

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 13TH JULY 2010

REVISED CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

REPORT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGER

1.0 PURPOSE

This report sets out the key changes in the revised corporate health and safety policy for adoption.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- **That the revised health and safety policy be formally adopted by Cabinet.**
- **That the policy continues to be produced both electronically and in hard copy booklet format.**
- **That an easy read one-page summary be prepared to help raise awareness of the revised Health and Safety policy.**

3.0 SUMMARY

3.1 Since the last corporate health and safety policy was adopted we have had a new chief executive and the Council has changed its structure and priorities. The revised policy reflects these changes and clarifies other areas.

4.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

4.1 The previous health and safety policy was adopted by Cabinet at their meeting on 1st October 2007 Minute number CB-49/07.

5.0 INFORMATION

5.1 **Background** The law requires the Council to regularly review its health and safety policy and we have made the commitment to do this every three years. The revision is led by the Council's occupational health and safety team with input via the health and safety committee to enable trade union health and safety representatives and managers to be consulted and make suggestions.

5.2 **Key changes from the previous policy:**

- 5.2.1 Managing health and safety correctly and implementing sensible risk management enables services to be delivered in an efficient and effective way. This is also a legal requirement. Health and safety therefore, always needs to be at the core of Council services and this has now been reflected in the subtitle of the policy document.
- 5.2.2 The structure for health and safety management and consultation has been thoroughly revised to reflect the needs of the restructured Council and the One Council vision. (See section Four). The role and remit of the corporate health and safety committee has been expanded to encompass issues that were originally covered in a separate Chief Executive's health and safety group meeting (Section 4.4).
- 5.2.3 A clearer explanation of the legal requirement for, and role of, "competent persons" is provided (See section 3.3).
- 5.2.4 Several new topics have been included in Section Five; The Arrangements. These are:
- Challenging behaviour (para 5.5)
 - Event safety (para 5.15)
 - Home working (para 5.20)
 - Night work (para 5.19)
 - Thermal Comfort (para 5.35)
 - Welfare facilities (para 5.37)
- 5.2.5 Some minor wording amendments have also been made where the consultation process showed that these were appropriate.
- 5.2.6 The electronic version of the policy will incorporate electronic links to more detailed policies and guidance where appropriate.
- 5.2.7 The revised health and safety policy is set out in Appendix 1

5.3 **Equal Opportunities**

- 5.3.1 The revised health and safety policy supports the Council's equalities agenda whilst recognising that some aspects of gender or disability require additional health and safety measures to be implemented.

5.4 **Environmental Impact**

- 5.4.1 Some aspects of the policy have the potential for positive environmental outcomes such as good event safety or noise management. Health and safety can usually be managed without detriment to the environment.

5.5 Legal Comment

- 5.5.1 The adoption of the revised health and safety policy is required to demonstrate the Council's compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 section 2(3).

5.6 Links with Corporate Priorities

- 5.6.1 Implementation of a robust health and safety policy contributes to an efficient community focussed council.

5.7 Opportunities and Risks

- 5.9.1 The opportunities and risks associated with this policy revision have been identified and assessed. Arrangements will be put in place to manage the risks and maximise the opportunities that have been identified.

5.8 Financial Implications

- 5.8.1 There are no material financial impacts arising from the recommendations. Publication costs are covered in existing base budget provision.

6.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 District Wide Implications.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Previous Corporate Health and Safety Policy – "Improving health and safety"

Any queries regarding this report please contact: Jo Revell Health and Safety Manager 383625

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Appendix 1



“HEALTH AND SAFETY – AT THE CORE OF COUNCIL SERVICES”

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL
CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

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“HEALTH AND SAFETY – AT THE CORE OF COUNCIL SERVICES”

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

SECTION ONE: The commitment to health and safety

1.1 Getting health and safety right is integral to the Council’s priority of being efficient and community focussed.

1.2 Employees are the Council’s most valuable asset and their well being is of vital importance to delivering effective services to the community. It is the policy of Telford & Wrekin Council to try to improve the health and safety aspects of everything it does to safeguard, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of everyone whilst they are working for the Council or using Council services.

