

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

CABINET - 28TH MARCH 2013

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LAW, DEMOCRACY AND PUBLIC PROTECTION

LEAD CABINET MEMBER – CLLR RICHARD OVERTON

1. PURPOSE

The Council undertakes to revise its overarching health and safety policy every three years. A revised policy has been developed in consultation with stakeholders and is presented for formal approval.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members formally approve and adopt the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

3. SUMMARY

Since the previous corporate health and safety policy was adopted the Council has changed its structure and priorities. The revised policy reflects these changes and clarifies other areas. This report briefly outlines the main changes in and the consultation process that has been undertaken to arrive at these.

4. PREVIOUS MINUTES

The previous health and safety policy was adopted by Cabinet at their meeting on 13th July 2010. Minute number CB-37/10.

5. INFORMATION

5.1 The law requires the Council to regularly review its health and safety policy and is committed to do this every three years.

5.2 The revision was lead by the Council's Health, Safety & Resilience Team. The revisions to the policy have been made after consultation

with trade union health and safety representatives, health and safety advisers, health and safety contacts and key managers.

- 5.3 The revised health and safety policy retains the title “Health and Safety – at the Core of Council Services” as this was felt by stakeholders to still be appropriate.
- 5.4 The health and safety policy is deliberately kept as short and easy to read as possible. It aims to explain health and safety from the employees’ perspective and make it clear to them what the expectations are.
- 5.6 The statement of commitment to health and safety clearly shows how health and safety is integral to the Council’s priorities and must be signed by the Managing Director.
- 5.7 The policy sets out key roles and responsibilities and outlines how health and safety is to be managed and communicated.
- 5.8 The arrangements section of the policy briefly covers 40 specific health and safety issues, These have been revised and updated where appropriate to reflect any legal or best practice changes. Where more detailed policies and guidance are available a cross reference is made to these. In particular the following sections have been updated:
 - Accident reporting
 - Computers
 - Driving
 - Home working
 - Personal safety
 - Pregnancy and new mothers
 - Risk assessments
 - Training
- 5.9 The policy will be made widely available electronically via the website and on the intranet.
- 5.10 It is proposed to continue to produce the policy in A5 booklet form. The availability of a hard copy version also emphasises the importance of health and safety for everyone, not just those with a easy access to a computer. The costs of producing the booklet format will be kept as low as possible and the numbers printed kept to a minimum.
- 5.11 The new policy will be widely publicised.
- 5.12 The revised policy is in appendix 1.

6 Background

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 made it a legal requirement for employers who employ five or more people to have documented health and safety policy that is regularly reviewed and updated. The policy must contain not only a general statement of intent, but also the organisation and arrangements for carrying it out. Any changes must be brought to the attention of employees. The Council has had a succession of health and safety policies revised at regular intervals.

7 Equal Opportunities

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.

8 Environmental Impact

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.

9. Legal Comment

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).

10 Links with Corporate Priorities

- Protecting employees' health and safety enables them to work efficiently to deliver all the Council's priorities.
- The health and safety policy details the arrangements that not only protect employees but anyone affected by the work of the Council including protection for our vulnerable children and adults
- The health and safety policy details the arrangements that are needed to ensure that Council premises are safe.

11 Opportunities and Risks

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.

12 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the revised Corporate Health & Safety Policy. Publication costs are covered in existing base budget provision within Health, Safety & Civil Resilience. MLB 25.02.13

13 WARD IMPLICATIONS

District wide implications.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous Corporate Health and Safety Policy

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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 aim to be a Co-operative Council, working with our communities to create ‘Telford and Wrekin – the Place of Partnership, Enterprise and Innovation’.**

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 everyone, from volunteers 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 co-operatively 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.



Richard Partington
Managing Director
Date: 28th March 2013

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 line manager or head teacher and ask for a personal emergency evacuation plan to be worked out.

[*\(Personal emergency evacuation plan\)*](#)

2.5 Your line manager or head teacher must explain if your job involves responsibilities for others (e.g. 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. First aid treatment should be provided to the casualty whilst waiting for the paramedics to arrive.

- *First Aid*

2.8 Find out who your nearest first aiders are and make a note of their work location and telephone numbers. These details are provided in key locations such as adjacent to first aid boxes, on first aid room doors and on the intranet. 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 line manager or head teacher 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:

One of the health and safety advisors on 01952
383627/83628/83629/381107

- 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 line manager, head teacher, 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 E Council,
Local Health and Safety Manuals

More 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 Managing Director

The managing director will (aided by competent persons and the senior management team) decide on the corporate policies to be adopted, ensure that they are implemented, maintained and that their effectiveness is monitored. The managing director will ensure that the members of the senior 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 Directors and Assistant Directors

Directors and assistant directors, along with the managing director make up the senior management team. They oversee the implementation and monitoring of the effectiveness of corporate health and safety policies within the Council as a whole and within the service areas for which they have a lead responsibility. They must ensure that the service delivery managers that they manage have the necessary competence and resources to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities. Directors and assistant directors must ensure that their services are appropriately represented on the corporate health and safety committee.

