

ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



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Department: Legal & Regulatory Support
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1. Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement

- 1.1 Argyll and Bute Council recognises that people are its most important asset and that their health and safety is central to successfully achieving our vision of realising our potential together.
- 1.2 Argyll and Bute Council will do all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees at work and the health and safety of those affected by its undertakings.
- 1.3 Responsibility rests with the Chief Executive who discharges these duties through the Executive Directors and all Council staff.
- 1.4 This policy will be modified when appropriate and reviewed every three years.
- 1.4 The Council:
 - a) Will foster and maintain a positive health and safety culture which secures the commitment of all employees, making it clear to managers that there can be no conflict between health and safety and the demands of the job
 - b) Is committed to control the risks arising from its work activities at the planning stage, including those undertaken by others on its behalf
 - c) Will provide adequate resources, in terms of finance, supervision, staff numbers, training, materials and equipment to enable employees to perform all work activities safely
 - d) Recognises the duty of management to ensure that all processes and services are designed to take account of health and safety
 - e) Recognises that managers must regularly supervise, monitor and review work to ensure health and safety standards are maintained
 - f) Is committed to minimise the possibility of incidents and accidents occurring and where they do, take appropriate action to prevent similar events occurring in the future
 - g) Communicates and consults with employees on health and safety

Signed:



Chief Executive, Argyll & Bute Council

2. ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 This Health and Safety Corporate Policy Statement is underpinned by supporting health and safety Management Standards which detail how this document is met.
- 2.2 Safety Policies and Management Standards are kept and maintained on the Corporate Health and Safety SharePoint via the Hub.
- 2.3 The health and safety responsibilities of Elected Representatives and relevant Council Officers are summarised below.

2.3 ELECTED MEMBERS

- 2.3.1 Elected Members have a significant part to play in securing the health and safety of Council employees and undertakings. Although they are not responsible for managing health and safety services on a day-to-day basis, elected members need to be aware of the strategic impact of the decisions they make and how they may affect operational health and safety downstream.
- 2.3.2 In particular, elected members will:
 - a) Take note of health and safety advice provided through Council Officers and ensure, through challenge and scrutiny, that the level of risk associated with decisions related to policies, projects resourcing and strategic priorities is understood before decisions are taken.
 - b) Provide effective leadership, challenge and scrutiny to ensure that the Council manages health and safety risks sensibly and proportionately.

2.4 THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 2.4.1 The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work of all Council employees and those affected by Council undertakings. This will be achieved by:
 - a) Ensuring that Health and Safety is an integral part of the overall management culture.
 - b) Developing a positive attitude to Health and Safety amongst staff and contractors by visibly demonstrating a personal commitment to high standards of Health and Safety performance.
 - c) Creating and maintaining an appropriate organisational structure and chain of command within the Council through which the policy will be implemented. This will include competent persons to assist the Council to comply with Health and Safety legislation.
 - d) Delegating the responsibility for implementation of the policy to Executive Directors and through them to each Head of Service.
 - e) Ensuring that adequate financial, physical and human resources are made available to enable the Council to fully implement and discharge this policy.
 - f) Monitoring health and safety performance each quarter through the performance management framework.

- g) Ensuring that management arrangements are established and maintained within Council Services which ensure that health and safety risks are identified and assessed and effective risk controls implemented and kept under review.
- h) Ensuring that arrangements are in place for the Chief Executive's own Unit to meet the requirements detailed in section 2.5 of this document.
- i) Ensuring that an approved Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement is in place and regularly reviewed.

