

Coventry City Council

Corporate Health and Safety Policy Document

1st July 2019 – 30th June 2021



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CONTENTS

Introduction

Section 1 Policy Statement

Coventry City Council's Health and Safety Policy Statement and Declaration of Intent

Section 2 Organisation

- 2.1 Roles and Responsibilities
- 2.2 Governance
- 2.3 Elected Members
- 2.4 Cabinet and Cabinet Members
- 2.5 Chief Executive, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources and Strategic Management Board Directors
- 2.6 Deputy Chief Executives, Executive Directors and Assistant Directors
- 2.7 Heads of Service and Senior Managers (including Head Teachers)
- 2.8 Managers and Supervisors
- 2.9 All Employees, Agency Workers and Contractors
- 2.10 Relationships with other Legal Entities
- 2.11 Schools
- 2.12 Trusts and Partnerships
- 2.13 Responsibility of Contractors Working for the City Council Competent
- 2.14 Health and Safety Advice
- 2.15 The Director Project Management & Property Services
- 2.16 Head of CWS Resilience
- 2.17 Employee Health and Safety Representatives
- 2.18 Health & Safety Strategy Group
- 2.19 Joint Health and Safety Forum
- 2.20 Operational Health and Safety Committees
- 2.21 Customers, Service Users and Members of the Public

Section 3 Governance and Corporate Arrangements

- 3.1 Health and Safety Leadership
- 3.2 Health and Safety Culture
- 3.3 Health and Safety Systems and Processes
- 3.4 Service Delivery
- 3.5 Setting Health and Safety Objectives
- 3.6 Corporate Monitoring of Directorates
- 3.7 Provision of a Corporate Health and Safety Training Strategy / Plan
- 3.8 Provision of an Effective Joint Consultative Process
- 3.9 Establishing Adequate Health and Safety Communication Channels
- 3.10 Measurement of Health and Safety Performance

Section 4 Corporate Auditing and Review

- 4.1 Auditing
- 4.2 Reviewing Performance

Appendix 1 Health and Safety Management Arrangements flow-chart

COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL

Health and Safety Policy Document (1st July 2019 – 30th June 2021)

Introduction

Coventry City Council's commitment to effective and successful health and safety management forms part of the Council's wider agenda of social responsibility, sustainability, corporate governance, risk management and delivery of value for money quality services; we require this same commitment from our partners and contractors. This means having in place effective management arrangements that ensure the well-being of our employees and service users, that minimise the losses (both financial and reputational) to our business from ill health and injury.

Implementation of this health and safety policy and associated policies, guidance and management systems will contribute to improving corporate performance.

This health and safety policy has been developed jointly by Coventry City Council's Strategic Management Board, Health and Safety Strategy Group and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources. It is fully supported and endorsed by the trade unions.

Guiding Principles

To achieve continuous improvement in our health and safety performance through management leadership and the commitment of our employees we have developed five guiding principles,

Control	Management are responsible for the clear allocation of health and safety responsibilities and for monitoring the implementation of those responsibilities
Co-operation	We all have a responsibility to co-operate as individuals and as groups to make health and safety a collaborative effort
Communication	Communication of health and safety information is essential and includes our visible behaviour, written communication and face to face discussions
Competence	Developing health and safety competence of elected members, directors, managers, employees, the health and safety advisors, volunteers and contractors is at the heart of successful health and safety management
Sensible Risk Management	Through the adoption of a pragmatic approach which encourages risks to be managed in a sensible, responsible and proportionate manner in line with all relevant regulatory requirements, with a focus on the effective management of real risks - including those that are most likely to cause serious harm and those which are likely to happen more frequently.

These guiding principles are interrelated and interdependent so that consistent activity and effort in each area is needed to promote a climate in which a positive health and safety culture can be maintained.

The costs of poor health and safety at work include death, major injury, lost working days due to injury and occupational ill-health, uninsured losses, civil claims and loss of reputation. Failure to comply with health and safety legislation can have serious consequences for individuals as well as organisations. Penalties include fines, and imprisonment. Under the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2007, an offence will be committed where failings by an organisation's senior management are a substantial element in any gross breach of the duty of care owed to the organisation's employees or members of the public, which results in death. The maximum penalty is an unlimited fine and the court can additionally make a publicity order requiring the organisation to publish details of its conviction and fine.

