

10 October 2017

Report of

Strategic Director

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Title

Health & Safety Policy 2017/18

Wards  
affected

Not Applicable

**This report requests the Committee to review the Health & Safety policy for 2017/18 and note a further report will be submitted.**

### 1. Decision(s) Required

- 1.1 The Committee is requested to approve the revised Health & Safety Policy for 2017/18 and to recommend to Council that it be included in the Council's Policy Framework.
- 1.2 To note that a further report will be submitted to the Committee regarding the positive progress of health and safety, work undertaken during 2017 and the Council's future direction for health and safety management.

### 2. Reasons for decision

- 2.1 The Health & Safety Policy is an integral part of the risk management process. As such it is appropriate to provide an annual report to the Governance and Audit Committee, to assist with the Committee's responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of risk management.

### 3. Supporting Information

- 3.1 Colchester Borough Council has general duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and specific duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to ensure that employees, and others who may be affected, can work safely without risk to their safety or health.
- 3.2 Overall responsibility for Health & Safety rests with Cabinet but is primarily managed by the Strategic Director with Health and Safety responsibilities, along with the Corporate Health & Safety Officer and Designated Officers within services, who form the Health & Safety Committee.

### 4. Policy for 2017/18

- 4.1 The Health & Safety policy sets out the Council's commitment to managing health and safety risks and the individual responsibilities, at all levels of the organisation.

- 4.2 The policy is supported by a set of arrangements that detail what the Council will do in practice to achieve the aims set out in the health and safety policy and successfully manage health and safety.
- 4.3 Both of these documents have been attached at appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

## **5.0 Summary of Policy outcomes during 2017**

- 5.1 Audits of services and arrangements have been continued by the Corporate Health & Safety Officer for 2017. These have been completed for Waste & Recycling Service Services, and Lone Working Arrangements. Action plans have been produced, however there were no significant risks identified. Community Zones and Building Management audits are upcoming.
- 5.2 Following the lone working audit, a new improved lone worker monitoring system was considered and subsequently trialled. There was a very positive response from those who trialled the system and this has now been implemented with devices currently being rolled out to lone workers after training. The new system is a device which utilises GPS tracker and a 24/7 monitored SOS alarm to provide two way communication and assistance as required.
- 5.3 The internal audit of health and safety at Colchester Borough Council provided an opinion of "Substantial Assurance" and this was confirmed in the follow up review.
- 5.4 Fire Risk Assessments for all CBC corporate workplaces are being updated as part of the Corporate Health and Safety Officer's 2017/18 work plan. Premises currently completed have all been considered suitable with good management of fire risks and none identified at a "high" risk level.

## **6. Proposals**

- 6.1 To review and endorse the revised Health & Safety policy for 2017/18 and note a further report will be submitted.

## **7. Strategic Plan Implications**

- 7.1 The failure to adequately identify and manage health and safety issues will affect the ability of the Council to achieve its strategic objectives.

## **8. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Implications**

- 8.1 Whilst there are no direct equality, diversity or Human Rights implications from this report, the Health & Safety process recognises the requirements of the legislation and controls have been implemented, including the completion of Equality Impact Assessments, to mitigate any impact.

## **9. Risk Management Implications**

- 9.1 The failure to adequately identify and manage health and safety issues may have an effect on the ability of the Council to deliver effect services.

## **10. Other Standard References**

- 10.1 There are no direct Publicity, Financial, Consultation, Community Safety or Health and Safety implications as a result of this report.



# Health and Safety Policy 2017/18

October 2017

**Contents**

1. INTRODUCTION .....	3
2. STATEMENT .....	4
3. ORGANISATION .....	5
3.1 Organisation Structure .....	5
3.2 Organisation Health and Safety Responsibilities.....	6
4. RESPONSIBILITIES .....	7
4.0 Leader of the Council and Cabinet.....	7
4.1 Chief Executive .....	8
4.2 Strategic Director (with Responsibility for Health and Safety) .....	9
4.3 Chief Operating Officer and Strategic Director .....	10
4.4 Assistant Directors .....	11
4.5 Group Managers .....	12
4.6 Managers and Supervisors .....	14
4.7 Corporate Health and Safety Officer .....	15
4.8 Designated Officers for Health and Safety .....	16
4.9 Employees .....	17
5. DOCUMENT INFORMATION .....	18
5.1 Document Control .....	18

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy sets out our commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of those working for Colchester Borough Council and anyone else who interacts with the services that we provide.

As an employer, we are aware of our general duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and our specific duties under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Where additional legislation relates to the activities that we are carrying out we will also ensure that our duties are fulfilled and our employees and others who may be affected can work safely without risk to their safety or health.

We will monitor and review this policy and associated documentation as necessary, at least every three years, unless any significant changes occur in the meantime.

*“Colchester Borough Council is committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees, customers and anyone who interacts with our services. We strive to create an environment in which our employees feel that their health, safety and wellbeing is integral to the organisation. We encourage everyone to be part of this positive culture so that we can continue to improve our standards throughout the organisation.”*

## 2. STATEMENT

Colchester Borough Council is fully committed to complying with its statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated legislation. The Council values the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees and will take all reasonably practicable measures to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all employees, contractors, the public and others that may be affected by its activities.

The Council recognises that good health, safety and wellbeing is integral to our organisational and business performance and our service delivery decisions will always consider the impact on health, safety and wellbeing. This will help to deliver the Council's philosophy of a positive safety culture.

The Council will maintain an appropriate health and safety management system and organisation structure to support its statutory duties. We will:

- Assess risks and put adequate control measures in place
- Consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety
- Provide and maintain a safe place of work with safe plant, equipment and personal protective equipment
- Ensure safe use, handling and storage of substances
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision for employees to ensure that they are competent to carry out their tasks
- Prevent incidents, injuries and cases of work-related ill-health
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions

All employees are required to follow this health and safety policy at all times and adhere to their own statutory requirements. We encourage any comments over health and safety in the workplace and will actively seek to rectify any areas of concern.

