



Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Spelthorne Borough Council & Companies Operated
by Spelthorne Borough Council

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Overview

Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Applicable to	All Spelthorne councillors, staff and others working on Spelthorne Council property and/or business, including volunteers, agency workers and contractors. All Spelthorne subsidiary companies and activities.		
	All Spelthorne councillors, staff and others working on Knowle Green Estates Ltd, Spelthorne Direct Services Ltd property and/or business, including volunteers, agency workers, contractors and non-executive directors.		
Implemented by	Leader of the Council, Corporate Policy and Resources Committee, Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives, Directors and Officers of council-owned businesses.		
Delivered by	Group Heads, Managers in charge of services, Managers and Team Leaders. Directors and Officers of council-owned businesses.		
Monitored by	Group Heads, Managers in charge of services. Directors and Officers of council-owned businesses. Health, Safety and Insurance Services.		
Compiled by	Health, Safety and Insurance Services		
Summary of Legislation and Guides	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 • The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 • Successful Health and Safety Management HSG65 • Regulatory (Fire Safety) Order 2005 • Many regulation and guidance documents have been produced by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to guide and inform on compliance. 		
Policy Date 2026	Review Date 2027

Section 1 – Health and Safety Statement of Intent

The Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees and of others who may be affected by its activities. The Council will take all reasonably practicable steps to achieve this commitment, to comply with its statutory obligations and to promote a positive health and safety culture throughout its organisation.

In accordance with Sections 2 and 3 of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees and protect non-employees from risks arising from Council activities.

Health and safety are an integral part of its activities and whilst the Chief Executive takes overall responsibility, Deputy Chief Executives, Group Heads and their management team, Directors, and Officers of council-owned business and employees share the responsibility for implementing this policy.

While health and safety is a shared responsibility, accountability remains with those who create, manage, or control risk.

By their inherent nature, some hazards present a higher risk for the Council and therefore require more detailed examination for the implementation of appropriate control procedures. These include but are not limited to:

- a) Fire and fire risk to our building and accommodation provision
- b) Electrical installations and electrical testing
- c) Gas safety and certification
- d) Vehicle and driving risks
- e) Equipment provision
- f) Training and monitoring
- g) Violence and abuse towards staff and councillors
- h) Public safety on our estates
- i) Housing provision
- j) Asbestos
- k) Legionella
- l) Confined spaces
- m) Vicarious liability
- n) First Aid provision
- o) Control of contractors
- p) Airborne viruses
- q) RAAC risk to our buildings and accommodation

The above list is not exhaustive and will be reviewed through the Corporate Governance Assurance Framework to ensure emerging risks are identified and managed

The Council will provide and maintain a healthy and safe working environment with the objective of minimising the risk of injury or ill-health. The Council will pay particular attention to:

- a) Undertaking risk assessments to review the health and safety of its activities and premises and implementing safe systems of work as a result.
- b) Maintaining the workplace in a safe condition, including safe access and providing adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.
- c) The provision of suitable vehicles and equipment which are properly maintained with suitable safety devices installed, where applicable.
- d) The provision of such information, instructions, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure

the health and safety at work of our employees and other persons.

- e) Maintaining arrangements for emergency response including fire and medical emergencies.
- f) Investigating all incidences of injury and work-related ill-health.
- g) Consulting with its employees (and councillors and volunteers) on health and safety matters.
- h) Ensuring that the Council has access to health and safety advice.

The Council recognises its duty to protect the health and safety of all visitors to premises owned and managed by the Council, including contractors and temporary workers, as well as any members of the public who might be affected by the Council's work operations. The Council will take steps to check the competence of any contractor before their services are engaged and will ensure that all third parties are provided with appropriate information prior to entering council premises in relation to work activities.

This policy will be drawn to the attention of all new employees as part of their induction. It is the duty of each employee to take reasonable care of their own and other people's health, safety and welfare, to familiarise themselves with and implement council procedures and to report any shortcomings in the arrangements.

