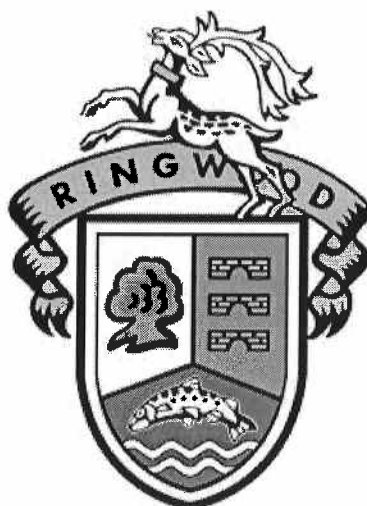


Health & Safety Policy



Ringwood Town Council

Adopted (date)

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General Statement of Policy

This document sets out Ringwood Town Council's policy and standards for Health and Safety in the Workplace.

The Council is fully committed to meeting its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at work etc Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and associated protective legislation as an employer.

The policy commits the Council to the following:

- Taking all reasonable steps to safeguard employees, contractors, the general public and anyone else who may be affected by its acts or omissions, from injury and ill-health;
- Putting the arrangements in place for the effective implementation of the policy and communicating these to employees;
- Ensuring that sufficient financial arrangements and other resources are provided for the implementation of health and safety requirements and needs;
- Providing information, instruction and training and supervision as may be necessary to ensure the health and safety of its employees;
- Providing and maintaining plant and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health, safe places of work and safe systems of work;
- Consulting employees on health and safety in matters relating to their areas of work;
- Carrying out risk assessments, where appropriate, and making these available to employees;
- Appointing competent personnel to secure compliance with statutory duties and to undertake reviews of the policy as necessary.
- Providing all relevant information, including risk assessments, to third parties acting on behalf of the Council to enable them to discharge their health and safety responsibilities.

This Policy has been prepared in compliance with Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and binds all members and officers of the Council, in the interests of employees and others.

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Signed: _____ Town Clerk

_____ Mayor

Date: _____

Organisation and Responsibilities

1. Overall Responsibility

The Town Clerk has overall and final responsibility for ensuring:

- i) the provision and implementation of the Health and Safety Policy;
and
- ii) its annual review.

2. Delegated Responsibilities within The Council

The Deputy Town Clerk, to whom the second line Health and Safety supervision has been delegated, will be responsible to the Town Clerk for the day to day supervision within his/her defined area of responsibility and, in particular, for:

- i) establishing, in consultation with the Town Clerk, safe systems of work and procedures for carrying out the Council's Health & Safety Policy incorporating any regulations, approved Codes of Practice and other relevant legislation;
- ii) ensuring that safe working procedures and safe systems of work are implemented by employees and that a safe working environment is provided for them;
- iii) ensuring that all employees under his/her control receive adequate training, information and supervision to maintain safe standards;
- iv) arranging and reviewing risk assessments, regular inspections and tests etc and the maintenance of records, schedules and programmes of work;
- v) Reporting any known defaults or defects arising from health and safety procedures to the Town Clerk; and
- vi) providing all relevant information, including risk assessments, to third parties acting on behalf of the Council to enable them to discharge their health and safety responsibilities.

The Grounds Foreman will be responsible to the Town Clerk for the day to day supervision within his/her defined area of responsibility and, in particular, for:

- i) maintaining safe work practices in order to achieve maximum safety;
- ii) ensuring adequate safety supervision and training where required, in particular, where young and inexperienced employees are concerned;
- iii) ensuring that all safety rules are observed and that protective clothing and equipment is worn where required; and
- iv) ensuring that all machinery and equipment is properly maintained and safe to use and that guards are in position.

3. Employees' Responsibilities

All employees have the responsibility to co-operate with the Council to achieve a healthy and safe workplace and to take reasonable care of each other and the public at large.

