



Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Corporate Health and Safety Team

September 2024

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Document History

Name of Policy	H&SP01-Corproate Health and Safety Policy
Purpose of Policy	This policy and subsequent arrangements outline the health and safety management duties and culture of New Forest District Council.
Policy Applies to	<p>This policy applies to all New Forest District Council employees including any individual undertaking work for the Council on a voluntary basis, agency staff or those employed on work experience.</p> <p>This policy also applies to contractors working on any Council premises or on behalf of the Council to deliver our services.</p>
Update Frequency	Annually
Latest Update	September 2024
Update Overview	September 2024 – general update to all areas of the policy including more detailed audit and monitoring processes.

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1. Statement of Intent

It is the policy of New Forest District Council to safeguard the Health, Safety and Welfare of its employees and all persons likely to be affected by its undertaking. The Council is committed to its legal and moral obligation in accordance with the health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and other relevant statutory duties. We recognise that successful health and safety management contributes to the performance and objectives of the Council. New Forest District Council believes that safety is a core value in the organisation and is committed to:

- Assessing the health and safety risks to our employees and to anyone else who may be affected by its undertaking with the aim of eliminating or mitigating risk, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Arranging for the effective planning, implementing, checking and acting upon health and safety risks identified.
- Ensuring that risk assessment is the foundation of our health and safety management system, requiring that managers and supervisors have the competency to review the workplace hazards, the likelihood of these being realised and controls which may be put in place.
- The provision and maintenance of a safe working environment for employees, contractors, and visitors, with adequate welfare arrangements and emergency procedures so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensuring that plans are in place for the higher risk services to meet both short and long-term health and safety performance targets.
- Develop and maintain a positive incident reporting procedure across all services which secures the commitment and participation of all employees to reduce accidents to as low a level as reasonably practicable.
- Develop and maintain good employee health and safety consultation, engaging with unionised and non-unionised representatives.

- Ensuring partnership working arrangements are reached prior to commencement of work with all partners, to determine how health and safety will be managed and the standards to be met. As a minimum standard the Councils health and safety procedures and policies will be maintained.

The Council aims to promote and communicate this policy and the associated arrangements across all services. Each employee regardless of their role is responsible for their health and safety and that of the wider team, and they shall adhere to the Councils health and safety policies and procedures.

This policy has been endorsed by the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive and Executive Management Team and sets out the arrangements for health and safety management at the Council.

X

Cllr Jill Cleary
Leader of the Council

X

Kate Ryan
Chief Executive

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. The Chief Executive shall:

- Take overall responsibility for the health and safety arrangements across New Forest District Council and lead the authority in setting a positive safety culture.
- Take overall responsibility for ensuring New Forest District Council meets its duties under the health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and all relevant safety regulations.
- Ensure that sufficient financial resources are available to ensure the authority can deliver its aim and objectives safely.
- Ensure that the authority receives suitable health and safety advice from competent persons to ensure all significant health and safety risks are identified and managed, and so assisting the organisation in the safe service delivery of the authorities' objectives.
- Ensure that risk assessment processes are embedded across all the Councils different services.
- Ensure health and safety objectives are set and monitored to verify that all Council services are meeting its accountabilities and duties.

2.2. The Executive Management Team shall:

- Lead by example on all areas of health and safety and set a positive health and safety culture for the organisation.
- Provide strategic direction and oversight of health and safety policies, procedures and action plans.
- Review and ensure the objectives set in the Health and Safety Work Programme are achieved.
- Ensure that New Forest District Council has competent health and safety advice available to assist the organisation.

2.3. Senior Managers shall:

- Ensure that health and safety policies, procedures and safe systems of work are communicated and adhered to by all employees within their service area.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the requirement to report all accident, incident, near misses, vehicle incidents and occupational diseases to their line manager and a member of the Corporate Health and Safety Team.
- Ensure all employees within their service area have sufficient training, experience, knowledge and skill to undertake their role competently and safely.
- Ensure all employees within their service area are provided with a suitable and sufficient health and safety induction.
- Ensure all tasks undertaken by the teams within their service have a suitable and sufficient risk assessment in place, to reduce all risks faced by employees to as low as is reasonably practicable.
- Lead by example on all health and safety matters and encourage a positive safety culture ensuring good communication channels throughout the workforce.
- Where required, attend relevant health and safety service safety panel and working group meetings.
- Ensure that sufficient financial resources are available to ensure their service can deliver its aims and objectives safely.