The Policy Document is in four parts:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| (1) Statement | The Chief Executive's declaration of intent on behalf of the City Council and the Elected Members' Health and Safety Policy Statement |
| (2) Organisation | The management structure and the defining of roles and responsibilities within the organisation |
| (3) Arrangements | The corporate procedures and systems necessary for implementing the policy |
| (4) Monitoring | The system for auditing the effectiveness of the arrangements and for reviewing and reporting on health and safety performance |

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

COVENTRY CITY COUNCIL'S CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT AND DECLARATION OF INTENT

The Council originally adopted a Health and Safety at Work Policy Statement on 10 December 1974 (Policy Advisory Committee Minute 138/74 reference). It has been the subject of regular reviews and updates, the latest of which is as follows.

Policy Aim

To be an organisation where everyone can undertake their roles and responsibilities and fulfil their potential free from work related injury or ill health; this includes elected members, directors, employees, service users, pupils, partners and others who may be affected by our work activities.

Policy Objectives

- To conduct all our activities safely and in compliance with legislation and best practice.
- To provide safe working conditions and safe equipment.
- To ensure a systematic approach to the identification of risks and the allocation of resources to control them.
- To be a health and safety learning organisation that promotes a positive health and safety culture that is demonstrated by open communication, a shared commitment to the importance of health, safety and welfare, and by confidence in the efficacy of preventive measures.
- To promote the principles of sensible risk management.

Policy Statement

Coventry City Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer and provider of services to provide a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for all of its employees and such other persons as may be affected by its activities. The Council will seek to ensure an active health and safety culture throughout its workforce and will strive to meet and adhere to all relevant legislation and codes of practice.

The Council will provide competent technical advice on health and safety matters via the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team to assist line managers in their task of ensuring healthy and safe conditions of work. The Council will seek to ensure that all buildings, plant and equipment meet appropriate health and safety standards. It will promote safety training and encourage a high concern for safety among all employees through management example and through joint consultation, and will develop and disseminate information on sensible risk management and safe working practices. At the same time the Council will require all employees to show a proper personal concern for their own safety, for that of the people around them, and for the safety of buildings and equipment, by exercising due care and attention, and in observing safe working methods, including those inherent in their professional craft or training.

Coventry City Council will adopt a planned risk based approach to health and safety

management based on the principles of sensible risk management. This will involve:-

- Assessment of risks
- The identification of protective and preventive measures against those risks
- The introduction of those measures including the enforcement of proper working practices by supervisors; the incorporation of health and safety requirements into contract conditions; the enforcement of those contract conditions by supervising officers, the provision of information, instruction, training and protective equipment to employees
- The monitoring of the operation and efficacy of those measures
- The review of risk assessments, policies, topic-specific guidance, procedures and practices in the light of information gained through monitoring

It is a requirement of the Council that this policy statement and its implications are understood and acted upon at all levels within the authority. Linked to this policy statement are documents recording the organisational arrangements and procedures by which Coventry City Council will ensure that this policy is implemented. Copies of the policy will be brought to the attention of all employees and will be available on the Council's intranet with the master copy held by the Occupational Health, Safety Manager on behalf of the Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board.

This Policy was reviewed by the Health and Safety Strategy Group in June 2019 and approved by the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executives of Coventry City Council on 1st July 2019 ~~26th July 2017~~. It will be reviewed before 1st July 2021



Martin Reeves
Chief
Executive



Martin Yardley
Deputy Chief Executive
Place Directorate

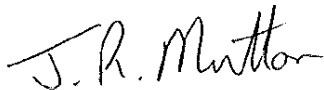


Gail Quinton
Deputy Chief Executive
People Directorate

Elected Members' Health and Safety Policy Statement

On behalf of the Cabinet and Elected Members of Coventry City Council I fully support the Council's approach to managing health and safety as summarised in the principles outlined below, expanded upon in the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement and Declaration of Intent that:

- A sensible risk management approach is fundamental to the way the Council operates and delivers its services
- A key focus on high risk activities and the Council's 6 priority topics of construction, fire, transport, musculoskeletal, stress and work related violence is sensible prioritisation
- The health and safety implications of Council decisions, budget and target setting must be a fundamental part of decision-making criteria.
- Elected Members have a key part to play in the monitoring and review of health and safety performance, particularly through the Joint Health and Safety Forum and Health and Safety Strategy Group and through the receipt of health and safety reports at Cabinet Member Meetings.
- That successful health and safety management is based on continuous improvement in all areas of health and safety.



Councillor John Mutton
Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources
Health and Safety Champion
Date: 12.06.2017

2.0 ORGANISATION

2.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and subordinate legislation states that all employees have health and safety responsibilities when at work.

Although some duties and responsibilities may be delegated, accountability for health, safety and welfare at work is not transferable and cannot be evaded. Executive direction of the Council's policy for health and safety matters, including authorisations, will follow normal arrangements for responsibility and accountability.

