

Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Corporate Health & Safety
Working together for a safer, healthier future



Document Control

Overview

Policy owner for review	Corporate Health and Safety
Date implemented	Jan 2009
Date of last review	Jan 2023
Date of last amendment	Jan 2022
Document Ref/Version	CP-POLICY-13
Related Documents	

Revision History

Version	Issue Date	Summary of Changes
CP-POLICY-12	Jan 2022	Chief Executive/Chief Officer name changes
CP-POLICY-11	Jan 2021	No changes
CP-POLICY-10	Jan 2020	New Foreword, New format, organisational changes and legislative updates.
CP-01	Jan 2009	New Standard – reviewed on an annual basis to include organisational changes and/or legislative updates

Version	Who	Date
CP-POLICY-10	Corporate Health and Safety Steering Group – Chief Officers, Senior Management, Elected Members, Unions	Jan 2020
CP-POLICY-11	Chief Executive	Jan 2021
CP-POLICY-12	Chief Executive	Jan 2022
CP-POLICY-13	Chief Executive	Jan 2023

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1. FOREWORD

This policy demonstrates the duty of care owed by the Council to its employees and others and a commitment to go about its business in the safest way possible.

I am committed to integrating health, safety and wellbeing into decision making and risk management processes within the council. The Chief Officers will support me in this role and, together with the Senior Management Teams, we will ensure the effective leadership of health, safety and wellbeing for the Council and others affected by the council's activities.

The Council has a record of good health and safety performance and fully acknowledges its responsibilities as an employer, therefore has a mature safety management system and local procedures in place to ensure the effective management and control of the wide ranges of risk which are inevitably present.

Employees are the Council's most valuable resource and as such we are committed to ensuring their health, safety and welfare. Employees work best when they are fit, healthy and feel safe, therefore protecting their health and safety will in turn enhance the performance of the Council. It is important that employees recognise that their diligence towards safety has a direct impact on their workplace, their safety and the safety of their co-workers.

To complement the formal systems the Council have in place, everyone needs to take personal responsibility for their own and others' health and safety and play their part in achieving the highest possible standards of health and safety.

The Council's Health and Safety Policy and Safety Management System (SMS) are the gateway to the essential guidance and advice you will need to help you achieve this.

Signed

Date 1st January 2023



Chief Executive Officer

2. CORPORATE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT

Flintshire County Council recognise that good standards of health, safety and welfare are an integral part of good management. The sensible and proportionate management of risk supports innovation and sustainability.

The approach adopted by the Council in nurturing an attitude of positive safety behaviour is dependent on the involvement of all employees and stakeholders. We, therefore, require effective methods of monitoring and communication to be in place so that all employees can raise safety and health concerns.

We aim to meet our health, safety and welfare commitments, so far as is reasonably practicable, by:

- Providing effective leadership and resources and access to competent advice across the Council to enable agreed health, safety and welfare standards to be met
- Clearly defining roles and responsibilities so that all everyone is clear of the contribution they will make to securing their own health, safety and welfare and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- Achieving legal compliance, as a minimum, but striving for good or best practice where it is appropriate and proportionate to do so
- Assessing the significant risks associated with the Councils activities and implementing sensible and proportionate control measures to reduce the risk of injury and ill-health and damage to property or the environment
- Developing and implementing a safety management system(SMS) and associated arrangements, including arrangements to consult employees, to identify agreed performance standards and the means by which the achievement of these will be monitored and reviewed in order to secure continuous improvement
- Embedding consideration of health, safety and welfare matters when planning and coordinating all Council activities to enable the early identification of unacceptable risks and the implementation of satisfactory control measures
- Providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to our employees to encourage ownership of health, safety and welfare matters and to enable each person to carry out their duties safely and to contribute to the overall delivery of the aims of this policy
- Taking appropriate, timely and proportionate corrective and preventative actions to manage intolerable risks identified by monitoring, auditing and investigative activities.

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to reflect our commitment and stated aims. Any revisions shall be brought to the attention of all managers, employees and other stakeholders.

3. ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

High standards of health and safety shall be achieved through good management and positive leadership. The organisational arrangements within which health and safety can be managed and specific responsibilities for health and safety management are set out below.

3.1 Structure of Health and Safety Meetings

The following diagram outlines the communication and monitoring structure the Council follows to help ensure relevant health & safety information is considered at all levels.