This Health and Safety Policy Statement and the Organisation and Arrangements documents which support it, will be reviewed at least annually and more frequently where there have been changes in the organisation or the activities undertaken.

Signed: Date:

Gordon Mitchell - Chief Executive Management and Support

Signed: Date:

Joanne Sexton - Leader of the Council

Section 2 – Organisation and Responsibilities

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, all organisations have a legal duty to put in place suitable arrangements to manage health and safety in the workplace.

The Council

The Council, as the employer, holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring health and safety in the workplace. Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act (HASAWA), the Council is recognised as a “Corporate Body” and may be held liable for offences as outlined in Section 37 of the Act.

Operational responsibilities arising from the Act are delegated to the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives and Group Heads, who are provided with the necessary authority to carry out their duties effectively.

The Council will ensure that appropriate financial resources and staffing are made available to support the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executives and Group Heads in meeting their health and safety obligations.

Elected Members are responsible for maintaining oversight of health and safety across the organisation.

Chief Executive / Deputy Chief Executives

The Chief Executive is responsible for the health, safety, and wellbeing of all those who work or visit the Council. The Chief Executive will ensure that responsibilities are achieved and that adequate resources are made available to enable delivery of the Policy.

The Deputy Chief Executives are responsible to the Chief Executive for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy and include ensuring:

- a) Implementation and compliance with the Policy and arrangements within their areas of control.
- b) Monitoring of health and safety performance within their areas of control.
- c) Proper arrangements for providing health and safety information and training for staff and, where necessary, contractors.
- d) suitable governance, assurance, and verification arrangements are in place to demonstrate effective risk control.

The Leader / Committee and Other Elected Members provide the Council with leadership, direction and strategy and allocate budgets to enable services to be delivered. Through their decisions, the council leader, lead members, and other elected members can significantly influence how health and safety are managed across the Council. Elected Members will receive appropriate health and safety awareness training to enable them to understand risk, fulfil their governance role, and make informed decisions.

Members and the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee will:

- a) ensure that resources and strategic direction are available to discharge the Council's health and safety responsibilities.
- b) Monitor, via reports, the overall health and safety performance of the Council.
- c) Ensure members consider the health and safety implications of significant corporate decisions.
- d) Take reasonable steps to understand the health and safety issues in services.

Directors and Officers of Subsidiary Businesses

The Boards of subsidiary companies are responsible for the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy and to demonstrate (not just declare) to the Council that all their legal health and safety responsibilities are fulfilled.

The Boards of subsidiary companies will report directly to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee as the shareholder representative in respect of health and safety issues which fall within their areas of responsibility.

Subsidiary companies must provide formal annual health and safety assurance reports, notify the Council immediately of any serious incident or enforcement action, and permit audit or inspection by the Council or its appointed advisers.

General health and safety responsibilities of the Boards of subsidiary companies include ensuring:

- a) Implementation and compliance with the Policy and arrangements within their areas of control.
- b) Provision of adequate resources for this purpose.
- c) Co-ordination, co-operation, control and monitoring in respect of suppliers and contractors.
- d) Monitoring of health and safety performance within their areas of control.
- e) Accountability for the acts and omissions of their subordinates.
- f) Proper arrangements for the provision of health and safety information and training for staff and, where necessary, contractors.

Management

Group Heads and their Management Teams will provide positive and active leadership with effective safety arrangements within their services. They will ensure:

- a. Provision of an update quarterly to Management Team+ on the Corporate Health and Safety Risk Register.
- b. Understanding of their responsibilities and any obligations under safety legislation or relevant standards.
- c. Suitable risk assessments are completed by competent individuals covering the significant hazards within their service and that suitable control measures are put in place.
- d. Staff are suitably informed and others who may be affected by the findings of risk assessments.
- e. Adequate resources are provided to allow those with delegated responsibilities to discharge their duties effectively.
- f. Procedures are in place within the areas under their control to implement the requirements of this corporate policy, relevant legislative requirements, and best practice.
- g. Clear responsibilities for health and safety management are identified, including where a site is occupied by more than one department or organisation and suitable arrangements are in place to enable co-operation and co-ordination.
- h. Consideration of risk and the suitability of health and safety arrangements is an integral part of the management of any service or contracts provided by third parties.
- i. Procurement processes are in place to ensure that health and safety is always considered in the purchase of goods or services and to confirm that contractors and/or individuals conducting maintenance, testing or other such work are competent and suitable to do so.
- j. Those with contract management responsibilities are competent in conducting this role.
- k. Sufficient controls are in place to monitor health and safety compliance for all buildings for which they are responsible.
- l. Undertake investigation of accidents and incidents and submit a report under RIDDOR, when necessary.
- m. Equipment used by employees is maintained in a safe condition.

Corporate Health, Safety and Insurance Team

Corporate Health, Safety, and Insurance Team is responsible for maintaining their knowledge of health and safety matters. This authority shall be exercised proportionately, documented, and communicated to relevant senior managers.

They will:

- a) Provide competent advice and guidance for managers and staff.
- b) Monitor, audit, and inspect organisational activities, management, and facilities.
- c) Support with the investigation of accidents and incidents.
- d) Review the management system on a rolling program.
- e) Escalate and intervene as necessary to protect staff and the Public including direct reporting to the Chief Executive, as appropriate.
- f) Formally escalate any significant health and safety concerns to the appropriate service in the first instance, then to the Chief Executive when they believe that any actions to deal with any material health and safety risks are not being addressed.
- g) Have the delegated authority to suspend activities and services where there is a risk of severe injury or ill health or reputational damage to staff or others.

Service Health and Safety Leads

The Health and Safety Leads will be the focal point for information from the Corporate Health, Safety, and Insurance Team. Where advice or specialist guidance is required, the Health and Safety Leads will, in the first instance, contact the Corporate Health, Safety and Insurance Team

They will attend Service Review Meetings representing their service area or provide a substitute representative when they are unable to attend.

Additionally, they will attend a yearly meeting where all representatives will meet to reflect on the needs of all services within the Council.

Occasionally, additional meetings will be required to discuss any urgent or serious issues that may arise.

Human Resources and Recruitment

Human Resources and Recruitment's role is to mediate between the need for management and the concerns of employees. Human Resources play a key role in looking after the health and safety of staff.

Employees/Volunteers

All employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. They must comply with their employers' reasonable health and safety measures in accordance with the training and instruction given.

Employees are required to inform their manager immediately if they have reason to believe that there is any serious or imminent danger to any person or any inadequacy in the safety arrangements which might affect them. No employee shall suffer detriment for raising genuine health and safety concerns in good faith.

Employees must inform managers immediately of any work-associated ill-health, accident, incident, near miss or assault.

Employees are required to:

- a) Co-operate with the Employer and follow any instructions given to them around health and safety.
- b) Behave in a professional manner, follow health and safety rules and not act in a way which would deliberately endanger others.

- c) Familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Policy, risk assessments and any other instructions relating to their work and comply with the requirements set out.
- d) Report unsafe working practices, shortcomings in safety procedures, accidents and near misses to their manager.
- e) Stop work and liaise with their manager if a procedure appears unsafe.
- f) Know the emergency procedures for the location at which they are working.
- g) Use vehicles, equipment, materials or substances in accordance with information, instruction and training provided.
- h) Make proper use of safety devices and guards and only carry out such maintenance, repair or adjustment to work equipment as they are authorised to do so.
- i) Ensure that equipment and materials are stored safely when not in use.
- j) Keep their work area clean and tidy, avoid the creation of tripping hazards and clean up any spillages immediately.
- k) Wear personal protective equipment as instructed, store it to avoid damage, keep it cleaned and maintained and report loss or damage.
- l) Dispose of waste materials in the manner instructed so that they do not create a hazard to other workers.
- m) Not work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Contractors

Contractors are responsible for following guidance, policies, processes, or procedures as provided by the Council to ensure their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions. Contractors are those paid to complete work on behalf of the Council, including agency staff and consultants. **Contractors must provide suitable risk assessments and method statements which will be reviewed before work commences.**

All contractors must treat the Council's arrangements and procedures as minimum standards to adhere to, follow appropriate industry guidance, and best practice. Failure to comply could influence the awarding of future contracts by the Council.