1.3 The Council will comply with all relevant health and safety law and seek to promote standards of health and safety that exceed basic legal requirements wherever it is cost effective to do so.

1.4 The Council’s policy is to have a positive, proactive safety culture. This involves all employees, from casual staff to directors and members:

- Being clear about their health and safety responsibilities.
- Being actively involved in making Telford & Wrekin Council a healthy and safe place to work.
- Providing services in a manner that protects the health and safety of the users.
- Working with partners and other agencies to promote good standards of health and safety.

1.5 To put this policy into practice the Council will give its employees, as far as is reasonably practicable:

- A safe, healthy and harmonious work place.
- The training, knowledge and supervision they need to work safely.
- Safe work equipment and safe ways of working.
- Safe means for using, handling, storing and moving anything at work.
- Adequate welfare facilities.
- Access to occupational health support.
- Support to adopt healthy lifestyles.

1.6 The Council will appoint competent persons to help ensure that this policy becomes reality.

1.7 The Council will consult with trade union and other workforce representatives on health and safety issues to ensure that everyone is informed about and involved in health and safety.

1.8 This policy will be reviewed every three years and be updated as necessary.

Victor Brownlees

Chief Executive

Date: 2010

SECTION TWO: What does all that mean for me?

2.1 The law requires all employees, wherever they work, to do certain things. That means we must take personal responsibility to:

- Take care of our own health and safety and that of anyone else who is affected by our work.
- Co-operate with the Council in the interests of health and safety.
- Take good care of anything provided for the purposes of health and safety.
- Report accidents, incidents, “near misses” and anything we think is dangerous as well as actively looking for opportunities to improve health and safety.

2.2 Depending on your job you may well have more detailed health and safety responsibilities (see section 3 and the policies and guidance referred to in italics in section 5).

Emergency procedures

2.3 Please read this section and fill it in straightaway and remember to change it if you move to another Council workplace.

- *Fire and other evacuations:*

2.4 On your first day in a new workplace your induction must include the emergency evacuation procedure. Different procedures may be in place outside core opening hours. If you work in several buildings you need to understand the evacuation procedure in each one. On hearing an alarm, leave the building by the nearest exit and make your way to the assembly point. Never assume that it’s only a drill. If you’d need help to evacuate a building safely, talk to your manager or headteacher and ask for a personal emergency evacuation plan to be worked out.

[\(Personal emergency evacuation plans\)](#)

2.5 Your manager or headteacher must explain if your job involves responsibilities for others (eg pupils, customers or service users) in an emergency. Find out exactly what is expected of you – that emergency might happen today!

Many Council buildings have fire marshals. Find out the names of those in your area so you know who to contact if you have a concern about fire safety.

2.6 Find out where the nearest fire alarm call point is to your workplace and where the fire extinguishers are. Fire extinguishers are only ever to be used on the smallest of fires (nothing bigger than a waste paper basket for example) and only *after* the alarm has been raised to get the evacuation of the building started and help on its way. Read the instructions on the extinguishers in your workplace so you'd know what type to use. If in doubt – just get out!

Fire marshals are:

..... Tel. No.

..... Tel. No.

..... Tel. No.

Nearest fire alarm call point:

Nearest fire extinguishers are:

My evacuation assembly point is:

- *Medical emergencies*

2.7 If urgent medical aid is needed don't waste time - call an ambulance by dialling 999, give your exact location and send someone to direct the paramedics to the casualty if necessary. Only after or whilst that's done should first aid treatment be sought.

- *First Aid*

2.8 Find out who your nearest first aiders are and make a note of their work location and telephone numbers. If you have a particular medical problem it would be useful to have a chat with them so that they can be certain of giving you the right treatment if the need arises. First aiders must respect the information you give them in confidence.

