INTRODUCTION

The health and safety policy sets out Buckinghamshire Council's commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for our employees, and for others who may be affected by the Council's undertakings. As we develop new services and upgrade other practices to meet rising standards, health and safety issues will permeate through all of the Council's activities.

This document sets out the roles and responsibilities of each and every one of us. We all have a part to play and a responsibility to ensure that the arrangements set out in this policy document are followed. We must ensure we support each other in promoting safety, reducing accidents and addressing the issues of ill health.

Through the way we work and behave, all our employees will be protected from risks of occupational injury or ill health, so far as is reasonably practicable. Our commitment to health and safety is a key priority.

If you have any doubts about your responsibilities, please speak to your Line Manager. Remember that we have a responsibility to ourselves and our colleagues to understand and implement this important policy.

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BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This Health and Safety Policy Statement is the lead document for Health and Safety for Buckinghamshire Council. All other health and safety documents at a corporate or directorate level will reflect the principles outlined within this document.

Everybody working in or with the Council must read this policy and consider how they can contribute to achieving its aims.

GENERAL STATEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Council recognises that good health and safety management is integral to the successful delivery of our services to the people of Buckinghamshire.

Buckinghamshire Council is committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all of its employees, ensuring that their work does not adversely affect the health and safety of other people such as service users, visitors and contractors.

- In order to achieve this aim the Council has the following key objectives: to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other relevant legislation;
- to identify hazards (the potential for harm), assess risks (the likelihood of that harm being realised) and manage those risks in a proportionate manner;
- to ensure that employees (and others as appropriate) are adequately informed of the identified risks and receive management instruction, training and supervision;
- to consult with employees' representatives on health and safety matters;
- to provide and maintain safe and healthy premises and work equipment;
- to ensure that employees are competent to do their tasks, providing training where necessary;
- to ensure that contractors are competent to manage the health and safety aspects of their work;
- to maintain appropriate health and safety management systems and arrangements;
- to monitor and review the effectiveness of the safety management systems and arrangements and where appropriate implement improvements.

Rachael Shimmin

Chief Executive Buckinghamshire Council

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ORGANISATION AND REPONSIBILITIES

Buckinghamshire Council, through the Corporate Management Team has overall responsibility for implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy, within which individual Service Areas and their Officers will operate.

It will ensure that the Council complies with its legal responsibilities and that suitable and sufficient resources are available to meet health and safety objectives and statutory requirements.

An Executive Member from the Planning, Growth and Sustainability portfolio has been designated to act as Health and Safety Champion at member level.

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for health and safety within Buckinghamshire Council; with responsibilities being delegated operationally to the Corporate Director of Planning, Growth and Sustainability who will ensure that the Council's Health and Safety Policy is implemented effectively by the Corporate Directors.

Corporate Directors shall:

- support the Chief Executive in meeting their safety responsibilities for the Council as a whole;
- provide strategic direction and endorse corporate health and safety strategies;
- ensure that health and safety policies, standards and objectives are set;
- ensure that appropriate monitoring arrangements are in place for monitoring health and safety;
- take action in the event of any shortcomings identified;
- lead by personal example and ensure all decisions reflect health and safety intentions;
- report annually on health and safety matters to the Corporate Management Team.

Service Directors are responsible for:

- supporting their Corporate Director in setting and implementing the policy within their service area;
- establishing written health and safety procedures and protocols for their Services that support the Corporate Health and Safety policy and objectives; bringing this to the attention of employees and revising as necessary to ensure that it remains valid;
- preparing objectives and plans for implementing the Health and Safety policy in their Service;
- identifying the hazards that are applicable to activities that are undertaken within their Service areas and ensuring risk assessments are carried out and that all relevant legislation is complied with;
- planning and implementing arrangements to eliminate or control significant risks and to comply with the relevant legislation;
- monitoring the above arrangements to ensure that they are working effectively;
- ensuring their managers are competent in health and safety and that designated persons are appointed to assist in discharging health and safety responsibilities;

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- ensuring that staff are involved and consulted on relevant health and safety matters in good time and ensure that their views are considered;
- ensuring that staff are informed of hazards and the preventative and protective measures in place to avoid those hazards;
- ensuring that training is provided; on the appointment of staff; where they are exposed to new or increased risks arising out of a change in responsibilities and/or when there is a change in equipment or working systems;
- obtaining assistance from the Corporate Health and Safety Team where necessary ;
- reviewing the performance of their services on a quarterly basis and reporting the results through to the Directorate via the quarterly Health, Safety and Welfare meetings;
- reporting to the Corporate Director where the arrangements set out in this policy cannot be implemented.

Managers and Supervisors are responsible for delivering their service in a safe manner by:

- monitoring and complying with the requirements of their Service's health and safety documentation;
- ensuring that all work related hazards are identified and that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken, recorded, signed and dated;
- developing local procedures and safe working practice in line with service documentation;
- ensuring that only competent contractors are engaged and that their safety performance is regularly monitored and reviewed;
- ensuring that they and their staff are trained and competent to complete their work tasks safely;
- carrying out monitoring to ensure that health and safety standards are maintained;
- reporting and investigating accidents, incidents and near misses, and putting in place preventive measures.

All employees are responsible for:

- taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their acts and omissions;
- co-operating with the management of their service so far as is necessary to enable the risks to be controlled and achieve compliance with legislation;
- using all work equipment and substances in accordance with the instruction and training received;
- reporting to their supervisor or manager any health and safety concern, including hazards which they cannot deal with themselves or any shortcoming they consider to be in the health, safety and welfare arrangements;
- not intentionally misusing anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare; and reporting to their supervisor or manager any health and safety concern, including hazards which they cannot deal with themselves or any shortcoming they consider to be in the health, safety and welfare arrangements;
- failure to comply with any written procedures or codes of practice, misuse of equipment or failure to co-operate on health and safety matters is a disciplinary matter.

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Governing Bodies of Maintained and Voluntary Controlled Schools:

- The Governing Body has a statutory duty to comply with this Policy, so far as it is within their power to do so, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. They may however develop their own localised arrangements to meet their responsibilities.

Competent Source of Advice:

Buckinghamshire Council employs a competent source of advice through the Corporate Health and Safety Team to support Corporate and Service Directors in discharging their health and safety responsibilities. Acting in an advisory and monitoring capacity, Officer's will:

- ensure that competent technical advice is provided to assist the Chief Executive, Corporate Directors, Service Directors, Managers and employees to fulfil their responsibilities for health, safety and welfare matters within each Service:
- ensure the provision of health and safety training and instruction;
- receive accident and incident reports, identifying corporate trends where appropriate;
- liaise with recognised trade unions and their appointed workplace representatives on issues relating to the health and safety of their members.

Employee Consultation:

- Active involvement of both managers and employees is essential for successful implementation of this policy.
- Employees or their representatives will therefore be consulted with regard to the arrangements to control the significant risks and to comply with relevant legislation.
- This will be done informally by managers and Supervisors in the workplace and formally through Safety Committees. Safety Representatives will be provided with reasonable training and paid time off for standing as a candidate or as a representative. They will also be provided with the necessary information, facilities and assistance to carry out their functions under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (as amended by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999) and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.

Monitoring and Review of Buckinghamshire Council's Health and Safety Performance:

A quarterly report is presented to the Corporate Management Team and includes; details of updated legislation, emerging trends in Services; review of accidents/incidents/near misses reported and recommendations for improving performance.

It is the responsibility of the Corporate Director of Planning, Growth and Sustainability to ensure that this policy is reviewed on an annual basis.

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