

Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Approved by Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board : December 2023
Reported to Cabinet : January 2024

City of Wolverhampton Council Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

This policy identifies the key elements of our health and safety management system. It details the commitment City of Wolverhampton Council has for maintaining and improving the health, safety and welfare of its staff and others, including our customers, service users and residents who may be affected by our activities.

Our staff are a key resource and it is essential that risks to their health and safety are properly controlled through an effective health and safety management system and commitment at all levels within the organisation.

City of Wolverhampton Council recognises the important role confident strategic leadership and effective management control plays in establishing a positive safety culture and preventing incidents, work related ill-health and accidents.

We are committed to improving health and safety performance, and this policy provides the framework for this to be achieved. City of Wolverhampton Council values the important contribution that staff and union appointed safety representatives make in improving health and safety. A partnership approach to managing health and safety is crucial to the organisation meeting its objectives for maintaining and improving health and safety performance.

Suggestions for improvement on any health and safety related issues are always welcomed and should be addressed through your manager or safety representative.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

City of Wolverhampton Council attaches great importance to the health, safety and welfare of its employees, considering this management responsibility equal to that of any other management function, believing that the preservation of human and physical resources is an important means of minimising costs and ensuring customer satisfaction.

It is the policy of City of Wolverhampton Council to provide safe and healthy working conditions for all employees and to enlist the active support of employees in fulfilling their own health and safety responsibilities in order that City of Wolverhampton Council achieves a continuous improvement to health and safety performance.

The objectives of the policy are:-

- 1) To promote standards of health, safety and welfare that comply with the provision and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other statutory provisions, ACOP's (approved codes of practice) and guidance.
- 2) To provide and maintain safe and healthy workplaces and working environments, the safe transportation and handling of articles and substances, safe systems and methods of work and to protect employees, and others, including members of the public, in so far as they come into contact with foreseeable work hazards.
- 3) To provide all employees with the information, instruction, training and supervision that they need to work safely and efficiently and to develop safety awareness amongst employees.
- 4) To maintain a constant and continuing interest in health and safety matters applicable to the organisations activities by involving and consulting with employees on relevant matters.

City of Wolverhampton Council Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed and revised as often as is necessary in the light of changing circumstances and statutory requirements.

Chief Executive City of Wolverhampton Council ?? January 2024

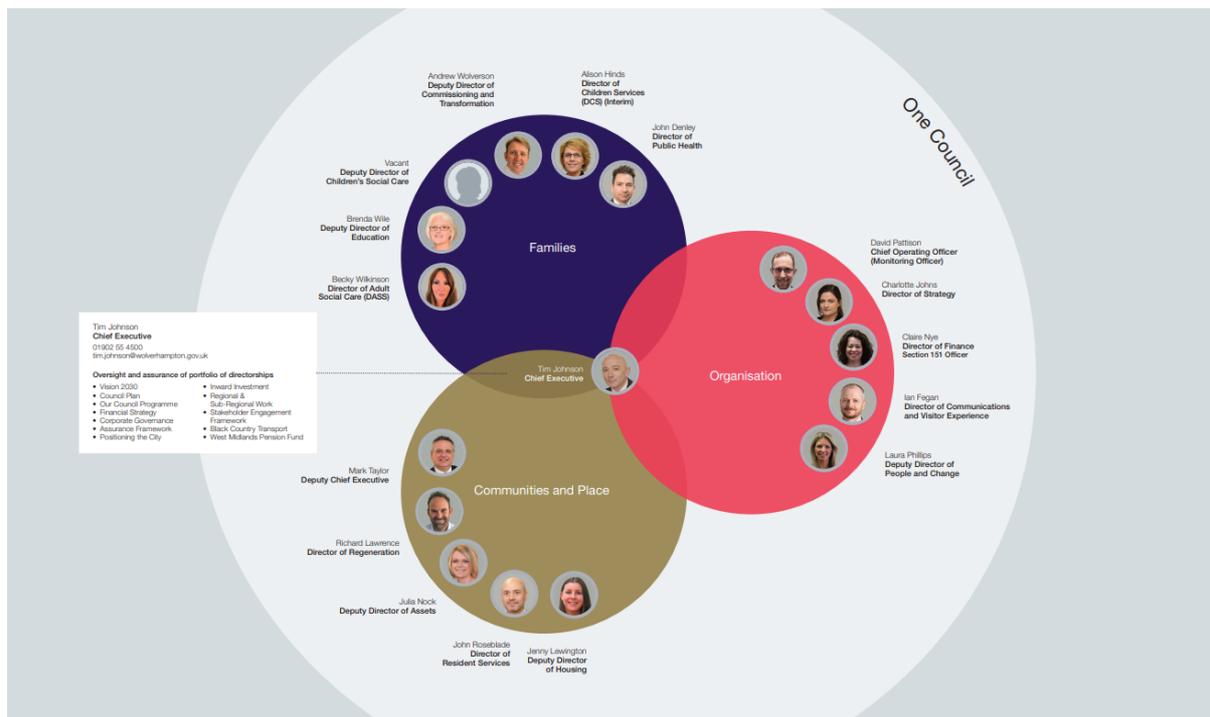
Leader of the City of Wolverhampton Council ?? January 2024

