

CORPORATE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE POLICY

Head of Service/Contact: Gillian McTaggart, Head of Policy,
Performance & Governance

Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No

**If yes, reason urgent decision
required:**

Annexes/Appendices (attached): **Annex 1** - Corporate Health, Safety & Welfare
Policy

**Other available papers (not
attached):**

Report summary

This report summarises the Council's current arrangements for corporate health and safety outlining the new Corporate Health, Safety & Welfare Policy.

Recommendations:

That the Committee

- (1) Approve the Corporate Health, Safety & Welfare Policy attached at Annex 1;**
- (2) Delegate authority to the Head of Policy, Performance and Governance to update the Policy to reflect regular changes to regulations, best practice and organisational structure.**

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 Health and Safety legislation underpins all key priorities. The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on the Council to protect the health, safety and welfare of all its employees whenever they work. This includes providing a safe work environment, suitable equipment, suitable instruction, information and training. It also places a duty on the Council to ensure that its work does not adversely impact the health and safety of others.

Strategy and Resources Committee

2 April 2019

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council has various legal duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act and its associated regulations. Failure to comply with these duties can lead to a breach of statutory policy or even prosecution.
- 2.2 The Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy has been reviewed and updated by the new Corporate Health and Safety Group in consultation with the Leadership Team and the Staff Consultative Group. The Health & Safety Group has been established to review and improve existing health and safety practices. The Group is chaired by the Chief Operating Officer and includes officers from a wide range of areas across the Council. On establishing the Group it was agreed that that the Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Policy would be reviewed and updated.
- 2.3 The previous policy was approved in 2011.
- 2.4 The Health and Safety Group has an agreed work programme. As well as updating the corporate policy, it has reviewed the fire risks assessment, is monitoring relevant health and safety statistics and is reviewing and updating all other health and safety policies. The Group is also developing a Training Needs Assessment for all posts within the Council which will identify what risk assessments should be completed for each post.
- 2.5 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of our health, safety and welfare arrangements for all employees together with other persons who may be affected, and for ensuring that the Council is kept informed of its compliance with the relevant legislation and the effectiveness of our arrangements. The Chief Operating Officer has responsibility for operational performance of health and safety supported by the Head of Policy, Performance & Governance and the Corporate Health and Safety Officer.
- 2.6 Members also have clear responsibilities to ensure that health, safety and welfare implications of decisions are properly considered. Also, to ensure that suitable resources are made available to meet our obligations, to monitor and review the health and safety policy and take reasonable care for their own health and safety and those who may be affected by their actions.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That the Committee approve the new Health, Safety and Welfare Policy that has been updated to be more concise and understandable.
- 3.2 Although broadly similar in layout to the previous policy, the text has changed significantly. The new policy is shorter, but does still cover three main specified sections: General Policy Statement, Organisation for Health & Safety and Arrangements for Implementation.

Strategy and Resources Committee

2 April 2019

- 3.3 The roles and responsibilities in place across the organisation have been stated separately in a new Appendix 1 making them more accessible and easier to understand. They will not need to be repeated in any of the subsidiary health and safety policies or guidance. The roles and responsibilities in the new updated policy differentiate clearly between those which are specific and those which are seen as supporting.
- 3.4 All subsidiary policies to the Health, Safety and Welfare Policy are listed in Appendix 2 of the policy. The subsidiary policies and accompanying guidance notes are in the process of being updated as part of a rolling programme. They will be placed into the new format providing both consistency and removing any duplication.
- 3.5 Once approved the new corporate policy will be communicated to staff and published on the intranet.

4 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific financial or manpower implications for the approval of the policy although a budget of £15,000 was agreed to ensure that the recommendations from the Corporate Health & Safety Group can be implemented and training provided.
- 4.2 **Chief Finance Officer's comments:** None for the purposes of this report.

5 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 5.1 The Council as an employer must comply with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and supporting regulations which includes Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.
- 5.2 It is important to have up to date health, safety and welfare policies in place and to ensure their contents are disseminated to all staff.
- 5.3 **Monitoring Officer's comments:** None arising from the contents of this report.

6 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

7 Partnerships

- 7.1 None for the purposes of this report.

8 Risk Assessment

Strategy and Resources Committee

2 April 2019

- 8.1 The implications of failing to have a safe system of work can be significant. The new policy forms part of the planned approach to manage and mitigate risks. This will include, reviewing risks assessments, assessing training needs, updating supporting policies, guidance and risk assessments and monitoring performance.

9 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 9.1 That the Committee approve the Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy.
- 9.2 The Committee is also asked to delegate authority to the Head of Policy, Performance and Governance to agree annual or regular changes as dictated by changes to regulations or organisational structure. Although any major changes would require a full update to the Policy which would be reported back to the Committee.

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);