

Health & Safety Policy

Policy Adopted: 13th June 2022 (Staffing& Accommodation Sub-Committee)

Reviewed: 2nd December 2024 (Staffing Committee)

Review Date: December 2025

Policy Overview

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council has a duty both as an employer and as a body corporate, to prepare, update accordingly and bring to the attention of its employees a written statement of its general policy with respect to health and safety at work. With due regard to the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992, the Council will make and give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate. In undertaking such a commitment the Town Council will consider the nature of its activities and the size of its undertaking, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the necessary preventative and protective measures.

The Town Council undertakes that it will bring all aspects of the policy, where appropriate, and revision thereof to the notice of all its employees and other persons so affected by the Council's activities as required under current relevant statutory provisions.

1. Statement of Intent

Witham Town Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to provide a healthy place of work and a safe working environment for all its employees. The Council accepts the requirement to assess risk and to reduce hazards accordingly for the protection of its employees. Within that undertaking, so far as is reasonably practicable, the following areas will form the basis upon which to provide a corporate strategy:-

- 1.1 To provide an effective and suitable system for the assessment of risk, to identify the hazards present and to implement preventative and protection measures;
- 1.2 To provide effective planning, organisation, control and monitoring procedures;
- 1.3 To provide appropriate health surveillance;
- 1.4 To appoint suitable persons to provide health and safety assistance for implementing the Town Council's responsibilities.
- 1.5 To make provision for adequate procedures to deal effectively with situations
- 1.6 to provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of the employees.
- 1.7 to make provision to ensure all employees are provided with adequate health and safety training;
- 1.8 to ensure adequate provision is made for new employees with regard to their health and safety;
- 1.9 to establish joint co-operation with other employers where Council employees and those from outside undertakings need to make suitable provision for health and safety matters.
- 1.10 To ensure that appropriate measures are in place to address the risks associated with remote and flexible working arrangements.

1.11 To regularly review and update risk assessments, particularly in light of new working practices or changes in legislation.

1.12 To provide adequate resources for the implementation of this policy.

Witham Town Council hereby declares that the provision of relevant European Community Directives, Legislation, Regulations and Approved Codes of Practice must be observed.

2. Corporate Responsibility

The overall responsibility for matters arising out of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 rests with the Staffing and Accommodation Sub-Committee acting through the Town Clerk. In compliance with the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992, Regulation 6(1), Witham Town Council has appointed the Staffing Sub-Committee to undertake necessary measures in order to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed under the relevant statutory provisions.

3. Employees' Responsibilities

The Town Council wishes to draw the attention of all employees to the following:-

3.1 Section 7(a) of the Act which requires them to take reasonable care for the safety of themselves and others at work and to Section 7 (b) of the Act to co-operate with their employers and others in the carrying out of statutory obligations;

3.2 Section 8 of the Act which prohibits any person from intentionally or recklessly interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare;

3.3 The need to comply with the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1992, Regulation 12 as follows:

(i) use any machinery, protective clothing, equipment, dangerous substances, the handling and transporting of loads strictly in compliance with Council procedures and in accordance with any related training; (

ii) Inform the Town Clerk of any work situation which is reasonably considered to represent a serious and immediate danger to health and safety;

(iii) Inform the Town Clerk of any matter which could reasonably be considered to represent a shortcoming in the Town Council's protection arrangements for health and safety;

(iv) report to the Town Clerk should the employee consider that he/she is not capable for any reason, be it a medical condition, level of training, knowledge or experience etc., to carry out any activity during the employ of the Council in none other than a safe manner and without risk to their health and that of others;

(v) Report to the Town Clerk all accidents and damage to persons or equipment;

(vi) Ensure that they, as individuals are aware of and conform to the Town Council's Safety Policy;

(vii) Observe safety rules at all times;

(viii) Observe safe standards of behaviour and dress

(ix) That failure of an employee to comply with the provisions of the Act or of any aspect of the Town Council's policy could lead to legal and/or disciplinary action.

4. Particular Arrangements for Application of the Policy

4.1 The Town Council is required:-

- (i) To ensure that the provisions of health and safety legislation are carried out in the Council;
- (ii) To ensure that the Council's Health, Safety & Welfare Policy is implemented;
- (iii) To identify employees with health and safety responsibilities;
- (iv) To ensure that all employees know the whereabouts of the first aid facilities;
- (v) To ensure that all employees know what to do in the case of fire and to know the locations of and how to use the firefighting equipment provided;
- (vi) To ensure that all employees are provided with appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where necessary, and are trained in its correct use;
- (vii) To implement and maintain an effective system for reporting and investigating accidents, incidents, and near-misses;
- (viii) To ensure that regular health and safety audits and inspections are carried out;
- (ix) To provide and maintain a safe and healthy working environment, including adequate welfare facilities;**
- (x) To consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- (xi) To provide information, instruction, and supervision for employees;
- (xii) To ensure all employees are competent to do their tasks, and to give them adequate training.

4.2 Employees are required:

- (i) Fully to familiarise themselves with the Council's Safety Policy and subsequent modifications;
- (ii) To ensure that they comply at all times to safe working practices;
- (iii) To ensure that they know what to do in the case of fire and know the locations of and how to use the firefighting equipment provided;
- (iv) To be familiar with the first aid locations of all staff kitchens, operational vehicles and ground floor defibrillator cabinet.
- (v) To maintain safe practices in order to achieve maximum safety for themselves, their colleagues and members of the public
- (vi) To report promptly to the Town Clerk all accidents, dangerous occurrences for insertion in the appropriate book.
- (vii) To ensure that all machinery and equipment which they are operating is properly maintained and safe to use.
- (viii) To ensure that all defects are reported immediately to the Town Clerk.
- (ix) To use any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided in accordance with training and instructions;
- (x) To cooperate with the Council on all matters relating to health and safety;
- (xi) Not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for their health, safety, or welfare;
- (xii) To report any health and safety concerns to their line manager or the Town Clerk immediately.

5. Promotion of Policy

Copies of this statement will be issued to all Members of Staff and to Members of the Town Council who have corporate responsibility in this matter. The Town Clerk holds ultimate accountability for Health & Safety policy implementation and his/her deputy in their absence. Copies of this policy will also be placed in conspicuous areas. A continuing programme of health and safety awareness briefings will be developed and maintained for all.

The Council will ensure that this policy is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in legislation, working practices, and the nature of the risks faced by the Council and its employees.

6. Risk Assessment

The Council will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are carried out for all work activities. These assessments will be reviewed and updated regularly, particularly when there are significant changes in work practices or legislation.

7. Training

The Council is committed to providing employees with adequate health and safety training. This will include:

- (i) Induction training for new employees;
- (ii) Job-specific training where required;
- (iii) Training in the use of any new equipment or technology;
- (iv) Refresher training as necessary.

8. Emergency Procedures

The Council will establish and communicate clear emergency procedures for potential incidents such as fire, serious accidents, or other significant risks. These procedures will be regularly reviewed and practised where appropriate.

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed annually, alternating between the Staffing Committee and Policy and Resources Committee to ensure its continued effectiveness and relevance.