ORGANISING FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

Any employee, including Directors, Heads of Service, Managers, Supervisors, Team Leaders, may be found criminally liable if he/she has not fulfilled their duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 or relevant legislative requirements.

The hierarchy of responsibilities and organisation for effective health and safety management is shown in the organisational chart below.

The organisational framework identifies the responsibilities and relationships, which help to promote a positive health and safety culture. This section of our policy identifies individuals who are responsible for delivering the policy commitments.



City of Wolverhampton Council Senior Team

City of Wolverhampton Council's Senior Team accept their responsibilities with regards to ensuring effective implementation of health and safety systems and procedures. In particular they will:

1. Take responsibility and "ownership" of health and safety
2. Approve the strategic health and safety action plan and monitor its implementation and progress
3. Receive sufficient information a minimum annually, during their usual meeting cycle, to satisfy themselves that health and safety throughout City of Wolverhampton Council is being effectively managed, and where appropriate, consider recommendations for improvements.
4. Be provided with sufficient information and training to enable them to act with due diligence and to effectively discharge their duties under this policy.
5. Appoint one of the team to champion and lead on implementation of health and safety

6. Follow good practice set out by the Health and Safety Commission and The Institute of Directors in guidance Document "Leading Health and Safety at Work".
7. Receive specific and routine reports from officers with responsibilities for health and safety on the standards of health and safety management being achieved and recommendations for any necessary changes with regards to roles and responsibilities for ensuring health and safety.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the Health and Safety Policy, and for ensuring that adequate funds and resources are available to meet both organisational and statutory health and safety requirements. The Chief Executive will ensure that the effectiveness of health and safety policy is continually reviewed and will ensure that periodic reports are provided to Cabinet.

The Chief Executive will have ultimate responsibility for ensuring that health and safety policy objectives are met and that such are implemented across the organisation. In particular they will:

1. Accept, by signing of this Policy, that they have overall responsibility for the day to day management of health and safety.
2. Ensure that City of Wolverhampton Council Senior Management Team are competent to fulfil their health and safety duties required by this policy and act as role models for the benefit of promoting a positive health and safety culture.
3. Ensure that health and safety planning is incorporated into business planning processes and that departmental plans support the implementation of the Strategic Health and Safety Action Plan in relation to health and safety. They will call for periodic reports on the implementation of the plans.
4. Ensure that all Directorates have adopted adequate systems for the undertaking of risk assessments and the implementation of safe systems of work within their departments.
5. Keep up to date with changes and developments in health and safety legislation, best practice and relevant management standards
6. Ensure the Health and Safety Policy is reviewed annually and approved.

Chief Operating Officer - Delegated responsibility for Health and Safety.

The Chief Operating Officer has been delegated responsibility to act on behalf of the Chief Executive with regards to the implementation of health and safety policy and practice.