First aiders are:..... Tel. No.

..... Tel. No.

..... Tel. No.

So what do I do if I'm concerned about a health and safety issue?

Sort it or report it!

2.9 If you can't deal with the problem yourself, the first step is to contact the person responsible for the issue with the authority to sort it out. Often this will be your manager, the headteacher or your team leader and, in any case, if you are uncertain whom to go to, try them first.

If they are unable or unwilling to answer your query or you would feel more comfortable talking to someone else contact:

- The corporate [occupational health and safety team](#) on 01952 383627/383626
- and/ or your trade union health and safety representative

Name: Tel. No

[\(A list of current trade union health and safety representatives and their contact details is on the intranet\)](#)

Further health and safety information and policies

2.10 Talk to your manager, headteacher, team leader or trade union health and safety representative as to where further health and safety information can be found in your workplace. Detailed guidance and policies can be found, for example, in the:

- [Health and Safety pages on the intranet](#)
- Education Health and Safety Manual on the Learning Platform,
- Catering health and safety manual
- Building cleaning health and safety manual

Much useful advice can also be found on the HSE website

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm> and the web sites of the recognised trade unions.

SECTION THREE: The organisation - (who does what)

3.1 Management

3.1.1 Members

Members will formally adopt and scrutinise the Council's core health and safety policy.

3.1.2 The Chief Executive

The chief executive will (aided by competent persons) decide on the corporate policies to be adopted, ensure they are implemented, maintained and their effectiveness is monitored. The chief executive will ensure that the corporate management team understand and carry out their role in accordance with the health and safety strategy and will nominate one of them to be the lead on health and safety matters.

3.1.3 Corporate Management Team

The corporate management team will oversee the implementation and effectiveness of corporate health and safety policies within the priorities for which they have a lead responsibility. They must ensure that heads of service that they manage have the necessary expertise to understand their responsibilities and carry these out.

3.1.4 Heads of Service

All heads of service are responsible for implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of corporate health and safety policies within their service area. Heads of service are responsible for ensuring that their service delivery units are appropriately represented on the corporate health and safety committee. They must ensure that managers understand their responsibilities and have the necessary resources and competence.

3.1.5 Service Delivery Managers and Team Leaders

Service delivery managers and team leaders are responsible for making sure that all relevant policies, procedures and practices are followed within their areas of supervision and that health and safety is integral to everything the service delivery unit does. They are responsible for ensuring that any health and safety issues they cannot resolve are brought to the attention of their service delivery manager or head of service. They are responsible for communicating regularly with their team on health and safety issues, allocating sufficient resources and ensuring that adequate health and safety training is provided.

3.1.6 Governing Bodies:

- In schools where the governing body is the employer (ie foundation schools, voluntary aided schools and academies) the governing body will draft a health and safety policy for the school and oversee its development

and implementation. It may be helpful to base this policy on that of Telford & Wrekin Council.

- In schools where the Telford & Wrekin Council is the employer (ie community and voluntary controlled schools) the governing body will oversee the development and implementation of Telford & Wrekin's health and safety policy within the school.

3.1.7 Headteachers

Headteachers in their capacity as agents of the Council, have overall responsibility for day to day health and safety management at their school. They must have sufficient competence (or assistance from competent colleagues) to enable them to ensure that Telford & Wrekin's standards for health and safety are maintained in their establishments.

3.2 Health and safety representatives

Health and safety representatives are usually trade union representatives and they have the right to carry out regular inspections of the work place, to investigate accidents and incidents and to examine health and safety documents. They attend the quarterly health and safety committee where they represent the views of employees (regardless of whether they are union members or not). Health and safety representatives must be consulted in good time about health and safety issues.

([Functions of trade union health and safety representatives](#), [List of trade union health and safety representatives](#))

3.3 Competent persons

The Council is required by law to appoint competent persons to assist in taking the measures needed to ensure that health and safety law is complied with. In this context a competent person is defined as someone with sufficient training, experience, knowledge and other qualities to be effective.

