

Swaffham Town Council

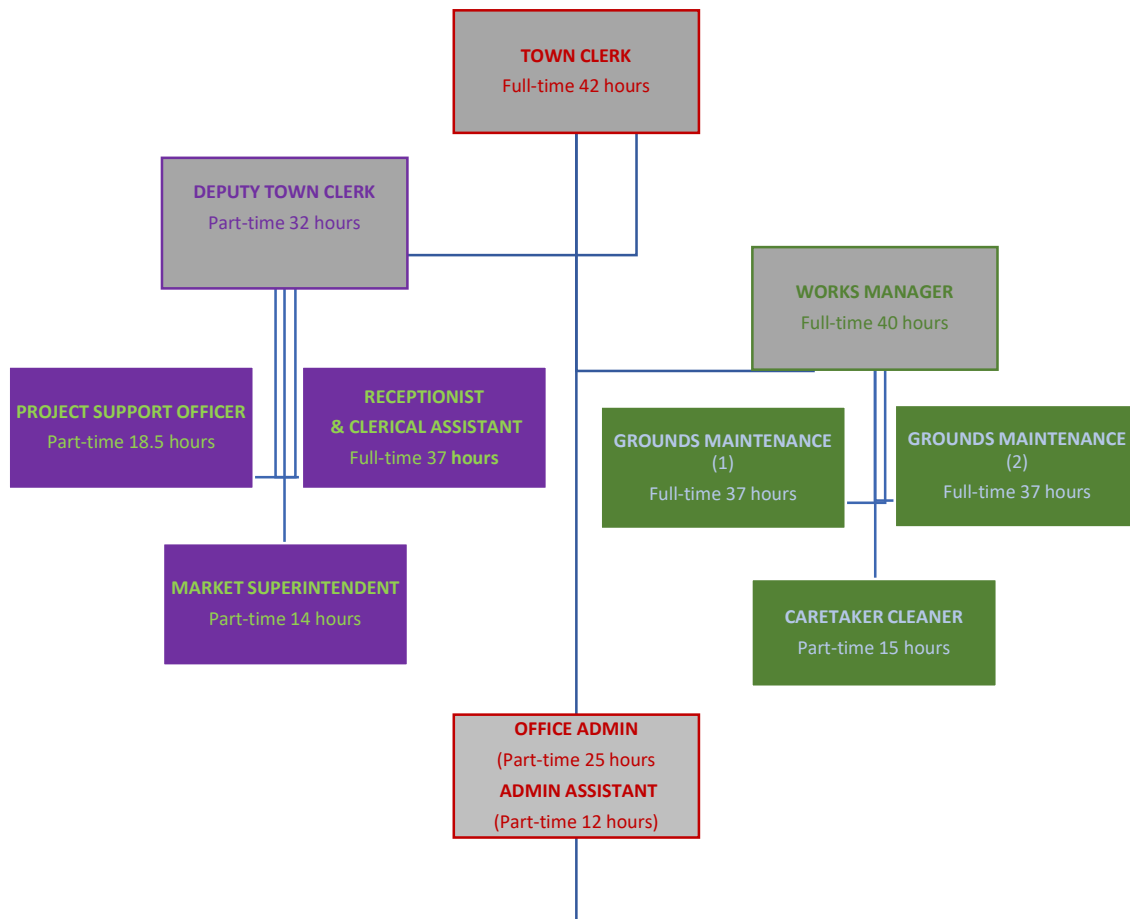
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Part 1 – Statement of Intent

- 1.1. Swaffham Town Council's policy is to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment, and safe systems of work for all our employees.
- 1.2. Increase the awareness of all employees to the responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others and consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- 1.3. Provide a health and safety organisation to effectively manage and monitor the safety arrangements.
- 1.4. Comply with all current applicable occupational health and safety legislation.
- 1.5. Ensure all employees are competent to fulfil their tasks and promote a culture of continual improvement, through training and communication.
- 1.6. Ensure that deliberate breaches of health and safety rules and procedures lead to disciplinary action.
- 1.7. The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the Council's activities change in nature and size. To ensure this, the policy, and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every year by the Council. Although risk assessment is a continuing process, it shall form part of the Council's annual review.

Part 2 – Responsibilities

Health And Safety Organisational Chart



Responsibilities

1.8. Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the Council and for compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act and Regulations made under the Act and the Occupiers Liability Act is that of the Town Council of Swaffham. The Town Clerk (or such designated officer) is responsible for this policy being carried out at all the Council's premises.