In particular they will:

1. Be responsible for the co-ordination of health and safety within City of Wolverhampton Council and regularly review the Health and Safety Policy.
2. Ensure compliance with City of Wolverhampton Council' Health and Safety Policies and encourage best practice at all levels of management and staffing.
3. Be responsible for updating and advising elected members and Senior Management Team on health and safety matters.
4. Authorise new or revised health and safety procedures as appropriate
5. Be responsible for ensuring health and safety policies are developed and formulated

6. Ensure health and safety objectives and priorities are identified.
7. Will ensure that adequate resources, including financial resources, are available to train staff on health and safety matters.

Directors and Deputy Directors

The Deputy Chief Executive, Directors and Deputy Directors have overall responsibility for giving effect to health and safety, and will:

1. Be responsible for the day to day management of health and safety within their teams and will ensure that their Senior Managers and managers are committed to the Health and safety Policy and arrangements for its implementation.
2. Be responsible for the effective management, monitoring and progression of health and safety issues within their directorate or business unit,
3. Ensure that effective management systems are in place to achieve high standards of health and safety.
4. Call for periodic reports on the progress of health and safety issues from within their own teams and also from the City Councils health and safety team on corporate health and safety matters.
5. Will liaise and ensure full co-operation not only with, but also between, managers and supervisors to ensure that they are in compliance with their responsibilities and company policies and procedures.
6. Ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters relating to health and safety, whilst maintaining and encouraging a positive attitude towards health and safety.
7. Be responsible for ensuring that their teams health and safety plans adequately reflect the corporate health and safety objectives.
8. Establish management arrangements within their teams and ensure that risk assessments are undertaken; control measures identified, actions implemented; and associated performance standards are met.
9. Be responsible for obtaining and co-ordinating specialist health and safety advice. They will liaise on health and safety matters with the, Chief Executive, City of Wolverhampton Council Health and safety team, Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee and any other relevant specialist to ensure effective planning and implementation of policy and arrangements.
10. Keep up to date with changes and developments in health and safety legislation, best practice and relevant management standards, in particular with regards to their specific area of responsibility.
11. Actively encourage the participation and involvement of their staff in relation to health and safety matters. They will each demonstrate their own commitment by acting as exemplars for health and safety, undertaking periodic safety Inspections of the workplace.

City of Wolverhampton Council Health and Safety Team

The City of Wolverhampton Council health and safety team will:

1. Ensure that City of Wolverhampton Council's Health and safety policies and procedures are fit for purpose based on business need and statutory requirements.
2. Provide competent advice regarding the development of best practice guidance, operational procedures, and management and staff working instructions.
3. Attend regular consultative Health Safety and Welfare Committee meetings with Trade Unions with the aim of fostering good joint working relations and oversee joint initiatives.

4. Agree with the Director of Governance health and safety objectives and priorities.
5. Assist in the identification of health and safety training needs and selection and appointment of training providers either internal or external to City of Wolverhampton Council.
6. Provide or commission advice on the impact of any legislative change in relation to health and safety and develop improvements in systems and working practices to meet the challenges of national policy initiatives.
7. Determine and implement a planned program of health and safety audits based on risk priorities to monitor health and safety management systems.
8. Assist managers in developing and implementing health and safety risk management systems relevant to their area of operation.
9. Ensure City of Wolverhampton Council has access to a suitable process for the undertaking of assessments required under the Control of Hazardous Substances Regulations 2005. To provide training and awareness to the City of Wolverhampton Council employees responsible for undertaking the assessments to ensure they are able to complete suitable and sufficient assessments.
10. Develop and implement a regular programme of inspection of fixed work places (Offices) to ensure compliance with statutory requirements.
11. Support where necessary the Human Resources/ Occupational Health function in matters relating to Safety, Welfare and Health.
12. Provide relevant specialist health and safety input to the preparation of pre-tender and construction phase health and safety plans.
13. Maintain a system for the reporting of accidents, produce associated statistics and arrange a common procedure for the reporting and investigation of accidents.
14. Following notification of accidents to the health and safety team to assess the need for investigation, and where indicated as necessary in accordance with City of Wolverhampton Council policy to conduct appropriate investigations.
15. Provide relevant health and safety input to ensure effective internal communication with staff relating to health and safety matters, including, but not limited to, attendance at team meetings, articles for staff briefings, and health and safety bulletins.