All contractors and others employed by Colchester Borough Council to perform work or provide service are required to maintain health and safety standards in accordance with this policy.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored and reviewed as necessary, at least every three years or when circumstances otherwise dictate.



Councillor Paul Smith  
Leader of the Council

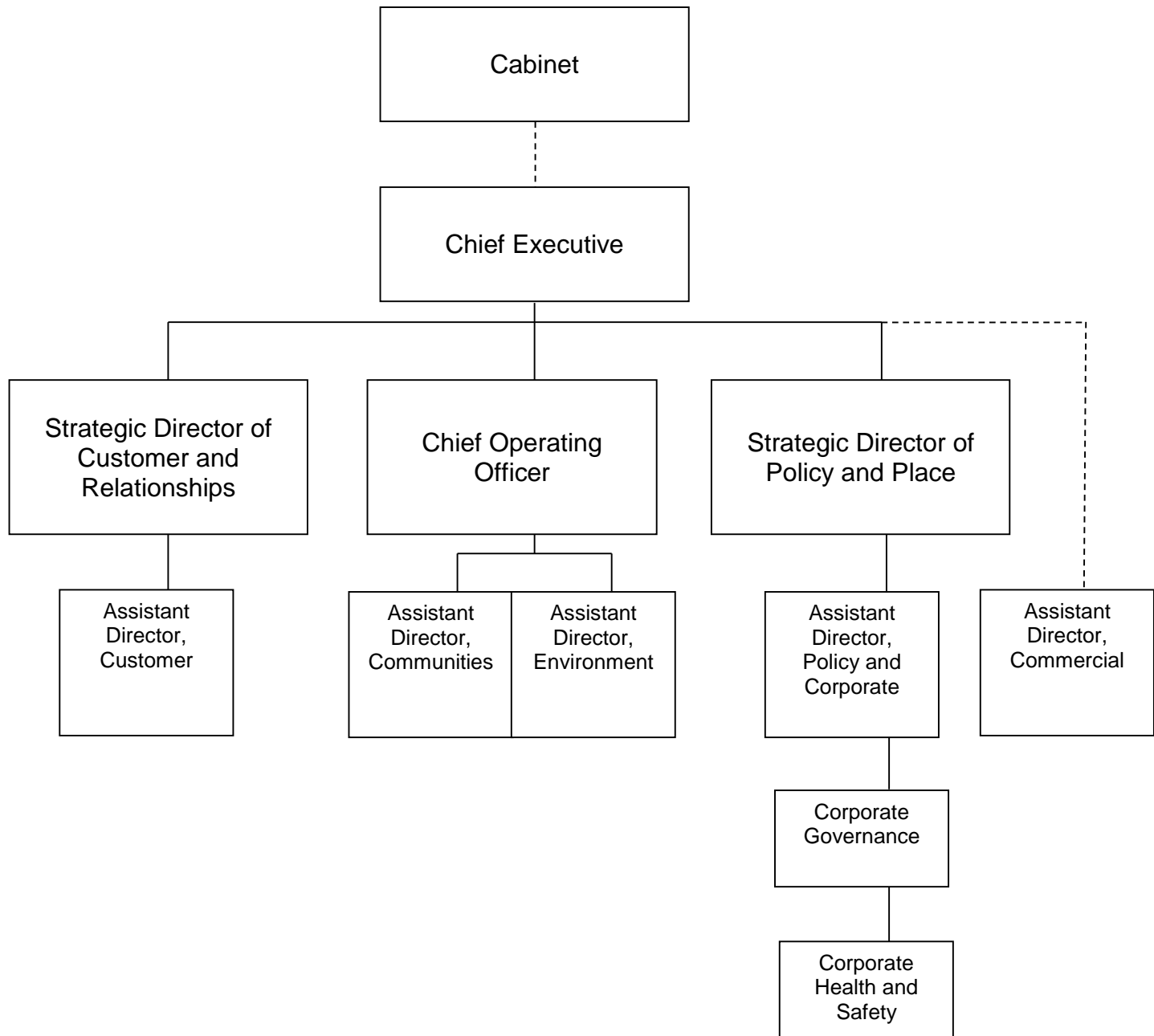
04 July 2016



Adrian Pritchard  
Chief Executive

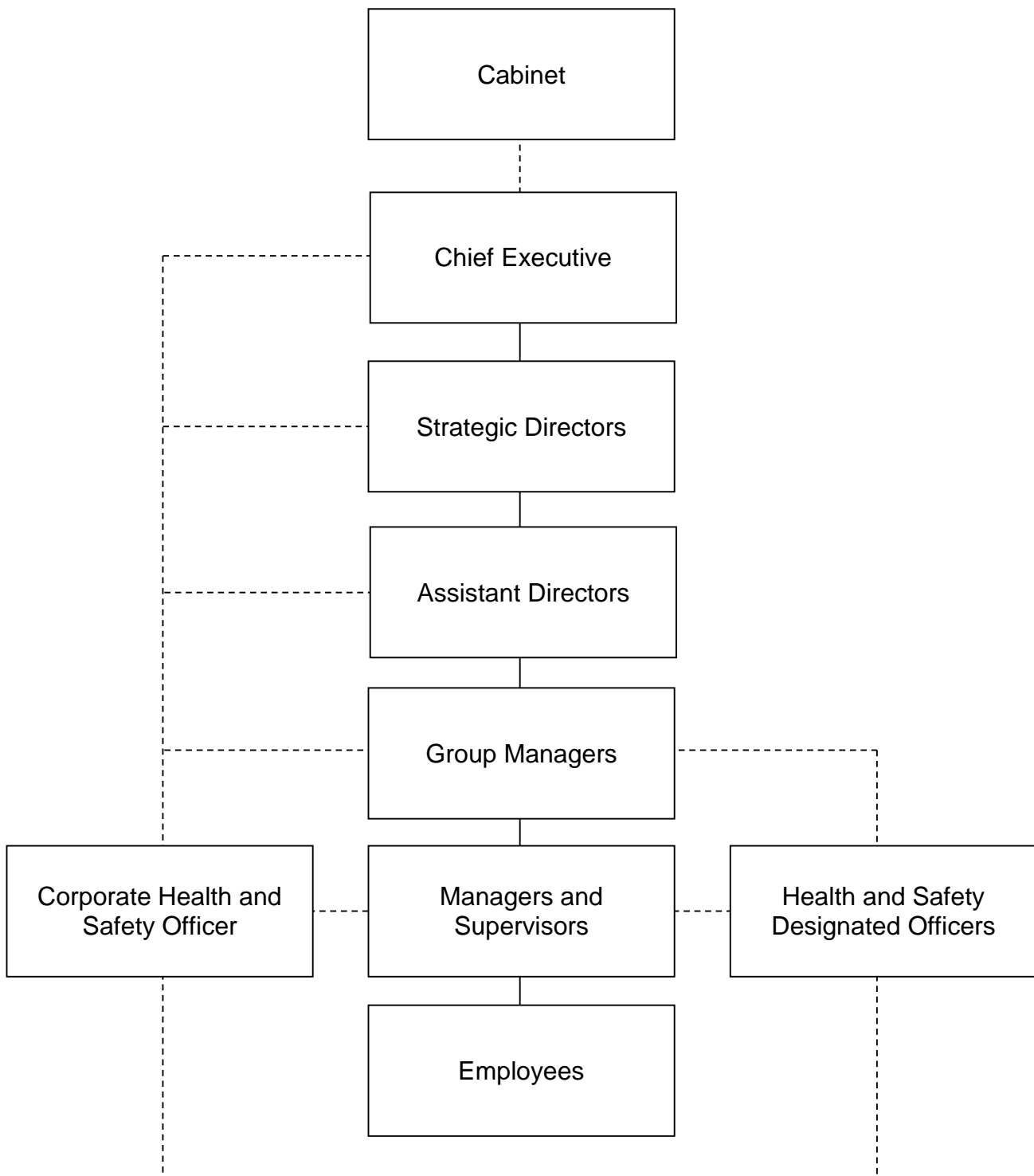
### 3. ORGANISATION

#### 3.1 Organisation Structure





### 3.2 Organisation Health and Safety Responsibilities



## **4. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **4.0 Leader of the Council and Cabinet**

The Leader of the Council has the responsibility for the management and monitoring of health and safety provision across the whole of the Council's undertakings. Cabinet are jointly and severally the primary duty holders for health and safety across the Council's undertakings.

1. Ensure that adequate financial and other resources are provided, so that the health and safety policy can achieve its aims.
2. Give due regard to requests from the Chief Executive for financial and other resources to meet statutory duties and other obligations regarding health and safety management.
3. Ensure that the Chief Executive has in place an effective health and safety policy and management system, which will ensure that all health and safety hazards and risks within the Council are adequately controlled.
4. Require the Chief Executive to be able to confirm, during the reporting period; health and safety performance, any major incidents or failure in the health and safety management system, accident history and key improvements to health and safety that have been implemented.

## **4.1 Chief Executive**

1. Overall responsibility for health and safety throughout the Council.
2. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
3. Preparation of an effective health and safety policy statement, organisation for carrying out that policy, measures for ensuring that it is implemented and communicated to all employees.
4. Ensure that this health and safety policy is reviewed, at least every three years or when circumstances otherwise dictate.
5. Ensure that health and safety is given an appropriately high priority and is not compromised, so putting employees or other persons at risk to their health and safety.