2.4. Managers and Supervisors

- Lead by example on all health and safety matters and encourage a positive safety culture ensuring good communication channels throughout the workforce.
- Ensure all employees within their service area are provided with a suitable and sufficient health and safety induction.
- Where required, attend relevant health and safety service safety panel and working group meetings.
- Ensure employees within their service area complete the relevant required and role specific health and safety training.
- Ensure all employees within their service area are aware and follow risk assessments, method statements and safe systems of work.
- At all times, ensure work is being carried out in line with local safe systems of work which have identified control measures.
- Ensure all accidents, incidents, near misses, vehicle incidents and occupational diseases are recorded and reported to a member of the Corporate Health and Safety Team.
- Carry out accident/investigations when required.
- Assist the Corporate health and safety team in monitoring health and safety performance as identified within this policy and subsequent health and safety arrangements.

2.5. Corporate Health and Safety Team shall:

- Act as the competent person for the Council as identified under regulation 7 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Monitor the health and safety performance within the organisation by establishing reporting arrangements for incidents and accidents and undertaking site inspections and service audits.
- Arrange, monitor, and minute Health and Safety Service Safety Panel meetings and Working groups as identified within this policy.
- Take quarterly health and safety reports to the Executive management team so that performance and identified trends can be reviewed and appropriately actioned.
- Provide competent advice to services on health and safety management systems, regulations, standards, risk assessments, training and other health and safety matters.
- Audit and monitor compliance with this policy and subsequent health and safety arrangements to ensure good practice throughout the Council.
- Carryout accident/incident investigations when required.
- Issue periodic health and safety bulletins on changes to legislation, updates to health and safety policies, guidance, and procedures etc.
- Liaise with enforcement bodies on behalf of New Forest District Council, for example the HSE.
- Ensure all accidents, incidents, and occupational diseases, which meet the criteria set out in RIDDOR 2013 are reported promptly to the HSE.

2.6. Employees shall:

- Carry out their duties in line with the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, subsequent arrangements, safe systems of work and local risk assessments.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their activities.
- Co-operate with the Council to ensure that any relevant statutory provisions are complied with.
- Undertake the mandatory training and role specific training provided to them.
- Make themselves familiar with the safety rules and safe systems of work relevant to their job(s).
- Report all accidents, incidents or near misses to their immediate supervisor.
- Report any unsafe work situation or defective equipment to their immediate supervisor.
- To use any equipment or substance provided in accordance with any training or instruction given.

3. The Organisation

3.1. New Forest District Council

New Forest District Council delivers a variety of services by its staff to businesses, residents and visitors which include, burials and cemeteries, coastal protection, community safety, council tax, economic development, elections, emergency planning, environmental health enforcement, waste and recycling, housing landlord services (currently over 5000 social housing units that include extra care schemes), Street Scene and Open Spaces.

The Council recognises the need to have suitable and sufficient health and safety arrangements in place to efficiently provide these services.

3.2. The Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028

The Corporate Plan lasts for 4 years and sets the strategic direction for all our work. The Corporate Plan 2024 – 2028 is detailed on the [Councils ForestNet Pages](#).

3.3. Our Values

Our values of Learning, Empathy, Ambition and Fairness, shortened to the acronym LEAF, underpin the Councils vision and priorities by shaping our behaviours and the way we work. They were developed with staff as part of the Corporate Plan.

4. Co-operation and Consultation

4.1. Service Safety Panels

Undertaking effective co-operation, communication, and consultation throughout the organisation is a vital part of any health and safety management system. To ensure effective co-operation, communication and consultation throughout the workforce, the Council has implemented 3 Service Safety Panels. The purpose of the Service Safety Panels is to:

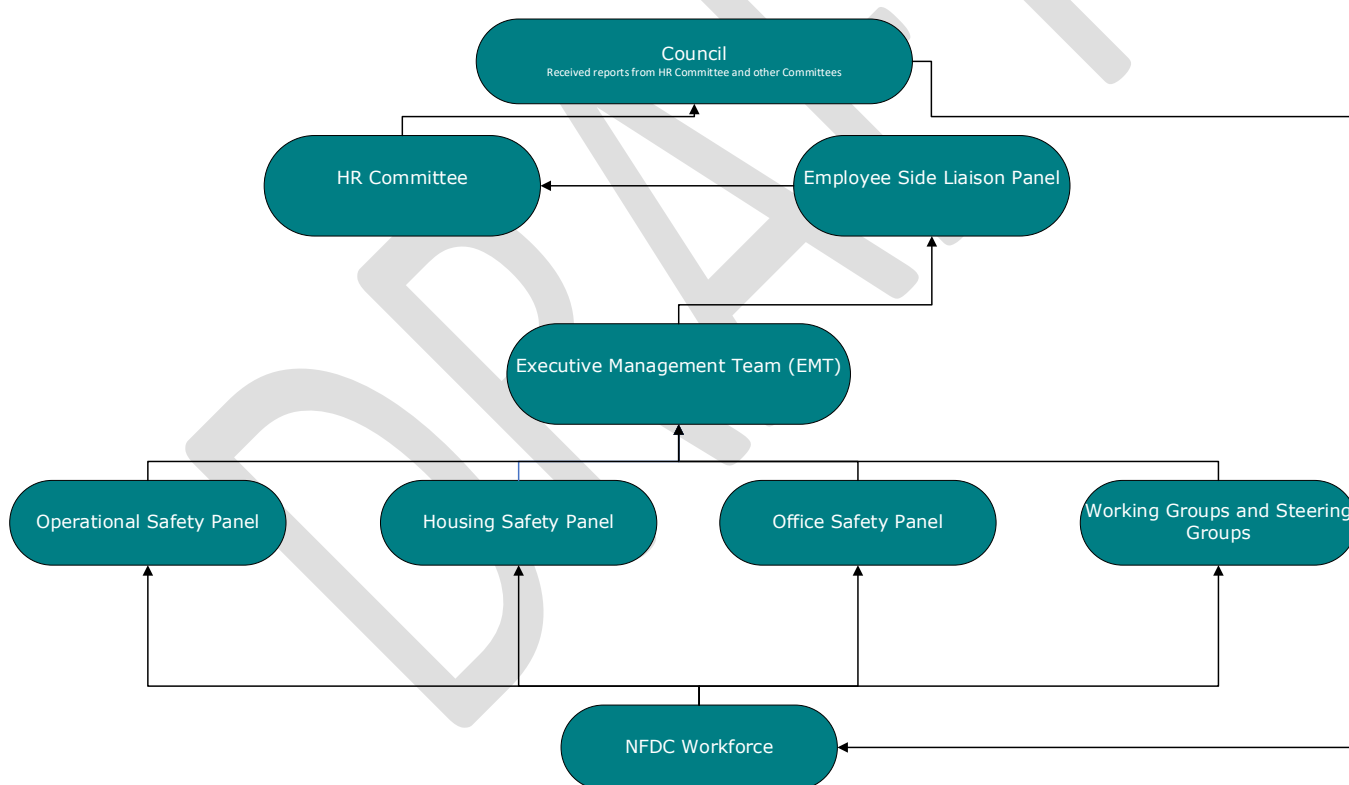
- Gain employee input to identify hazards, assess risk, and develop ways to eliminate, reduce, isolate, and control risks.
- Provide an environment for employees, union representatives, supervisors and senior managers to work together and make decisions to ensure a safe workplace.
- Generate a strong commitment to implementation through the level of engagement achieved.
- Develop a culture of co-operation and trust through listening, gaining a better understanding and collective problem solving, to give effective actions.

All Service Safety Panels are held quarterly, via TEAMS or face to face. All Service Safety Panels must be held in accordance with the terms of reference for the Panel. All minutes and accident/incident information must be communicated to all employees following the meeting. The Corporate Health and Safety team are responsible for maintaining the dedicated SharePoint pages for all **Service Safety Panels and Working groups**.

4.2. Working groups

To support the functions of the Councils Service Safety Panels, the Council has introduced several dedicated Working Groups and Steering groups to ensure effective management and communication between services in relation to the control of contractors, asbestos, fire safety and housing operational staff. As identified in the previous section, Working Groups must be held quarterly and reported to the executive management team via the Corporate Health and Safety Quarterly Report.