The City Council recognises that the key to further improvements in health and safety lie in securing a systematic approach to health and safety management throughout the organisation so that health and safety becomes fully integrated with all other aspects of business management. This requires strategic leadership, supported by specialist professional input.

2.2 Governance

Governance is about organisations ensuring that they are doing the right things in the correct manner for the right people in a timely, open, honest, inclusive and accountable way. Overall governance arrangements for health and safety are with the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources. Strategic Management Board (SMB) will provide the definitive governance for health and safety. Other elements of corporate governance for health and safety are the Health and Safety Strategy Group, Joint Health and Safety Forum and the Corporate Leadership Team. These governance structures will enable the health and safety management systems, actions and levels of performance to be appropriately challenged.

2.3 Elected Members

The Council's elected members have a responsibility to conduct their business and make decisions in conformity with health and safety legislation and the Council's own policies. Members must ensure that the decisions they make take account of health and safety issues and that sufficient resources are allocated for this purpose. As a result of the powers given to individual members there is an increased possibility that they could be held legally liable for the consequences of their decisions in health and safety terms.

2.4 Cabinet and Cabinet Members

The Cabinet and Cabinet Members are responsible for carrying out specific functions both individually and collectively. The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is the lead member responsible for health and safety issues and overall governance arrangements for health and safety lie with that cabinet member.

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources may also request that a scrutiny board undertakes an investigation into a health and safety matter of particular concern. A scrutiny board or the scrutiny co-ordination committee may, of its volition, identify and request enquiries are made into any other health and safety matter.

2.5 The Chief Executive, Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, Strategic Management Board are responsible for:

- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership that encourages employee involvement in improving health and safety standards
- Ensuring that all decisions made reflect their health and safety intentions as articulated in the Council's health and safety policy statement
- The implementation and effective operation of an integrated health and safety management structure that supports successful health and safety management
- The monitoring of health and safety arrangements that includes progress against the corporate health and safety action plan. There will be quarterly reports into the Health and Safety Strategy Group. SMB will be informed of key issues by the Chief Executive as they arise.
- The provision of adequate resources to enable the delegation of their health and safety responsibilities

2.6 Deputy Chief Executives, Executive Directors and Directors must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular are required to:

- Ensure the effective operation of their health and safety management structure, directorate health and safety committees, the communication of health and safety issues and the effective coordination of responsibilities with partner organisations
- Ensure that accountability for health and safety management is properly assigned, understood and accepted at all levels and that effective monitoring and reporting arrangements inform the directorate management team and directorate health and safety committee
- Ensure the development and delivery of directorate health and safety action plans that supports and are aligned with the Council's corporate plan
- Provide adequate resources to enable the delegation of their health and safety responsibilities

2.7 Heads of Service and Senior Managers (including Head Teachers of maintained and voluntary controlled schools) must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular are required to:

- Visibly support the directorate health and safety arrangements, work with trade union and employee health and safety representatives and ensure that all employees are aware of and accountable for their specific health and safety responsibilities and duties
- Ensure health and safety policies/guidance, procedures, action plan and risk management programmes are implemented as an integral part of business and operation planning, and service delivery
- Develop and implement robust procedures to ensure that health and safety standards are demonstrably met
- Support accident and incident investigations, review reports and statistics, utilise information on trends and hot spots
- Undertake monitoring and ensure the provision of adequate resources to achieve compliance
- Complete health and safety self-assessment audits as required
- Where two or more services share a site, to ensure that clear health and safety roles and responsibilities and means of communication and coordination between the services are established and maintained

2.8 Managers and Supervisors must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular are required to:

- Identify hazards, initiate risk assessments, record the significant findings and implement any necessary control measures
- Check and document that the working environment is safe; equipment, products and materials are used safely; that health and safety procedures are effective and complied with and that any necessary remedial action is taken
- Inform, instruct, train, supervise and communicate with employees and provide them with equipment, materials and clothing as is necessary to enable them to work safely; to complete the health and safety induction checklist for all new employees at the commencement of their employment
- Report all accidents, incidents and near miss events, undertake an investigation into the cause and take appropriate remedial action to prevent recurrence
- Complete health and safety self-assessment audits as required.

2.9 All Employees, Agency Workers and Contractors must comply with Coventry City Council's health and safety policy and in particular are required to:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety at work and of those who may be affected by their actions or by their omissions
- Cooperate with their line manager and senior management, to work safely, to comply with health and safety instructions and information and undertake appropriate health and safety training as required
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare
- Report to their manager any health and safety concerns, hazardous condition or defect in the health and safety arrangements.