6. Ensure that the Executive Directors are aware of the health and safety policy and understand their responsibilities for effective health and safety management.
7. Ensure that the Executive Directors implement the policy through effective local arrangements and suitable monitoring arrangements.
8. Ensure that adequate financial and other resources are available to meet statutory duties and requirements of this health and safety policy.
9. Ensure that the Council has appointed a competent Corporate Health and Safety Officer for the purpose of advising on meeting its statutory duties and for advising and monitoring on health and safety.
10. Fulfil the responsibilities of the Executive Directors if services are under their direct management.
11. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

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## **4.2 Strategic Director (with Responsibility for Health and Safety)**

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Accountable to the Chief Executive for health and safety within all Services.
3. Ensure that their Assistant Directors are aware of the health and safety policy and understand their responsibilities for effective health and safety management.
4. Provide leadership on health and safety and support and promote continuous improvement programmes.
5. Lead the provision and function of the health and safety committee.
6. Monitor health and safety performance at Executive Management Team through quarterly updates, an annual review and ensuring health and safety is an agenda item.
7. Ensure that there is sufficient financial or other resource for effective health and safety management and identify any short falls in resources that may negatively impact health and safety.
8. Provide support to the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and Health and Safety Designated Officers.
9. Ensure that if any serious health and safety occurrence or failure in health and safety occurs, the relevant person/s are held accountable for any deficiency in fulfilling their responsibilities under the health and safety policy and will be required to demonstrate to the Executive Management Team, remedial actions have been implemented to prevent a similar reoccurrence.
10. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