3.3.1 The Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Team

The corporate occupational health and safety team includes health and safety staff who are responsible for promoting improvements in health and safety practice and bringing to the Council's attention any new or changed legislation which may affect the way things are, or need to be, done. The team will lead on the development of detailed policies and guidance as well as monitoring and reviewing their effectiveness. Operational health and safety advice is provided by this team. They also facilitate health and safety training of employees at all levels.

Occupational health staff provide medical advice, from pre-employment right through to retirement, to both managers and employees to enable them to work in a way that does not endanger their (or anyone else's) health. Your personal medical details remain strictly confidential throughout and will not be divulged to anyone without your informed consent. Occupational health staff provide medical input into health and safety policies and assessments to promote improved standards of health and wellbeing. [\(for more detail see the Occupational Health Policy\)](#)

3.3.2 Health and safety contacts

Every service delivery unit must have a named health and safety contact to help monitor health and safety performance and help communicate health and safety messages. The contacts work closely with, and are supported by, the occupational health and safety team.

3.3.3 Employee counselling team

The employee counselling team are independent trained counsellors who offer you a completely confidential opportunity to explore and resolve difficulties you may be experiencing in your personal and work life.

[\(Counsellors\)](#)

3.3.4 Other competent persons

Health and safety advice in specialist areas can be obtained from a number of sources within the Council including engineers, architects, building surveyors, facilities management staff and building control officers.

3.4 Putting the policy into practice

3.4.1 To put the Council's health and safety policy into practice requires:

- Competence
- Communication and consultation
- Control
- Co-operation

Exactly what is expected is set out in the Council's health and safety strategy.

[\(Health and Safety Strategy\)](#)

SECTION FOUR: The structure (how it all fits together)

4.0 The structure can only be effective in promoting good standards if we all play our part, taking a personal interest and looking out for, and taking, opportunities to improve health and safety in everything we do.

4.1. Team/staff meetings

Health and safety must be a standing agenda item at team meetings. This gives everyone the opportunity to raise health and safety concerns that apply to the team and discuss proposed improvements.

4.2 Local Health and Safety Committees/ Working Parties

Occasionally local or particular health and safety issues may require the setting up of a local health and safety committee or working party involving management and trade union health and safety representatives. Any matters that cannot be resolved there can be brought to the attention of the occupational health and safety team or raised at the corporate health and safety committee.

4.3 Employee focus groups

Health and safety issues may also be raised and discussed at the Council's employee focus groups. Any matters that cannot be resolved there can be brought to the attention of the occupational health and safety team or raised at the corporate health and safety committee.

4.4 The Corporate Health and Safety Committee

This is the forum for consultation between the Council and trade union representatives on measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees at work that have implications for several services.

The committee also exists to introduce, monitor and maintain best practice in health and safety and to ensure, where appropriate, that there is a uniform approach to health and safety management throughout the authority.

It meets four times per year and is attended by representatives of key services, trade union health and safety representatives, members of the occupational health and safety team and employee focus groups. This meeting is chaired by a member of the corporate management team. Other people may attend on an ad hoc basis where this appropriate for the matters to be discussed.

(Health and Safety Committee terms of reference.)

4.5 Management team meetings

All management teams need to include health and safety as a standing item on their agendas at all levels to ensure that health and safety is being managed and monitored effectively. Service area management teams must consider a report about the service's health and safety performance and emerging issues at least once a year and take any steps identified that are needed to improve health and safety standards.

4.6. *Governors' meetings*

School governors should always have health and safety as an agenda item and will usually wish to set up a separate health and safety committee that takes responsibility for monitoring and promoting good health and safety standards in school.

SECTION FIVE: The Arrangements A-Z (the details in brief)

5.0 This section gives brief details of how the Council intends health and safety to be at the core of everything we do. The topics are arranged in alphabetical order to make it easy to find what you are looking for. Where there is more detailed policy or advice available this is indicated in italics in brackets. These can be found on the intranet or the Learning Platform.