1.9 Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk – Area of Responsibility: Town Hall

The Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for health and safety within the Council. They will ensure that:

- the Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed, and amended as required.
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements.
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed.
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and

advice.

- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant, and work equipment in a safe condition.
- statutory examinations are planned, completed, and recorded.
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues.
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner.
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented.
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported.
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff.
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record, and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger

1.10 Town Councillors

The Councillors have the ultimate responsibility for the Health and Safety for Swaffham Council but discharge this responsibility through the Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk in the Clerk's absence and down to individual managers and employees.

The Council will ensure that:

- they provide a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation
- all its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions
- adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety
- they will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance
- they will review the health and safety performance of the Council on an annual basis

1.11 Works Manager – Areas of Responsibility: Play Areas/Open Spaces, Cemetery & Public Toilets

The Works Manager will ensure that in their areas of control:

- they actively lead the implementation of Town Council Health and Safety

Policy

- they supervise their staff to ensure that they work safely, providing increased supervision for new and young workers
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented; risk assessments are completed, recorded and regularly reviewed
- accidents, ill health and “near miss” incidents at work are investigated, recorded and reported
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues and encourage staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns
- safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented
- premises, plant and work equipment are maintained in a safe condition
- personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided, staff instructed in its use and that records are kept
- any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to the Clerk for action
- welfare facilities provided are maintained in a satisfactory state
- hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers’ instruction and Data Sheets
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- health and safety notices are displayed

1.12 Employees.

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and the safety of others affected by their actions.
- observe the safety rules and comply with the Health and Safety policy.
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others.
- dress sensibly and safely for their working environment or occupation.

- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed.
 - avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others.
 - maintain all equipment in good condition and report any safety hazard, malfunction or defects to their line manager.
 - report all accidents to their line manager whether an injury is sustained or not.
 - attend as requested any health and safety training course.
 - observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit.
- 1.13 Consultation between management and employees is provided by immediate day to day discussion with the Town Clerk/Deputy Clerk/Works Manager (Line Manager).

Part 3 - Arrangements

This section deals with the arrangements for Health and Safety at Swaffham Town Council; it is by no means exhaustive and is for the most part, general in its terminology, reflecting the obligations laid down in various 'pieces' of legislation which must be adhered to, in order to reduce risks of injury and ill health to levels that are deemed to be 'As Low As Reasonably Practicable' (ALARP).

3 Fire Statement of Intent and Procedures

Swaffham Town Council will meet its statutory duty to comply with fire safety legislation and to reduce the risk of fire, causing death, serious injury and property related losses. The town clerk is the Responsible Person (Fire). They are responsible for ensuring all employees are conversant with the following:

- the action to be taken on discovering a fire or the actions to be taken upon hearing the fire alarm.
- raising the alarm.
- the correct method for calling the fire brigade, remembering to give precise details of the location of the fire.
- the location and use of fire-fighting equipment and knowledge of escape routes.
- appreciation of the importance of fire doors to help stop fires spreading and the need to close all doors at the time of a fire and on hearing the fire alarm.
- stopping machines and, where practicable, isolating power supplies.
- evacuation of the building. Where members of the public are present this will include reassuring them and escorting from the building.
- details of fire assembly points.
- staff will be made aware that, however tempting it may be, they should not

return to their office to collect personal effects and valuables but should proceed directly to the assembly points and should not re-enter the building until authorised to do so.

- practice fire drills will be carried out periodically on an unannounced basis to test the adequacy of the precautions and evacuation procedures.
- the fire alarm system at the Town Hall shall be tested weekly by the Receptionist & Clerical Assistant.
- a fire drill shall be held 6-monthly at the Town Hall.
- fire extinguishers shall be visually inspected weekly in the Town Hall by the Works Manager.
- fire extinguishers shall be maintained annually (currently APF Safety Services Ltd, 6 Swaffham Road, Ashill, Thetford, IP25 7BT Tel: 01953 711566)
- the Works Manager will be responsible for ensuring emergency lights and smoke detectors are checked on a regular basis, recording all checks in the logs provided.
- the Works Manager will ensure stocks of flammable items will be kept to the minimum level that is compatible with efficient working practice. Fuels, gases, and organic solvents will be stored appropriately.
- notices shall be displayed giving directions for the evacuation of buildings in the event of fire.
- fire exits shall be kept free from obstructions.

