularly serviced, inspected and maintained.
- Identified drivers of council vehicles will be assessed to ensure they are competent.
- Checks on drivers' licences (e.g. ensuring correct categories are held) will be carried out at regular intervals.
- We will carry out risk assessments of vehicle movements on our sites and the vehicle/pedestrian interface. Assessments will also cover maintenance activities where vehicles may need to access vehicle restricted areas. Other areas we will consider include:
 - Wherever practicable, there will be separate pedestrian and vehicle access on to sites.
 - If appropriate, designated pathways will be provided with suitable barriers (e.g. fencing) to protect pedestrians from vehicle movements.
 - Speed limit signs, limiting speed to 10 mph or less, will be displayed on our sites. Speed restrictors (e.g. sleeping policemen/humps) will be installed, as appropriate, to slow down vehicles on site.
 - Designated parking bays will be established on sites.

5.7 Electricity & Gas

- We will ensure that electrical and gas installations and equipment are safe to use and are suitable for the purpose and conditions in which they are used.
- Electrical and gas installations will be maintained in a safe condition for use so that people's health and safety is not put at risk.
- Electrical and gas installations will be regularly inspected to ensure that they are, and continue to be, safe for use.

5.8 Fire & other emergency evacuation procedures

- We will ensure that a fire risk assessment is carried out by a competent person for all premises we own and/or occupy.
- The assessments will be formally reviewed by a competent person at regular intervals as determined by risk assessment. In some premises, e.g. schools, annual reviews will also be carried out by the premises occupier.
- Any actions identified by the fire risk assessment will be addressed by an appropriate Action Plan.
- Personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) will be carried out for any employee or other person (e.g. pupil, customer) requiring one due to disability or ill health.
- Firefighting equipment, fire alarms systems, emergency lighting and fire notices will be provided in accordance with the fire risk assessments.
- All checks identified by fire risk assessments will be recorded in Fire Log Books.
- There will be weekly tests of fire alarm systems and all firefighting equipment will be checked annually by a competent person.
- Fire Evacuation Plans will be produced, and appropriate employee's will be appointed and suitably briefed to act as fire wardens if required.
- Where appropriate, suitable signs will be prominently displayed around our premises giving details of fire wardens.
- Fire safety drills will take place at least twice per year or termly in schools.
- All employee's will be made aware of fire safety issues, and new employee's will be briefed when they join the council.
- Pupils/customers will be briefed on evacuation procedures as appropriate.
- Contractors will be given information on what to do in case of fire and employee's will assist visitors to exit our premises should an emergency arise.

5.9 First aid

- We will complete needs assessments to determine our first aid requirements (training and equipment). Assessments will be reviewed regularly and following any serious incident.
- First aid provision will consider pupils, customers and service users who use our premises/facilities. In primary schools/early years settings, first aid will include an appropriate number of paediatric first aiders.
- First aiders will be appropriately trained, and first aid boxes will be kept appropriately stocked.
- Appropriate signs will be prominently displayed around our premises giving details of first aiders and the location of first aid boxes.
- All employees will make themselves familiar with details of their nearest first aider(s) and the location of first aid boxes. They must also be aware of emergency procedures and the requirement to report all incidents.

5.10 Hybrid & Home Working

- We will ensure that all employees are enabled to work in a safe & secure environment, wherever that may be.
- We will provide suitable equipment for the environment in which employees are working.
- Managers will ensure suitable & sufficient assessments are made prior to authorising their employees to begin Hybrid and/or Home working.
- Regular contact and support will be given to all employees who are working in a hybrid manner, to ensure their wellbeing.

5.11 Infection Control

- We will ensure that all our workplaces are operated/maintained in a safe manner to minimise the risk of transmitting infections and will ensure our employees are made aware of measures they must take to keep themselves and others safe.
- If there are instances where there is a pandemic / endemic outbreak of a pathogen, we will follow all UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) / Government advice and guidance.

5.12 Legionella (water safety)

- Where required, Legionella risk assessments will be carried out by competent, suitably qualified contractors for all premises we occupy. Assessments will be reviewed regularly.
- Any remedial work identified by the risk assessments will be addressed as appropriate.

Where necessary written schemes identifying the required controls to manage the risk from Legionella will be produced that include the following controls (detail of who undertakes the work to be confirmed locally):

- Weekly flushing of little used outlets.
- Monthly water temperature checks.
- Quarterly de-scaling of shower heads.
- Annual water sampling (or more frequent if required by risk assessment).
- Annual service of any thermostatic mixer valves (TMVs) fitted to control scald risk.
- Appropriate employee will receive awareness training.

5.13 Manual handling

- Wherever reasonably practicable, we will avoid the need for hazardous manual handling activities.
- Where hazardous manual handling tasks can't be avoided, we will undertake an assessment of the risk of injury.
- Controls will be put in place to reduce the risk of injury so far as is reasonably practicable.

- Handling equipment, such as hoists, trolleys and pallet/sack trucks, will be made available.
- All appropriate employees will receive manual handling awareness training.
- Employees who are required to undertake hazardous manual handling tasks will receive specialist training.
- Employees involved in [moving and handling of people](#), will receive specialist training.

