

Health and safety at work

policy document



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The Health and Safety at Work Policy provides a framework to ensure Bradford Council proactively creates and maintains a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and those who may be affected by the Council’s activities. All Employees must co-operate fully with the measures the Council takes to fulfil the requirements of this policy.

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 states that:

- “It is the duty of every employer to conduct his or her business in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that a safe and healthy environment for all members of

staff, young persons and for persons not in their employment, (visitors, contractors, member of the public) is provided.”

- “No person (i.e. all employees, those we work for and with and the general public) shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything which is provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.”

Breaches of the health and safety policy, procedures and arrangements will be dealt with under Bradford Councils disciplinary procedures. It must be understood that such breaches may also expose the authority to criminal prosecution.

The wording in this publication can be made available in other formats such as large print and Braille. Please call 01274 431007.

Revised January 2016

Health and Safety at Work Policy Statement

Bradford Council is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment as is reasonably practicable, through the provision of plant, equipment, safe systems of work, information, training and supervision as is necessary to safeguard the health and safety of all employees and those who may be affected by our work activities.

As Chief Executive, I embrace the duties and obligations imposed upon me by safety legislation and realise the importance of placing health and safety as an over-riding priority within Council services.

Whilst accepting the minimum legal standards set by national legislation, the Council is committed to promoting a health and safety culture which considers all departments and services as one and aims to produce high standards of health and safety. Sufficient resources and provisions will be made available to achieve this commitment including:-

- Developing and embedding a safety culture throughout the Council that recognises the importance and value of effective safety management.
- Consulting with employees, trade unions, employee representatives, and others on health and safety issues and encourage active participation.
- Complying with legislative health and safety requirements and where possible aiming for best practice.
- Ensuring that all employees are provided with appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision relating to health and safety.
- Clearly defining roles and responsibilities for all employees.
- Establishing systems for monitoring, measuring, inspecting and auditing the health and safety performance and standards within the Council.
- Effectively managing all significant risks to health and safety arising from Council activities, reducing them to the lowest reasonably practicable.
- The Head of Strategic Human Resources will act as the Safety Champion and will deputise for the Chief Executive as required on Health and Safety matters.

I fully accept the final level of responsibility for implementing the Council's Health and Safety Policy rests with me; however every employee must take an active role in effectively implementing this policy, act in a safe manner at all times and encouraging others to do likewise.



.....
Kersten England
Chief Executive
January 2016

Organisation – roles and responsibilities

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The Strategic Directors

(including City Solicitor, Director of Finance and Director West Yorkshire Pensions)

Have duties under this Council's Health and Safety at Work Policy and are responsible for the effective implementation of this policy. They are required to take all necessary action to ensure that the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation, approved codes of practice and guidelines are met in full within their departments.

They will:-

- Provide leadership on occupational health and safety to their Assistant Directors/Deputy Director and Principal Managers; support improvements in health and safety standards.
- Provide adequate resources and provisions for the effective management of health, safety and welfare of all employees and others who may be affected by Council activities.
- Ensure defects to premises, plant, equipment or processes affecting health and safety are made safe without delay.
- Create and maintain effective channels of communication; including consulting with

Occupational Safety and Employee Health and Wellbeing Advisers, Service Managers, Trade Union representation and other officers.

- Support staff and others to achieve the highest possible standards; encourage employees to suggest new ways and means to reduce risk. Educate those who fail to consider their own health, safety and well being or that of others.
- Monitor (benchmark), inspect and audit the health and safety performance throughout their department. To keep themselves informed of or discuss health and safety issues, accidents, incidents, work-related ill health, sick absence or significant changes to work practices occurring within their departments or from other areas of the Council.
- In the absence of a Strategic Director, a named Assistant Director will deputise on all matters involving health and safety at work.

Assistant Directors / Deputy Director / Governors

Each Assistant Director/Deputy Directors/ Governors are responsible for the effective implementation of this Health and Safety at Work Policy within their area of responsibility.

With the support from the Occupational Safety and Employee Health and Wellbeing Advisers and other appropriate officers will carry out the following duties.