Union Safety Representative

To comply with the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, each union must notify their council of the appointment of any employee as a safety representative.

The main responsibilities of a safety representative are:

- a. To act on behalf of employees whose health and safety they represent and to make recommendations to the appropriate senior manager.
- b. To attend Health, Safety, Risk, and Insurance Group meetings and make representations where their members raise concerns about health and safety.
- c. To be consulted on policy and process which affects employees.

Visitors

Visitors must follow any instructions provided to safeguard their own and others' health and safety.

Visitors are people invited onto council property for a purpose other than completing paid work on behalf of the Council.

The Health, Safety, Risk, and Insurance Group (HSRI)

The Group Head of Place, Protection and Prosperity will chair meetings of the Health, Safety, Risk and Insurance (HSRI) Group and ensure that minutes are recorded and circulated.

The Group provides a forum for management and employee representatives to discuss health and safety policy matters, employee welfare and wellbeing initiatives and any issues of concern. It also reviews actions taken or required following reported accidents and incidents.

The HSRI Group aims to meet at least quarterly, additional meetings or the formation of subgroups may be arranged when urgent or serious issues arise. The Group will also review, investigate and report on proposed safety improvements or changes to operational procedures or guidance.

MAT+ (Management Team plus other senior managers)

MAT + provides strategic oversight, coordination and assurance in relation to the Council's Governance Assurance (risk management) Framework. This group supports effective identification, assessment and management of corporate, strategic, and operational risks across all services, ensuring that risk management is embedded in decision-making and day-to-day operations and that adequate governance arrangements are in place and working effectively to address any areas of focus, concern or issues that may arise.

The Safety Advisory Group (SAG)

The Safety Advisory Group (SAG) core purpose is to support event organisers in ensuring that events are planned and managed safely and responsibly. It comprises of representatives from different services across the Borough Council, Surrey Police, Health Services and County Council. The group is co-ordinated by Spelthorne Neighbourhood Services.

Section 3 – Arrangements

The Council defines Health and Safety as prevention of fatality, injury or poor health to its employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, visitors and the Public, caused by occupational accidents, incidents or hazards.

As an organisation, Spelthorne Borough Council aims to employ best practice solutions when applying policies, procedures and controls to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health of employees, councillors, volunteers, contractors, visitors and members of the Public.

The Policy will form the cornerstone of the Council's Safety Management System, in specifying health and safety objectives, detailing the steps that need to be taken to meet these objectives, managing risks and outlining the mechanisms to be used to monitor the effectiveness of the systems in place.

General Health and Safety Arrangements

Introduction

The following section deals with the various arrangements of how the aims of the Policy will be implemented and thus comply with the requirements of all relevant legislation. This will be achieved by:

- a) Maintaining a robust safety management system.
- b) Identifying and managing all identifiable risks.
- c) Informing employees (and others) of the identified risks.
- d) Undertaking appropriate instruction, training and supervision.
- e) Consulting with employees on health and safety matters.
- f) Safeguarding the environment from the effects of council activities.
- g) Monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's arrangements and, where appropriate, implementing improvements.

Underpinning Policies

The Health and Safety Policy is underpinned by other related policies covering specific issues including:

- a) Breastfeeding Policy
- b) Driving at Work

- c) Drug and Alcohol Misuse at Work
- d) Lone Working
- e) Smoking at Work
- f) Stress Management
- g) Whistleblowing
- h) Violence at Work
- i) Lone Working

This list is not exhaustive.

Consultation

We recognise that the involvement of staff in their own health and safety arrangements is essential to the success of this policy. We therefore consult with staff by means of safety briefings and health and safety service review meetings or any other means suitable for the type of information.