2.10 Relationships with Other Legal Entities

The City Council's responsibilities and those of its officers within certain undertakings may often appear unclear. There will be different circumstances and relationships surrounding each individual undertaking that may need legal clarity should enforcement or litigation arise. When assessing responsibility and accountability for these undertakings, the resources made available by each party, including time, funds and technology will need to be taken into account.

When entering into a partnership or voluntary venture it is essential that absolute clarity on health and safety roles and responsibilities and means of communication and co-ordination are established at the outset, in the same way as other support arrangements, such as finance, are normally clarified.

The defined health and safety roles and responsibilities must be formally documented and agreed by all parties at the time of setting up the funding agreement or the overall project plan. The 'Project Leader' would normally undertake or lead on this task. Such a document needs to concentrate on the relationship/arrangements agreed between various parties and the City Council. In particular the document needs to identify the subsequent responsibilities and accountabilities that the City Council and its officers might face.

2.11 Schools

The Employer and their health and safety responsibilities.

Having regard to the definition of categories of school within the School Standards and Framework Act 1998:

- For community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and external learning centres, the Local Authority is the employer.

Within these organisations there are bodies and individuals, such as school governors or head teachers

who have devolved responsibilities for health and safety. However, when it comes to the enforcement of health and safety legislation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), the Local Authority (LA), may be held responsible where they are the employer.

In order to discharge the legal responsibilities of the Local Authority, local authority schools are required to comply with the City Council's health and safety policies, procedures, codes of practice and guidance, where relevant. This includes all community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools and extended learning centres.

- For voluntary aided schools, the employer is the governing body
- For academies, the employer is the academy board/trust
- For free and independent schools, the employer is the proprietor or other equivalent entity.

In academies, voluntary aided, free and independent schools the governing body/trustees is the employer who is responsible for the management of health and safety, including their own health and safety policy and arrangements.

Where schools are required to comply with the City Council's Health and Safety Policy, which includes all community schools, community special school, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nursery schools, and extended learning centres, and other schools not listed but covered by the authority's insurance package, they must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with both the Policy and the insurers requirements and must provide that evidence to the Local Authority when requested. This to be no later than two weeks from the date of the request. Where services, are obtained through Corporate Facilities Management ~~Corporate Property Services~~, they will provide the maintenance records and certification.

The 'Local Authority Fair Funding Scheme of Delegation' sets out conditions with which governing bodies must comply in managing the expenditure of the school with regard to the Local Authorities' responsibility for health and safety:

http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/14948/fair_funding_scheme_of_delegation_-_sept_2015

http://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/download/3436/fair_funding_scheme_of_delegation

In addition to the general provision of competent health and safety advice and guidance by the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team, schools are encouraged to sign up to a service level agreement for the delivery of a dedicated consultancy service to assist the head teacher and governing body with the discharge of their health and safety responsibilities over and above that provided through core activities of the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team.

School Governing bodies have responsibility for ensuring that reasonable measures are put in place to ensure the health and safety and welfare of employees, pupils, visitors and other people affected by the establishment's activities. These responsibilities can be satisfied by ensuring that the governing body and school's management team:

- produce a local health and safety policy and devise appropriate procedures for managing related issues
- implement the policies of the Council and any agreed local policies or procedures where appropriate
- consider the costs of implementing the policies, seeking and setting aside reasonable funding for their implementation
- receive and action regular and routine health and safety reports from the head teacher to enable the governing body to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the health and safety management systems

2.12 Trusts and Partnerships

Working in partnership with other organisations is a critical task for councils, police forces, health authorities and NHS trusts. There is a national drive to improve the quality of public services that includes finding solutions to fit together services that are provided by more than one agency, and partnerships can be a productive way of achieving more efficient and effective use of scarce resources.

There are key issues of governance, accountability and responsibility with Trusts and Partnerships that each of the organisations need to consider and agree. A robust and effective partnership governance structure and performance management arrangements are essential elements in managing risk in trusts and partnerships.

Partnerships and trusts associated with the City Council must have documented and effective health and safety arrangements, management procedures and controls in place with agreement as to responsibilities and accountabilities, means of co-ordination and communication of health and safety issues.

2.13 Responsibility of Contractors Working for the City Council

Contractors working for the City Council have legal duties placed on them under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and subordinate legislation to safeguard the health and safety of their own employees and anyone who may be affected by their business activities.

Therefore, contractors when working for the City Council must conduct their activities in such a way that they do not endanger City Council employees or anyone for whom the Council has a duty of care.

Contractors will be selected according to the Council's specifications and approval procedures. All contractors will be required to meet relevant statutory duties and Council policies.

The Council's procurement arrangements when establishing a contract will include systems and protocols that will ensure adequate public and professional liability cover.