2.5 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

- 2.5.1 Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees and those affected by Council undertakings. In particular they should:
- a) Develop a positive attitude by visibly demonstrating a personal commitment to health and safety.
 - b) In consultation with the Corporate Health and Safety Team, establish the local organisational arrangements, procedures, instructions and safe systems required to enable safe working and the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy.
 - c) Ensure that a two year Health & Safety Plan which reflects the Corporate Health and Safety Plan and includes Departmental targets and objectives is in place.
 - d) Put in place arrangements to ensure that their Services regularly monitor and report their health and safety performance (including the outcomes of Service specific health and safety walk rounds, inspections, reviews and audits) each quarter.
 - e) Ensure that adequate resources, in terms of finance, supervision, staff numbers, materials and equipment are made available to enable safe working and implement the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.
 - f) Ensure that Services undertake training needs analysis and that suitable training is provided to staff (and contractors where appropriate) taking into account risk assessments for work activities.
 - g) Ensure that suitable arrangements are made to enable the evacuation of all persons with particular consideration to vulnerable groups from any area within their control in the event of fire or other emergencies.
 - h) Ensure that risks at work are assessed and controlled as early in any work process as possible, at the design and planning phases of work projects and during the procurement of services, equipment, plant or materials.
 - i) Ensure that only contractors approved through the Council's procurement processes are allowed to work on Council undertakings.
 - j) Monitor contractor's health and safety performance, ensuring that contractor's accidents, incidents and near misses are reported through the Council's incident reporting system within one working day.

- k) Ensure that programs of management workplace inspections and maintenance inspections are undertaken - appropriate to the risks present.
- l) Ensure that all incidents, accidents and near misses are reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Team within one working day.
- m) Ensure that all remedial health and safety actions identified after incidents, accidents, near misses, audits, inspections and reviews are completed by responsible managers as promptly as possible.

2.6 CHIEF OFFICER - INTEGRATED HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP

2.6.1 The Chief Officer is accountable operationally for ensuring that suitable and sufficient arrangements are made for health and safety in all aspects of the Partnership. They shall provide direction for the management of health and safety for all staff and activities in each area of responsibility and under their control. They are responsible for:

- a) Demonstrating visible and active health and safety leadership.
- b) Implementing the respective policy, objectives, procedures and plans of both NHS Highland and Argyll & Bute Council as appropriate and bringing these to the attention of all Managers and Staff.
- c) Ensuring that a Health, Safety and Fire Improvement Plan is developed for the Partnership.
- d) Ensuring that the Health, Safety and Fire Improvement Plan is implemented and that progress is monitored.
- e) Allocating sufficient resources to meet the requirements of relevant policy and the Operational Unit's Health, Safety and Fire Improvement Plan.
- f) Ensuring that health and safety accountabilities and responsibilities are clearly allocated to appropriate managers under their control.
- g) Ensuring that systems are established to identify, assess, manage and monitor significant operational hazards and risks using competent staff.
- h) Ensuring that the Partnership maintains a risk register.
- i) Managing the health and safety impacts of change management and service redesign projects, consulting with staff, staff side representatives including Corporate Health and Safety service link officers throughout the process to "design out" hazards.
- j) Identifying the operational priorities for health and safety and taking action where appropriate.
- k) Ensuring that managers and staff are competent to identify risks in the workplace and manage them effectively, with support where necessary.
- l) Ensuring that adverse events are reported and investigated.

- m) Ensuring that adverse event data is reviewed regularly, trends identified, action taken to reduce reoccurrence and that learning is disseminated and shared widely.
- n) Ensuring that work place safety monitoring is undertaken where required.
- o) Ensuring that the relevant Parent Body is informed in a timely manner when Health and Safety Executive enforcement action is being considered.
- p) Ensuring that all significant Health and Safety Executive advice and guidance is adhered to and actioned, with appropriate allocation of resources. If the advice cannot be actioned it is to be escalated to the next management tier for decision-making.
- q) Encouraging and supporting joint consultation on health and safety issues with elected representatives and enabling health and safety representatives to undertake their statutory functions.
- r) Establishing a Partnership Health and Safety Group and acting as joint chair with a staff side representative.
- s) Ensuring that managers are aware of their responsibility to manage the health and safety of all staff under their control irrespective of whether they are employed by the Council.
- t) Ensuring that managers are aware of the organisational management arrangements which apply to staff working in the integrated health and social care partnership.

2.7 HEADS OF SERVICE

2.7.1 Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of all their employees and those affected by Council undertakings their Services provide. In particular they should:

- a) Develop a positive attitude to Health and Safety amongst staff and contractors under their control by visibly demonstrating a personal commitment to high standards of Health and Safety performance.
- b) Establish the local organisational structure to secure effective health and safety management, and ensure that safe systems are implemented to identify, assess, manage and review significant health and safety risks.
- c) Ensure that a risk register for the service is maintained.
- d) Where significant risks are identified, action plans to minimise and control those risks are prepared, ensuring that unacceptable risks are escalated up the management chain for action where appropriate
- e) Ensure that regular workplace inspections and risk assessments are carried out which identify action plans which must be implemented where significant hazards are identified.
- f) Prepare, implement and monitor a two year Health & Safety Service Plan which includes Service specific targets and objectives and put in place arrangements to ensure that their Services regularly monitor and report their

Health and safety performance (including the outcomes of Service specific health and safety walk rounds, inspections, reviews and audits) each quarter, ensuring that local procedures are in place for maintaining appropriate health and safety records.