In compliance with this:-

- i) All employees should be aware of, respect and adhere to the rules and procedure contained in this policy statement.
- ii) All employees shall immediately report any unsafe practices or conditions to the relevant authority.
- iii) All employees must know the location of first aid facilities and what to do in case of a fire or other emergency.
- iv) Any person under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicating drugs which might impair motor skills or judgement, whether prescribed or otherwise, shall not be allowed on the job.
- v) Horseplay, practical joking or any other acts which might jeopardise the health and safety of any other person are forbidden.
- vi) Any person whose levels of alertness and/or ability are reduced due to illness or fatigue will not be allowed on the job if this might jeopardise the health and safety of that person or any other person.
- vii) Employees shall not adjust, move or otherwise tamper with any electrical equipment, machinery or air or water lines in a manner not within the scope of their duties, unless instructed to do so by a senior employee.
- viii) All waste materials must be disposed of carefully and in such a way that they do not constitute a hazard to other employees.
- ix) No employee should undertake a job which appears to be unsafe.
- x) No employee should undertake a job until he or she has received adequate safety instruction and is authorised to carry out the task.
- xi) All injuries must be reported to the Town Clerk or a delegated representative.
- xii) Employees should take care to ensure that all protective guards and other safety devices are properly fitted and in good working order and shall immediately report any deficiencies to their supervisor or other senior employee.
- xiii) It shall be the duty of all employees to carry out a visual safety inspection of plant and equipment prior to using such machinery.
- xiv) Work shall be well planned and supervised to avoid injuries in the handling of heavy materials and while using equipment.
- xv) No employees should use chemicals without the knowledge required to work with those chemicals safely.
- xvi) Suitable clothing and footwear will be worn at all times. Personal protective equipment shall be worn wherever appropriate.

4. Health and Safety Champions

The Council will appoint a Councillor to champion and promote good health and safety practice and to act as the lead elected representative in matters concerning the health and safety of the public, employees, visitors and contractors. The Deputy Town Clerk will similarly act as the champion for the paid service. Meetings will be held as necessary to discuss issues of concern and to prepare reports to the appropriate committee of the Council.

5. Consultation

The Council sees communication between employees at all levels as an essential part of effective health and safety management. It will therefore:

- i) ensure that all employees are made aware of the procedures relating to accidents and sickness; and
- ii) consult with all employees concerned about changes in health and safety issues which can affect them.

6. Communication

The Council will endeavour to communicate to employees its commitment to safety and to ensure that employees are familiar with the contents of the Council's Health & Safety Policy.

The Council will communicate with its employees orally, in the form of directions and statements from supervisors, in writing and on computer screen, in the form of directives and this policy, and by example.

7. Co-operation and Care

All employees are expected to co-operate with the Council and to accept their duties under this Policy. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who violates rules or who fails to perform his or her duty under this Policy.

Employees have a duty to take all reasonable steps to preserve and protect the health and safety of themselves and all other people affected by the operations of the Council.

8. Safety Training

Safety training is regarded as a key ingredient of an effective Health & Safety programme. It is essential that every employee in the organisation is trained to perform his or her job effectively and safely. The Council believes that if a job is not done safely then it is not done effectively.

To comply with the general duty to provide such information, instruction, training and supervision, as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees, health and safety training will be provided as follows:

- At Inductions
- Repeat training at regular intervals
- On transfer or promotion to new duties
- On introduction of new technology or equipment
- On changes to systems of work
- When training needs are identified during risk assessments.

All employees will be included in the Health and Safety training programme.

9. Workplace Inspections

Under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, regular inspections of the workplace will be conducted by a competent person. In addition inspections will be conducted in the relevant areas whenever there are significant changes in the nature and /or scale of operations.

All inspections will be recorded.

Workplace inspections will also provide an opportunity to review the continuing effectiveness of the Policy and to identify areas where revision of the Policy may be necessary.

10. Contractors

When a contractor is awarded a contract to carry out any work the Council will check their safety policy and ensure that the contractor has made adequate safety arrangements for the public, their employees and Council employees who may come into contact with the work being undertaken. The contractor will be made aware of all the Council's Health and Safety rules, and any particular information or requirements relating to the contracted task and his responsibility to prepare appropriate safety plans.

Contract work will be monitored and records will be kept. Any breaches of safety procedures may lead to curtailment or termination of the contract.

Contractors involved with electrical work will be NICEIC registered and contractors involved with gas work will be Gas Safe Register registered. Contractors handling and disposing of waste and hazardous substances will be appropriately licensed.

General Arrangements

11. Risk Assessment / Equipment Inspection and Testing / Programmes of Work / Schedules / Guidance

Risk Assessments will be carried out and reviewed by appropriate competent persons, if necessary assisted by or in collaboration with outside bodies and other local authorities. The Risk Assessments will have regard to official codes of practice and guidance, in particular that provided by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) on its website.

Assessments will be ongoing and may be generic, location or activity/or operational. Some may refer to several assessment elements.

Issues arising will be prioritised according to risk and a target date will be set for the completion of any work. This may result in a programme of work which will be overseen by the Deputy Town Clerk. Any safe system of work must be followed at all times

Certain ongoing duties, especially those associated with statutory provisions, will be subject to schedules which will be overseen by the Deputy Town Clerk.