2.14 Competent Health and Safety Advice

The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team will provide professional specialist support on health and safety issues to the whole of the City Council.

The Occupational Health and Safety Manager, Health and Safety Team Leader and Health and Safety Advisors will:

- Develop, and advise on, corporate health and safety policy, procedures and topic-specific guidance
- Provide advice and guidance on compliance with relevant statutory requirements within a sensible risk management framework
- Develop the Council's Health and Safety Action Plan and support directorates in developing and implementing their directorate, section, service and school health and safety action plans
- where required, and make recommendations to achieve health and safety improvements where necessary Monitor health and safety performance across all directorates, conduct audits
- Report to Health and Safety Strategy Group and Joint Health and Safety Forum on a quarterly basis
- Together with the Learning and Development Team, ensure the provision of health and safety training that supports skills and knowledge transfer
- Deliver dedicated health and safety consultancy service to schools through the provision of a service level agreement
- Provide professional/specialist advice as necessary.

The role of the advisors within the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service is to provide professional advice, guidance and specialist support to the Council at all levels within their remit and competence; this will include technical advice, support and an auditing and monitoring service where necessary to meet the corporate objectives of this health and safety policy.

The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team is responsible for advising elected members, management, trade unions and all other employees on all aspects of health and safety and will liaise closely with other professional officers within the Council to support health and safety management, including Environmental Health, Learning and Development, Internal Audit, Risk Insurance Services and Corporate Property Services. They will network closely with external health and safety agencies e.g. Health and Safety Executive, Fire Authorities and other public service organisations.

The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager together with the occupational health, safety and wellbeing team will;

- Develop and advise on occupational health, safety and well-being policies, guidelines and processes
- Provide advice and guidance on compliance with relevant statutory requirements and the application of best practice
- Audit and monitor occupational health, safety and well-being performance across all directorates
- Help to establish and maintain physical and mental well-being within the workforce
- Report to Strategic Management Board and Cabinet to assist them in discharging their responsibilities
- Develop and provide occupational health, safety and well-being training
- Provide professional/specialist advice as necessary
- Help prevent work-related accidents, injuries and ill health

2.15 The Director Project Management and Property Services.

The Director of Project Management and Property Services has a specific responsibility to ensure that competent people are appointed to ensure:

- Health and safety risks and implications are considered and addressed when making policy or business recommendations to Strategic Management Board, Health and Safety Strategy Group, Joint Health and Safety Forum, Directorate Management teams and health and safety committees and/or Members
- All Council premises are safe and comply with legislative requirements (relates to buildings that are in the control of the City Council as defined within this document)
- Systems are in place to monitor compliance against standards, including fire, asbestos and water management
- Regular reports are made to the appropriate health and safety committee/forum to report on risks and control measures

2.16 Head of CWS Resilience

The Head of CWS Resilience has specific responsibility under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 for the development and management of the Council's emergency and business continuity arrangements and to ensure that health and safety concerns are addressed from foreseeable risks associated with events such as;

- Acts of terrorism

- Flooding
- Health pandemics
- Utility / IT failure
- Major sports events (Coventry half marathon)
- Entertainment events (Godiva festival)

2.17 Employee Health and Safety Representatives

Employee health and safety representatives, whether appointed by the trade union or from employee groups, play a vital role in the communication and promotion of health and safety. However, employee health and safety representatives have no additional legal duties as a result of their role. They are only bound by the general duties applicable to any employee.

The main function of employee health and safety representatives is to:

- Investigate potential hazards and dangerous incidents at their workplace and to examine the causes of accidents
- Investigate complaints by any employee that they represent, which relate to that individual's health and safety or welfare at work
- Consult with management on matters arising out of the two points above
- Inspect the workplace, at intervals not more frequent than three months/termly in schools, unless prior agreement is reached with local management
- Consult with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), on behalf of the employees they represent, when the HSE inspect or visit the workplace
- Take receipt of relevant health and safety information forwarded to them by the Health and Safety Executive
- Receive any other relevant information concerning health and safety of the employees they represent

2.18 Health and Safety Strategy Group

The Health and Safety Strategy Group will meet to review corporate occupational health and safety progress on a quarterly basis and provide strategic direction and agree the strategic health and safety priorities for the forthcoming period.