Information

Providing information relating to health and safety is an important element of Spelthorne's Health and Safety Management System.

Government agencies and lead bodies in industry, Health and the Environment produce legislation (Acts), regulations (Regs), approved codes of practice (ACOP) and guidelines for the many aspects of occupational health and safety. These documents are regularly reviewed and any necessary changes made.

The Health, Safety and Insurance Team will work to interpret the legislation and other related documents, ensuring that the provisions and requirements that apply to the Council are incorporated into the Safety Management System.

Policies and procedures relating to health and safety law will be developed by the Health, Safety and Insurance Team and by service areas directly and as appropriate. These will be maintained and circulated to all managers and employees.

The Health, Safety and Insurance Team will keep on maintaining a register to hold a repository of all health and safety related policies and procedures.

The Health, Safety and Insurance Team will provide information relating to matters affecting the safety, health and welfare of employees by the following means as appropriate:

- a) Health and Safety Policy (this document)
- b) Other policies
- c) Procedures and guidelines
- d) Statutory notices.
- e) Safety information area
- f) Safety posters

and communicated through the following outlets:

- a) Team meetings
- b) Group email
- c) Presentations
- d) Training sessions

Training

The Council is committed to providing such information, instruction and training as may be necessary to enable all employees to carry out their duties, as far as is reasonably practicable, without risk to either their own health and safety or that of others who may be affected by their activities.

All new staff and existing employees transferring between posts/changing the nature of their employment shall be given adequate and suitable training to enable them to carry out their duties safely and without risk.

All new staff and existing employees are required to attend corporate safety induction training which will include general awareness of health and safety and this policy. Site-specific training in relation to jobs and/or services will be part of the local induction programme and is a group head/manager in charge of service responsibility.

Risk Assessment

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the employer must ensure that risk assessments are undertaken for all tasks and activities under their control, including any out of hours services and tasks that occur infrequently. Risk assessments will apply the hierarchy of risk control: elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, and PPE.

The significant findings of the risk assessment shall be recorded.

Each assessment must be 'suitable and sufficient', i.e. it should show that:

- a) A proper check was made.
- b) All those who might be affected were considered.
- c) All the obvious significant risks have been dealt with by undertaking corrective actions to reduce or eliminate the problem or hazards.
- d) The precautions are reasonable and the remaining risks are low.
- e) The workers (or their representatives) were involved in the process.

The level of detail in a risk assessment should be proportionate to the risk and appropriate to the nature of the work. The person undertaking the assessment is not expected to anticipate unforeseeable risks.

Each assessment must be reviewed regularly. Council policy is that they should be reviewed annually, however, risk assessments must also be reviewed under the following circumstances:

- a) Following an accident or near miss.
- b) When the work takes place in a new location.
- c) When the work task in question has been significantly altered.
- d) Following physical changes to the environment, e.g. building layout or when the type or use of work equipment is changed.
- e) Following specific changes in legislation, or considered best practice, in the field to which the assessment applies.
- f) Following change of plant and machinery.

Safe Systems of Work

Safe systems of work shall be formulated following the identification of hazardous work activity (including the introduction of new equipment, processes or substances) to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees and any other persons who may be affected. Wherever possible, managers should endeavour to adopt best practice solutions for hazard control, including major hazards and training/instruction in emergency procedures.

Managers at all levels shall ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that places of work are maintained in a condition that is safe and without risks to the health of employees.

Heads of Service/Senior Managers must commit sufficient resources to facilitate the implementation of adequate control measures identified in their risk assessments. If sufficient resource is not available at service level, then a case must be escalated up to the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive so that authority is obtained to:

- a) Take short-term remedial actions and/or
- b) Initiate longer-term corrective actions to reduce or eliminate the problem or hazard.

Particular attention shall be given to the definition and control of council services provided by partner organisations and council works carried out by, or with, outside contractors.

