

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

### **PURPOSE**

This policy sets out the general principles and approach that the council will follow in respect of health and safety legislation for premises and activities for which the council is responsible.

It is the responsibility of all councillors' and employees of the council to be aware of the following policy statements on health and safety and of the organisational arrangements made to implement these policies.

### **COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT AND LEGAL CONTEXT**

Meriden Parish Council will:

**In accordance with the requirements of *The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)*, and *The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1998)*, accept its duty to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions for its employees and members.**

**Accept its duty of care to other persons such as volunteers and contractors who work on behalf of the council.**

**Take all reasonable steps to ensure that it complies with the law on health, safety and welfare and any relevant Regulations, Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance.**

**Provide the resources to ensure the safety of its employees and others affected by its work.**

### **PROCESS**

**The council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that:**

- Information, instruction, training, supervision, equipment and facilities necessary to achieve a safe working environment for employees, members of the public, contractors and volunteers are provided
- Work is done in ways so that members of the public are not put at risk
- Arrangements are in place for the safe use, handling, storage and disposal of all substances and equipment that may endanger health or welfare
- This policy is brought to the attention of all employees, members of the public, contractors, volunteers and councillors
- When necessary, there is consultation and negotiation with employees on health, safety and welfare at work to ensure continuing improvement.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The council is responsible for managing safety, based on the council's safety policy.

The clerk shall keep copies of all risk assessments, method statements and health and safety documents, in labelled health and safety files. All council members and employees should have access to and be aware of the contents.

All councillors, employees/contractors and volunteers have a duty to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of any persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Day to day matters of health and safety are dealt with by the clerk acting on behalf of the council.

This policy is reviewed annually by the council.

### PROCEDURE

## General arrangements (council premises)

Any accidents, injuries or dangerous occurrences must be recorded in the accident book and where necessary the clerk will report these to the HSE by telephoning 0845-300-99-23. The notifiable types of incident are:

- a fatality
- a specified major injury (fracture of skull, spine or pelvis; fracture or amputation of limb(s); loss of sight or penetrating injury to an eye; severe electric shock or any other injury which results in hospitalisation for more than 24 hours)
- An injury which results in incapacity to work for more than three days.

Thereafter all such accidents should be brought to the attention of the council. On the event of a serious injury or dangerous occurrence the chairman or in their absence the vice chairman should be informed immediately.

A first aid box is located in the council office, and periodic checks will be carried out to ensure the contents are adequately maintained.

The accident book is located in the council office.

## Fire safety

It shall be the responsibility of the person conducting a meeting in booked non-council premises to ensure that fire exits and passageways are kept clear at all times as detailed in the hire agreement.

The clerk will visually inspect the fire extinguishers in the council office on a monthly basis and will check and annual inspections by an appointed contractor of the landlord.

Any electrical equipment brought onto council premises shall be safe, in good working order and used in a safe manner.

## Risk assessments

The council will carry out risk assessment of its activities as and when necessary and review these annually.

The council will set up and monitor policies and procedures to reduce any risks that are identified.

The council requires contractors to supply Risk Assessments, written Method Statements/Safe Systems of Work prior to starting any major works on behalf of the council.

## Computer use and set up

This section applies to computers whether desktop, laptop or handheld, wherever they may be used.

All council employees habitually using DSE equipment as a significant part of their normal work should use the HSE Workstation Checklist to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992.

The clerk will ensure that workstations are be maintained in a safe condition including:

- chairs that are capable of being adjusted and have adequate back and leg support
- adequate space under the work surface
- footrests available to those who need them
- adequate ventilation and lighting.

The council will provide habitual DSE users, on request, with an eye sight test every two years or more frequently if recommended by a doctor or optician.

### Alcohol and drugs

The use of illegal drugs and misuse of alcohol is forbidden in all council activities.

### Smoking

The council operates a strict no smoking policy on their premises

## Lone working

Lone working for the council is defined as working away from a fixed base without colleagues, e.g. driving, visiting other premises, sites or people in their homes or at home.

Employees and members of the council should comply with any information, instruction and training that is provided in relation to lone working.

Ensure their own health and safety is not put at risk by taking appropriate safety precautions when working alone, including for example:

- not working at heights on a ladder or steps
- not going into lofts or any other spaces in which they might become trapped
- not doing any tasks involving hazardous tools or material
- locking the doors and closing the windows, where possible, to prevent intruders
- making themselves aware of the nearest fire exit and first aid kit
- making sure someone knows where they are and their estimated time of return.

## Driving

Where privately owned vehicles are used for business purposes, the driver must ensure that their insurance covers business use.

All vehicles private vehicles must be taxed, possess an MOT if required and regularly serviced.



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## Office

The office work area is kept clear and free of tripping and slipping hazards.

Coats and bags must not be hung on the backs of chairs or left on the floor around workstations.

All waste materials should be promptly removed to designated waste storage areas and disposed of regularly to avoid build up.

Any defects in the work environment or conditions must be reported to/actioned by the clerk.

## Electrical equipment

Portable electrical equipment must only be used for the purpose for which it was intended and in the environment for which it was designed and constructed.

Users will:

- visually inspect new equipment for damage
- only connect portable electrical apparatus to the mains supply by means of suitably fused plug and socket outlets
- stop using equipment and disconnect from the power source if there are any concerns relating to damage or fault.

The clerk will ensure portable appliance testing takes place on a regular basis by an approved electrical contractor and a register of all testing is maintained.

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