- g) Ensure that adequate resources are made available to ensure that the services they provide are properly supervised to enable safe delivery without unacceptable risk to health and that their services comply with the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.
- h) Ensure that Services undertake training needs analysis and that suitable training is provided to staff (and contractors where appropriate) taking into account risk assessments for work activities and the need to provide appropriate Health and Safety induction and refresher training, in line with the relevant policies and local risk assessment.
- i) Ensure that health and safety risks are assessed and controlled at the design and planning phases of work projects and are considered when procuring services, equipment, plant or materials.
- j) Ensure that only contractors approved through the Council's procurement processes are allowed to work on Council undertakings.
- k) Monitor contractor's health and safety performance, ensuring that contractor's accidents, incidents and near misses are reported through the Council's incident reporting system within one working day and ensure that managers are aware of their local responsibilities with regards to the management of contractors on sites.
- l) Ensure that programs of management workplace inspections and maintenance inspections are undertaken - appropriate to the risks present.
- m) Ensure that all incidents, accidents and near misses are reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Team within one working day.
- n) Ensure that all remedial health and safety actions identified after incidents, accidents, near misses, audits, inspections and reviews are completed by responsible managers as promptly as possible.
- o) Ensure that the services they are responsible for co-operate with health and safety audits and investigations and that recommendations in audit and inspection reports converted into appropriate actions assigned to named service staff with agreed targets for action completion.
- p) Ensure that in each Council premises (or site) under the control of their Service, persons with suitable management authority are appointed to take responsibility for overseeing facility safety and facility related activities.
- q) Ensure that procedures are established where appropriate to ensure that situations presenting serious and imminent danger are managed at premises or sites controlled by their Service and that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Procedures will set out the roles and responsibilities of persons nominated to implement any detailed emergency actions.
- r) Ensure that suitable arrangements are made to enable the evacuation of all persons with particular consideration to vulnerable groups from any area within their control in the event of fire or other emergencies.

- s) Ensure that managers are aware of the organisational health and safety management arrangements for their service

2.8 LINE MANAGERS

- 2.8.1 Line Managers are responsible for doing all that is reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and welfare of their staff and those affected by their work activities.
- 2.8.2 Line Managers are responsible for assessing risks and for making sure that the work controls identified by risk assessments are implemented.
- 2.8.3 Task related health and safety risks and any risks introduced to the workplace by known medical issues (including pregnancy) must be assessed and managed by Line Managers.
- 2.8.4 Line Managers are responsible for making the Facility Responsible Person aware of any facility specific health and safety risks to building users.
- 2.8.5 Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that their staff (and any contractors working for them) follow all rules and instructions designed to ensure their health and safety.

2.9 EMPLOYEES

- 2.9.1 All employees must co-operate in the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy by:
 - a) Taking reasonable care for their own health and safety and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
 - b) Co-operating to enable the Council to comply with any requirements required to comply with UK Health and Safety legislation.
 - c) Using work items provided by the Council in accordance with the training and instructions provided to ensure they are used safely.
 - d) Ceasing any work activity where they believe there is a serious health and safety risk to themselves or to others.
 - e) Reporting all defects, dangerous situations, safety system failures, accidents or safety related incidents to their line manager.

2.10 FACILITY RESPONSIBLE PERSONS / Site or Premises Responsible Persons

- 2.10.1 It is the responsibility of each Head of Service with the largest number of staff working at a premises (or site) to ensure that management arrangements are put in place to manage day to day health, safety and security issues in the facility (or site). Heads of Service are responsible for making arrangements and to delegate tasks to an appointed Site or Premises Responsible Persons and those who deputise which help to discharge this responsibility.
- 2.10.2 Heads of Service monitor the appointment and maintenance of facility (or site) arrangements as part of routine performance monitoring via their Service Health and Safety Plans.