### **4.3 Chief Operating Officer and Strategic Director**

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Accountable to the Chief Executive for health and safety within their Services.
3. Ensure that their Assistant Directors are aware of the health and safety policy and understand their responsibilities for effective health and safety management.
4. Support and promote health and safety continuous improvement programmes.
5. Support the provision and function of the health and safety committee.
6. Monitor health and safety performance at Executive Management Team through quarterly updates, an annual review and ensuring health and safety is an agenda item.
7. Ensure that there is sufficient financial or other resource for effective health and safety management and identify any short falls in resources that may impact health and safety.
8. Ensure that if any serious health and safety occurrence or failure in health and safety occurs, the relevant person/s are held accountable for any deficiency in fulfilling their responsibilities under the health and safety policy and will be required to demonstrate to the Executive Management Team, remedial actions have been implemented to prevent a similar reoccurrence.
9. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

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## 4.4 Assistant Directors

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Accountable to the Chief Operating Officer or Strategic Director for health and safety within their Services.
3. Ensure that their Group Managers are aware of the health and safety policy and understand their responsibilities for effective health and safety management.
4. Support the development, modification and delivery of a health and safety management system and ensure local process compliance.
5. Support and promote health and safety continuous improvement programmes.
6. Monitor and review health and safety processes and performance in their Services, and include appropriate health and safety actions within relevant strategies and business plans.
7. Ensure that there is sufficient financial or other resource for effective health and safety management and identify any short falls in resources that may impact health and safety.
8. Identify health and safety training needs for their Service and ensure this follows the health and safety training matrix and is in line with the Council and legislative requirements.
9. Ensure that their Group Managers have suitable and sufficient risk assessments in place to eliminate or control and reduce risks to acceptable levels including those required under relevant statutory provisions and ensure these are supported by method statements where required.
10. Ensure that for any premises under their direct control and management, adequate arrangements are in place for fire safety management and supported by a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment completed by a competent person.
11. Ensure there is a process to employ competent contractors with the correct skills, knowledge, attitude, training and experience.
12. Ensure that all materials, plant, vehicles, equipment and personal protective equipment procured for use comply with legislation, commercial and any other specific standards which ensure that it is safe and without risk to health when used correctly.
13. Support the carrying out of regular health and safety audits and inspections and ensure the outcomes of these are completed within the agreed timescales.
14. Ensure that if any serious health and safety occurrence or failure in health and safety occurs, the relevant person/s are held accountable for any deficiency in fulfilling their responsibilities under the health and safety policy and will be required to demonstrate to the Executive Management Team, remedial actions have been implemented to prevent a similar reoccurrence.
15. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

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## 4.5 Group Managers

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Accountable to the Assistant Directors for health and safety within their Services.
3. Ensure that their Managers and Supervisors are aware of the health and safety policy and understand their responsibilities for effective health and safety management.
4. Ensure compliance with the local health and safety management system by assigning levels of responsibility to relevant competent persons as required.
5. Support and promote health and safety continuous improvement programmes.
6. Monitor and review health and safety processes and performance in their areas of remit and ensure regular health and safety audits and inspections are carried out and outcomes of these are completed within the agreed timescales.
7. Ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place to eliminate or control and reduce risks to acceptable levels including those required under relevant statutory provisions and ensure these are supported by method statements where required.
8. Ensure that all accidents, incidents and near misses that are work-related or happen on council premises are reported using the online incident report form as soon as possible and no more than 5 days after the accident or incident and an appropriate investigation takes place promptly with remedial actions implemented to prevent a similar occurrence.
9. Ensure that all employees within their group have appropriate information, instruction and training that follows the health and safety training matrix and is in line with the Council and legislative requirements.
10. Ensure that competent contractors with the correct skills, knowledge, attitude, training and experience are employed.
11. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

The following may also apply, depending on their specific responsibilities:

12. Ensure that for any premises under their direct control and management, adequate arrangements are in place for fire safety management and supported by a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment completed by a competent person.
13. Ensure that workplace welfare, housekeeping and general safety requirements are effectively managed.

14. Ensure that all materials, plant, vehicles, equipment and personal protective equipment procured for use comply with legislation, commercial and any other specific standards which ensure that it is safe and without risk to health when used correctly.
15. Ensure that all plant, vehicles and equipment is adequately maintained and subjected to statutory examinations where appropriate and relevant records are kept.
16. Ensure that all employees within their group are provided with the correct level of personal protective equipment as identified by risk assessments and that it is maintained or replaced when necessary.
17. Ensure that arrangements are implemented in respect to the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015.
18. Ensure health and safety is considered during tender of new contracts and contractors employed are competent with suitable health and safety arrangements in place. Monitor and review contractors' health and safety processes and performance.



## 4.6 Managers and Supervisors

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Accountable to their Group Manager for health and safety within their Services.
3. Read, understand and implement the requirements of the health and safety policy and health and safety management system.
4. Support and promote health and safety continuous improvement programmes and regularly communicate with employees on health and safety issues.
5. Monitor and review health and safety processes and performance in their areas, teams and premises and ensure regular health and safety audits and inspections are carried out and outcomes of these are completed within the agreed timescales.
6. Ensure that the requirements of risk assessments and method statements are implemented, in place during work and communicated to all employees within their team.
7. Ensure that all employees within their group have appropriate information, instruction and training that follows the health and safety training matrix and is in line with Council and legislative requirements.
8. Not to put any person at an unacceptable risk during the course of work and stop work where any new hazards are identified until the risk has been assessed and controlled and if required reduced to an acceptable level.
9. Ensure that all plant, vehicles and equipment are adequately maintained so it is safe for use and any defective plant, vehicles and equipment is withdraw from use immediately.
10. Ensure that all employees within their team have the correct level of personal protective equipment as identified by risk assessments and that it is maintained or replaced when necessary.
11. Receive, review and remedy any concerns in respect to health and safety. When concerns cannot be resolved at a local level, they shall be referred to the Group Manager and if still unresolved to the Corporate Health and Safety Officer.