Safety Management

The Council will ensure that it meets all obligations imposed by current legislation including, but not exhaustively:

- a) By means of risk assessment.
- b) Safety tours/inspections.
- c) The provision of suitable information and training.
- d) Accident/incident reporting.
- e) Take out and maintain a compulsory insurance policy, known as Employers' Liability Insurance, which covers employees against accidents and ill health.
- f) Adapt work to the employee, especially with respect to the design of workplaces.
- g) Establish procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to persons working in council owned and managed premises.

The health and safety performance of Spelthorne Borough Council will be monitored to ensure a system for continuous improvement.

Monitoring will be through a mixture of proactive means and reactive methods (analysis of accident reports).

We will actively monitor health and safety performance by:

- a) Regular workplace inspections/risk assessments developed and carried out at a local level within service areas, with central monitoring of performance.
- b) DSE self-assessments for new employees and regular re-assessment for all DSE users.

Incident Reporting and Investigation

All incidents leading to accidents, near-misses, injuries, diseases, dangerous occurrences and cases of ill-health arising from work activities must be reported in accordance with statutory requirements and the Council's Incident Reporting Procedure.

Managers are responsible for investigating and submitting a report on the circumstances of all incidents with the objective of determining the immediate, underlying and root causes and to implement measures to prevent recurrence.

The Safety Management System is to be used for reporting and all sections must be completed and submitted to the Health, Safety and Insurance Team within three working days of the incident occurring. Where the report cannot be completed within the three-day period, the Health, Safety and Insurance Team must be notified of the incident by email or telephone.

An incident is defined as an unplanned event, happening or occurrence which leads to one or more of the following:

- a) Accident is defined as an unplanned, unexpected or undesirable event, causing damage, injury or loss.

b) Near miss is defined as an unplanned event or series of events that could, under slightly different circumstances, have resulted in harm to people, damage to property or interruption to services provided by Spelthorne.

c) A dangerous occurrence, when used in this policy, relates exclusively to the definition of a dangerous occurrence contained in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

Occasionally more serious incidents occur. The Council has a responsibility to ensure that certain incidents are reported to the Health & Safety Executive in accordance with the Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

The responsibility to report these accidents to the Health & Safety Executive lies with the group heads/managers. The responsibility to report these accidents to the Health, Safety and Insurance Team lies with the group head/manager in charge of the service responsible for the work area in connection with the incident.

Vehicle incidents are to be reported to the Transport Manager in the first instance and then to the Health, Safety and Insurance Team. The details of accidents involving council-controlled vehicles (leased cars/'grey' fleet) are to be entered onto the Safety Management System by the Transport Manager or any members of staff.

Monitoring and Performance

Health and safety performance will be monitored using both leading and lagging indicators, reported regularly to senior management and Members such as accident frequency rates, training completion rates, audit compliance scores and outstanding risk actions.

Employees at Special Risk

From time to time, some workers may be at increased risk of injury or ill-health resulting from work activities, e.g. those with medical conditions or permanent or temporary disability, those taking medication, young people and those who are pregnant.

The Council therefore requires that all employees advise their line manager if they become aware of any change in their personal circumstances which could result in their being at increased risk. Risk assessments will then be reviewed accordingly and action taken as necessary to control the risks.

Managing the Safety of Contractors

It is council policy to maintain a high standard of safety in all the work it undertakes, including control of third-party contractors carrying out work on the Council's behalf.

The term 'contractor' includes consultants, sub-contractors and any other service providers carrying out internal or external works.

Contractors must conduct their activities so that conditions and methods of work are safe for their employees, sub-contractors, Spelthorne Borough Council employees and any other persons who may be affected by the work, for example other contractors and members of the public. The Council must take steps to ensure that the contractor observes all appropriate safety precautions. The work methodology must comply with current health and safety legislation.

Occupational Health

All employees are encouraged to report any health concerns which they feel are associated with or made worse by work. Such reports will be treated confidentially and occupational health assistance will be sought as needed.

The Human Resources Department offers an information and advisory service to all. These services are accessible to staff via direct contact and information is widely available on notice boards.