Membership comprises:

Chief Executive/Executive Director - Chair

Director of HR/OD

Head of Legal Services

Directors who chair the Operational Health and Safety Committees ~~directorate~~

Head of Communications

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager

The Health and Safety Strategy Group will:

- Ensure measures, structures and practical arrangements are in place to deliver health & safety at work in all directorates
- Provide a forum for further discussion on matters that have not been resolved at the Joint Health & Safety Forum
- Set objectives and priorities and pro-actively monitor and review health & safety performance against the corporate H&S action plan
- Review any external H&S audit or inspection reports or reports from the council's internal audit and the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service

- Use the outcomes of this monitoring to influence future health & safety objectives set against the levels of perceived risk
- Ensure effective communication channels and systems to ensure the exchange and sharing of health & safety knowledge and information.
- Meet on a quarterly basis
- Report to Strategic Management Board and to the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources) on an annual basis
- Advocate and promote strategic policies and initiatives that protect and minimise risk to service-users and Council employees

2.19 Joint Health and Safety Forum

The Council's Joint Health and Safety Forum (JSF) will advise and make recommendations to the Health and Safety Strategy Group, who will in turn report to the Strategic Management Board, the Corporate Leadership Team and Cabinet on matters emanating from the application of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation.

Membership comprises:

Cabinet portfolio holder - Chair

Senior managers – the chairs of the Operational Health and Safety Committees

Trade union health and safety representatives from the recognised trade unions

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager

The Joint Health and Safety Forum will:

- Promote and develop measures for health and safety at work and monitor their effectiveness
- Provide a forum for further discussion on matters that have not been resolved at directorate health and safety committee level
- Pro-actively monitor and review health and safety performance, through health and safety sampling, auditing and report sharing
- Use the outcomes of this monitoring to influence future health and safety objectives set against the levels of perceived risk
- Promote effective communication channels and systems to ensure the exchange and sharing of health and safety knowledge and information
- Evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of the corporate health and safety training plan

2.20 Operational Health and Safety Committees

To meet its legal obligations and to promote the effective exchange of health and safety information, the Council provides and facilitates a mechanism for health and safety joint consultation. It recognises the importance of consultation and the important role that employee health and safety representatives play.

Within the requirements of legislation for joint consultation on health and safety issues with employees, the council have taken a risk based approach and agreed to put in place three operational level committees as follows:

Health and Safety Committee - A (mainly employee office based risks):

HR/OD; Transformation; ICT; Finance; Legal; Audit; Communications; Customer and Business Services; Procurement; Audit; Insurance; Government Services; Elections; Member Services; Revenue and Benefits.

Health and Safety Committee - B (mainly employee care services and education risks) Adult Social Care; Education; Children's Services, Public Health.

Health and Safety Committee - C (mainly employee manual work risks) Planning and Regulatory Services, Transport and Highways; Property Asset Management; Street scene and Greenspace

Membership comprises:

Member of the Corporate Leadership Team - Chair

Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives conversant with the relevant hazards and risks

Managers conversant with the relevant hazards and risks

Team Leaders Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager

The primary functions of Operational Health and Safety Committees are to;

- Promote and develop measures to ensure health and safety at work and monitor their effectiveness
- Provide a forum for further discussion of matters that have not been resolved at normal employee/management level (HR/IR meetings)
- Review health and safety performance by examining health and safety monitoring, auditing and review activities against the directorate health and safety action plan
- Establish, develop and maintain effective communication channels and systems to guarantee the exchange and sharing of health and safety knowledge and information
- Monitor and evaluate the up-take and effectiveness of health and safety training
- Report at least annually to their directorate management team on the effectiveness of the service directorate's health and safety management strategy and achievements in meeting their defined health and safety objectives and priorities, including results of directorate and corporate audits
- Report to the Joint Health and Safety Forum, Health and Safety Strategy Group and where necessary the members of Strategic Management Board

2.21 Customers, Service Users and Members of the Public

Through local communications such as the internet, signs, posters etc, customers, service users and members of the public are encouraged to co-operate with the health and safety arrangements put in place to protect them and the people who are providing a service for them.

3.0 GOVERNANCE AND CORPORATE ARRANGEMENTS

The principles of good governance are integrity, openness and accountability.

These arrangements describe the systems and procedures necessary to ensure that the Chief Executive, Strategic Management Board and Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources fulfil their responsibilities and provide the foundation for securing the health and safety of the Council's employees and others affected by its undertakings, within a framework of good corporate governance.

Good health and safety governance combines the 'hard' factors of robust systems and processes with the 'softer' characteristics of effective leadership and high standards of behaviour. This involves:-

3.1 Health and Safety Leadership

Strong leadership on health and safety will be provided by the Chief Executive, Strategic Management Board, Cabinet and Councillors and the Health and Safety Strategy group to establish a vision of successful health and safety management. This leadership and vision will generate clarity about health and safety strategy, management objectives, health and safety roles and responsibilities and foster

professional relationships. Key to this are the roles of Cabinet and the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources, together with those of the Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board and the Health and Safety Strategy group.

