



# Corporate Safety Policy

Health and Safety



# Document Control

Document Title: Corporate Safety Policy

## Summary

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| Related Policies, Strategies, Guideline Documents       |  |
| Replaces  | Corporate Safety Policy 2020   |
| Joint Policy (Yes/No)                                   | No   |
| Name of Partner(s) if joint                             | N/A  |
| Policy Owner (Name/Position)                            | Rosemary Barker, Assistant Director (Workforce and Organisational Development) |
| Policy Author (Name/Position)                           | Nancy Wilson, Corporate Safety Adviser   |
| Applies to  | All employees, Elected Members and School Governors of Rochdale Council        |

## Review of Strategy

|                      |               |
|----------------------|---------------|
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| Review undertaken by | Nancy Wilson  |
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## Document Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

| Name | Title | Date of Issue | Version Number |
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## Corporate Safety Policy

### HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

The Leadership Team of Rochdale Borough Council recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees. The Leadership Team also recognises the health and safety impact of the Council's work with regards to service users, pupils, contractors, members of the public, and anyone else who may be affected by the Council's work activities, and will take all reasonable steps to protect these people.

The Council will fully comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all other relevant health and safety regulations and standards and will, as far as is reasonably practicable, fulfil these requirements.

Chief Executive  
March 2023

### ORGANISATION

This section outlines the responsibilities of each member of the organisation for implementing and complying with this policy. Every member of the organisation must accept and ensure that they understand their personal responsibilities for health and safety, and achieve and maintain these to the appropriate standard.

#### Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of the Council's safety policy and will provide leadership which supports and strengthens the Council's health and safety culture. Through the Leadership Team, the Chief Executive will ensure that responsibilities are met and that adequate resources are made available to enable this Policy to be implemented.

#### Leadership Team

Through its management structure, the Leadership Team will promote and develop a positive attitude by ensuring that health and safety is an integral and prominent function of the overall management culture.

Collectively and individually the Leadership Team are required to:

- provide visible leadership, leading by example and considering health and safety implications for all strategic decisions;
- ensure that each Service examines its own work activities and puts in place effective safety management systems;
- ensure that the necessary resources are available for the management of health and safety;
- demonstrate a clear commitment to continuously improve health and safety performance;
- provide effective communication and consultation arrangements for health and safety;
- allocate a health and safety lead to support the aims of this policy; and
- ensure that the Corporate Safety Policy is fully implemented.

### **Leadership Team Health and Safety Lead**

The Leadership Team member appointed as the health and safety lead will:

- meet with the Corporate Safety Adviser to provide strategic support with regards to corporate health and safety matters;
- bring to the attention of the Leadership Team relevant health and safety issues;
- discuss with the Corporate Safety Adviser the health and safety priorities and strategies for the Council, and monitor progress;
- attend strategic meetings with the Trade Unions, as necessary, to represent the Leadership Team; and
- to be the point of contact to escalate serious non-compliance through the Leadership Team.

### **Heads of Service / Senior Managers (SMT) / Headteachers**

These are responsible for implementing and monitoring the Council's Safety Policy in areas which come under their direct management control. They are required to:

- provide visible leadership, encouraging employees to achieve high standards of health and safety, and ensure that health and safety has equal priority with all other activities;
- ensure that health and safety responsibilities are clearly and logically delegated to successive levels of management who are sufficiently senior and competent to discharge them;
- comply with all relevant health and safety legislation as a minimum, conform to any specific Council policies or procedures relating to health and safety, and wherever practicable, seek to adopt best practice in respect of health and safety;
- implement health and safety management systems that will identify and control risks, and regularly monitor and review the preventative and protective measures employed;
- ensure employees are properly instructed and trained in their health and safety responsibilities and that they discharge these effectively; and
- that information regarding their particular areas of control are detailed in the Section Safety Procedures (separate document) and that this is made available to all their employees.

### **Elected Members & School Governors**

Elected Members and School Governors must ensure that any decisions they make reflect the requirements of this safety policy and that they promote compliance with statutory responsibilities as a minimum standard.

### **All employees**

All employees including agency workers, volunteers or casual staff (together with those detailed above) are required to:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of any other person who may be affected by their actions;
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for health and safety;
- co-operate with managers and supervisors to enable the Council to comply with their health and safety obligations;
- participate in any instruction or training that is provided for health and safety;
- report any accident, incident, injury or near miss using the Council's reporting procedure;
- report any unsafe, unhealthy or hazardous working conditions to their Line Manager;
- inform their Line Manager immediately if they are diagnosed with a medical condition or are prescribed medication that may impact on their ability to carry out their duties safely;
- seek advice if they do not feel competent to carry out their responsibilities safely; and
- make themselves aware of, and follow their responsibilities as detailed in this policy and any procedures set out locally.