These arrangements are in place to improve awareness throughout the workforce of the need to promote and maintain safety, as well as to ensure the physical and mental wellbeing of all employees.

The Council recognises work-related stress as a significant health issue and will assess, manage and reduce stress risks in line with HSE Management Standards.

Aggression in the Workplace

The Council recognises that exposure to violence is not an acceptable part of an employee's job. Therefore, the Council will not tolerate the behaviour of those few individuals who may become abusive or violent. Appropriate action will be taken to protect and ensure the safety of employees.

We define aggression as "any incident in which an employee/volunteer is abused, threatened, or assaulted by another person in circumstances relating to their work". This definition includes verbal as well as physical violence, aggression, verbal or written abuse, sexual or racial abuse and intentional damage to personal property.

In giving this commitment, the Council is aware that this requires proper monitoring and training in the management of aggression and counselling for those who are at risk from violence. To provide a framework for preventing violence towards employees whilst at work, the Council has adopted a Violence at Work Policy.

Risk Assessments should also identify the training needs of employees. Recognition is given to the need for training and support for employees and so training on conflict management and personal safety are provided within the Continuous Development Programme of training. Further support/training may be given on a service-specific basis.

An employee must report any aggressive incident to their line manager and report it through the accident/incident form available on the Safety Management System.

First Aid

The Council (in accordance with hybrid working) will fully meet the obligations for the provision of First Aid at Work. (Health and Safety at Work (First Aid) Regulations 1981).

The Health, Safety and Insurance Team will ensure that there are sufficient trained and authorised first aiders available during operational hours at council-owned premises.

Group heads and service managers work with the Health, Safety and Insurance Team to achieve this by encouraging and nominating staff to be trained as First Aiders.

Fire Safety

Proper systems to ensure fire safety and established fire precautions are provided for all council-owned and managed properties. All requirements of current legislation will be satisfied at all properties which will be subject to regular risk assessment.

All occupied premises will be subject to regular review of planned emergency evacuations, or in accordance with the property specific risk assessment.

Information, instruction and training in fire precautions will be provided for all Spelthorne employees, commencing with induction training for all newly appointed employees.

All work activity and processes that have the potential to cause fire will be risk-assessed and the required control measures implemented.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), including Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE), and Safety Appliances/Equipment will be issued to and worn/used by employees involved in activities where a known hazard exists and the level of risk cannot be controlled in any other way, or where there is a statutory requirement to do so.

Managers/supervisors responsible for undertaking such activities will make a written, detailed risk assessment of each work process, specifying PPE/RPE and safety equipment requirements.

Where a risk assessment has indicated a need for PPE/RPE or safety equipment, the specification for that equipment must be kept under regular review to ensure an appropriate level of protection is always achieved.

Managers/supervisors must ensure that employees are given suitable and adequate information, instruction and training in the correct use of PPE/RPE and safety equipment, including the care and maintenance of such equipment.

Records of training, issue and maintenance of PPE/RPE and safety equipment must be held on site by the manager/supervisor responsible, where it may easily be produced for inspection or safety audit.

Managers must set a good example to employees by not only ensuring that all staff under their control comply with PPE/RPE requirements but that they themselves also conform to good, safe working practices.

PPE and RPE should only be used either as a back-up to other control measures, or as a last resort, where other control measures cannot be practically implemented. (Elimination, reduction, or substitution of process by engineering control methods should always be considered as the primary methods of controlling hazards in the workplace, before considering the use of PPE/RPE).

Used PPE must be discarded in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance.

In all cases where PPE and safety equipment has been provided the expectation is that it must be used. Non-usage will be subject to Spelthorne Borough Council's disciplinary procedures.

Procurement

All employees involved in purchasing any article for use at work at any site/area must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the article is designed and constructed so that it will be always safe and without risks to health when being set, used, cleaned, or maintained by a person at work. The requirements of the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008 and Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and any other regulations must be met.