12. Work Equipment

The Council will endeavour to ensure that all equipment used in the workplace is safe and suitable for the purpose for which it was intended and working conditions are such as to comply with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

All employees will be provided with adequate information and training to enable them to use work equipment safely.

The use of any work equipment which could pose a risk to the well being of persons in or around the workplace will be restricted to authorised persons.

Employees will be made aware of any particular risks involving work equipment through the risk assessment process.

All work equipment will be maintained in good working order and repair.

All employees will be provided with such protection as is suitable to protect them from dangers associated with the use of work equipment.

All work equipment will be clearly marked with health and safety warnings where appropriate.

13. Equipment and Open Spaces used by the Public

Equipment examples – play equipment, street furniture, litter bins, hanging baskets, skateboard equipment, lighting.

Open spaces examples – cemetery, playing fields.

The Council will endeavour to ensure that all equipment and open spaces are suitable for use and maintained as far as possible in good working order and repair. The Council is aware of the damage which can be caused by vandalism, misuse and general wear and in this respect inspections will be made on a regular basis. Inspections, maintenance and repairs will be carried out by competent persons including specialist contractors where necessary.

See also operational risk assessments.

14. Personal Protective Equipment

All employees who may be exposed to a risk to their health and safety while at work will be provided with suitable, properly fitting and effective personal protective equipment as stipulated by the Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992.

All personal protective equipment provided by the Council will be properly assessed prior to its provision.

All personal protective equipment provided by the Council will be maintained in good working order.

All employees provided with personal protective equipment by the Council will receive training and information on its use, maintenance and purpose. Employees must also ensure that they use the equipment in accordance with the training and instruction given.

Any loss of or obvious defect in any personal protective equipment issued by the Council must be immediately reported to the relevant person.

The Council will endeavour to ensure that all personal protective equipment provided is used and used properly by its employees.

15. Manual Handling Operations

Manual handling operations will be avoided so far as is reasonably practicable where there is risk of injury according to the Manual Handling Operations Regulation 1992 – as amended – Health & Safety (miscellaneous arrangements) Regulations 2002.

Where it is not possible to avoid manual handling operations an assessment of the operation will be made taking into account the task, load, environment and the capability of the individual concerned.

An assessment will be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

All possible steps will be taken to reduce the risk of injury to the lowest level possible.

16. Display Screen Equipment

The Council will comply with the law as set out in the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 – as amended – Health & Safety (miscellaneous arrangements) Regulations 2002.

The Council will conduct specific risk assessments of all workstations staffed by employees who use DSE screens as part of their usual work, and will ensure that all workstations meet the requirements set out in the Schedule to the Regulations.

The risks to DSE users will be reduced to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

DSE users will be allowed periodic breaks in their work.

Eyesight tests will be provided for DSE users on request.

Where necessary DSE users will be provided with the basic necessary corrective appliances (ie glasses or contact lenses), or portion of prescription lenses, that are specifically for DSE use.

All DSE users will be given appropriate and adequate training and information on the health and safety aspects of this type of work and will be given further training and information whenever the organisation of the workstation is substantially modified.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/office/index.htm> for further information.

17. Control of Hazardous Substances

It is the policy of the Council to comply with the law as set out in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

A risk assessment will be conducted of all work involving exposure to hazardous substances. The assessment will be based on manufacturer's and supplier's health and safety guidance and the employees own knowledge of the work process. These assessments will be reviewed periodically, or where there is a modification to the work process, or where there is reason to believe that the assessment is no longer valid. However, it may be necessary to keep these for a long time since some occupational illness does not manifest itself for many years.

Where practical, every effort will be made to reduce or replace hazardous substances with non or less hazardous products.

The Council will source COSHH safety data sheets for all products in use in the workplace and store them for a minimum of 5 years.

The Council will ensure that exposure of employees to hazardous substances is minimised and adequately controlled in all cases.

All employees who come into contact with hazardous substances will receive training and information on the health and safety issues relating to that type of work.

See also operational risk assessments.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/coshh/index.htm> for further information.

18. Chemicals / Flammable Materials / Fuels / Biological Hazards

Chemicals etc. not subject to COSHH but which could nevertheless cause harm will be properly stored, maintained, and handled and any necessary information and training will be provided.

Flammable materials will be properly stored, maintained and used in accordance with relevant legislation and instructions.