5.1 *Accident, incidents and near misses*

If you have, or see, an accident, violent incident or a near miss you have a responsibility to report it to your employer. Some serious incidents may be reportable to the Health and Safety Executive immediately and others within ten days, so don't delay. Road traffic collisions experienced in the course of travelling whilst at work must be reported too.

([Accident reporting procedure](#). [Personal Safety Policy](#))

All reported incidents should be investigated and improvements made to try to ensure they do not happen again.

5.2 *Adult Safeguarding*

In order to protect adults who are vulnerable as a result of mental or other disability, age or illness, from harm resulting from abuse, the Council and its partners have comprehensive procedures which all employees must follow. If you are concerned that an adult is vulnerable and is, or may be, at risk of any form of abuse you must report this to the appropriate social care team. If you are unsure whether the person fits the criteria you can still contact the team and discuss the matter, if necessary as a hypothetical case.

Always err on the side of caution.

([Safeguarding and Adult Protection](#))

5.3 *Asbestos*

It is the policy of Telford & Wrekin Council to prevent, as far as is reasonably practicable, the exposure of anyone on our premises to all types of asbestos in a form that can be breathed in. A detailed asbestos policy and management plan has been adopted and survey results are available in every operational building. Before carrying out any work on a Council building that could disturb asbestos (or allowing anyone else to do this work) ask for the asbestos survey results. This will tell you if there is any asbestos present and if so, where it is.

([Asbestos Management Plan](#))

5.4 *Audits, inspections and reviews*

About once a year an audit will take place in order to assess how well health and safety is being managed within your working area and where improvements are needed. This may be in the form of a written checklist, or by way of a more formal inspection by your headteacher, team leader, manager or someone from the occupational health and safety team. Inspections can be most productive if carried out jointly with trade union health and safety representatives.

([Trade Union Health and Safety Inspections](#))

5.5 Challenging behaviour

Many Council employees, as part of their role, work with clients, service users or pupils who have communication difficulties and behavioural problems that sometimes lead to challenging behaviour. The triggers for the challenging behaviour and the strategies for preventing it and dealing with it need to be identified and recorded. These risk assessments usually form part of the person's care plan or behaviour management plan to minimise the risk of harm to themselves, employees and others.

[\(Personal safety policy\)](#)

5.6 Chemical and substance safety

Using chemicals and other substances can be an important part of work, especially for people involved in cleaning. Any likely contact with hazardous substances needs to be assessed to ensure that potential harm is reduced to a minimum (including the fire risk from flammable substances). In some circumstances infections are classed as hazardous substances including those carried by body fluids.

5.7 Child protection

In order to protect children from harm resulting from abuse (whether physical, sexual, emotional or as a result of neglect) the Council and its partners have comprehensive procedures which all employees must follow.

If you are concerned that a child is, or may be, at risk of significant harm, do not attempt to investigate or resolve this yourself. Refer the matter to the Children & Families Helpdesk (01952 385700) or, in an emergency, to the police.

If you are unsure whether the child is at risk you can still contact the helpdesk and discuss the matter, if necessary as a hypothetical case.

Always err on the side of caution.

[\(Safeguarding Children\)](#)

5.8 Computers

If you frequently use a computer for your work you will need to have your work station assessed to check that you know how to set it up correctly for your use and that you are working safely. You will also be entitled to have your eyes tested.

[\(Computer users\)](#)

5.9 Construction work

Some employees commission construction work or are employed in a professional capacity as designers, CDM-co-ordinators or client representatives supervising such work. Everyone in these roles has a key part to play in ensuring good health and safety standards are at the core of any construction work and ensuring that health and safety risks are minimised at an early stage of any project.