3.2 Elected Members

Elected Members are, collectively, the Corporate Employing Body and it is their responsibility to promote a positive and forward looking (proactive) approach to health and safety by: -

- Having a clear understanding of the Authority's Health and Safety aims and objectives as members of the employing body and with duties to the public. Ensuring that these aims and objectives meet the requirements of the duty of care placed on us under common law to our employees and others exposed to our activities and to the duties we have under the Health and Safety at Work Act.
- Assisting in the provision of Health and Safety direction for the Council as a whole and to ensure this direction is mainstreamed into all relevant Council policies.
- Ensuring Elected Members consider the impact of their decisions on health and safety as an employer and service provider.
- Ensuring a Corporate Safety Management System, a Corporate Health and Safety Policy and Corporate Health and Safety Standards are communicated to all employees and reviewed as necessary.

3.3 Governing Bodies of Schools Maintained by the Council in its capacity as Local Authority (LA)

Local Management of schools requires school staff, Governing Bodies and the Local Authority to work together to ensure the health, safety and welfare objectives are achieved. The Education Reform Act 1988 gives Governing Bodies important powers and duties in controlling and managing school premises including responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of employees, pupils, visitors and others who may access the premises or services offered by the school.

In particular, Governors are responsible for ensuring a Health and Safety Management System is in place ensuring statutory and Authority health and safety requirements are complied with.

Governing Bodies must:

- Appoint a suitable Lead Person in Health and Safety.
- Establish a forum with appropriate school representation for monitoring school health and safety performance (a specific Health and Safety Committee with a set agenda).
- Ensure responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are allocated to specific people with relevant information and training to ensure competence in carrying out their functions.
- Ensure Headteachers are suitably aware of their duties and responsibilities and for the implementation of the Council's Safety Management System, Corporate Health and Safety Policy and Corporate Standards as they apply to the school and school activities.

- Ensure compliance with the requirements set out in the schools health and safety service level agreement and consult, where necessary, with the corporate health and safety team.
- Prepare and implement a supplementary School Health and Safety Policy to clarify in detail how systems and arrangements for compliance will be enacted within their individual school.
- Co-operate with the Council in monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements and operations in respect of these functions.
- Ensure that, in implementing this policy, arrangements and organisation for the safety of staff, pupils, visitors and contractors are met.
- Ensure that all premises, plant and equipment for which they are responsible are safe and properly maintained.
- Ensure that equipment is suitable for its intended use and account is taken of the working conditions and any hazards in the workplace.
- Ensure school health and safety issues are identified, discussed and decisions taken and effective action is implemented.
- Ensure they consider the health and safety of all persons at the planning stage and include any necessary measures to control risks when initiating projects.
- Ensure that all employees adopt safe methods of work for the activities carried out.
- Receive and act upon reports from their Headteachers which include any significant accidents, incidents and dangerous occurrences.
- Ensure staff are given sufficient time to attend relevant health and safety training.
- Ensure sufficient budget is allocated, particularly in relation to statutory maintenance and inspections where these fall within the delegated budget responsibility of the school.
- Receive and act upon any direction from the Authority regarding health and safety matters.
- Ensure a review of the school health and safety policy and performance takes place at least annually, and implement an action plan for improvement based on its' findings.

3.4 Headteachers

Headteachers are responsible for the internal organisation, management and control of the school including accident prevention and risk management, where such matters fall under his/her control.

Headteachers must:

- Implement the school health and safety policy in accordance with arrangements for managing health and safety paying particular attention to ensuring:

- Documented risk assessments for all significant hazards
 - Access to competent health and safety advice
 - Documented arrangements for the Plan, Do, Check, Act approach to health and safety
 - Monitoring and review of health and safety arrangements
- Be the focal point on health, safety and welfare matters and give advice or indicate sources of advice.
 - Ensure compliance with the requirements set out in the schools health and safety service level agreement and consult, where necessary, with the corporate health and safety team.
 - Delegate duties to specialist members of staff in accordance with the Governor's arrangements necessary to fulfil the requirements of the Local Authority and School health and safety policy (for example, for conducting safety inspections, risk assessments, fire evacuation, etc.)
 - Provide health and safety information to personnel in relation to specific responsibilities and duties required by them to enable the organisation to meet their respective health and safety obligations.
 - Ensure school employees receive suitable induction, instruction, training and supervision as necessary to enable them to fulfil their health and safety responsibilities and functions and retain records of such training
 - Organise their management system to ensure that essential health and safety documents and records are kept up to date and readily available for use or inspection.
 - Provide regular reports to the Governing Body (including accident, incident, near miss reports, results of school annual self-audits, periodic safety inspections, reviews of policy, procedures, and any reports from Local Authority officers or other external bodies).
 - Ensure that all accidents are reported to the FCC Corporate Health and Safety team via the corporate accident database and in line with the guide for reporting of schools accident/incidents and within the specified timescales.
 - Regularly review communication of health and safety information in the school, paying particular attention to newly appointed and temporary staff, volunteer helpers and other users of the premises.
 - Ensure all equipment used in school is adequately maintained and inspected in accordance with the Provision and Use of Work Equipment standard and associated professional guidance.
 - Co-operate with and provide facilities for trade union appointed safety representatives.
 - Undertake training identified as necessary to enable competence in the execution of health and safety management duties within the school.