Abrasive Wheels

A register of qualified employees is kept in the office and annually reviewed.

Only qualified staff on the register can use abrasive wheels (e.g. angle grinder) and only in accordance with their training. The qualification lasts for three years.

Handheld abrasive wheels must only be used in a safe, barriered area.

Accident/Near Miss Reporting and Investigation

The council deem an accident and near-miss to be defined thus: -

Accident: any unplanned event that results in personnel injury or damage to property, plant, or equipment.

Near-miss: an unplanned event which does not cause injury or damage but could have done so. Examples include items falling near to personnel, incidents involving vehicles and electrical short-circuits.

All accidents and near misses must be reported in an accident book. Accident books are kept in the town council office, they meet the requirements for accident recording that are required by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR).

Accident /Near Miss details written in accident books must be torn out from the accident book and delivered to the clerk or works manager as soon as possible to comply with GDPR to protect names and addresses of individuals and to allow the clerk or works manager to investigate, if necessary.

Accidents will be investigated for each incident; this will ensure that proper action is taken to help prevent the accident re-occurring.

Note: Investigation of an alleged accident does not necessarily imply that sick pay will be paid. This will depend on the result of the investigation. Clearly it is essential for all concerned to give priority to the safety and welfare of any injured person and anyone else involved.

Specific injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences must be reported by telephone to the enforcing authorities and followed up by form F2508 within 10 days.

Any injury resulting in more than seven days' absence from normal work must also be reported to the HSE within 10 days on form F2508. This can be completed on the HSE website.

The following injuries are examples of reportable under RIDDOR when they result from a work-related accident:

- the death of any person (Regulation 6).
- specified Injuries to workers (Regulation 4).
- injuries to workers which result in their incapacitation for more than 7 days (Regulation 4).
- injuries to non-workers which result in them being taken directly to hospital for treatment.

Any non-employee who experiences an accident or near-miss whilst on council premises should report the incident immediately to any available council employee to ensure the council accident procedure is followed.

Visitors and contractors who are unable to enter their account into the book must arrange for another person to make an entry on their behalf. Visitors and contractors should also notify their own employer where applicable. The council takes the responsibility for its contractors of notifying reportable accidents under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013, therefore the works manager or town clerk must be informed immediately.

Safe System of Work: All incidents and near-miss incidents must be reported, however minor. To achieve this the following procedure should be adopted:

- ensure the accident report form is completed and forwarded to the operations manager.
- obtain treatment for any injury from a first-aider or the local hospital.
- ensure that the area is made safe and poses no risk to other personnel **(except where the accident results in a major injury, in which case the scene should be fenced off and left undisturbed until advised otherwise by the**

enforcing authority).

- enter details in the accident book.
- inform the injured person's line manager or town clerk of the incident.
- keep the council informed of any after-effects, including periods of incapacity for work.

Alcohol and Drugs

Employers have a legal duty to protect employees' health, safety and welfare. Understanding the signs of drug and alcohol misuse (or abuse) will help manage health and safety risk in the workplace and deal with drug and alcohol-related problems and support employees.

Misuse is not the same thing as dependence. Drug and alcohol misuse is the use of illegal drugs and misuse of alcohol, medicines, and substances such as solvents.

The following are possible warning signs which could indicate drug or alcohol misuse:

- unexplained or frequent absences.
- a change in behaviour.
- unexplained dips in productivity.
- more accidents or near-misses.
- performance or conduct issues.

These can also be signs of other things, like stress or illness.

Safety-critical elements must be considered where drug or alcohol misuse could have a serious outcome, for example these are:

- using machinery.
- using electrical equipment or ladders.
- driving or operating heavy lifting equipment.

Tailored work programmes avoiding safety-critical equipment to keep the employee and others safe should be employed.

If an employee declares they have a drug or alcohol problem, they will be encouraged to get help from their GP or a specialist drug or alcohol agency and a referral to an occupational health service should follow. This will allow the council to help and support the member of staff rather than initially lead to dismissal.

In certain circumstances dismissal may be the only option but all avenues of support, including tailored work, should be exhausted first.

Consumption of Food

Food should only be consumed in safe areas. If food is to be eaten in the workplace individuals are to ensure that their work activities do not contaminate their foodstuffs; personal hygiene and the washing of hands prior to eating is to be always observed.

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation (COSHH)

The town council will comply with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002.