Managers and Supervisors

The terms managers and supervisors includes all members of staff with responsibility for managing and directing the activities of others.

Managers and supervisors are directly responsible for ensuring that rules, regulations, procedures and codes of practice relating to health and safety of employees and others affected by the work of their team are correctly interpreted and implemented for all activities within their area of responsibility.

Managers and supervisors must therefore:

1. Understand and ensure the implementation the Corporate Safety Policy rules and statutory requirements applicable to all operations under their control.
2. Ensure that all employees under their control are aware of the Corporate Health and safety policy.
3. Be responsible for developing, where appropriate section specific policies and procedures to complement the organisations Health and Safety Policy in order to adequately control known health and safety risks.
4. In order to comply with the Health and safety at Work etc. Act 1974 they must ensure that, for their team, there is adequate provision for:
 - 1) Safe articles, protective clothing, plant tools, equipment and systems of work.

- 2) Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transportation of substances and materials.
 - 3) Premises used by employees and members of the public shall be safe and not present a hazard to the users or occupants.
 - 4) Sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own health and safety at work.
 - 5) A safe access and egress to and from the place of work.
 - 6) Adequate health and welfare facilities.
 - 7) A healthy working environment.
5. Represent and advise the appropriate Director, Deputy Director or manager as requested on all matters of health and safety.
 6. By undertaking risk assessments for all activities carried out by employees under their control, ensure that all risks to health and safety of employees, and members of the public which may arise from the work of the section are identified and adequately controlled by whatever means identified as appropriate by the risk assessment.
 7. Ensure that all health and safety records, certificates, licenses and reports pertaining to their area of responsibility (employee and equipment) are satisfactory and up to date.
 8. Ensure that all appropriate remedial action is taken in respect of all reported defects and complaints relating to health and safety.
 9. Keep up to date with and implement where applicable any new health and safety measures and circulate any relevant information to each level of employee under their control.
 10. Ensure full co-operation with appointed Safety Representatives and other personnel appointed in matters relating to health and safety.
 11. Require and encourage a positive attitude towards health and safety within their own area of responsibility. This must include ensuring that there is a regular formal means to pass health and safety information out to employees and also to allow employees to raise health and safety matters with their manager. Regular feedback on matters raised must also be given.
 12. Take whatever disciplinary action is necessary against any employee not carrying out their responsibilities under health and safety legislation, or organisational Health and Safety Policy.
 13. To ensure that all employees are aware of the first aid arrangements.

Employees

All employees have an equal responsibility for ensuring and maintaining health and safety in the workplace.

City of Wolverhampton Council supports and encourages employee participation in health and safety. This is because we recognise that active employee involvement helps to:

- ✓ promote a positive health and safety culture
- ✓ develop effective risk control measures and realistic safe systems of work
- ✓ reduce accidents and work-related ill health.

To achieve this participation, we will:

- ✓ promote open, frank and constructive consultation with employees and their nominated representatives
- ✓ promote employee engagement
- ✓ make sure employees have the facts they need to make an informed contribution

All employees must:

1. Ensure that they understand the contents of the organisations Corporate Health and Safety Policy, a copy of which is readily available, and also be aware of health and safety arrangements for their particular job and place of work.
2. Use the correct and safe tools and equipment for the job, also to use all safety equipment \ protective clothing provided, and adopt a safe method of working at all times.
3. Keep tools, equipment, plant, machinery and protective equipment in good condition to prevent injury to themselves or others.
4. Report any defects or hazards to their immediate supervisor.
5. Develop a personal concern for safety, both for themselves and for others around them, particularly trainees and young persons.
6. Suggest ways of eliminating hazards by reporting to their immediate manager or supervisor.
7. Co-operate with internal and external representatives and their immediate manager or supervisor on matters relating to health and safety.
8. Set a personal example and ensure safe working practices are observed at all times.
9. Be aware of and carry out the requirements of health and safety legislation, and the safety instructions issued to them.
10. Work in a safe and responsible manner, avoiding accidents and not causing hazards to themselves or others.
11. Ensure that they are not rendered unfit for work through alcohol or drugs.
12. Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with any plant or equipment or clothing provided in the interests of health and safety for their own use or use by others.
13. Report to their supervisor in accordance with the accident reporting Policy any accidents or near miss incidents.
14. Consider the health and safety of colleagues and members of the public, and will not act in any way which could cause harm to others.