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## 4.7 Corporate Health and Safety Officer

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Review, develop and communicate the health and safety policy and management system in conjunction with other responsible duty holders.
3. Provide competent advice in relation to all health and safety matters and ensure duty holders are kept up-to-date on all relevant health and safety issues.
4. Ensure own competence is maintained through continual professional development.
5. Identify key health and safety training needs and advise on methods of implementation and delivery.
6. Provide a pro-active resource for the development and delivery of health and safety inspections and audits on an agreed programme basis.
7. Provide a reactive resource for the reporting, recording and investigating of accidents and incidents and provide statistical information to the health and safety committee.
8. Provide corporate safety initiatives and ensure there is a continual improvement programme for effective health and safety management and advise on the implementation of programmes.
9. Attend health and safety committee meetings and other relevant health and safety groups and provide guidance and advice where required.
10. Review the performance of health and safety within the Council as a whole, in conjunction with the Executive Management Team.
11. Provide a report to the Executive Management Team on a regular basis which details health and safety performance and update the Executive Director with health and safety responsibilities on all significant health and safety matters.
12. Ensure there is a continual improvement programme for effective health and safety management.
13. Provide a useful and relevant information service, with documents to assist others with their duties and ensure information is updated on a regular basis.
14. Communicate with and provide support, direction and guidance to Health and Safety Designated Officers and ensure they provide support on health and safety matters to duty holders within their area of remit in accordance with their responsibilities.
15. Support duty holders with enforcement agency requests for information, visits and inspections and if required, be the primary point of communication with relevant enforcement agencies.
16. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

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## 4.8 Designated Officers for Health and Safety

1. Support other duty holders within their areas of remit to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Read, understand and implement requirements of the health and safety policy and health and safety management system.
3. Be the initial point of contact for health and safety guidance to colleagues and managers in their service area and refer to the Corporate Health and Safety Officer for advice and guidance as appropriate.
4. Support and promote health and safety continuous improvement programmes and regularly communicate with employees on health and safety issues, encouraging suggestions for improvement from colleagues and encourage them to report any health and safety concerns.
5. Attend all health and safety committee meetings or ensure that a suitable deputy attends if unavailable and prepare a report as required.
6. Support other duty holders ensuring that all employees within their responsibility have appropriate information, instruction and training that follows the health and safety training matrix and is in line with legislation.
7. Carry out health and safety review and monitoring as agreed with the Corporate Health and Safety Officer and ensure regular health and safety audits and inspections are carried out and outcomes of these are completed within the agreed timescales.
8. Set a personal example at all times and act as an ambassador with respect to health and safety.

*Managers, at all levels, are responsible for the health and safety of their team - this cannot be delegated. However the Designated Officers can support and assist Managers with meeting their obligations.*

## 4.9 Employees

1. Support other duty holders to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities.
2. Read, understand and comply with the requirements of the health and safety policy and health and safety management system.
3. Take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts and or omissions.
4. Work safely at all times, in accordance with the information, instruction, training, risk assessments and method statements provided.
5. Use the correct plant, vehicles, equipment and materials for tasks and keep them in good condition and never use anything for which it is not intended or they are not trained or competent to use.
6. Comply with all safety control measures appropriately, including any personal protective equipment issued and never intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interest of health and safety.
7. Attend and participate in all training provided in the interest of health and safety.
8. Report immediately to their Manager or Supervisor any accidents, incidents, verbal abuse, near misses, occupational diseases and health and safety concerns, including defects to personal protective equipment, plant, vehicle, equipment and material, and any hazards or risks believed to be inadequately controlled.
9. Set a personal example at all times with respect to health and safety.

## 5. DOCUMENT INFORMATION

<b>Title :</b>	Health and Safety Policy
<b>Status :</b>	Final
<b>Version :</b>	7 - October 2017
<b>Consultation :</b>	SMT, Health and Safety Committee, and Unison
<b>Approved By :</b>	SMT and Governance and Audit Committee
<b>Approval Date :</b>	October 2016
<b>EQIA :</b>	Yes - <a href="#">web link is shown here</a>
<b>Review Frequency :</b>	Every three years or if change occurs
<b>Next Review :</b>	October 2019

### 5.1 Document Control

Date	Version	Description	Sections Affected	Approved by
September 2015	1	Initial draft	All	
April 2016	2	Updated draft. Moved arrangements to separate document.	All except 1 and 2	
June 2016	3	Updated following SMT meeting.	4.0 and 4.9	SMT
July 2016	4	Final draft version - Signatures added	2	Leader of Council and Chief Executive
August 2016	5	Minor amendments following Unison consultation. Final version.	2, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5,	Unison and Executive Director
October 2016	6	Review and endorse the revised Health and Safety policy for 2016/17.	All	Governance and Audit Committee
October 2017	7	Annual review. Organisation structure and job titles updated. Minor amendments to improve comprehension.	All	Corporate Health and Safety Officer

## Health and Safety Arrangements

These health and safety arrangements detail what the Council will do in practice to achieve the aims set out in the health and safety policy and how we will eliminate or reduce the risks of hazards.

This document will assist managers fulfil their responsibilities set out in the health and safety policy by identifying key elements and providing guidance for practical management of health and safety.

Statutory requirements, Council requirements and industry best practice are identified within the arrangements; however these may not be exhaustive and only provide a generic guide to health and safety. Every service, location and activity is different so must be adapted to the relevant circumstances and additional risks and controls must be considered.

Carl Free, the Corporate Health and Safety Officer can be contacted for further health and safety advice on: 01206 506579 or [carl.free@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:carl.free@colchester.gov.uk)

## Table of Contents

1 Audit & Review.....	3
3 Employee Consultation .....	4
4 Employee Welfare.....	5
5 Risk Control .....	8
6 Induction and Training .....	10
7 Accident and Incident Reporting and Investigation.....	11
8 Emergency Arrangements.....	12
9 Workplace Safety .....	13
10 Company Vehicles .....	16
11 Hazardous Substances .....	17

# **1 Audit & Review**

## **1.1 Audit**

An audit is a structured and objective process of collecting information in order to assess whether the system for safety management is working effectively.