4.3. Co-operation and Consultation Structure



4.4. Health and Safety Meetings

In addition to the procedures set out in the previous section, all managers and supervisors must include health and safety on all team meeting agendas to give employees an opportunity to raise health and safety concerns. All employees can contact their **safety reps** and/or a member of the Corporate Health and Safety Team to raise workplace concerns.

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5. Performance Monitoring

To ensure continual monitoring of the Councils health and safety performance and to ensure the continued improvement of health and safety management systems and control measures, the Council undertake several different measures. This includes accident/incident reporting to identify potential trends, onsite inspection to ensure all employees are following the appropriate control measures identified within risk assessments, method statements and safe systems of work. The Corporate Health and Safety team will also undertake regular health and safety management audits in line with HSG65. The programme for audits is set out under section 5.2.

5.1. Accident/Incident Reporting

In order to have a positive health and safety culture it is important to be open and transparent with the accidents and incidents that occur. Recording and reporting on accident and incident stats also helps organisations identify potential trends which could give rise to significant incidents in the future.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team are responsible for maintaining the corporate accident/incident database. The Corporate Health and Safety team will also provide a statistical accident/incident report to all members of the service safety panels and the Executive Management team every quarter. This report will also include information on all significant accident/incident and RIDDOR reportable incidents.

5.2. Inspections

Managers are responsible for undertaking regular formal (recorded) and informal site inspections of the workplace, inspections should be undertaken in consultation with trade union and employee's safety representatives. Findings from workplace inspections must be discussed at the relevant Service Safety Panel and team meetings.

5.2. Audits

As part of the ‘check’ phase of HSG65 (plan, do, check, act), it is important to undertake regular health and safety audits. To ensure all teams and services within the Council are subject to regular health and safety management audits and health and safety performance review, the following procedures will be followed.

5.2.1. Stage 1 – Health and Safety Audit

All teams identified within high-risk services (**see appendix 1**) are subject to undertake an annual health and safety management self-audit. This self-audit tool will be created and provided to the relevant managers/supervisors by the Corporate Health and Safety Team. The self-audit question set will follow the requirements of HSG65 – Plan, do, check, act and include team specific workplace safety questions. The self-audit tool is an evidence-based question set, and therefore all managers must provide suitable and sufficient evidence for each question. All other services must complete a stage 1 – health and safety audit every 2 years.

Once submitted, the health and safety team will review the findings and provide the relevant service with actions and recommendations.

Overall scoring framework

0% – 50%	Immediate action required	Full stage 2 audit to be undertaken by the H&S team.
51% - 75%	Further action required	H&S to monitor actions identified.
76% - 90%	Satisfactory	Continue to monitor actions identified.
91% - 100%	Outstanding	No further action.

5.2.2. Stage 2 – Health and Safety Audit

Stage 2 audits will be more in-depth and be undertaken by a competent Corporate Health and Safety Advisor in person. The Council will aim to undertake a Stage 2 audit on all teams identified within high-risk services over a 5-year period. The schedule of Stage 2 – Health and Safety Audits will be identified within the Corporate Health and Safety Work-Plan and be agreed with the Executive Management team on an annual basis. A record of actions will be communicated to the relevant persons and reported on at quarterly Service Safety Panels and as part of the Quarterly Health and Safety Report presented at EMT, ESLP and HR Committee.

5.2.3. Reactive Health and Safety Audits

Reactive health and safety audits may be required or identified as part of an accident/incident investigation or following enforcement action. Reactive audits will be undertaken by a competent Corporate Health and Safety Advisor and will follow the stage 2 – Health and Safety Audit template. Relevant questions will be added depending on the scope of the audit required.

5.3. Corporate Health and Safety Work-Plan

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager and Service Manager – Human Resources, will create an annual Corporate Health and Safety Work-Plan. The purpose of this plan is to fulfil the requirements of Do, Check & Act, as identified within HSG65. It also provides the Executive Management team, union representatives and Councillors with key updates on health and safety and offers a chance for consultation.

The Corporate Health and Safety Work-Plan will be agreed by the Executive Management team in quarter 1 of each financial year.

