

Harrietsham Parish Council

Health & Safety Policy

Introduction

This document has been compiled to provide information and guidance to all employees on the Council's Health and Safety Policy and organisational arrangements for implementation of the Policy. The parish council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to ensure, as far as is reasonably practical, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees.

Statement of Safety Policy

It is the policy of the Council to provide and monitor safe and healthy working conditions, plant equipment and systems of work for all employees and to provide such information, training and supervision as may be required for this purpose. The Council is aware of its Duty of Care for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by its activities.

The allocation of duties for safety matters and the particular arrangements necessary to implement the policy are set out below.

The Organisation and Responsibilities

Overall Responsibility

The Clerk has overall responsibility for ensuring the provisions and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy.

Detailed Responsibility

In particular the Clerk is responsible for:-

- Establishing safe systems of work and procedures for carrying out the Health and Safety Policy of the Council, incorporating any regulations, approved codes of practice and other relevant legislation.
- Ensuring that safe working procedures and safe systems of work are implemented by staff and that a safe working environment is provided for them.
- Ensuring that all employees receive adequate training information and supervision to maintain safe standards.
- Ensuring all safety rules are observed and that protective clothing and equipment is worn or used where required.
- Ensuring that all machinery and equipment is properly maintained and safe to use and that guards are in position.
- Ensuring that the mental welfare of all employees is protected, as far as it is able, and that the Council recognises its responsibility to identify and manage stress in the work place.

All employees have the responsibility to co-operate with their Supervisor and Line Manager to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of themselves and others.

All employees are required to:

- Make themselves familiar with and conform to the Council's Health and Safety Policy.
- Observe safety rules at all times.
- Where required, wear protective clothing and use appropriate safety devices provided.

- Report to the immediate Supervisor all accidents, injuries to persons or damage to plant and equipment.
- Know the location of first aid facilities.
- Report all safety hazards as a matter of urgency to their immediate supervisor.
- Know what to do in the case of fire or other emergency and the location of fire fighting equipment.
- Maintain good housekeeping at all times.
- Observe safe standards of behaviour and dress.
- Not to enter into any kind of horseplay or practical joking.

It is the policy of this Council that all employees shall receive training in all safety aspects of their occupation and courses, where necessary, shall be held for this purpose.

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to investigate all accidents and to submit a full report to the Chairman and Chairman of the relevant committee. The Clerk will issue instructions to ensure such accidents are not repeated and where appropriate make recommendation on accident prevention.

It shall be the responsibility of the Clerk to monitor the maintenance of all equipment and to submit an annual report for consideration by the relevant committee on obsolete machinery.

General Arrangements

First Aid

The First Aid Box is located in the Parish Office. The Clerk is responsible for carrying out periodic checks to ensure the contents are adequately maintained.

Accident, Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences

It shall be the responsibility of the Clerk/staff to record all such incidents in the Accident Book and where necessary the Clerk to report these injuries, diseases and other dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Executive, normally by telephoning RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences). The Clerk is responsible for a periodic review of the accident book.

The accident book is located in the Parish Office.

Fire Safety

It shall be the responsibility of the Clerk or other named person to see that escape routes and passageways are kept clear at all times.

Fire Extinguishers

It shall be the responsibility of the Clerk to organise annual inspections of all fire extinguishers on premises administrated by the Council.

Fire Alarms

All employees are responsible for ensuring that they are conversant with the Council's evacuation procedures.

Training

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to issue to all newly appointed staff a copy of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and such supplements as are applicable to that person's duties and responsibilities.

It shall be the duty of the Clerk to ensure that all new staff receive adequate training in all safety aspects of their occupation.

Contractors and Visitors

Where contractors and sub-contractors are engaged by the Council, they must maintain effective control of themselves and those working under them so as to ensure that they comply with the responsibilities and duties set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and any subsequent legislation (see appendix A).

The Parish Council shall ensure that those not in the employment of the Council, including the general public, are not exposed to risk to their safety or health when on the Council's premises.

Contractors should ensure that any electrical appliances brought onto Council premises shall be safe, in good working order and used in a safe manner.

General advice for safe working (see appendix B).

Appendix A.

OFFICES

HEATING, LIGHTING AND VENTILATION

Temperature should reach a minimum of 60.8 degrees F after the first hour of working time and be maintained between 60.8 degrees F and 68 degrees F throughout the working day.

Free standing heaters must not be used unless specifically authorised. When these are so authorised, they must comply fully with Fire Regulations and the area around them must be kept clear of any paper or other flammable materials and be sited away from desks and chairs.

Office lighting - Desks should be placed to gain the maximum amount of light. Free-standing desk lights should be avoided or placed so as to minimise the danger of trailing electrical leads.

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Mains must not be overloaded. It is important that the correct socket outlet and plug top face (where these are available) is used for each item of electrical equipment.