Instances involving bacteriological hazards (animal / human waste / blood etc.) will be assessed and resolved using specialist contractors where necessary.

See also operational risk assessments.

19. Pesticides / Herbicides

Pesticides and Herbicides will be stored, maintained and used in accordance with relevant legislation and official guidance.

See also operational risk assessments.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/biocides/index.htm> for further information.

20. Electricity at Work Regulations

It is the policy of the Council to comply with the law as set out in the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

The electrical installation and portable electrical appliances will be tested on an annual basis. Fixed wiring in premises will be inspected every 5 years. The tests and inspections will be undertaken by an independent electrical contractor or a "competent person" as defined by the Regulations.

The Council will ensure that exposure of employees to the risk associated with electrical equipment and appliances is minimised and adequately controlled in all cases.

Working on live electrical equipment will only be permitted by a competent person. A permit-to-work system will be operated when major work is to be carried out to electrical distribution systems.

All employees who come into contact with electrical appliances at work will receive comprehensive and adequate training and information on health and safety issues relating to that type of work and appliance.

Risk assessments will be reviewed periodically, or where there is substantial modification to the work process, or where there is reason to believe that the assessment is no longer valid.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm> for further information.

21. Fire Safety

The Council is aware of its responsibilities under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 and procedures will take account of special fire hazard in specific areas of the workplace. Where appropriate, guidance will be sought from the local fire service.

All employees are responsible for ensuring that they are fully aware of the Council's evacuation procedure.

The Council will be responsible for the provision and maintenance of fire fighting protection, prevention and detection equipment. It will also carry out regular fire risk assessments at all premises.

All employees within the Council have a duty to report immediately any fire, smoke or potential fire hazards to the fire service.

All employees have a duty to conduct operations in such a way as to minimise the risk of fire. This involves taking care when smoking, keeping combustible materials separate from sources of ignition and avoiding unnecessary accumulation of combustible materials.

The Deputy Town Clerk and the Grounds Foreman are responsible for keeping their operating areas safe from fire, ensuring that employees are trained in proper fire prevention practices and emergency procedures.

Fire alarm systems will be tested on a weekly basis and recorded in a log book. Fire drills will be carried out periodically to test the adequacy of the precautions and evacuation procedures.

Fire extinguishers are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. Employees are expected to tackle a fire themselves only if it would pose no threat to their personal safety to do so. If the situation is dangerous or potentially dangerous the employee should activate or raise the alarm and evacuate the building immediately.

Fire exits are located at strategic points throughout the workplace. Exit doors and corridors must never be locked, blocked or used as storage space.

All employees will be provided with fire awareness and evacuation procedures training.

See also operational risk assessments.

22. Working at Height

Working at height will be avoided so far as is reasonably practicable. Where it is necessary planning, training, assessment and equipment will be provided in accordance with the Working at Height Regulations 2005.

Fragile surfaces will be identified and access will be controlled.

See also operational risk assessments.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/falls/index.htm> for further information.

23. Noise and Vibration

Working in a noisy environment or with noisy equipment will be avoided so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Council recognises the need to provide hearing protection where levels exceed 85dB (daily average exposure) and to assess the situation and provide information and training where levels exceed 80dB in accordance with the Control of Noise Regulations 2005.

Where the Council is involved with music and entertainment, measures will be taken to protect the hearing of employees in accordance with the Regulations.

Working with vibrating equipment will be avoided so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Council recognises the requirements of the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations as regards hand arm and whole body vibration and the associated limits.

The use of vibrating equipment will be monitored and limited to avoid exceeding the exposure limits and equipment will be replaced or modified where necessary before 2010.

See also <http://www.hse.gov.uk/noise/index.htm> and <http://www.hse.gov.uk/vibration/index.htm> for further information.

24. Work Place Transport

The Council will have regard to vehicles used by its employees and areas controlled by the Council which are used by visiting and delivery vehicles.

In particular the Council will identify health and safety requirements at all stages and communicate these to all involved. This will include any changes to vehicles and work practices.

Licences and insurance details of all those using council vehicles or private vehicles for council use will be checked as necessary.

See also operational risk assessments.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/workplacetransport/> for further information.

25. Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment

The Council recognises its responsibility under the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations and will ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that, if any, lifting operations are planned and carried out using the correct equipment.

Equipment will be tested by competent persons and labelled as required.

Regard will be had to HSE Guidance INDG 290, see <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg290.pdf>.