It is the responsibility of the Corporate Health and Safety Manager to keep the work-plan up to date.

6. Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment is the primary management tool in ensuring the health and safety of our staff, and others. There is a duty on the organisation to carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments so that effective risk management controls are in place.

Risk assessment is a straight-forward and structured method of ensuring risks to the health, safety, and wellbeing of employees (and others) are sufficiently eliminated, reduced, or controlled. Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place for all activities their employees undertake. The Corporate Health and Safety Team provide competent advice and guidance to all employee of New Forest District Council, additional advice and guidance is available on the Corporate Health and Safety intranet pages "risk assessment".

6.1. Different Types of Risk Assessment

The types of risk assessment required within the workplace should be proportionate and relevant to the operational activities being undertaken. There are a variety of prescribed types of risk assessment set out in different sets of Regulations, the different types of risk assessments required are outlined within the Councils health and safety policies, standard operating procedures and safe working guidance documents. Managers and supervisors must ensure they follow the requirements outlined within these documents. the Corporate Health and Safety team have created several templates for employees to use, all templates and forms can be found on the **Corporate health and Safety Intranet**.

6.2. Communication of Risk Assessments

Once complete and signed, risk assessments, method statements and safe systems of work must be communicated out to all relevant employees. It is the responsibility of the relevant manager/supervisor to communicate this information to their staff. All risk assessments (unless they contain personal information, such as a person centric risk assessment) must be stored on the Corporate Health and Safety intranet site within the relevant area on the **Directorate Hub**. Where staff do not have access to SharePoint, managers and supervisors must provide employees with printed copies. A record of communication should be held by the team.

6.3. Reviewing Risk Assessments

All risk assessments must be reviewed by a competent person annually, or if there has been a significant change, or if identified through an accident/incident investigation.

7. Training

As identified within this policy and the subsequent health and safety arrangements, the Council must ensure that suitable information, training, and instruction is provided to employees to ensure they are able to undertake their work safely. All Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring the employees within their team are competent to undertake their roles and have received the required role specific health and safety training. Responsible Managers must ensure all training requirements identified within the Councils Health and Safety Arrangements are included within their service training matrix (identified within the Corporate LMS)

All training records, including e-learning and face to face learning must be recorded on the Corporate LMS.

The table below outlines the e-learning modules that are mandatory for all employees to complete, additional training requirements are outlined within the Council Health and Safety arrangements.

Course Name	Requirement	Refresher Frequency
Fire Safety	All employees	2 yearly
Drug and Alcohol Awareness	All employees	2 yearly
Driving Safety	All employees (who drive on council business)	2 yearly
Display Screen Equipment (DSE)	All employees identified as DSE users	2 yearly
Office Safety	All office employees, Operational team leaders, Supervisors, and managers	2 yearly

7.1. IOSH Managing Safely

All managers/supervisors identified within the higher risk services (appendix 1) are required to undertake accredited IOSH Managing Safely training as part of their H&S induction. Refresher training (IOSH Managing Safely Refresher) must be undertaken every 3 years.

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8. Health and Safety Arrangements

The Council's Health and Safety Arrangements include the specific policies, Standard Operating Procedures, procedures, and safe management systems followed within the Council to ensure compliance with the relevant legislation, approved code of practices and guidance. All health and safety information is held on the Council's **Corporate Health and Safety Intranet**. The Corporate Health and Safety Intranet pages are available via ForestNet.

All health and safety documentation, including Policies, Standard Operating Procedures, Safe Working Guidance, templates, toolbox talks, and industry guidance is available via the **Health and Safety Documents** folder.

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9. Main Legislation Relevant to this Document

- **The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974**
- **The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999**
- **The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992**
- **The Safety representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977**
- **The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996**
- **The Control of Asbestos Regulation 2012**
- **The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015**
- **The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005**
- **The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998**
- **The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998**
- **The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations 2002**
- **The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989**
- **The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981**
- **The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002**
- **The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992**
- **The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992**
- **The Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002**
- **The Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005**
- **The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005**
- **The Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992**

- **The Working at Height Regulations 2005**
- **The Fire Safety Act 2021**
- **The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013**
- **Building Safety Act 2022**
- **Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998**

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11. Appendix

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