3.5 The Corporate Health and Safety Steering Group (CHSSG)

The aim of the Group is to facilitate and monitor the strategic development and progress of health and safety practice and the health and safety culture within the Authority.

Purpose of the Group is:

- To promote a positive health and safety culture throughout the Authority that strives to continually improve health and safety practice and performance.
- To monitor and ensure effectiveness of the Council's health and safety performance, risk management systems and arrangements.
- Communicate health and safety issues across the Council, sharing experiences, lessons learnt and best practice.
- To understand significant risks and seek assurances of effective management
- To maintain an overview of legislative changes.

3.6 Chief Executive

The person with overall Corporate responsible for health and safety is the Chief Executive Officer.

He will ensure that with the support of Senior Management effective safety management arrangements are established, maintained and monitored and compliance is observed.

To meet these responsibilities he is to be assisted by an appropriately qualified and experienced Corporate Health and Safety Team Leader and Corporate Health and Safety Team.

3.7 Chief Officers

The Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring that the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and Corporate Standards contained within Corporate Safety Management System (SMS), are followed.

Portfolio Health and Safety Committees will be established at a suitable frequency where issues affecting the health and safety of employees and stakeholders on a service-wide basis can be raised and resolved.

The Chief Officers with responsibility for health and safety in their respective portfolios are as follows:

Chief Executive	Colin Everett
Governance	Gareth Owens
Education & Youth	Claire Homard
Planning, Environment & Economy	Andrew Farrow
Transport & Streetscene	Katie Wilby
Social Services	Neil Ayling
Housing & Communities	Vicky Clark

Chief Officers will be supported by designated Corporate Health and Safety Advisors who have the responsibility for providing competent advice to the Chief Officers and their Senior Management Team.

3.8 Chief Officers and Service Managers are responsible for the following in their Services:

- Overseeing the health and safety of their staff and anyone affected by the delivery of their service, and for ensuring the Safety Management System (SMS), the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and the Corporate Standards are followed.
- Ensure that adequate financial provision is made available to establish, implement, control and maintain the SMS in their area of responsibility.
- Encourage the development of a culture that is supportive of health and safety and that ensures a systematic approach to the identification and control of foreseeable risks.
- Ensure that the management within their specific services fosters a culture where health & safety are seen as being essential to the achievement of the primary aims of the Services and the Authority.
- Ensure that health and safety issues are part of the strategic and operational planning process, and that strategic business decisions within their Service(s) are subjected to systematic hazard and risk analysis.
- Promote a culture that strives to continually improve health and safety practice and performance
- Measure, review and monitor compliance with the SMS, the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and the Corporate Standards. Communicate health and safety information and performance reports appropriately across services. Support health & safety initiatives and act positively to remedy significant deficiencies identified by this process.
- Regularly monitor accidents and occupational ill health and establish targets and objectives in order to reduce these across the Council.
- Establish measurable health and safety objectives within their Services and monitor performance against those objectives as well as the SMS.

In particular, Chief Officers and Service Managers are required to:

- Produce service health and safety action plans identifying significant risks and the necessary actions required to control them. Review these regularly through Portfolio Health and Safety Committees and communicate to the Corporate Health and Safety Steering Group.
- Ensure they have appropriate health & safety training and that people with safety responsibilities are suitably trained and that they carry out their duties satisfactorily.
- Ensure relevant health & safety issues are included in reviews of staff performance.

- Ensure they identify health and safety training needs of their staff and stakeholders. Review the annual training requirements and objectives that they have set for the people they are responsible for.
- Ensure foreseeable risks in their Service(s) are assessed and controlled, and that they influence the planning & risk assessment process.
- Ensure appropriate safe systems of work are in place within their Service(s).
- Ensure health & safety issues arising from significant changes in Service procedures or work activities are discussed and addressed promptly.
- Approve risk control systems & ensure that resources are allocated according to priorities.
- Ensure all property, equipment and plant are suitable for purpose and properly maintained.
- Ensure any occupational health surveillance identified as being necessary by the risk assessment process is undertaken.
- Ensure there are sufficient instructions and information available for their staff regarding the outcomes of the risk assessments, i.e. the hazards, the risks and the control measures.
- Ensure suitable systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of controls and safety procedures.
- Ensure all accidents, incidents and near misses are investigated, recorded and reported as appropriate.
- Support, contribute and comply with the internal audit process undertaken by the Health and Safety Advisors against the SMS and the Corporate Standards.
- Ensure there are sufficient first aid arrangements in place to cover all their staff, and where appropriate service users.
- Ensure procedures are in place for the safe evacuation of staff from buildings they occupy, on either a permanent or temporary basis.
- Ensure employees and trade union representatives are informed and consulted regarding risk assessments and safety issues.