They will:

- Provide leadership on occupational health and safety to their managers and employees supporting improvements in health and safety standards across the Council. Ensure

that health and safety risks or issues are taken into account in all service development plans and at the design stage of new projects or initiatives.

- Establish systems within their area of control for effective management of risk. To identify, assess the associated risks and seek to eliminate them. Where this is not possible reduce the level of risk through suitable control measures to their lowest level practicable.
- Ensure risk assessments are suitable and sufficient, formally recorded, brought to the attention of those affected and are reviewed

- within agreed timescales to ensure they remain valid.
- Ensure all employees receive suitable training, information (e.g. safe systems of work), guidance, supervision and equipment (including appropriate PPE) to carry out their duties safely and with the minimum of risk.
- Ensure systems exist for the reporting of hazards and defects to premises, plant, equipment or processes which may affect health and safety, making sure these defects are made safe without delay.
- Ensure effective communication, consult and discuss with employees, trade unions and employee representatives on health and safety matters; particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.

- Keep themselves informed of significant accidents, incidents, cases of work-related ill health, health and safety issues/risks and sick absence occurring in their area of responsibility. Ensure they have been correctly reported, appropriately investigated and remedial action taken in good time.
- Establish systems for monitoring (benchmark, inspect, audit) safety performance. Satisfy themselves that safety standards are being maintained and shortcomings arising from these activities are rectified in good time.
- In the absence of an Assistant Director or a Deputy Director a nominated officer will be appointed to deputise in all matters of health and safety.

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Officers with managerial / supervisory responsibilities

This group includes: - Head teachers, Deputies, Heads of Departments or Services Managers, Business or Facilities Managers, Team Managers, Team leaders, etc.

Employees, who manage, supervise or have responsibility for employees, trainees or members of the public are accountable for health and safety and day to day responsibility for the implementation and operation of this policy within their management control.

They will:-

- Provide leadership on occupational health and safety to their employees and actively promote improvements in health and safety standards in their department and across the Council. Ensure that occupational health and safety issues/risks are addressed in good time.
- Be responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees, trainees and other persons who may be affected by their work activities (e.g. visitors, volunteers, members of the public, contractors).
- Effectively manage the risks to health and safety in their area of responsibility. Are responsible for carrying out suitable and sufficient risk assessments and where risks cannot immediately be eliminated, ensure reasonable action is taken (e.g. control measures) to reduce risk to the lowest level practicable. Risk Assessments should be formally recorded and brought to the attention of those affected.
- Ensure that all employees and trainees in their area of responsibility receive health and safety training; have sufficient knowledge, skills, information and appropriate supervision to carry out their work safely.
- All employees and trainees have appropriate protective equipment and clothing where this is required, and are given suitable information, training and instruction on its correct use.
- New employees are given a workplace safety induction during their first week at work or as soon as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure effective systems exist for the reporting of hazards and defects to premises, plant, equipment or processes which may affect health and safety, making sure these defects can be made safe without delay.
- Ensure that accident, incidents and cases of work-related ill health, within their area of responsibility are promptly reported within

the Council Accident Reporting Procedure. Incidents are robustly investigated and reasonable action is taken to prevent a recurrence.

- Ensure effective communication for health and safety matters, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- Monitor (benchmark, inspect, audit) safety performance including accident incident trends and satisfy themselves that safety standards are being maintained and that shortcomings are rectified in good time.
- Keep themselves and their employees up to date with all relevant health and safety information. Consult with or seek advice, guidance and support from Occupational Safety and Employee Health and Wellbeing teams.



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Occupational Safety and Employee Health & Wellbeing Teams

The Occupational Safety and Employee Health and Wellbeing Teams are located within the Human Resources Service.

It shall be their responsibility to assist the Chief Executive in the management of health, safety and wellbeing; advise the Strategic Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers, Employees and others, to meet our statutory duties and ensure the requirements of this policy are fulfilled.