- 2.10.3 The appointed Site or Premises Responsible Person must arrange to have their contact details prominently displayed in the facility to make it clear that any issues relating to the premises (or site) should be reported to.
- 2.10.4 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that a first aid needs assessment is carried out for the facility and that adequate first aid arrangements are in place and that the names of first aiders are prominently displayed at the premises (or site).
- 2.10.5 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that emergency situations such as fires in the premises (or site) are managed and that:
- emergency procedures are exercised on an annual basis by those using the premises
 - any action points identified by exercises are recorded and promptly addressed
- 2.10.6 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that enough fire wardens are appointed at the premises (or site) to enable fire evacuation and personnel accountability to be managed during an emergency
- 2.10.7 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that fire alarms are tested on a weekly basis.
- 2.10.8 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that the Corporate Health and Safety Team are informed of any changes to facility (or site) arrangements which may require the fire risk assessment to be amended.
- 2.10.9 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that the fire safety controls identified in the fire risk assessment are properly implemented in the premises (or site)
- 2.10.10 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must put in place arrangements to inform individuals (and if necessary, their line managers) if their actions introduce unacceptable risks to health and safety, to people at the facility (or site)
- 2.10.11 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must routinely inform building users of issues relating to the premises (or site) e.g. information on Asbestos containing materials (ACM's), liaising with Property Services when contractors undertake building works and reporting any concerns to them.
- 2.10.12 The Site or Premises Responsible Person will ensure that arrangements are in place that snow and ice is cleared from access and egress routes at the premises (or site) including the replenishment of grit bins.
- 2.10.13 The Site or Premises Responsible Person will ensure that arrangements are in place to manage day to day building (or site) security, including the appointment of key-holders and local out of hour's callout arrangements to enable any security incidents arising to be managed.
- 2.10.14 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that safety inspections are undertaken in the premises (or site) at a frequency appropriate to the risks present and that any issues are recorded and addressed as soon as possible.
- 2.10.15 The Site or Premises Responsible Person will ensure that arrangements are in place to undertake water quality checks by following the weekly flushing regime and recording as instructed by Property Services.
- 2.10.16 The Site or Premises Responsible Person must ensure that arrangements are in place and that corporate information is disseminated and displayed on noticeboards and communal areas at facilities or sites under their control.

2.11 PROPERTY SERVICES

- 2.11.1 Property Services are responsible for providing Council premises with building fabric and services which provide safe environments for employees and building users. Premises remain safe through appropriate repair, maintenance, inspection, examination and testing regimes.
- 2.11.2 Property Services will ensure that risks relating to the building design, building fabric and building services in Council premises are managed. These include (but are not limited to):
- a) Fire
 - b) Asbestos
 - c) Legionella
 - d) Statutory inspection, testing and maintenance of plant and equipment
 - e) Control of contractors

2.12 HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE AND SUPPORT

- 2.12.1 The Corporate Health and Safety Team are the competent persons for health and safety appointed by the Council to comply with Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999).
- 2.12.2 The Corporate Health and Safety Team will provide the following services:
- a) The provision of health and safety advice to enable Council Services to meet their statutory duties and implement Council policies relating to health and safety.
 - b) The generation, review and maintenance of corporate safety documents, including the statement of health and safety policy and relevant Management Standards and procedures.
 - c) The provision and maintenance of the suite of information available to staff on the Council's internal Health and Safety Share Point (within the Hub).
 - d) The development and maintenance of the Council's corporate health and safety management system.
 - e) The provision of health and safety expertise to Council Services to assist them to develop and review service specific strategies, standards, procedures and instructions.
 - f) To alert management to newly recognised health and safety issues and provide preventative action when they are required.
 - g) To escalate any significant health and safety issues and risks to the Chief Executive and Strategic Management Team when necessary.