26. Asbestos

The Council recognises its responsibility to locate and manage asbestos in the workplace under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. Accordingly steps will be taken to locate asbestos in non domestic premises and to establish its condition.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos/index.htm> for further information.

27. Legionella

The Council recognises the importance of controlling legionella and will identify work activities and premises where there is a means of creating water droplets which may be inhaled thereby causing a foreseeable exposure to legionella bacteria. Checks and procedures will be adopted in accordance with the HSE Approved Code of Practice and Guidance L8 .

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legionnaires/index.htm> for further information.

28. Stress in the Workplace

The Council is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of employees and recognises that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors. In particular the Council will where necessary:

- i) Identify workplace stressors and conduct risk assessments to eliminate stress or control the risks from stress. These risk assessments will be regularly reviewed.
- ii) Provide training in good management practices.
- iii) Provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.
- iv) Provide adequate resources to implement the stress management strategy.
- v) Ensure good communications between management and staff, particularly where there are organisational and procedural changes.
- vi) Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- vii) Ensure staff are provided with meaningful developmental opportunities.
- viii) Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- ix) Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staff are taking their full entitlement.
- x) Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated within their jurisdiction.
- xi) Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/index.htm> for further information.

29. Emergency Evacuation

In the event of a fire alarm being activated, or in any other emergency situation (such as a bomb scare), all employees must leave the building by the nearest available exit and assemble at the designated assembly point. The designated assembly points are:

Area	Fire Assembly point
Greenways	Rear of offices
Carvers (Pavilion and Sheds)	Playing fields
Cemetery office / areas	Cemetery car park

For a bomb alert, employees should meet at the fire assembly point only for roll call purposes and then move further away as quickly as possible.

30. Bomb Procedures

If you suspect a package to be a suspicious item, put it gently down on a clear surface, do not place anything on top of it or place it in anything (including water). Move away from the package, alert other employees in the vicinity to its presence and contact the Police immediately. Employees should then go to the relevant assembly point and await further instructions. Remain at the assembly point until the roll call is taken.

In the event of a telephone bomb threat, you should try to gather as much information as possible. You should not hang up (even after the caller has), try to identify details of the caller (sex, accent, age etc.) any background noise (traffic, aircraft, conversation) and try to get as many details about the threat, e.g. what time will it explode? Where is it? What kind of bomb is it? Why? You should then pass on all the details to the Police immediately. Neighbouring property occupiers should also be informed of the threat.

31. Smoking

Ringwood Town Council operates a no smoking policy. Therefore all buildings and vehicles owned by the Council are designated no smoking zones and accord with present no smoking legislation.

32. Accident Investigation and Reporting

All accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses will be reported immediately to the relevant person, and will be recorded in the appropriate accident reporting book.

All accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses will be investigated as soon as possible and the Town Clerk will attempt to discover why the accident occurred and what action should be taken to avoid a recurrence of the problem. The Deputy Town Clerk will keep all records relating to accidents and actions taken.

If the accident is reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) it will be reported by the Deputy Town Clerk within the statutory 10 working days using the relevant form.

33. First Aid

First Aiders will be appointed in accordance with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981.

The Deputy Town Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that there is always at least one first aider on duty at anytime.

First Aid boxes are located in the following locations:

Area
Greenways
Carvers
Cemetery office

A first aid kit is also provided in all Council vehicles.

All first aid boxes are clearly marked and are easily accessible by all employees during all working hours. If any contents of a first aid box are used the Office Manager must be informed immediately to ensure replacement contents are obtained.

34. Visitors

All visitors to Council premises must report to the reception desk.

Visitors must be accompanied by the person they are visiting, who in turn is responsible for the visitor's safety and ensuring that visitors are aware of any hazards that they may be exposed to e.g. fire evacuation procedures.

On no account should door security codes be disclosed to visitors and any theft or damage should be reported immediately to the Town Clerk.

35. Lone Working

If an employee is required to work alone the Council will ensure that everything reasonably practicable is done to ensure that individual's safety.

All lone workers will be provided with a means of communication. If the employee has not communicated within a certain time period the Town Clerk or Grounds Foreman should attempt to locate the individual.

Use of certain dangerous equipment is prohibited when working alone (e.g. chain saws, ladders etc.)

The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring that employees are trained in identifying and dealing with violent behaviour.

See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf> for further information.

36. Disability

In the event of the Council employing any person with a disability, it will ensure their safe evacuation or make other appropriate arrangements to ensure their safety in an emergency situation. It will also implement changes in working practices where appropriate and carry out other adaptations to ensure the health and safety of the employee.