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Occupational Safety Team will:-

- Promote a positive health and safety culture that aims to produce high standards of health and safety, offering advice, support to departments and informing Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers, Employees and Trainees on all aspects of occupational safety:
- Provide advice on new legislation impacting on the work of the Council.
- Advise on safety training for staff at all levels.
- Attend meetings on occupational safety issues in an advisory capacity.
- Have the authority to issue 'an internal improvement notice or prohibition notice,' where Council's work activities involve or will involve a risk of serious personal injury to council employees, persons in our care or members of the public.
- Maintain the corporate accident incident reporting, recording and investigation system.
- Manage the Council's occupational safety audit programme and report to senior management on safety performance and standards.
- Liaise with Employee Health and Wellbeing team and Human Resources services regarding health and wellbeing matters.
- Liaise with the Safety Champion on matters arising or impending that may be required to be brought to the attention of Senior Management.
- Keep themselves up to date with changes to legislation, standards or new practices, which may affect the activities of Bradford Council. Seek opportunities to maintain and or improve their knowledge and skills in order to meet the needs of the Council.

Employee Health and Wellbeing Team will:-

- Promote and maintain the highest degree of physical, mental, and social wellbeing for workers in all occupations.
- Encourage a culture where managers take an active interest in the health and wellbeing of their staff.
- Advise and inform managers, employees and trainees on all aspects of employee health and wellbeing to protect staff from factors adverse to their health.
- Attend meetings on employee health and wellbeing issues in an advisory capacity.
- Advise on employee health and wellbeing training for staff at all levels.
- Where appropriate refer staff to external medical advisers.
- Liaise with Occupational Safety team and Human Resources services regarding health and wellbeing matters.
- Assist in the placing and maintaining of employees in occupational environments suitable to their physiological needs, e.g. the adaptation of work to the worker.

Safety Champion

They will:

- Champion health and safety issues at senior management level and promote relevant health and safety issues within the Management Board.
Keep the Management Board informed of developments arising from the above.
- Inform the Management Board of any serious health and safety issues that may compromise or damage the Council by leading to media censure or possible civil or criminal prosecution.
- Act as the named senior responsible person for health and safety corporate issues if required to by the Health & Safety Executive.
- Support, when required, the Occupational Safety Team in implementing necessary health and safety changes.
- Foster an awareness and understanding of health and safety issues as they affect the Council amongst Board Members or Councillors.
- Liaise with the Occupational Safety Team on a regular basis.
- Where appropriate, facilitate cross departmental working on health and safety matters.



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Employees, trainees, volunteers and visitors

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Employees

... take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of any other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.



In particular, all employees will:-

- Comply with health and safety legislation, safe systems of work and procedures at all times whilst at work and conduct themselves in such a manner so they or others are not put at risk by their activities, actions or omissions.
- Co-operate with supervisors and managers including where appropriate Occupational Safety Team and Employee Health and Wellbeing Teams on all matters affecting health, safety and wellbeing at work.
- Only use machinery and equipment, which they have been authorised, have been fully instructed as to its safe use and have received suitable training. Employees must ensure that all plant and machinery is suitably guarded during use.
- Wear the necessary protective clothing or use safety equipment (inc PPE) provided by management. This may require training and instruction in its correct use. Employees will face disciplinary action for not adhering to safe working procedures, misusing or failing to use safety equipment (PPE) correctly.
- Report hazards, defects or potential risks affecting the health safety or welfare of themselves or others to their supervisor or manager immediately.
- Report all accidents and incidents (ie. near-miss, violence, racial and hate related) occurring in their area of work including cases of work related ill health to their manager/supervisor immediately, following the correct reporting process. Employees may be involved in the investigation and any remedial actions required arising from this process.
- Keep up to date with health and safety policies, procedures, guidance and other safety documents as required by their manager.
- Be encouraged to take an active interest in promoting health and safety and feel empowered to make suggestions to their Manager, Assistant Director or Director or equivalent which may reduce risk, improve the health and safety standards or the wellbeing of employees or anyone affected by the work of the Council.

Trainees and volunteers

The Council recognises its responsibilities both as sponsor and managing agent to all its Trainees and to others who may be affected. All

Trainees including Apprentices and Volunteers will assume the health and safety duties and responsibilities of that of an “Employee.”

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Young persons and work experience students

All Young Persons and Work Experience Students have the same health and safety responsibilities as an employee and are required to adhere to the requirements of the Council’s

Health and Safety at Work Policy. These vulnerable persons should be supervised at all times and may also be subject to additional controls arising from a risk assessment process.