- h) To attend Service specific or Directorial Management review meetings when required.
- i) To provide specialist health and safety expertise to design, modification and procurement projects when required.
- j) Within the Council's larger procurement processes, to review the suitability of contractors seeking to undertake Council work in respect of their health and safety management competence.
- k) To develop and deliver general health and safety training identified by the Council in response to training needs analysis undertaken by operational Service managers.
- l) To assist the Council's Improvement and Organisational Development team to review the suitability of health and safety training packages provided corporately.
- m) To investigate significant accidents, incidents and near misses to identify root causes and recommend actions to prevent similar events occurring in the future.
- n) To provide information on accidents, incidents and near misses to Executive Directors to enable them to review Service performance within their areas of responsibility.
- o) To undertake periodic audits of health and safety.
- p) To liaise with outside bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive, Fire and Rescue Service and Institute of Occupational Safety and Health.

3. ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 General

- 3.1.1 Each Executive Director shall ensure that this policy and arrangements are implemented in the management area for which they are responsible.
- 3.1.2 Each Executive Director shall ensure that documents detailing the local health and safety arrangements they have put in place for their areas of responsibility are developed, maintained and placed on the Council's internal HUB system. These may be expanded to meet specific local requirements.
- 3.1.3 Executive Directors must ensure that Line Managers make employees without access to computers aware of the health and safety arrangements.

3.2 PLANNING

- 3.2.1 The Chief Executive shall ensure that a corporate health and safety plan is prepared which will identify specific health and safety objectives with realistic timescales for their accomplishment. Objectives will be developed in consultation with staff and Trade Union representatives.

3.2.2 These objectives shall be set out following a review which will:

- a) Compare existing arrangements against the requirements of relevant health and safety legislation.
- b) Establish performance standards after analysing operational risks.
- c) Assess the effectiveness of the resources devoted to health and safety.

3.2.3 A review of the strategic plan will take place at least once every 3 years.

3.2.4 All Council Services will continue to pursue improvements to reduce injury and ill health by controlling the risks arising from their work activities.

- a) Managers must ensure that risk assessments are undertaken by staff with, appropriate training, knowledge and experience of the work to be performed.

3.2.5 The Corporate Health and Safety Team will provide advice to help Services undertake novel or contentious risk assessments and identify suitable controls. The Team will also provide training in risk assessment to staff identified by Services following training needs analysis.

3.3 **MONITORING**

3.3.1 The effectiveness of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy will be assessed through active and reactive monitoring.

3.3.2 Proactive monitoring will review the findings from health & safety walk rounds, examination, maintenance, inspection and test regimes for plant and equipment, health surveillance and health and safety audits and reviews. Remedial actions from proactive monitoring should be closed out as soon as possible.

3.3.3 Reactive monitoring will review the findings from occupational health reviews and significant incidents, accidents and near misses. The Corporate Health and Safety Team will determine which events need detailed investigation and will make recommendations for remedial action to the appropriate Service Managers.

3.4 **HEALTH & SAFETY CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

3.4.1 The Council will engage with employees with regard to:

- a) Proposals to introduce measures or equipment which may substantially affect the Health and Safety of employees.
- b) The appointment of persons to implement emergency procedures.
- c) The provision of health and safety information and training.
- d) The health and safety consequences of new technologies introduced into the workplace.

- 3.4.2 Where requested, Trades Unions will represent employees for the purpose of health & safety consultation and may raise health and safety concerns on behalf of employees at any time.
- 3.4.3 The Council will provide recognised employee representatives with the facilities and assistance reasonably required to carry out their functions. For example, Safety Representatives appointed by recognised Trade Unions are entitled to inspect workplaces every three months. Executive Directors will encourage Safety Representatives to carry out these inspections at agreed frequencies and make available a representative of local management to accompany them.
- 3.4.4 Safety Representatives appointed by recognised Trade Unions will be allowed to inspect any statutory document Services need to maintain and if requested, will be given any information they require to carry out their functions.

3.5 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- 3.5.1 To help manage situations presenting serious and imminent danger, procedures will be established by Departments for people to follow in emergency situations. These procedures will set out the roles and responsibilities of competent persons nominated to implement any detailed actions and will ensure that all employees understand what they need to do in any emergency.
- 3.5.2 Where appropriate, procedures will identify any special actions required to evacuate anyone with special needs, taking account of Council Policy on Equality and Diversity.

4. PRESENTATION AND REVIEW

- 4.1 This policy (and any revision of it) will be drawn to the attention of every Council employee by their line manager.
- 4.2 Supporting Management Standards produced under this policy will be brought to the attention of all employees, to whom the contents are relevant, by their line manager.