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In addition to their general responsibilities, certain employees have a supporting role, or are requested to provide technical advice to managers and employees. These responsibilities are detailed in the following sections.

### **Specialist Support - Safety Team**

The Safety Team is the Council's appointed 'competent person' in regard to health and safety assistance. The Safety Team will provide professional and competent advice, guidance and support to the Executive Directors, Heads of Service and personnel who have responsibilities for health and safety and in implementing the Council's policy. Support will be given in complying with legal requirements and in promoting the continuous improvement of health and safety standards.

### **Health and Safety Representatives**

Safety representatives appointed by the recognised trade unions will be consulted on matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of employees in good time so that effective consultation can take place. They will help create a positive health and safety culture by working in partnership with management. Safety representatives will work in accordance with their statutory rights as defined in the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations.

## ARRANGEMENTS

This section sets out the Council's specific arrangements for managing health and safety. The arrangements follow the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other relevant legislation, and give details on how people should meet these requirements. Because of their legal status they are mandatory requirements of this policy and it is important that managers and employees adhere to them.

There are guidance notes to supplement these arrangements available on the Council's intranet site. These are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they continue to work for the Council. If you need any help or assistance with any of the items listed below, please either contact your Line Manager or the Safety Team.

### **Risk assessment**

All job roles and work activities within the Council will be assessed and significant health and safety risks recorded. Control measures will be put in place to protect employees or others that may be affected by the Council's work activities. The risk assessment should identify further actions that will be required to reduce the risks to at least a tolerable level. Once complete, the risks identified and control measures put in place for protection will be communicated to the relevant employees.

### **Safe working procedures**

(also referred to as Safe Systems of Work, Method Statements, etc.)

Following the risk assessment process, where hazards cannot be eliminated and where risks still exist, written detailed instructions will be produced and effectively communicated to the relevant employees. The level of detail included will be proportionate to the level of risk involved.

### **Chemicals and hazardous substances (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health - COSHH)**

All hazardous substances, chemicals or products will be used, stored and disposed of in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or the relevant legislative requirements. Where necessary, the appropriate COSHH risk assessments will be put in place.

Following the COSHH risk assessments, exposure will either be prevented, or where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled. Where measures are put in place to control exposure, these will be maintained, examined and tested to ensure their continued effectiveness. Information, instruction and training will be given to those employees exposed to hazardous substances, including the potential risks and the control measures in place to prevent exposure. Personal protective equipment will be provided only as a last resort for controlling exposure.

### **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The Council accepts that the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) is a last resort and is committed to continually seeking alternative methods of reducing risk. Where risks identified through risk assessments cannot be removed or adequately controlled by other means, employees will be provided with the most suitable and sufficient PPE, and given training in its use, storage and maintenance.

Managers are responsible for issuing, repairing and replacing PPE and for ensuring its proper use. Employees are responsible for keeping their PPE clean and properly stored, and for reporting faults and problems to their Line Manager.

Where a risk to eyes or eyesight is identified through the risk assessment process, prescription safety glasses will be provided where necessary. Computer users will be provided with access to free eyesight tests. Where prescribed by an Optician, provision of glasses up to the specified amount will be paid where glasses are identified as necessary solely for computer use.

### **Health surveillance**

Arrangements for a programme of health surveillance will be put in place where it is a requirement of law, or where it is identified through the risk assessment process that operations are exposed to harmful substances that could potentially harm the employee's health. Pre-employment screening will take place for those employees starting in a role where a health hazard has been identified. Records of all health surveillance will be kept by the employing Service for the applicable length of time.

### **Health and Safety Training**

#### ***Induction training***

Line Managers will ensure that all new employees go through the corporate health and safety induction on taking up employment. In addition, service inductions will be provided by the higher risk service areas providing information on site / risks specific to that service and the control measures in place to protect employees.

#### ***General health and safety training***

The health and safety training needs of all employees will be identified through the risk assessment process. Appropriate information, instruction and training will be provided to ensure that employees have the competency to carry out their work safely. Where mandatory health and safety training is required, managers must ensure that employees are provided with this, including information on the hazards and the control measures in place to protect them.

Employees must participate in any instruction or training provided to enable the Council to comply with their health and safety obligations. Records of all employees' health and safety training must be kept by the employing Service. Refresher training must be provided as and when necessary.

### **Accident & incident reporting and investigation**

All employees are responsible for following the Council's incident reporting procedure. Employees should report all accidents, whether it results in injury or not, incidents, including verbal or physical assault, or near miss incidents to their Line Manager, who must then promptly and properly report them to the Safety Team.