3.2 Health and Safety Culture

A positive health and safety culture based on openness and honesty in which decisions are based on the principles of sensible risk management, lessons are learnt from mistakes and accountability is clear.

3.3 Health and Safety Systems and Processes

Health and safety systems and processes must support accountability and will include risk management and performance management information and health and safety inspections, audits and monitoring. These systems and processes must be robust, produce reliable information that is reported to Strategic Management and Cabinet to enable informed decisions to be made and to achieve objectives.

3.4 Service Delivery

Some of the services that the Council delivers have inherent risks and a relatively high hazard burden and some of the risks associated with service delivery cannot always be eliminated. The Council needs to ensure that not only does it identify the risks but that they are managed and controlled within a sensible risk management framework.

3.5 Setting Health and Safety Objectives

The Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board will meet at least on an annual basis for regular updates on health & safety performance, to determine if the Council's health and safety objectives and action plan are being achieved and if necessary ensure that the outstanding issues are being prioritised and addressed via a risk based approach, and also to sign off the annual report.

The Occupational Health Safety and Wellbeing Service will provide professional advice guidance and support together with audit and monitoring reports to support Strategic Management Board in these assessments.

The Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board will require directorates to submit progress reports on the achievements and outcomes of their respective health and safety action plans. The Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board will use these reports together with those of internal audit, managers' self-assessments and the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service to assess how services, directorates and the Council as a whole are meeting their health and safety action plans and general obligations.

3.6 Corporate Monitoring of Directorates

The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service will measure the health and safety performance of directorates via monitoring and assessment techniques including topic audits. Assessment of performance will be against the criteria set in the Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan and the Council's Health and Safety Policy, procedures and topic guidance. The results will be reported on to the Health and Safety Strategy Group, Chief Executive and Strategic Management Board, Joint Health and Safety Forum, Cabinet Member, directorate management teams and appropriate health and safety committee groups/forums, who will consider and act on the findings.

3.7 Provision of a Corporate Health and Safety Training Strategy/Plan

Corporate training and development is provided through Organisational Development who will liaise with the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Service in ensuring that health and safety training is provided covering various health and safety topics on an on-going basis.

The courses will take account of the Council's health and safety priorities, potential high risk factors, legislation and customer requirements or specific key issues. The health and safety training strategy is part of the wider corporate training strategy.

As part of the agreed objectives and priorities, Strategic Management Board may wish to instruct directorates that attendance may be compulsory for certain levels of management training. In addition, directorates will ensure formal induction training is delivered that must include health and safety awareness. Attendance on all health and safety courses will be recorded on Agresso.

Information, instruction and training on health & safety are provided in an increasingly wide variety of formats including guidance documents, e-learning and toolbox talks to promote access to learning.

3.8 Provision of an effective Joint Consultative Process

Directorate level health and safety committees must be established and meet at least quarterly.

Directorate level health and safety committees must report to their respective management teams and are also represented (normally by one management and one employee representative) at the quarterly meeting of the Joint Health and Safety Forum.

The size and complexity of any directorate will determine whether other service or operational committees feed into the directorate health and safety committee.

3.9 Establishing Adequate Health and Safety Communication Channels

In addition to the City Council's established committee structure and the joint consultative forums, communication channels for the exchange of health and safety knowledge and information already exist through the day-to-day supervisory channels.

These channels may need to be formalised by managers/supervisors and regularly evaluated by the specialist support advisors. They include, for example:

- line supervision
- safe systems of work/risk assessments
- health and safety discussion groups
- management teams
- 'on the job' health and safety training
- issuing and exchange of health and safety policies, guidance and codes of practice
- co-operation and communication between teams on shared sites

At directorate level the results of the risk assessment process are key elements of the communication process. On-site safety systems rely extensively on the exchange of information. Generic risk assessments will be accessible via the intranet and SHE software system to assist managers, but it is essential that local risk assessments are undertaken to ensure that procedures and systems are correctly documented, legible and readily available.

Although it is primarily the responsibility of heads of service/head teachers, senior managers and managers/supervisors to initiate such information, the value of 'bottom up' feedback is important. Staff must always have opportunity and be encouraged to contribute to this process without fear of penalty. The Health and Safety Communication Strategy document will identify the main communication channels for health and safety issues within the Council.

3.10 Measurement of Health and Safety Performance

In order to substantiate that health and safety standards are actually being achieved, it is necessary to measure performance against pre-determined plans and objectives. Any areas where the standards are not being met will require remedial action.