Only electrical equipment provided by the Council should be used and electric points must not be overloaded by means of multi-adaptors. Where possible all mains should be switched off when not in use.

Leads from points for various desk uses should not present a hazard by trailing across areas of access. Extension leads are for temporary use only.

Defective equipment must never be used. Staff should not attempt to effect repairs to electrical equipment, unless competent to do so.

FURNITURE, FITTINGS AND EQUIPMENT

All heavy equipment and storage units should preferably be placed against the wall.

Heavy equipment and furniture must not be moved by individuals.

Office equipment whether manually or electrically operated, must not be used by unauthorised, untrained personnel.

Filing cabinets should always have sufficient weight in the bottom drawer to prevent the cabinet from tipping when a full top drawer is opened. Filing cabinet and desk drawers must always be closed immediately after use. Damaged or defective cabinets must not be used.

High shelves should only be reached through the use of steps provided for that purpose. It is dangerous to stand on desks and chairs, particularly those fitted with castors and this should be avoided at all times.

Work stations for office staff using computers etc. should conform to the guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) concerning position, seating and work practices.

CARETAKING AND CLEANING

It is essential that care is exercised to follow all labelled instructions on containers and packages. Products should be stored away from extreme low temperatures, heat sources and naked lights, particularly those products containing hydrocarbon and other flammable solvents. Additional information can be found sources at HSE website under Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Appropriate protective clothing, such as gloves and overalls must be worn when handling corrosive substances.

Care must be taken to avoid ingestion, inhalation and skin contact of all chemical substances. Spillage must be cleaned up immediately while observing all precautions.

Consideration must be given to the possibility of hazardous by-products that may arise from reaction between various products, or from products exposed to heat or fire. Particularly in the case of bleach which will produce chlorine gas if mixed with acidic cleansers (e.g. Harpic) or other acidic substances.

Step-ladders which are used to gain access to heights must be in good condition and free from defects.

All electrical cleaning equipment must have been wired up by a competent person.

Any deterioration in electrical connections or wiring should be reported immediately.

Floors must be treated only with approved non-slip products. The method of application and quantities to be applied should be that recommended by the manufacturer.

YOU SHOULD REPORT:

- a) Structural faults which appear dangerous.
- b) Floor coverings, etc. which cause a tripping hazard.
- c) Faulty equipment.
- d) All accidents, however small, should be reported.

YOU SHOULD NOT:

- e) Attempt to repair equipment, unless competent to do so.
- f) Attempt to move obviously heavy furniture alone.

YOU SHOULD:

- g) In the event of your having to stand on something to reach windows, etc. do ensure the object on which you will stand is solid and reliable.
- h) Dispose of aerosol cans in the recommended way.
- i) Dispose of soiled materials in sealed bags.
- j) Lift any boxes or heavy loads in accordance with Manual Lifting Guidelines.

GENERAL ADVICE TO ALL EMPLOYEES

TIDINESS

Keep floors, passages etc. clear of stores, packages and litter.

Put waste paper in the bin. Do not throw broken glass, razor blades or other dangerous items loose in the waste bin. Dispose of these with care and ask for advice from your Supervisor if in doubt.

FALLS AND COLLISIONS

Walk, do not run. Look where you are going.

Mop up spills of liquid, do not leave it to someone else.

Do not climb on chairs, desks, window sills to reach shelves or to open windows.

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

READ AND UNDERSTAND FIRE PRECAUTION NOTICES

Ensure that you know the lay-out of the fire exits and emergency routes. Report or remove where possible any obstruction of fire exits and passages. Keep cloths and towels away from heaters and convectors etc.

HORSEPLAY

Avoid horseplay, sky larking, practical jokes, it can be dangerous.

Appendix B.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS

To comply with Health and Safety Legislation, all outside contractors employed to do work on Council Premises are to be made aware of the expected requirements related to health and safety. A contractor accepting a contract from the Council shall be deemed to have agreed to comply with the following requirements:

1. As a contractor, you will supply and ensure that you and your employees wear and use protective equipment or anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare of any of the relevant statutory provisions.
2. You and your employees will ensure that all equipment, plant machinery and apparatus brought onto or used on the Council premises are safe and without risk to health and are maintained to a standard that will not constitute an offence under the Act or any of the relevant statutory provisions.
3. You and your employees will conform, in all respects, to your legal duties and responsibilities as laid down by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and relevant statutory provisions.
4. The Council will retain the right to stop any operation, plant or equipment, or the action of you or any of your employees if it is considered that there is a hazard to the safety and health of employees or others. The Council will not accept any responsibility for any increased costs arising out of such action.
5. In the event of the Council taking this action, your site representative will be notified verbally and given confirmation in writing by the Council's representative to order such a stoppage.
6. The Council will be indemnified by you or your insurers in respect of any claims, costs or expenses arising out of any incidents on Council premises involving you or your employees.
7. The Council may notify an inspector, appointed under the relevant legislation, of any breach of the Regulations.