[\(Construction, Design and Management Policy. Safe Working\)](#)

5.10 Contractors and partners

Many employees will find that part of their work involves working closely with contractors or with other organisations as partners. Communication and planning is vital in these situations to ensure that everyone can work safely and our customers, clients and pupils are protected. If you are not clear about what to do about health and safety when working with a contractor or partner ask for advice at an early stage – never assume that its someone else’s responsibility.

[\(Working with Contractors\)](#)

5.11 Disabilities

If you have, or develop, a disability and need some changes to be made to enable you to work effectively and safely please discuss your needs as soon as possible with your team leader, manager, human resources officer or the occupational health and safety team. They’ll do everything they can to help.

[\(Working with employees with disabilities\)](#)

5.12 Domestic abuse.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse there is support available at work to help you decide on a course of action and to protect you.

[\(Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy\)](#)

5.13 Driving

If you drive a vehicle as part of your work, road traffic rules will apply to your vehicle and your standard of driving. These must be closely observed for your own and others’ safety. Over-tired drivers cause many accidents so it is important to plan long journeys with sufficient rest breaks to prevent this. You must avoid the use of any substances that impair your fitness to drive. Inform your manager if you develop a health condition or are on medication that affects your ability to drive safely.

Skill, care and observation are needed to move a vehicle safely on Council premises especially in congested parking areas and where vulnerable customers are likely to be nearby. If you use your own vehicle for work purposes check that it is insured for this and that you keep it well maintained.

[\(Driving for Work, Substance Misuse Policy\)](#)

5.14 Electrical Safety

Whilst essential and taken for granted electricity can be very dangerous. Telford & Wrekin Council requires anything that involves electrical work to be done by competent people. Before you use any electrical equipment look at it carefully and report any obvious defects. If in doubt seek advice. Bringing in electrical equipment from home is discouraged and can never be done without the permission of your team leader or manager. All portable electrical equipment over one year old must be regularly tested for safety.

[\(Building based services and equipment\)](#)

5.15 Event Safety

If your role involves putting on events you must make sure that health and safety is at the core of these too. Plan the event properly, being clear at an early stage about what needs to be done and who is going to do it to enable the event to go ahead safely. Fireworks, temporary staging, crowd control and other unusual activities may carry unusual risks to manage so seek advice at an early stage if you are uncertain about anything.

[\(Event safety guidance\)](#)

5.16 Fire

The Council has a separate policy on fire safety that sets out what needs to be done to control the risks from fire. Every Council workplace must have its fire risks assessed and recorded so that the correct fire precautions and evacuation procedures can be put in place. Ask your manager, headteacher or team leader about your part in this.

[\(Fire Safety\)](#)

5.17 First aid

There will be someone responsible for first aid within your workplace; you need to know who they are and where they work so that you can contact them quickly if the need arises. If you would be willing to be trained as a first aider let your team leader, manager or headteacher know.

[\(First Aid\)](#)

5.18 Health advice

The occupational health team (tel 383630/383631) is available to help with any questions you or your manager have regarding your health at work. Confidential advice by appointment is available if required. The team also offer mini health checks and lifestyle advice to help you keep healthy. The Council works closely with the Primary Care Trust to promote healthy lifestyles for employees.

[\(Occupational Health Policy\)](#)

5.19 Height –working at

Working at height, such as on a roof or up a ladder, can be very hazardous. An assessment must be made of the risks from such work, which should be designed out wherever possible. Equipment used for working at height must be suitable for the job, regularly inspected and well maintained. You are expected to have completed ladder safety training if using a ladder is an unavoidable part of your work.

[\(Working at height\)](#)

5.20 Home Working

Working from home is an option for some employees. To set this up as a regular arrangement requires a formal agreement. Checks will be made on the safety and suitability of your home and steps will be taken to

ensure that electrical equipment in use for working at home is safe and that your work station is set up correctly.