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Line Managers are responsible for familiarising themselves with the reporting procedure and the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations* (RIDDOR) and informing the Safety Team as appropriate when these incidents occur. The Safety Team will report RIDDOR incidents to the Health and Safety Executive, where required, on behalf of the Council.

Line Managers are responsible for investigating all accidents, incidents or near misses to identify the cause and to take the appropriate steps to prevent a recurrence, and for monitoring incidents within their area of responsibility. Serious incidents will be investigated jointly with the Safety Team.

### **Consultation with employees**

Management will regularly consult with the recognised trade unions and appointed safety representatives through formal consultative meetings at both strategic and operational level. Safety representatives will be provided with the necessary information to allow them to fully and effectively consider health and safety matters. Consultation meetings give employees, via their safety representatives, the opportunity to discuss and exchange views on health and safety issues with management, to reach a better understanding on matters and procedures relating to health and safety.

### **Work environment**

All workplaces will be provided with adequate welfare facilities which will be maintained to a safe standard. Adequate access and egress will be provided and all employees must maintain good housekeeping standards. Defects or unsafe conditions will be put right. If this is not possible, they should be reported to the appropriate Line Manager or Building Manager as soon as possible following the appropriate procedure.

### **Safe plant, equipment and services**

Those responsible for purchasing work equipment, plant or services will make reasonable checks for health and safety standards and assess for suitability. Where necessary, equipment and plant should conform to the appropriate British Standards or conformity certification. Once purchased, arrangements should be made to keep equipment and plant in good working order by following the manufacturer's recommendations. These could include arranging for suitable maintenance, inspection and servicing and for providing the appropriate markings and warnings.

### **Statutory building compliance**

Building Managers or the person in control of a building (e.g. Headteacher, Responsible Person) are responsible for ensuring that Council buildings are kept in a safe condition and that all the required statutory building compliance inspections, assessments, maintenance and / or servicing are carried out within the appropriate timescales. The person in control of the premises will make arrangements for remedial action or recommendations made following on from inspections and/or assessments to be actioned as appropriate.

### **Emergencies**

Procedures will be put in place in each workplace to deal with emergency situations by the person responsible for the building (e.g. Building Manager, Headteacher, etc.). The emergency evacuation plan will be communicated to all employees within the building. Where teams / individuals work away from a permanent workplace, the responsible manager will put in place procedures to deal with any emergency situation that may arise.

Nominated personnel will be assigned roles to assist in emergencies and be given the appropriate training, e.g. first aid, fire wardens, etc.

### **Fire**

Building Managers or the person in control of a building (e.g. Headteacher) are responsible for ensuring that all the necessary fire safety controls are in place and are being managed. Employees, as building users, will be instructed on the procedures to follow in an emergency evacuation situation and must follow these as necessary.

Line Managers are responsible for preparing a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) for any employee requiring assistance to evacuate in an emergency. This should then be forwarded to the appropriate Building Manager for information.

### **First aid**

Building Managers or the person in control of a building (e.g. Headteacher) will ensure that there is a sufficient number of trained first aiders and that there is the equipment needed to deal with injuries or ill health. First aid requirements will be identified through the risk assessment process to ensure the adequacy and appropriateness of first aid personnel, equipment and facilities. Fully qualified first aid personnel will be paid the agreed allowance.

### **Disciplinary procedure**

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who is found to have knowingly failed to follow safety procedures or standards, interfered with or failed to use protective equipment provided for health and safety, or failed to follow their responsibilities as detailed within this policy. In these instances the Council's Disciplinary Procedures will be followed.

### **Monitoring and auditing**

Services will continuously monitor their health and safety performance through incidents, ill health, or near miss reports, followed by reviewing applicable risk assessments to ensure control measures remain effective. Managers will also monitor health and safety performance at a local level by, for example, undertaking safety tours, inspections and checking that control measures are being followed.

The Safety Team will carry out monitoring and periodic audits to determine whether services are complying with the necessary health and safety requirements, and whether the Council is fulfilling its obligations with regard to health and safety legislation.

### **Policy Review**

The Corporate Safety Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness and to encourage continuous improvements in health and safety performance.


### **Section Safety Procedures**

An appropriate manager from each team / section of the Council should record the person / people responsible for carrying out health and safety roles within their team / section. This should be within the Section Safety Procedures form. Once the form is complete, it should be shared with all employees within the team / section, and regularly reviewed to ensure that details remain accurate and up-to-date.



Rochdale Borough Council  
Number One Riverside  
Smith Street  
Rochdale OL16 1YH

 [rochdale.gov.uk](http://rochdale.gov.uk)

 01706 647474

 [council@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:council@rochdale.gov.uk)