Audits of services or arrangements are completed quarterly where possible by the Corporate Health and Safety Officer. In addition, quarterly inspections of all council corporate workplaces are completed by Designated Officers or responsible persons. An action plan is then produced and handed to the relevant managers. Reports on audits and inspections are presented at the health and safety committee and within the annual and half yearly health and safety report presented at SMT.

## **1.2 Review**

Reviews are necessary to ensure that policies and procedures are kept up to date. We review these whenever any of the following circumstances occur:

- Changes in legislation
- Changes to work processes
- On the introduction of new equipment
- Where there are changes to personnel
- After an incident

If none of the above occur, then all policies and procedures are reviewed and updated on an annual basis.



### **3 Employee Consultation**

Colchester Borough Council recognises its duties under The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 and the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

It is the policy of Colchester Borough Council to consult with all employees over health and safety matters. We will provide all new employees with a copy of this Health and Safety Policy during their induction and publish it on the staff intranet known as 'COLIN'.

There is a health and safety committee within the Council which sits on a quarterly basis and is attended by staff and union representatives. Information is then disseminated to staff through the Designated Officers for Health and Safety. In addition, committee minutes are published online.

If we intend to make any changes to processes, procedures or equipment that may affect the health and safety of employees and contractors, we will consult with them before doing so.

We operate an open door policy with regards to reporting any concerns or suggestions for improvement and actively encourage this within the Council. Where an employee has made a comment regarding the health and safety of the company, the Health and Safety Officer will investigate and action accordingly.

## **4 Employee Welfare**

### **4.1 Facilities**

The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 require that suitable welfare facilities are in place for employees. We provide and maintain the following for our staff:

- Toilets with hand washing facilities that have running hot/warm water
- Canteen areas with rest facilities and a means of preparing food
- Storage facilities for belongings where practicable.
- A supply of wholesome drinking water

Local arrangements are detailed during initial inductions to the Council.

### **4.2 Drug and Alcohol Policy**

We are committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for our staff and others. If staff are prescribed medication that may affect their ability to work safely, they should report this to their Manager. The Council's Drug and Alcohol Policy is under review. Additional information is provided in the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures.

### **4.3 Smoking**

The company prohibits smoking in all workplaces including company vehicles and client premises. More information for employees is contained on COLIN. Local arrangements are explained during induction.

### **4.4 Occupational Stress**

We recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stress. We will monitor the workload and working hours of employees to ensure that they do not become overloaded.

We encourage all employees to discuss any issues that are concerning them. The Council has a Stress Policy and all employees are encouraged to report any concerns of stress.

There is information for Managers on COLIN which can help them to identify signs of occupational stress so that they can act accordingly.

The Council runs an Employee Assistance Programme through Workplace Options who offer personal support and advice on wellbeing, family matters, relationships, debt management, workplace issues, consumer rights etc. All employees are encouraged to use this service which is free of charge.

#### **4.5 Violence, Discrimination and Harassment**

Workplace violence is defined as verbal and physical abuse, including threatening behaviour and assault. This can occur amongst staff or between staff and customers. The Council has a Bullying and Harassment Policy.

The Council condemns all forms of discrimination and harassment and will not tolerate such acts. Disciplinary action will be taken should this occur within the workplace and all concerns should be reported immediately to Managers or Supervisors.

Due to the work carried out, we recognise that employees may at times encounter members of the public who act aggressively towards them. Whilst we take precautions and train our staff to diffuse these situations, unfortunately, they can occur. If a potentially violent incident occurs we ask employees to complete our electronic incident report form so that we can monitor and investigate such incidents accordingly. Once investigated, the manager will then ensure that a suitable resolution is implemented in order to support the member of staff concerned.

We also operate a Cautionary Contact Register (CCR) which contains the details of all members of the public who have behaved in a threatening manner towards Council employees. If employees encounter an individual who behaves in such a manner, they are advised to complete a Cautionary Contact Incident Report Form. This form is then reviewed by the CCR panel to decide whether details of the individual concerned should be entered onto the CCR following a process as described in the CCR Policy.

#### **4.6 Lone Working**

Lone working is discouraged wherever possible, but due to the services we carry out, we recognise that this is not always avoidable. As we have many employees who work alone, we operate a lone worker personal monitoring alarm system.

Services with employees who lone work must complete a risk assessment to identify the hazards and risks to lone workers and remove or reduce the risks to a suitable level through appropriate control measures.

Lone working guidance (including information on lone worker personal monitoring alarm systems) is available on the council intranet site 'COLIN'.

Employees are encouraged to be aware, trust their instincts, not ignore warnings, be alert, confident and keep fit, to aid self-protection.

Any physical assault or verbal abuse (above an individual's threshold) to employees must be reported using the online incident reporting form and an investigation carried out by the manager.

As part of the reporting process, the perpetrator can be nominated by the investigating manager for inclusion on the Cautionary Contact Register (CCR).

#### **4.7 Personal Protective Equipment**

Where a risk assessment has identified that PPE is necessary as the last resort to further control an identified hazard, this will be provided free of charge to all employees.

It is the Manager's responsibility to ensure that PPE is issued to all staff members who require it. They must also ensure that the person knows how to use and store this correctly as well as the procedure for reporting defects.

When defects are reported, the Manager needs to ensure that PPE is repaired or replaced before the employee needs it again.

Employees are reminded to use all PPE as instructed and not to interfere with any provisions that have been made with respect to health and safety.