Human Resources Team

The human resources team will assist and support the implementation of this policy. In particular they will:

1. Monitor absence resulting from industrial injuries. Liaise with the Health and Safety team.
2. Be responsible for procuring, implementing and monitoring occupational health arrangements.
3. Provide support to assess when necessary the requirement for any reasonable workplace adjustments.

Organisational Development Team

The organisational development team will assist and support the implementation of this policy. In particular they will:

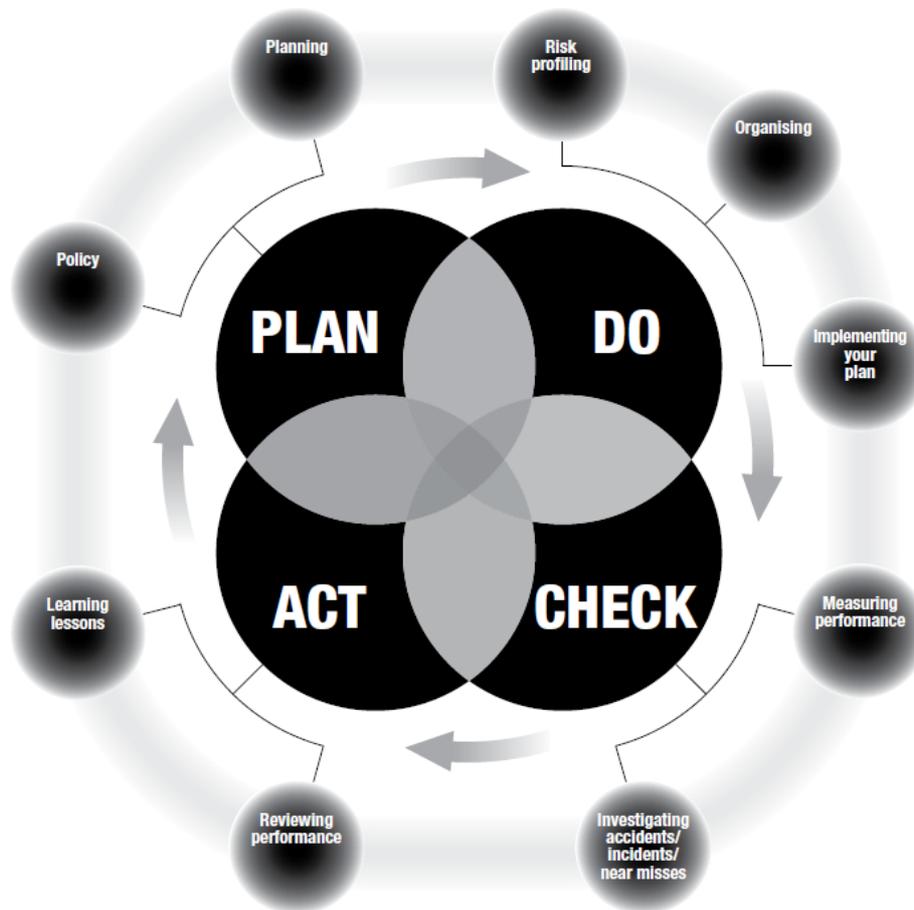
1. Maintain all health and safety training records.
2. Arrange and if required deliver health and safety training.