3.9 Managers / Team Leaders / Supervisors are to:

- Ensure they are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the management of health and safety in their respective service area(s).
- Set an example in safe behaviour, good management and positive leadership to others.
- Keep up to date with legislative changes, codes of practice, industry best practice, Corporate and Service Standards.
- Allocate appropriate health and safety responsibilities to personnel under their control / management / supervision, ensuring they are understood and effectively implemented.
- Ensure all employees receive corporate and workplace induction when they commence employment or change Service.

- Identify and meet the safety training and development needs of employees under their control to ensure competency.
- Involve and consult with employees on all matters concerning health and safety, encouraging a two way communication on such matters.
- Develop improved safety behaviour and performance through consultation, co-operation, communication and sharing examples of good practice and lessons learnt.
- Ensure contractors under their control discharge their health and safety responsibilities appropriately.
- Apply relevant Corporate Standards to all activities under their control.
- Allocate appropriate resources to the planning of all activities. Ensure all activities are effectively managed and supervised.
- Systematically identify hazards through site visits and, where necessary, obtain safety information from employees, designers, safety advisers and documented codes of practice.
- Develop and apply appropriate risk control systems and workplace precautions to eliminate or minimise risk.
- Ensure all plant, equipment, personal protective equipment and other safety devices are maintained, repaired and replaced as necessary. In addition, ensure that all statutory and other appropriate tests are carried out on all safety related equipment at relevant intervals.
- Ensure reporting of accidents/ incidents/ near misses and cases of occupational ill health in accordance with Corporate Standards and ensure investigation is undertaken.
- Monitor health and safety performance of employees and contractors.
- Identify health and safety deficiencies within their area(s) of responsibility and take appropriate remedial action. Ensure the relevant Service Manager and the Portfolio Health and Safety Advisor is informed of the deficiency.

3.10 All employees are to:

- Work safely at all times giving due consideration for the safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- Ensure all safety arrangements and procedures are followed at all times.
- Use all work equipment and personal protective equipment properly and in accordance with training received.
- Notify their Manager / Team Leader / Supervisor of their safety training needs.
- Inform their Manager / Team Leader / Supervisor if any physical or mental condition known to them affects their ability to work.
- Report any safety deficiencies, accidents / incidents / near misses and cases of ill health to their line manager.
- Assist during investigations of safety related incidents.

- Assist in improving safety systems and performance through consultation, co-operation, communication and sharing examples of good practice and lessons learnt.

3.11 Volunteers and Trainees are to:

- Ensure they follow all relevant Council safety arrangements and procedures so as to minimise potential risk to themselves and others who may be affected by their activities.

4. ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT

4.1 The Corporate Health & Safety Team Leader's role:

Lead, co-ordinate and maintain a pro-active, high quality health and safety function to enable the managers of the Authority to discharge their statutory and moral duties for the health and safety of employees and service users through appropriate Corporate and Portfolio action and:

- Ensure the ongoing review of the SMS and the Corporate Standards.
- Act as the Council's most senior advisor on Health and Safety matters with specific accountability to the Chief Executive Officer.
- Ensure that all necessary support is provided to the Council's Corporate and Portfolio Health and Safety Committees.
- Co-ordinate and direct the activities of Chief Officers, Service Managers, Managers and responsible officers in respect of health and safety to ensure coherent and consistent standards are maintained throughout the Authority.
- Contribute to the Council's Strategic Health and Safety Plan through provision of professional assistance to Chief Officers to ensure sensible risk management is built into the Council's approach to managing risk in all aspects of its service provision.
- Develop an audit programme to evaluate operational performance of Services.
- Provide professional leadership and operational management to the Health and Safety Team of Advisors.
- Ensure the development and maintenance of computerised systems for recording accidents and other reference data so the Council has the necessary information for determining priorities and performance on health and safety matters.
- Continue to build relationships with alternative delivery model services by fulfilling our core provision of services as set out in the service level agreements to the best of our ability.
- Develop up-to-date communication and training programmes so that all sectors of the Council's workforce are appropriately informed and competent to discharge their duties with due regard to best Health and Safety Practice.