## 5 Risk Control

### 5.1 Risk Assessment

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires that employers carry out an assessment of reasonably foreseeable risks that may be faced by employees and anyone else affected by their activities.

The Health and Safety Officer has produced a bank of generic risk assessments which Managers and Health and Safety Designated Officers can then use to make specific for particular tasks. These are published on COLIN along with a blank template which can be downloaded and completed as appropriate.

Following this process, appropriate control measures are then put in place to reduce risks as far as reasonably practicable. We apply control measures in line with the generally accepted hierarchy of control:

Eliminate → Reduce → Isolate → Control → PPE → Discipline

COSHH assessments are carried out for all hazardous substances used in the workplace. Assessments of typical hazardous substances are published on COLIN for Managers to use and amend for their needs.

Fire Risk Assessments are carried out for each Council corporate workplace. A copy of each is held centrally and also at the site concerned.

It is our policy to communicate relevant risk assessments to all employees during their initial induction and at regular intervals. We also communicate any changes that have been made following a review.

Unless any changes occur to the processes, machinery used, people carrying out the work, or following an incident, we review our risk assessments on an annual basis to ensure that they remain relevant.

### 5.2 Hot Work Permits

Where work is carried out that creates a source of ignition, a hot work permit is required. This is to give the worker permission to carry out the work providing necessary precautions are taken.

Fire watches are required in line with the permit. Permits should only be cancelled by an authorised person after they are satisfied that all the conditions are met.

The necessary precautions are described on our standard permit which is available on COLIN.

### **5.3 Method Statements**

Where a risk assessment shows that risks can be reduced further if a set way of working is in place, a method statement will be written by the relevant Manager or Health and Safety Designated Officer.

This document sets out a step by step approach to the task and must be followed in order to ensure that a task is carried out in a safe manner.

Examples method statements are available on COLIN as a guide for Managers needing to complete these for the tasks that workers carry out.

## **6 Induction and Training**

### **6.1 Inductions**

All new employees are given a company induction which includes the following:

- Health and safety information;
- Emergencies and fire arrangements;
- Welfare facilities and first aid;
- Accidents and hazard reporting;
- Risk assessments and training;
- Work prohibitions; and
- Personal protective equipment.

### **6.2 Training**

A training matrix is in place which details mandatory health and safety training for all employees and recommended training for specific services/employees.

Mandatory training for is provided by the Health and Safety Officer and recommended training will be provided as decided by the Corporate Health and Safety Officer. Managers are responsible for providing recommended training within their services.

The e-learning portal also provides additional training that employees are encouraged to complete.

### **6.3 Supervision**

All new employees are supervised when they first join the Council. Ongoing supervision is then carried out by Managers and Supervisors as appropriate.

## 7 Accident and Incident Reporting and Investigation

As required under the Reporting of Incidents and Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (as amended), once an accident has been reported we will:

- Provide first aid if qualified to do so
- Call the emergency services if required
- Ensure that the area is undisturbed to allow an investigation to be carried out

We operate an online reporting system which employees are encouraged to complete as soon as possible after the event and no more than 5 days after its occurrence.

If the injury is serious or fatal, then the HSE will be notified by telephone on: 0845 300 9923.

If the accident results in an over 7 day incapacitation (not including the day of the accident), the Health and Safety Officer will report this to the HSE using the correct form at [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor)

If the accident results in 3 days absent from work, we will keep a record of this, but are not obliged to report this to the HSE.

The Health and Safety Officer will monitor reported incidents to identify trends and report matters to SMT on a regular basis. Where relevant, we will implement an action plan to make necessary changes to prevent recurrence, review the risk assessments and control measures as appropriate.

We actively encourage all staff to report all near misses in the workplace as this will allow us to investigate and see where improvements can be made before future accidents occur.



## **8 Emergency Arrangements**

### **8.1 Fire Procedures**

The Chief Executive recognises his duties as overall Responsible Person for Colchester Borough Council under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

A fire risk assessment has been carried out for all Council 'Corporate' premises. These are held at each site within the Fire Log Book. We carry out a review of these whenever any significant changes are made to building layouts or processes carried out in them.

All fire protection measures are inspected and serviced in line with regulatory requirements. This is managed at each premises by the Health and Safety Designated Officer or respective Manager for the site.

Our emergency arrangements are made known to our employees during induction and are displayed at conspicuous places throughout each place of work. This information is also communicated to all contractors and visitors to our buildings.

We have designated incident controllers and fire marshalls for each of our sites. These people are trained to carry out this role and we carry out fire drills on a regular basis to ensure that the arrangements remain effective.

### **8.2 First Aid**

Colchester Borough Council recognises its duties under the First Aid Regulations 1981 to supply adequate and appropriate first aid equipment, facilities and people to assist in an emergency. Each place of work has dedicated first aiders. Their details are included in the inductions carried out for all new starters. Should this person change, updated information will be communicated as appropriate.

The Health and Safety Designated Officers for each site are responsible for monitoring and re-stocking first aid supplies. Employees are encouraged to inform them if stocks need replenishing.

## 9 Workplace Safety

Colchester Borough Council recognises our duty to ensure that the workplace is safe for our employees and anyone else who may visit our premises or use our services. This includes the equipment that we supply to employees as well as the environment in which they work.

### 9.1 Electrical Equipment

The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 requires that all portable electrical equipment is checked at regular intervals. We encourage all staff to check electrical equipment before use and to take out of service and report any defective equipment.