City of Wolverhampton Council Health and Safety Advisers shall

1. Be responsible to the Director of Governance for monitoring and improving the organisations health and safety standards.
2. Ensure that the organisations Corporate Health and Safety Policy is in line with legislative requirements and updated when necessary.
3. Maintain a system for the reporting of accidents, produce associated statistics and arrange a common procedure for the reporting and investigation of accidents.
4. Act as the recipient of, and be responsible for, the distribution of documentation and guidance on health and safety related matters.
5. Liaise with and advise the Elected Members, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers, Supervisors and others on all aspects of health and safety legislation and precautions necessary to ensure good safety practice.
6. Give appropriate input to any health and safety training courses arranged.
7. Liaise with the Health and Safety Executive and other external bodies, with a direct interest in the health and safety of the City of Wolverhampton Council employees.
8. Be responsible for monitoring health and safety compliance in City of Wolverhampton Council by providing advice, training and support for operational managers.
9. Assist in any investigation necessary to determine the circumstances of all RIDDOR accidents and advise managers, supervisors and employees as necessary.
10. Undertake and review Workplace health and safety assessments and periodic inspections of working practices (office based and otherwise).
11. Undertake an annual programme of audits.
12. Undertake health and safety related training directly or via appropriate third parties.
13. Provide or commission advice on the impact of any legislative change in relation to health and safety and develop improvements in systems and working practices to meet the challenges of national policy initiatives.
14. To assist City of Wolverhampton Council officers to assess and evaluate the principal contractor's construction phase plan(s) and other CDM related documents and advise on any improvement or amendments required to meet these regulations.

HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

The Senior Team of City of Wolverhampton Council have adopted the Health and Safety Executive Guidance HS (G) 65 Health and Management Framework System.



They recognise that the management of health and safety requires the same degree of expertise and standards as any other core business activity, if it is to effectively control risk and prevent harm to people.

Planning for Health and Safety

Planning is the essential to ensure that our health and safety procedures really work in practice. Planning involves identifying priorities and setting key objectives, identifying hazards, assessing risks, implementing standards of performance and developing a positive culture. City of Wolverhampton Council will:

- ✓ produce an annual health and safety plan that identifies objectives that are realistic measurable and achievable
- ✓ establish management arrangements, risk control systems and workplace precautions
- ✓ set performance indicators where appropriate
- ✓ utilise appropriate compliance standards in the plan
- ✓ ensure the participation and involvement of employees and their representatives

Measuring our Health and Safety Performance

Measurement is essential to maintain and improve health and safety performance. We need to know where we are, where we want to be and identify the differences and why.

We will measure our performance by having both active monitoring (checking before things go wrong) and reactive monitoring (checking when things didn't go as planned and understanding why.)

This will be achieved by:

- ✓ setting appropriate standards
- ✓ having in place good risk control strategies
- ✓ monitoring that City of Wolverhampton Council is complying with health and safety requirements that are relevant to its activities
- ✓ maintaining accurate records and investigating near misses, work related ill-health, incidents and accidents and identifying their causes
- ✓ benchmarking our performance against similar public sector organisations.

The agreed performance indicators measure Health and Safety compliance as set out in health and safety regulatory requirements.

Performance is reported to the Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board.

Auditing and Reviewing

Health and safety management audits are used to check that our policy, organisation and systems are effective and relevant.

We use audits and reviews to improve our ability to manage risk, especially by:

- ✓ checking levels of compliance with our health and safety performance indicators against legislation and good practice
- ✓ analysing near misses, work-related ill-health and injuries for causes and trends
- ✓ identifying areas where performance can be improved
- ✓ feeding audit findings into a management action plans with a timetable for implementation
- ✓ checking that agreed objectives are achieved within a given time scale
- ✓ communicating audit outcomes to relevant meetings and committees

Consulting on Health and Safety

Effective consultation is essential if City of Wolverhampton Council is to satisfy its commitment to promote a collaborative approach to health and safety.

City of Wolverhampton Council will consult on the introduction and modification of policies and procedures in respect of health and safety. The consultation will take place through working groups and the following formal consultation machinery.

Statutory Safety Representatives

Safety Representatives are statutory representatives of employees. City of Wolverhampton Council has adopted a system whereby these are nominated by recognised Trade Unions. They are recognised by the organisation in order that they may keep under review measures taken to ensure the health and safety at work of employees, and to consult with management on the development of health and safety policy.

In particular Statutory Safety Representatives may:-

- 1) Investigate hazards, dangerous occurrences and accidents occurring in the workplace.
- 2) Make representation on matters affecting the health, safety and welfare of employees.
- 3) Make workplace inspections, as they consider necessary.
- 4) Consult with Health and Safety Executive Inspectors.
- 5) Be given time off work with pay in order to pursue their function or undertake training necessary to effectively fulfil their role.

Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board

Purpose

The Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board has been established to take a strategic overview of health, safety and wellbeing issues affecting City of Wolverhampton Council.

Functions of the Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board

1. To agree the implementation of Policy to ensure compliance with statutory obligations and Approved Codes of Practice regarding Health, Safety and Welfare.
2. To review measures taken to promote health, safety and welfare within the organisation.
3. To monitor the provision and effectiveness of safety training.
4. To consider relevant reports submitted by management and/or recognised safety representatives.
5. To receive reports of visits made by the Health and Safety Executive.
6. Consider the implementation of health and safety legislation, HSE alerts, and good practice guides and recommend appropriate action.
7. Receive health and safety inspection and audit reports and recommend appropriate action to address any issues identified.
8. Receive reports on near misses, work related ill health, incident and accident reports and recommend appropriate action.
9. Provide a means for communication to employees about the implementation of City of Wolverhampton Council's health and safety management system including the planning, organising, monitoring and reviewing of company measures to ensure the health and safety and welfare of its employees.
10. Play a key role in actively monitoring and driving improvements in the health and safety performance of the organisation.
11. Provide City of Wolverhampton Council with a means of sharing ideas, highlighting examples of good practice and promoting a positive Health and safety culture.

Membership

1. Membership will consist of a sufficient number of team representatives to ensure that as far as possible all employee groups are represented on the committee in addition to eligible Trade Union representatives.
2. It is the responsibility of the Directors to ensure that each section within their service is adequately represented.
3. In addition, any other person may be invited on an ad-hoc basis for the purpose of presenting reports or advice as appropriate.
4. There is a standing invitation for the Cabinet Member with responsibility for health and safety to attend as an observer.
5. The Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board is chaired by the Director of Governance.
6. The Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board members will undergo any necessary training for them to be able to undertake their roles effectively.

Meetings

1. The Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board will meet at least quarterly and these will be scheduled annually in advance.
2. Minutes of the meetings will be taken by a member of the health and safety team and agenda and papers distributed to members a minimum of 5 working days in advance of meetings.
3. Action points and minutes from meetings will be distributed to members within 10 working days of the meeting.

Other arrangements

Supporting continuous improvement

We believe that continuous improvement is an important part of effective health and safety management. To achieve this, we will:

- maintain an effective health and safety management system
- systematically review and refine our policies, procedures and arrangements
- set minimum standards and performance indicators for health and safety
- measure our performance and benchmark it with similar organisations
- publish regular reports on our findings
- use the information positively to improve performance.

Communicating on Health and Safety

City of Wolverhampton Council will provide effective communication channels in respect of health, safety and wellbeing. Communication will be supported by:

1. Publishing the health and safety policy and distributing to managers.
2. Providing copies on the management system and the staff web home page in health and safety.
3. Providing health and safety briefings on relevant health and safety issues.
4. Undertaking tool box talks, team briefings and including health and safety as a standing agenda item at meetings.
5. Utilising the e-mail system to provide information on health and safety.

6. Meetings with partners and contractors
7. Informing residents and members of the public of relevant health, safety and wellbeing information via newsletters and attending meetings

Delegated Corporate Landlord Responsibilities

Hazard	Responsible Person	Technical Expert
Management of Asbestos	Julia Nock	Neal Shore
Management of Water Hygiene	Julie Bell - Barker	Richard Jones
Management of Gas Safety	Julie Bell - Barker	Richard Jones
Management of Fire Safety	Managed Corporate Buildings - Julia Nock Schools - Head Teacher	Neal Shore Fire Alarms and Emergency Lighting — John Sherrard
Management of Electrical	Managed Corporate Buildings — Julie Bell Barker Schools - Head Teacher	John Sherrard
Management of Passenger Carrying Lifts	Managed Corporate Buildings — Julie Bell Barker	Richard Jones via Zurich Engineering (inspection service attached to the current insurance policy)

Site Duty Holders

A site duty holder is appointed at each corporate building to monitor health and safety arrangements including but not limited to:

Asbestos
Fire
First Aid
General Environment
Electrical
Gas
Passenger Carrying Lifts
Legionella