Manufacturer's safety data sheets will be obtained from suppliers and held on file. These do not constitute COSHH risk assessments but are required to provide the information to enable risk assessments to be completed.

Assessments will be carried out and will consider the hazardous substances used or created, the working processes involved, and how tasks are performed. More than one assessment may be required for one substance if it is used in different ways which create different risks.

The first task is to determine the hazardous substances used or created, e.g., paints, isocyanates, solvents, dusts and fumes, and the risks they pose. This is followed by an examination of any risks their application or use could create and whether any of these risks could be eliminated by substitution of a non or less hazardous product. If this is not possible, an assessment should be undertaken to establish how any risk can be controlled. Where control is not possible or there is some residual risk then, as a last resort, personal protection equipment may be required.

Fuels have a lockable container in the right hand Garage at the Cemetery.

Display Screen Equipment

The town council will comply with the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 (amended 2002). The Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) regulation 5 sets out an employer's responsibility for providing eyesight tests. It details that the employer must ensure that employees who are VDU users, or who are to become VDU users, are provided with an appropriate eyesight test if they request one. The test must be carried out as soon as practicable after the request or, where the individual is to become a VDU user before he or she does so.

The town council will assess all workstations staffed by employees who use visual display unit (VDU) screens as part of their usual work and will ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, all workstations meet the requirements set out in the schedule to the regulations.

The risks to users of VDU screens will be reduced to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

VDU screen users are encouraged to take periodic breaks in their work.

Eyesight tests will be provided for VDU screen users on request. VDU users are defined as employees who habitually use display screen equipment as a significant part of their normal work. Thereafter, the employer must ensure that the VDU user is provided with further eyesight tests at regular intervals. This would normally be no more frequently than at annual intervals unless in exceptional circumstances.

Electricity at Work

The town council will comply with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 The town council will have its electrical wiring checked periodically or when new work is undertaken. Installation records will be held in the council's office.

Residual current devices and 110-volt transformers/generators will be used where possible.

All portable electrical appliances (PAT) will be registered and inspected and tested at least every three years by a competent electrical contractor and in some circumstances more frequently based on the type of appliance or environment it is used in.

First Aid

The council has carried out an assessment of first-aid requirements, with consideration of workplace hazards and risks, the size of the organisation, the number and distribution of employees and other relevant factors, to determine what first-aid equipment and facilities should be provided. In addition, the council shall provide trained and certified first aiders in line with the findings of the first aid assessment and ensure that first aid equipment is available for use at all times. The location of first aid boxes and the details of first aiders are to be clearly displayed on the health and safety notice board, in the contractors and visitor's safety brief and in other key documentation such as induction training records.

The town council will comply with The Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 and HSE basic advice leaflet INDG 347.

The Works Manager will check the contents periodically and liaise with the Office Administrator for replenishment of supplies/contents.

First Aid boxes are located as follows:

- Box 1: The downstairs kitchen at the Town Hall
- Box 2: The Council Chamber kitchen in the Town Hall
- Box 3: The Staff Kitchen at the Town Hall
- Box 4: The Chapel at the Brandon Road Cemetery
- Box 5: The Workshop at the Brandon Road Cemetery
- Box 6&7 The Town Council Trucks

Appointed persons responsible for boxes are:

Graham West Works Manager (working with Hannah Duggan Officer Administrator)

Housekeeping

The town council will comply with the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992.

Good housekeeping is a pro-active way of preventing many hazardous conditions that may result in injury to people. Hazardous items discovered should be put right immediately where possible, e.g., trailing leads or obstructions.

The works manager will conduct regular inspections of the workplace. In addition, inspections will be conducted in the relevant areas whenever there are significant changes in the nature and/or scale of the council's operations.

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

Ladders and Step Ladders

All ladders are to be of the appropriate industrial standard and inspected by the user before every use.

All ladders are checked, and safety tag signed on a monthly basis. Any ladders deemed not to be in a suitable condition shall be immediately removed from the workplace.

Ladders are only to be used for short term work. Other means of gaining height must be used if the works required; will take hours rather minutes or demands several different positions at height or requires both hands to operate e.g. scaffold tower or (hired) cherry picker.

Legionella

The legionella risk assessment is to be reviewed annually by a legionella specialist, prompted by the Works Manager.

Legionella flushing and temperature checks are conducted weekly across the council properties in accordance with the legionella flushing policy in areas highlighted by the risk assessment.