We will ensure that all portable electrical equipment is maintained along the following guidelines, as suggested by the Health and Safety Executive:

Equipment	User Check	Formal Visual Inspection	Combined Inspection and Testing
Battery operated items less than 40 volts	No	No	No
Low voltage items such as telephone equipment	No	No	No
Display screens Desk top computers	No	Yes: 2 – 4 years	No if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
Photocopiers Fax machines (not hand held & rarely moved)	No	Yes: 2 – 4 years	No if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
Class II Double insulated equipment: Fans Table Lamps (not hand held & moved occasionally)	No	Yes: 2 – 4 years	No
Class II Double insulated equipment: Floor Cleaners Hand held & mobile	Yes	Yes: 6 months – 1 year	No
Class I earthed equipment: Kettles Kitchen equipment Irons	Yes	Yes: 6 months – 1 year	Yes, 1 – 2 years
Cables, leads & plugs connected to the above equipment Mains voltage extension leads Battery charging equipment	Yes	Yes: 6 months – 4 years dependant on the type of equipment it is connected to	Yes, 1 – 5 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to

### 9.2 Workstations and Display Screen Equipment

As required under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992, we carry out a risk assessment for users of display screen equipment. A copy of this is published on COLIN along details to explain the process.

When any new member of staff starts work at the Council, they are asked to carry out a DSE/Workstation assessment with their Supervisor/ Manager. If there are any further concerns, they are encouraged to discuss these with the Health and Safety Officer.

We encourage all users to take regular breaks, such as 5 minutes every 30 minutes or a 30 second micro break every 10 minutes.

As the Council operates mobile 'hot desk' working, all employees are encouraged to take a few minutes at the start of each day to ensure that they have set their workstation up correctly.

The ongoing management of DSE and workstations is the responsibility of the employee and their Manager. If necessary the matter will be referred to Occupational Health. In addition, where employees have consulted a medical professional who has confirmed that there is a need for a formal assessment and potentially specially made equipment, this matter will be referred to the Health and Safety Officer.

### **9.3 Work Equipment**

In line with the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998, all equipment used in the workplace will be selected for its suitability for the tasks required and will be used and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Risk Assessments are completed for equipment used in the workplace by managers.

Users are required to carry out a visual check before using any equipment. Where they have concerns over the safety of the equipment, they are to report this immediately to their Manager or Supervisor and take the equipment out of circulation until it have been assessed.

Where any work equipment is hired, we will ensure that this is accompanied by the relevant inspection records to show that it is safe to use.

#### **9.4 Noise and Vibration**

We recognise that some equipment used by employees creates noise and vibration which needs to be controlled. Employees are given instruction on the correct use of machinery to reduce noise emissions and are provided with the information gained from risk assessments.

Where the risk assessments identify that PPE is required to further reduce risk, we provide employees with the necessary items and will monitor the use. We encourage employees to raise any concerns they may have about using this type of equipment and will investigate this accordingly.

#### **9.5 Work at Height**

Council employees may have to work at height in their activities. They are required to work in accordance with our risk assessments and to use all access equipment in accordance with the training that they have been given.

All access equipment owned by the Council is inspected as required to ensure it is fit for purpose. Anyone using a ladder is required to visually check it for any damage before use. If damage is found they are to take this out of use, label it accordingly and report this to their Manager or Supervisor.

#### **9.6 Manual Handling**

Employees are encouraged to avoid manual handling wherever possible by using lifting and carrying aids when moving goods. Where manual handling cannot be avoided employees should do this as a two person operation.

A manual handling risk assessment must be completed by Managers to ensure hazards are considered and suitably controlled and updated with the activities of their staff.

#### **9.7 Housekeeping**

We encourage all employees to maintain a clean working area and to keep all walkways free from belongings and other items. Bins are provided for all rubbish and employees are encouraged to regularly clear their work areas.

We endeavour to keep all external routes clear and to dispose of rubbish in the appropriate manner.

## **10 Company Vehicles**

The Council publishes a Vehicle User's Handbook which incorporates the Driving for Work Policy. In addition, it provides guidance for those employees who operate a Council owned vehicle.

The Council has a Fleet Working Group which meets on a regular basis to discuss the way in which vehicles are operated throughout the Council.

We ensure that all our vehicles are insured, taxed and have a valid MOT where applicable.

It is standard policy for all drivers to have a break of 45 minutes when driving for any 4.5 hour period.

All new staff should provide their driving licence and the Council will ask to see this on an annual basis. Staff are required to present their driving licence should anything change within this interval. Any employees who drive company vehicles should report any situations which may have an effect on their ability to drive, such as the use of medication that causes drowsiness.

## **11 Hazardous Substances**

We recognise our duties under relevant legislation and have the following procedures in place to satisfy the requirements:

### **11.1 Asbestos**

The majority of asbestos within Council owned buildings was removed as part of an initiative in 2004.

Where this has been left in situ, it has undergone an asbestos management survey from which an asbestos register has been developed. A management survey assesses the condition of any remaining asbestos for normal occupation of the building. Any contractors who arrive to carry out work in our buildings are required to read the register which is held at reception for individual premises and sign to confirm that they understand where asbestos is located. Before any work is carried out that affects the fabric of a building, a refurbishment and demolition survey is carried out which identifies the exact location so that it can be dealt with appropriately.

### **11.2 Substances Hazardous to Health**

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002 requires employers to make assessments of the risk to the health and safety of employees when using hazardous substances.

COSHH assessments are carried out for all hazardous substances used in the workplace. COSHH assessment templates are available on COLIN for Managers to use and amend to the specific requirements for their members of staff.

### **11.3 Biological Hazards**

Due to the work carried out by some of our employees, it is likely that at some point they may come into contact with biological hazards. The principal identified hazards being bird droppings, discarded needles, rats and animal faeces. These matters are taken into consideration when risk assessments are carried out by the relevant managers and appropriate personal protective equipment is issued where required.

### **11.4 Legionella**

Legionella is managed in all corporate buildings by Colchester Borough Homes. All buildings have been subject to a water hygiene risk assessment and have a scheme for control in place.