The types of systems that will be used to measure health and safety performance include:

Active monitoring systems:

- Monitoring and inspections that measure health and safety performance on a routine basis; e.g. spot checks
- Documents relating to the promotion of the health and safety culture should be periodically examined
- Premises, plant and equipment should be systematically inspected
- Health surveillance and environmental monitoring systems should be established to check the effectiveness of health control methods and to detect early signs of harm to health

Reactive monitoring systems:

- Identify where health and safety standards are not being met, by monitoring for failures in the systems - such as accidents, cases of ill health (work-related sickness), damage to property, etc.

Reporting and response systems:

- Ensures that monitoring information is evaluated by people competent to identify situations which create an immediate risk to health or safety, as well as longer-term trends. They must also have sufficient authority to ensure that appropriate remedial action is taken
- Health and Safety Strategy Group, Joint Health and Safety Forum, Strategic Management Board and the Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Equalities will all receive and consider reports on health and safety performance

Investigation systems:

- Where priority is given to incidents which indicate the greatest risk and the identification of both the immediate and the underlying causes of events
- For adequate analysis of all collected data to identify common features or trends and initiate improvements at an organisational level
- Where cases of occupational ill-health are to be investigated
- Where complaints relating to occupational health and safety are to be recorded and investigated
- Where accidents/incidents, assaults and near misses with the potential to cause injury, ill-health or loss are to be reported, recorded and appropriately investigated

4.0 CORPORATE AUDITING and REVIEW

Coventry City Council recognises that health and safety performance must be audited and reviewed

regularly at corporate and directorate levels. Directorate health and safety achievements and those of individual services, teams and managers need to be assessed against previously identified objectives and priorities, often as part of ongoing operational plans or specific health and safety action plans.

The purpose of health and safety auditing is to undertake an independent, systematic analysis of parts of the safety management systems of the Council (directorate, department, school, service area) to determine their extent and effectiveness.

Through the identification of issues and the implementation of necessary corrective actions, continuous improvement can be achieved which will give the Chief Executive, Strategic Management Board and Cabinet reasonable assurance on the effectiveness of the Council's management of health and safety. Through a risk based approach, health and safety audits will contribute to corporate governance arrangements and assist in service delivery within acceptable levels of risk and legislative compliance.

4.1 Auditing

Auditing in simple terms is the structural process of collecting information on the efficiency, effectiveness and reliability of the total health and safety management system and drawing up plans for any corrective action.

The aims of the audit should be to establish that:

- Appropriate management arrangements are in place
- Adequate risk controls systems exist, are implemented, and reflect the hazards the organisation needs to manage
- That appropriate workplace precautions are in place

Auditing will be used to examine compliance, effectiveness/weaknesses and adequacy of the Council's policies, procedures and annual health and safety action plan and will help to ensure that:

- Information about the City Council's health and safety management system is collected in a coordinated and consistent manner
- Sound judgments about its adequacy and performance are made
- Health and safety responsibilities are being properly identified and discharged correctly
- Management teams are accepting and dealing effectively with their devolved health and safety obligations
- City Council health and safety codes, procedures and policies are being applied and adhered to
- Employees are aware of, and complying with, health and safety rules and are health and safety conscious
- Accidents, incidents and ill health trends are showing improvements
- Employees are receiving appropriate health and safety training.
- Statutory requirements are being met

The Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan and the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service's Health and Safety Audit, Inspection and Monitoring Programme will contribute to corporate governance arrangements and assist in service delivery within acceptable levels of risk and legislative compliance.

Executive Directors, Directors, Heads of Service and Service Managers will be expected to complete an annual self assessment audit of health & safety management arrangements for their service areas, as directed by the Chief Executive.

4.2 Reviewing Performance

Strategic Management Board and the City Council as a whole understand the importance of making judgments about the adequacy of its health and safety performance and making decisions about the nature and timing of the actions required to resolve any deficiencies.

Feeding information on both success and failure back into the system is an essential element in motivating and stimulating employees to maintain and improve health and safety performance. Reviewing health and safety should be a continuous process undertaken at different levels within the City Council. It will include responses:

- By supervisors/managers to remedy failures to implement workplace precautions which they identify in the course of 'day to day' operations
- To remedy sub-standard performance identified by proactive and reactive monitoring
- To the assessment of plans at individual, section, directorate and corporate level
- To the results of audits both directorate and corporately

Key performance indicators for reviewing overall health and safety performance will include:

- Assessment of the degree of compliance with health and safety system requirements
- Identification of areas where the health and safety system is failing or absent
- Assessment of the achievement of specific objectives and plans
- Accident, assault, ill health and incident data, which analyses both the immediate and underlying, causes, trends and common features
- The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service quarter end reports provide an overall measure of the success of the Council's risk-based approach.