- Involve representatives of the Trade Unions in Health and Safety matters, including the working and interpretation of the Health and Safety Representatives and Health and Safety Committee Regulations 1977, to secure the fullest co-operation of the whole workforce.

4.2 The Health and Safety Advisor's role:

- Ensure a consistent approach to health & safety across the Authority
- Assist the Corporate Health and Safety Team Leader, Chief Officers and Service Managers in the delivery of their responsibilities.
- Maintain awareness of developments in legislation and best practice relating to Health and Safety and to ensure that consideration is given to their incorporation in Corporate and Service Standards.
- Prepare and present Corporate and Service Standards regarding health and safety as appropriate for consideration by groups/ committees within the Authority.
- Prepare written reports regarding inspections, audits and investigations as appropriate and advice on appropriate remedial measures.
- Monitor and audit the effectiveness of the Council's Corporate Safety Management System, Corporate Health and Safety Policy and the Corporate Standards contained within the Manual through workplace inspection/ surveys and analysis of audit/ accident/ incident statistics.
- Provide guidance and, where appropriate, assistance to management in the production of risk assessments and introduction of appropriate annual plans and objectives.
- Liaise with statutory Authorities, Voluntary Organisations and relevant outside bodies.
- Liaise with Occupational Health Professionals, provide advice and guidance regarding ergonomic assessment/ engineering controls where they may have an effect on employee health and vice versa.
- Liaise with Occupational Health Professionals with regard to assessing occupational ill health in terms of potential causation and control measures to prevent recurrence.
- Provide advice and guidance on all aspects of health and safety at work.
- Provide, advice and/or facilitate health and safety training.
- Support and attend Portfolio Health and Safety meetings.
- Investigate accidents/incidents and near misses where appropriate, and provide advice to prevent reoccurrence where necessary.
- Communicate, as appropriate, on behalf of the Council, with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to ensure agreement on the appropriate health and safety action plans.
- Monitor the delivery of Occupational Health and Safety training to ensure professional standards and legal requirements are being met.

4.3 The Occupational Health Professional's role:

- Act as a source of advice and expertise to managers, headteachers, and elected members on occupational health issues e.g. sickness absence, rehabilitation, job modification, re-deployment, new and expectant mothers, communicable diseases, stress management etc.
- Develop strategies for the prevention of occupational ill health through health surveillance programmes and, thereafter, analyse and evaluate the results of such programmes with a view to improving service provision.
- Establish and implement appropriate and effective pre-employment screening for potential County Council employees, making recommendations for job modification and/or health surveillance as necessary, in order to ensure their health, safety and well-being.
- Develop, implement and evaluate health promotion initiatives and staff training courses in order to enhance the skills and health awareness of all employees.
- Establish and implement appropriate liaison mechanisms with Portfolios and other Services within the Council to review existing service provision and identify potential improvements to it.
- Assist in the development and implementation of Occupational Health protocols and procedures in accordance with performance management and service review requirements determined by the Authority.
- Operate within a safe, secure and confidential working environment, maintain accurate records and statistics in relation to operational activity.

4.4 Trade Union Safety Representatives (TUSR)

- TUSR are nominated by Trade Unions to represent all those employees who are members of their relevant union. The Chief Officer of People and Resources must be notified in writing of the appointment of TUSR and who they represent.
- TUSR do not have statutory duties or responsibilities, other than as an employee, but they do have statutory rights under the Safety Representatives & Safety Committees Regulations.
- Employees who are members of the union may raise health & safety matters with their relevant TUSR who will act as a channel of communication with appropriate people or committees.
- Service areas must provide TUSR with reasonable facilities and assistance. Training of TUSR is arranged by the appointing Trade Union and time off with pay must be allowed.
- TUSR have the right to inspect the workplace (provided reasonable notice is given in writing to relevant Manager):
 - 3 monthly (or more frequently by agreement);
 - when there has been a substantial change in the work;
 - in the light of newly published information; or

- when there has been a reportable accident, disease or dangerous occurrence to the Health and Safety Executive under the Regulations.
- It is normally advantageous to combine these inspections with inspections and or audits being carried out by other appropriate people i.e. Corporate Health and Safety team.
- TUSR may inspect documents relating to health & safety unless the information relates to an individual or to legal proceedings in which the Council is involved.
- TUSR's should be actively involved in the risk assessment process.
- Services must consult in good time with TUSR when changes to health & safety arrangements or management are planned.