Lone Working

A lone working policy is in force. (Policy No EH (L) 002

Manual Handling

The town council will comply with The Manual Handling (Operations) Regulations 1992.

Manual handling operations will be avoided as far as is reasonably practicable where there is a risk of injury.

Where it is not possible to avoid manual handling operations an assessment of the operation will be made considering the task, the load, the working environment, and the capability of the individual concerned. An assessment will be reviewed if there is any reason to suspect that it is no longer valid.

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

Wherever reasonably practicable, lifting and moving objects will be done by mechanical devices rather than manual handling. The equipment used will be appropriate for the task.

The load to be lifted or moved must be inspected for sharp edges, slivers and wet or greasy patches.

When lifting or moving a load with sharp or splintered edges gloves must be

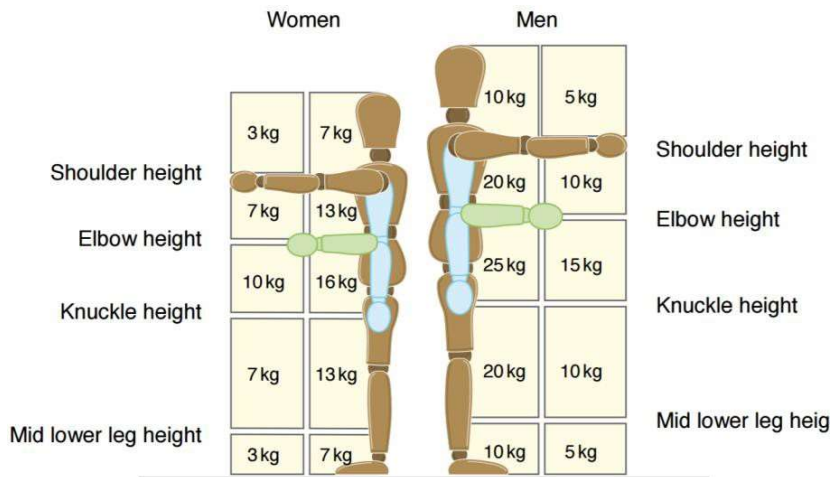
worn. Gloves should be free from oil, grease or other agents, which might impair grip.

The route over which the load is to be lifted or moved should be inspected to ensure it is free of obstructions or spillage which could cause tripping or spillage.

Employees should not attempt to lift or move a load, which is too heavy to manage comfortably.

Where team lifting or moving is necessary, one person should act as co-ordinator, giving commands to lift, lower etc.

When lifting an object off the ground employees should assume a squatting position, keeping their head back and their back straight. The load should be lifted by straightening the knees, not the back. These steps should be reversed for lowering an object to the ground.



Monitoring Procedures & Safety Inspections

To monitor the effectiveness of the council's health and safety systems, audits will be undertaken, using external services if required. Copies of the results of these audits will be shared with employees.

Managers will carry out regular, at least quarterly, safety inspections of their areas of responsibility and equipment to ensure safety standards and housekeeping best practices are maintained. Additional health and safety arrangements will be developed as indicated by risk assessments.

The report from the H&S external consultants will be submitted to the council's HR Committee, along with a report, if necessary, from the town clerk or works manager.

Consultation Arrangements:

HM Inspector of Health & Safety

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/index.htm>

Essential Safety & Environmental Solutions Ltd (ES & ES), Primrose Cottage, North

Street, Great Dunham, Norfolk, PE32 1LR.

Noise & Vibration

The council uses equipment that produces noise and vibration. Risk assessments and control measures will be employed to mitigate risk e.g. appropriate SNR ear defenders are employed, and anti-vibration gloves are available.

Noise and vibration from equipment is measured and recorded on a six-monthly basis using a class 2 sound level meter and a vibration monitor. For noise, the HSE calculator is used to ensure the correct rated ear defenders for different equipment are employed. For vibration, the HSE calculator indicates the exposure action and limit value and these are communicated to staff through staff meetings and toolbox talks following six monthly measurements.

Anyone using more than one item of vibrating equipment on one day is instructed to note the exposure action value detailed on the machine inventory spreadsheet and use the HSE calculator to check exposure. Employees should contact the Works manager if unsure.

Pandemics

A pandemic is an epidemic that has spread over multiple countries. This council will follow the UK government public health guidance relating to any UK government declared pandemic. In practice this may mean working from home where possible or an entire shut down of the council's normal business. Where possible the council will support Breckland District Council and Norfolk County Council in providing signage and hand sanitizer stations, or any other measures that are required, and will risk assess its activities and work environments for staff with the pandemic in mind.