5.14 [Noise and Vibration](#)

- Where possible we will procure equipment that is below the action levels for vibration and noise.
- Equipment will be maintained and serviced at regular intervals.
- We will keep under review our equipment to identify if safer options are available.
- Identified employees will be offered a pre-health check, followed by regular health surveillance appointments.
- Where identified appropriate training and PPE will be provided.

5.15 Occupational health and [work-related stress](#)

- Where required/identified, we will provide pre-employment health checks.
- Employees can be referred to occupational health to help put in place adjustments to support them at work or to help them back to work following periods of absence.
- Support to employees includes support following sudden injury at work and also following long-term exposure to hazards/working conditions (e.g. upper limb disorders or stress).
- Managers will cooperate with occupational health initiatives to help monitor and reduce the incidence of occupational ill-health, and initiatives to help employees back to work following periods of absence (e.g. through access to the corporate Health & Wellbeing approach).
- We will adopt the HSE management standards for any identified work-related stress issues.
- All employees have access to the council's Employment Assistance Counselling service and occupational health advisers who can provide guidance and information to employees and managers on occupational health issues.

5.16 [Open water](#)

- We will ensure that any bodies of open water under our control are suitably assessed and that appropriate warning signs, lifesaving equipment, etc is provided and maintained where appropriate.

5.17 [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

- We will only use PPE as a "last resort" option to mitigate the risk of harm to our employees.

- When identified by risk assessment, we will ensure that appropriate PPE to the recognised British Standard is provided to our employees at no cost to themselves.
- Where disposable PPE is provided, we will ensure there is an adequate supply made available to each employee.

5.18 Premises, plant and equipment – maintenance, servicing and inspection

- We will appoint (Headteacher in schools) and train a Premise Manager & deputy Premise Manager in each of our buildings to be responsible for/coordinating Premise related issues including the completion of a Premise risk assessment.
- We will ensure that there is safe access and egress to all our sites.
- Heating, lighting, ventilation, etc will be maintained by competent persons to ensure the working environment is comfortable so far as is reasonably practicable.
- All our plant and equipment are inspected and tested in accordance with statutory requirements and/or manufacturer's recommendations as appropriate.
- Other plant and equipment will be inspected and maintained in accordance with our risk assessments.
- Only competent persons/contractors (e.g. Gas Safe Registered for gas appliances) will be employed to carry out inspections/servicing of our plant and equipment.
- All inspections/tests are recorded, and inspection certificates/evidence of inspections retained.
- Each directorate will establish formal defect reporting procedures for employees to report defects with premises, plant or equipment and must ensure that systems are in place to rectify faults promptly.

5.19 Risk assessment (RA)

- Risk assessments will be carried out and recorded on the approved corporate pro-forma to identify significant hazards in the workplace, evaluate the risks arising from those hazards and ensure that adequate precautions are in place to minimise the risk.
- Premise and Line managers will ensure that Premise, job/team and task specific risk assessments are in place for existing work and will also ensure that assessments are carried out before introducing new methods of work. Employee's will be made aware of any assessments that affect them.
- When undertaking risk assessments, line managers will look at any specific risks to young persons (under 18s at work or on work experience), and/or new and expectant mothers, and ensure they are adequately controlled.
- Assessments will be reviewed regularly, especially following changes in methods of work; before introducing new equipment; and following any near misses, accidents or other serious incidents.

In addition;

- Where deemed necessary, the RA will be supplemented by method statements / safe systems of work.
- In extremely high-risk situations, or where required by specific Regulations/good practice, we will operate a permit to work (PTW) system.

5.20 Training & competency

- We will ensure that all employees, including temporary and agency staff, are competent and are given appropriate health & safety training/instruction to undertake their role safely and carry out duties assigned to them. This will be based upon corporate and localised training needs analysis (TNA).
- All employees will receive appropriate health & safety information when they first start work for the council.
- Key employees will receive appropriate training to help them manage health & safety and topic specific training e.g. accident investigation, asbestos management, COSHH, risk assessment, etc. Other training will be determined by regular training needs assessments.

5.21 Violence and aggression/lone working

- We will ensure that risk assessments and suitable controls are in place to cover lone working or any circumstances where employee's may be subject to aggressive incidents.
- A copy of our "violence notice" will be prominently displayed in the entrances/receptions to our buildings stating that we will not tolerate violence and aggression towards our employees.
- New employees will be made aware of any relevant lone working arrangements when they join the council.
- Appropriate front line employees and managers will receive personal safety and lone working training.
- Where appropriate, employee's will receive physical intervention training (e.g. "MAPA" in schools and children's residential services.)
- All incidents of aggression and violence to employees will be reported (see Accidents and aggressive/violent incidents, above) and investigated by managers so that suitable controls can be put in place to minimise the risk of recurrence. If appropriate, incidents will be reported to the police.

5.22 Work at Heights

- We will plan our works to avoid (e.g. by using technology such as drones³, reach poles, etc) the need to work at height wherever possible.
- Where we cannot avoid, then an assessment will be carried out for any work at heights. Appropriate access and where appropriate, fall arrest equipment will be provided and properly maintained. Where appropriate, employee's will be trained in safe work at height and safe use of access equipment.

³ Contact must be made with the council's risk and insurance team before using drones

5.23 Zoonotic Diseases

- We will ensure that our employees and members of the public are suitably trained/informed to keep them safe when dealing with animals that carry infectious diseases.
- Suitable PPE and health surveillance will be carried out where risk assessment has identified the need.