3.1.4 Service Delivery Managers, Team Leaders and Group Managers

Service delivery managers, team leaders, group managers and anyone else with line management responsibilities must make sure that all relevant policies and procedures 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 the next tier of management. 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.

3.1.5 Group or Service Delivery Specialists

Group or Service Delivery Specialists are responsible for advising on and ensuring that appropriate measures to control risks are identified and implemented within their specialist areas.

3.1.6 Governing Bodies:

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

3.1.7 Head teachers

Head teachers, 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 Health and Safety Advisors

The health and safety advisors 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 work with People Services to facilitate health and safety training for employees.

3.3.2 Occupational Health Advisors

Occupational health advisors 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 advisors provide medical input into health and safety policies and assessments to promote improved standards of health and wellbeing. [\(For more detail see the Occupational Health Policy\)](#)

3.3.3 Health and safety contacts

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

3.3.4 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. [\(Counsellors\)](#)

3.3.5 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. Everyone needs to take a personal interest and act on opportunities to manage health and safety in everything we do.

4.1. Team/staff meetings

Team meetings must create a regular opportunity to discuss health and safety issues. These give everyone the chance 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 health and safety advisors or raised at the corporate health and safety committee.

4.3 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 consistent and proportionate approach to health and safety management throughout the authority.

The committee meets four times per year and is attended by representatives of key services, trade union health and safety representatives, and health and safety advisors. This meeting is chaired by the managing director, or occasionally, another member of the senior management team. Other people may attend on an ad hoc basis where this appropriate for the matters to be discussed.

[\(Health and Safety Committee terms of reference.\)](#)

4.4 Management team meetings

All management teams must create the opportunity to raise health and safety matters as the need arises to ensure that health and safety is being managed and monitored effectively. Health and safety should be a standing item for meetings that have a formal agenda. 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.

4.5. *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, for schools, E Council.

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 fifteen 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](#))

5.4 *Audits and inspections*

Audits are used in order to assess how well health and safety is being managed within your working area and where improvements are needed. The frequency of audits is determined using a risk based approach so that scarce resources are targeted appropriately. Audits require the completion of a written checklist but may also involve a more formal inspection by your head teacher, line manager or a health and safety advisor. 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.

[\(Controlling substances hazardous to health\)](#)

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 Family Connect on 01952 385385 or 01952 676500 (out of hours), West Mercia Police 0845 7444888 or NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000

If you are unsure whether the child is at risk you can still contact Family Connect 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 can make a start on doing this for yourself by working through a user self assessment. If you share computer equipment or hot desk, work station assessments are usually carried out for all the users together. If you have concerns about your workstation or have some special needs ask your manager for an individual workstation assessment. 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 employees, 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 line manager, people services business partner or an occupational health advisor. 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. In order to drive safely you need to consider:

- The vehicle: this needs to be suitable, well maintained and insured for work purposes.
- The driver: who must be fit and licensed to drive. 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. Mobile phones must not be used whilst driving, even hands free ones.

- The journey: this must be planned so that it can be completed safely and legally. Over-tired drivers cause many accidents so it is important to plan long journeys with sufficient rest breaks to prevent this.
- Other people: especially children or vulnerable adults. Ensure that passengers can be transported wearing the correct seat belts. 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.

Your line manager will require you to produce your driving documents periodically for checking.

If you are employed principally as a driver of Council vehicles then there are further requirements that you must observe, your line manager will explain these.

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

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 line 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, head teacher 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 head teacher 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 partner agencies 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 must 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 either as an ad hoc or regular arrangement. To set this up as a contractual arrangement requires a formal agreement. Checks will need to 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.

[\(Health & Safety Law\)](#)

5.22 Lone working

If you are working alone you are potentially more vulnerable to accidents and violent incidents, these risks must be assessed and controlled. 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. Systems must be set up to monitor and support lone workers. You must follow the lone working procedures of your section.

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

5.23 Mobile phones

Mobile phones are used by most employees and 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 line manager.

[\(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 will be entitled to a free annual health assessment as part of the risk assessment process and 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 line 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 protect people as far as is reasonably

practicable 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 and any information held by your team 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, have given birth in the last six months or are breastfeeding you will need to let your line manager, know as soon as possible. If you feel uncomfortable discussing any aspects of this with your line manager you can get further advice from a people services business partner or occupational health advisor. Your line 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, at least annually, with changes made as necessary.

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.

A risk assessment bank is available on the intranet and, for schools, on E Council that can be used to streamline the recording of risk assessments and give examples of good practice.

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 E Council too.

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

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 line 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 and some via e-learning. Your head teacher or line 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 head teacher or line 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.

Line managers must be competent to manage health and safety and must be 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.

[\(Work equipment\)](#)

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.

[\(Young persons\)](#)