PAT Testing

The council is committed to ensuring electrical safety with portable appliances. PAT Testing is carried out annually by T.K. Drake Ltd annually in January/February.

Permits to Work

A permit to work is a formal, written, safe system of work to control potentially hazardous activities. The permit details the work to be done and the precautions to be taken (for instance, they may involve limiting the movement of overhead cranes, the precautions needed for high voltage or hot work or they might detail rescue arrangements for certain types of work). Permits should be issued, checked and signed off as being completed by someone competent to do so, and who is not involved in undertaking the work. Permits for work will be issued to contractors as necessary by the works manager.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The town council will comply with the Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992.

Employees must use all personal protective equipment provided to them in accordance with the training and instruction given to them regarding its use.

Employees who have been provided with personal protective equipment must immediately report any loss of or obvious defect in any equipment provided to their line manager.

Specific Policies

Procedures are displayed in particular premises:

1. Town Hall Offices
2. Cemetery Chapel
3. Cemetery workshop
4. Public Toilets
5. Outside vehicles

Risk Assessments

There are five stages to risk assessment:

- identify significant hazards.
- decide who might be harmed; employers, sub- contractors, site visitors, customers, members of the public.
- evaluate the risks and decide on controls; can the hazard be eliminated, if not how can it be controlled or minimised.
- record the findings; pass on information to employees.
- review the assessments to ensure they remain valid.

In undertaking risk assessments, the level of detail should be broadly proportional to the risk. A suitable and sufficient risk assessment will reflect what is reasonably practicable to expect employers to know about the hazards in their workplaces.

Hazard Identification. The town council will comply with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992, to develop and maintain the council's health and safety arrangements and ensure action is taken to eliminate or control the risks associated with its work activities.

The procedures to be adopted, copies of the required documentation and the results of Risk Assessments will be maintained in the risk assessment files held in the council's offices and on the council's computer files. Employees will be made aware of the significant findings of any review that affects them.

Smoking / Vaping

The council has a Smoke Free Policy - EH (S) 003 Smoke Free Policy & Procedure.

Workplace Stress

Managers will use the HSE's management standards approach to dealing with stress by risk assessing work activity and promoting active discussion and working in partnership with employees to help decide on practical improvements that can be made.

The Management Standards are:

- Demands – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work environment.
- Control – how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
- Support – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and

colleagues.

- Relationships – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- Role – whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures that they do not have conflicting roles.
- Change – how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organisation.

Training

The town clerk will arrange for induction training for all new members of staff. Where additional training is identified as necessary for the health, safety, and welfare of staff, it will be given in-house or by outside agencies e.g., Display Screen Equipment, Manual Handling, COSHH awareness

Violence

The Health and Safety Executive defines work-related violence as ‘any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.

The council should ensure the possibility of violence to its staff is considered when undertaking risk assessments. Every effort should be made to reduce the possibility of violence to the minimum level that is reasonably practicable by using safe working practices.

All incidents in which member(s) of the council’s staff are abused, threatened or assaulted must be reported to the Town Clerk.

Welfare Provision

Staff toilets / handwashing sinks are provided across the council’s estate.

Drinking water is available at the Town Hall and Cemetery Workshop.

Works’ handwashing facilities are available at the Cemetery facilities

Weekly cleaning rotas are in place at the Public Toilets and a cleaner is employed for the office. Adequate supplies of toilet paper, soap, paper towels etc is provided.

Work Equipment Safety Procedures

The town council will comply with The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

The council’s safe system of work for each item of equipment must be adhered to, including before and after use safety checks, and any necessary PPE must be worn.

Only staff in-date for training, on specific items such as the abrasive wheels and chainsaws, may use that council equipment. Details are held on the council’s training

and competency register.

Workplace Transport

The council has various vehicles for different functions, these include:

Two outside Trucks

Two ride-on mowers

Vehicles are safety checked daily by staff responsible for that vehicle. Servicing and MOT's are organised by the works manager. Cleaning is conducted by the team responsible for the vehicle.

Staff hazard perception testing is completed annually and driving licence checks periodically for those that drive council vehicles.

A fuel account is used at Swaffham Service Station.

Fuel for garden machinery is to be carried securely on/in council vehicles in the containers provided and when not in use is to be stored in the lockable container in the right hand garage at the Cemetery.