Roles & responsibilities

Visitors and the public

All reasonable action must be taken to ensure that visitors are made aware of risks applicable to that site. All visitors must be accompanied within areas of Bradford Council which are identified as non public areas. These persons

should not be allowed to access areas which may place them or others at risk.

The Council will conduct its undertakings in such a way as to ensure that members of the public are not endangered by work or activities of its employees.

Supporting teams

Devolved management

Certain areas of the Council have devolved all or part of their management structures from central control to local control, while the staff concerned, remain Council employees.

These employees are still bound by the Council’s Health and Safety at Work Policy and any other health and safety policies and procedures operating within their Department or Service.

Others involved with devolved services, i.e. Committees and Governing Bodies, are bound by both Council health and safety policies and by health and safety law.

The Council will conduct its undertakings in such a way as to ensure that members of the public are not endangered by work or activities of its employees.

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Arrangements for Health and Safety

In order to promote a health and safety culture that aims to produce high standards and continual improvement, the following health and safety arrangements are in place. This is not an exhaustive list and other health and safety arrangements can be found on the

Occupational Safety section of BradNet and Bradford Schools Online intranets. Other specialised services within the Council are available to offer support in health and safety matters, Fire Safety, Asbestos, Emergency Planning and Critical Incidents as examples.

Risk management

The Council will ensure the effective management of risk, which provides adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our work and activities.

The principles (process) for carrying out suitable and sufficient risk assessments are as follows:

- Identify the hazards associated with the task or activities.
- Decide who or what might be harmed and how.
- Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions or actions to take (e.g. eliminate or reduce via control measures).
- Record the findings of the assessment, share the information with those who may be affected and implement the controls.
- Review risk assessments on an annual basis or sooner in the event of a significant change and update where necessary.

Managers are responsible for ensuring the actions required arising from risk assessments have been implemented and their impact monitored.

Safe plant and equipment - inspection and testing

The Council will ensure all plant and equipment provided is fit for purpose and maintained in good working order. Where plant and equipment requires statutory maintenance, inspection and testing, this will be carried out within the required timescales. All defective equipment must be reported to the appropriate person, taken out of service until repairs have been made or it has been replaced.

All plant and equipment used must be suitably guarded during use and correctly isolated prior to maintenance, repairs or cleaning. The bypassing of safety guards, safety devices, interlocks; “lock off” procedures will be seen as gross misconduct and will be dealt with through disciplinary procedures.

Processes should exist for ensuring that any new or second hand plant or “hired in” equipment meets minimum safety standards before purchase or hire.

Managers who have employees using their own equipment while at work or for business purposes must ensure it is fit for purpose and suitably maintained as it will be deemed as workplace equipment.

Safe handling and use of substances – COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health)

Arrangements must exist for the safe storage, handling, use and disposal of substances which may be hazardous to health and the environment. The principle is the same as **Risk Management** as noted above. All substances must be assessed to check if it can be used safely prior to purchase or use. Control measures including safe working procedures and safe disposal arrangements must be adhered to at all times.

Safety training

Safety training forms an integral part of training within the Council. All employees regardless of their status in the Council should have the sufficient knowledge, skills and training to enable them to carry out their work safely with the minimum of risk.

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It is particularly important that managers ensure new employees are given an induction ideally within the first week of their employment or as soon as is reasonably practicable. This induction should be on health and safety related matters, including their responsibilities as identified in this policy; other basic information such as first aid, fire safety and reporting of hazards and incidents. Job specific training should follow which introduces local policies, processes and procedures. Further specialist training should take place where additional skills are required; this will include refresher training where these skills are not frequently used or where risks change.

The health and safety training needs of employees, managers and directors should be the subject of periodic reviews ensuring where necessary training is carried out. Consideration will be given to using accessible venues and training materials should be available in suitable formats to ensure nobody is disadvantaged. Arrangements should be made for retaining suitable record keeping.

Consultation with employees safety representatives and safety committees

High quality communication is an integral part of effective health safety and wellbeing management.

The Council will consult with recognised trade union and employee safety representatives on matters affecting health and safety and via safety committees and other meetings as appropriate. Such consultation and negotiation is to take place where practicable, in good time and using existing procedures to ensure effective consultation on matters that affect the health and safety of the employees they represent. Examples; where significant changes in working procedures occurs or at the design stage of plans or new initiatives.