(Home working)

5.21 Law

The law about health and safety of people at work is set out in Acts of Parliament and Regulations. Some of these rules are added to by Codes of Practice. The main law is The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The law gives general principles saying that your employer has a duty to keep you safe at work and you have a duty to keep others you come into contact with safe whilst you are at work. Failing to comply is a criminal offence.

[\(Health and safety law information\)](#)

5.22 Lone working

If you are working alone you are potentially more vulnerable to accidents and violent incidents. Planning ahead, personal safety training, being able to get help if you need it and letting your colleagues know where you are, what you are doing and what time you'll finish are all important. You must follow the lone working procedures of your section.

[\(Personal Safety Policy\)](#)

5.23 Mobile phones

Mobile phones are a great way of keeping in touch and for getting assistance quickly in the case of an emergency. They must not, however, be used whilst driving, even via a hands free kit.

[\(Mobile phone policy\)](#)

5.24 Moving and handling

Most employees will move items, and some move people, during the course of their work. Where the risks cannot be controlled well enough in other ways, manual handling training must be provided with more specialist training for the more difficult areas. If you think you may need this training talk to your manager or team leader.

[\(Manual handling policy, Manual handling of people. Manual handling guidance \(Back Chat\)\)](#)

5.25 Night work

If you usually work at night (for at least three hours and at least part of that time between midnight and five a.m.) then you may be entitled to a free health assessment to help you manage any medical condition that could be made worse by working at night.

[\(Night working\)](#)

5.26 Noise

Exposure to high noise levels can damage hearing. If you work where you have to shout to be heard or find it hard to hear someone talking close to you ask for the level of noise to be measured properly. If other control measures aren't reasonably practical you will be provided with hearing protection.

[\(Noise at Work\)](#)

5.27 Personal protective equipment

Protective equipment is provided to keep you safe, please use it. This not only protects you but sets a good example to those around you. It will only continue to protect you if it fits correctly, is clean and in good condition. You are expected to look after personal protective equipment and report any loss or damage to your team leader or manager straightaway. When it is not in use personal protective equipment must be stored correctly in the place provided. Cleaning should be carried out in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and paid for by the Council.

[*\(Personal protective equipment for site visits\)*](#)

5.28 Personal safety

Telford & Wrekin Council takes the safety of employees seriously and a policy has been devised to try and protect people from foreseeable violence and aggression whilst they are at work. You need to read this policy and know how it applies to the work you do. If you are doing home visits or meeting people by appointment you must check the Personal Safety Precautions register before you go to see whether any special precautions are needed.

[*\(Personal Safety Policy\)*](#)

5.29 Pregnancy and new mothers

All risk assessments must consider whether further measures are needed to protect women of child bearing age. If you are expecting a baby (or have given birth in the last six months) you will need to let your manager know as soon as possible. Your manager will review the risk assessments to ensure that you are as safe as possible during your pregnancy and will take any additional measures needed to protect you.

[*\(New and expectant mothers at work\)*](#)

5.30 Risk assessments

To help to keep people safe, the Council is required by law to carry out and record risk assessments of work practices.

Risk assessments are a way of looking at the work we do and considering whether it is foreseeable that it can cause harm to employees or anyone else. Reasonable steps must be taken to eliminate significant risks or reduce them to an acceptable level. Copies of risk assessments that apply to you and your work area must be available for you to read.

Risk assessment is a process, not an end in itself. Recorded risk assessments are a progress report that should form the basis of a risk reduction plan or safe working practice that results in improving health and safety. Risk assessments must be reviewed regularly with changes made as necessary at least annually.

Specialist risk assessments are needed for fire safety and for certain work tasks such as working with hazardous materials, computers or challenging behaviour.

Risk assessments must be carried out by competent persons, people with sufficient knowledge and experience of both the job and the safety issues. Many risk assessments will be carried out by employees, for a few highly technical areas outside expertise will be used. It is important that employees are involved in the assessment of risk both at the initial stage and when the risk is reviewed. Health and safety representatives can also be asked to help. Training is provided for assessors and is available to anyone involved in the assessment process.

[\(Risk Assessment\)](#)

5.31 Security

Security measures not only protect buildings and their contents from loss or damage but protect our personal safety and reduce the risk of arson or other attack. Everyone can help by being observant and reporting anything suspicious immediately to the appropriate person. Basic measures such as keeping the workplace tidy and disposing of rubbish properly can help reduce arson risks. Understanding the security measures at your workplace and playing your part in making them work (for example by challenging unauthorised persons) is important too.

5.32 Smoking

Everyone's health is important so smoking is not allowed during working hours, nor in Council buildings or vehicles. See the smoking policy for full details. If you would like some help to give up smoking the Occupational Health Team can give advice.

[\(Smoking policy\)](#)

5.33 Stress

Although pressure is necessary for us to live normal lives, excessive pressure can cause stress which in turn can lead to real physical and mental problems. Training is available on handling personal stress and employees are encouraged to take their leave entitlement and take regular exercise. Managers are expected to be able to recognise and manage stress and try to promote a harmonious working environment within their teams. Training is available to help with this.

If you feel that work is causing you to have too much stress or even that stress caused by other things is affecting you at work, then you need to tell your manager or contact our occupational health team (tel 383630/383631). If you wish, all such contact can be confidential. All employees can also contact one of the independent employee counsellors for free, confidential counselling. Leaflets giving the numbers are widely available in every work place and on the intranet and Learning Platform too.

[\(Stress Management Policy, Counsellors\)](#)

5.34 Substance misuse

No employee may misuse any substance (this includes drugs, alcohol and solvents) before or during working hours to the extent that:

- it impairs their performance and/or
- it potentially or actually puts their own or others health or safety at risk and/or
- it adversely affects the public image of the Council

Possession of and dealing in illegal drugs on Council premises and/or during working hours will be regarded as gross misconduct, will be reported to the Police and is likely to lead to dismissal.

[\(Substance Misuse Policy\)](#)

5.35 Thermal Comfort

If your work place is usually too hot or too cold a risk assessment needs to be carried out. Raise this with your manager to see if some improvements can be made. If you work out of doors a lot you should take steps to protect yourself from the sun and adverse weather conditions.

[\(Thermal comfort guidance. Sun protection\)](#)

5.36 Training in health and safety

Training on various aspects of health and safety is a legal requirement. Initial training is organised on induction and more specialist training is arranged as needed. Some training may be provided on the job. Your headteacher or manager will have details of any courses you need to attend or other opportunities to improve your health and safety skills. You should be given the opportunity to put your health and safety skills into practice and your headteacher or manager will need to follow up to check that the training you've received has been effective.

Some training is very specific to the job you are doing and should be undertaken *before* commencing work. Examples include The Moving and Handling of People, Driving Skills and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health.

One of the core competencies for managers and team leaders is health and safety and all managers will be assessed on this and encouraged to improve their skills and knowledge.

[\(Training\)](#)

5.37 Welfare facilities

Council workplaces will be provided with adequate toilets, washing facilities, wholesome drinking water and somewhere to keep coats. Many Council workplaces will also have the means to prepare or obtain hot drinks or food and some will have dedicated rest areas. Depending on the nature of the workplace changing facilities may also be provided.

5.38 Work equipment

Equipment used at work that could become dangerous must be inspected regularly and maintained as necessary to keep it in safe working order. Report any faults promptly and keep inspection and maintenance records up to date.

5.39 Workplace buildings

Workplaces and their services including gas, electricity, water, lifts etc must be maintained in a safe and healthy condition.

[\(Water Systems Management Policy, Servicing of Building Services and Equipment, Thermal Comfort\)](#)

5.40 Young people

Young people (those under 18), due to their lack of experience, may need additional support at work to keep them safe such as supervision or restriction on the tasks they can carry out. This will apply to those on work experience as well as employees. Before a young person is employed a specific risk assessment for them must be carried out.

[\(Young persons\)](#)