The Council will consult with employees and others directly on health safety related matters should the need arise.

Accident incident reporting and recording

All accidents incidents (including near-miss, violence, racial and hate related) which occur on Council premises or arising from our activities must be reported, using the correct

reporting process and forms. This also includes adhering to the reporting requirements under the Reportable Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regs 1995 (RIDDOR). The Occupational Safety Team has the responsibility for reporting **all** RIDDOR reportable incidents to the HSE not the managers. Managers or their nominated representative, have a responsibility to carry out a robust investigation following an incident and where appropriate take reasonable action to prevent reoccurrence. The depth of the investigation will depend on the severity of the incident.

Suitable accident incident report records must be retained for future reference.

First aid service

The Council provides first aid services and facilities to at least the minimum standards required by legislation. Employees will be advised of the first aid arrangements and who the first aiders are. The contents of first aid boxes or first aid rooms will be checked regularly and any deficiencies made good without delay. Managers must ensure first aiders attend the appropriate approved first aid training courses.

Contractors

Where the Council employs contractors to carry out planned works, we are committed to:-

- Ensuring the competency of such contractors including their ability to carry out the work or service in a safe manner and to the required standard.
- Liaising effectively with the contractor to ensure the proposed works are planned, assessed and suitable controls are in place prior to the commencement of work.
- Monitoring the work or service being carried out to ensure the health and safety of those who may be affected the operation.

It must be clearly understood that any contractor failing to adhere to agreed working procedures or deemed to be working unsafely will be instructed to cease work until the cause for concern is rectified.

Fire prevention and control

Centre Managers, Governors and Head teachers of schools are required to ensure fire risk assessments are carried out and implement suitable emergency arrangements which will include fire /smoke detection; raising the alarm, evacuation, fire fighting appliances, instruction and information to employees.

Issues arising from the fire risk assessment must be acted upon as appropriate, including effective communication with relevant staff, building tenants and users. It must also be available for inspection by the various agencies.

All Employees are required to complete their Fire Awareness training, via Smartlog or equivalent. Other training sessions will be arranged for Council employees on fire prevention and control where appropriate.

Existing fire risk assessments should be reviewed periodically. This review should coincide with any organisation or structural changes in the building and no less than annually.

Additional support and guidance can be sought from the Council's Fire Safety Team. The West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service will audit fire risk assessments and emergency arrangements as required and have enforcement powers should they feel it necessary to use them.

Monitoring and audit programme

Each Council department will establish systems to monitor (benchmark, inspect, audit) the standards of health and safety, for effectiveness, compliance, identifying opportunities for improvement within their area of responsibility. The Occupational Safety Team will manage the Council's occupational safety audit programme reporting back to senior management on the safety performance and standards.

Findings arising from the investigation of accidents, incidents, cases of ill health and workplace inspections and visits will also be seen as health and safety performance indicators.

Sources of information, guidance and supervision

Employees of the Council can obtain help support and advice on all aspects of occupational health safety and wellbeing from Occupational Safety and Employee Health and Wellbeing Advisers.

Each Council building, or accommodation where a Council service operates from, must display the Health and Safety law poster and or offer a leaflet version of the poster to employees. All young workers, work experience students and trainees must be supervised by managers or nominated employees who are deemed competent to do so.

Other health and safety policies, codes of practice, safety guidance, forms and templates are to be found on:

- BradNet (Bradford Council Intranet) pages Occupational Safety, Employee Health and Wellbeing
- School safety related information follow this link <http://www.bradford.gov.uk/hands/>
- For building related guidance, templates see Facilities Management Health and Safety page.
- Bradford Schools online Another schools website for health, safety and wellbeing information
- Local service specific policies and procedures – speak to your supervisor or line manager
- Health Safety Executive - HSE for Legislation, ACOPS and Guidance

Policy review

The effectiveness of the Health and Safety at Work Policy will be subject to a management review by the Occupational Safety Team. This policy will be reviewed at least annually and updated, modified or amended as necessary to ensure the health and safety and welfare of Council employees and visitors.

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