All employees involved in purchasing any substance for use at work at any site/area must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the substance will be always safe and without risks to health when being used, handled, processed, stored, or transported by a person at work. To this end, all employees involved in the procurement or purchase of known hazardous substances for use at work, must ensure that the requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 are satisfied. This is to include the undertaking of a COSHH Risk Assessment and provision of the Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

Plant and Equipment

All plant and equipment must be recorded on the equipment inventory for each service area. Plant and equipment shall be inspected and tested in accordance with laid-down statutory schedules and maintained to the required standards. Machinery, plant and equipment shall be effectively guarded to prevent exposure to dangerous or moving parts.

Where there is a requirement to use hired plant or equipment, arrangements shall be made by the employee responsible for organising the hire to ensure that all statutory requirements and inspections are carried out by the owner. Proof of such arrangements shall be requested on hiring and appropriate records kept.

Portable electrical appliances for use at work on any site/area for which the Council owes duty of care and responsibility must be registered and identified on the Master Electrical Appliances Inventory. Portable electrical appliances are subject to regular inspection and testing in accordance with laid-down statutory

and council schedules and maintained to the required standards. This includes newly purchased electrical equipment.

All privately-owned portable electrical appliances that are brought on to a site/area for which the Council owes a duty of care and responsibility, and which are connected to a mains electricity supply, shall also be recorded on the Inventory and be subject to regular inspection and test. However, the maintenance of such items is the duty of the owner.

If any such portable electrical appliances are found to be unsafe/unserviceable upon inspection and test, the owner will be instructed to remove them from site until they have been repaired/rendered safe and serviceable and subject to re-test.

Audit

The Health, Safety and Insurance Team will implement a programme for reviewing its health and safety performance through a system of independent audit of its safety management functions and implement corrective actions where required.

Audit outcomes will be reported for discussion to the Health, Safety Risk and Insurance Group and MAT+.

Manual Handling Policy

It is the aim of the Council to reduce injuries in connection with manual handling to the lowest level possible and to provide a safe working environment. This will be achieved by a programme to reduce the need for employees to undertake manual handling operations especially as and when modern technology and information are introduced. Where manual handling cannot be eliminated group heads and service managers will ensure that the manual handling risk is assessed.

Where manual handling still exists, all staff concerned will receive the appropriate information, instruction and training on safe handling techniques. Training needs will be reviewed annually (during risk assessment reviews and at staff annual appraisals), with a basic requirement for all staff to attend regular refresher training every three years.

This policy can only work with the co-operation of staff. It is therefore a requirement that staff must co-operate with safe working practices, to know their lifting limitations and to keep themselves physically fit for manual handling operations when it is unavoidable.

Staff must report immediately any health problem or change in health status which could give rise to an increased risk of injury if they engage in manual handling operations.

Environment

Workplace Environment - The Council will ensure that adequate facilities for employees are provided in every workplace. This will include provision of a reasonable temperature in all indoor workplaces, suitable lighting, adequate ventilation, sufficient sanitary conveniences and adequate workspace. A suitable standard of cleanliness will also be maintained.

Environmental Protection - The Council will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that no banned substances are released into air, water, or land to pollute or damage the surrounding environment at any site for which the Council owes a duty of care and responsibility.

Good Housekeeping

Group Heads will ensure that good housekeeping arrangements are in place to maintain safe and healthy workplace conditions.

The maintenance of good housekeeping policies and procedures is a prerequisite in the prevention of workplace accidents and occupational ill-health. Main hazards can be eliminated by attention to detail, including environmental hygiene, tidiness of work sections, desks, benches and storage.

Good housekeeping is especially important in catering operations such as kitchens and food preparation areas where cleanliness and hygiene are essential. Wet and slippery floors and work surfaces pose a particular hazard to catering staff.

In general office accommodation good housekeeping can reduce slips, trips and falls and contact accidents. It can also considerably reduce fire risks by ensuring correct storage of paper and other stationery items.

Record Keeping

Record keeping (compliance checking) is an essential requisite of a successful safety management system. Accident records, inspection/audit records, health records and training records can provide vital information to Management when seeking to measure successful performance or identify areas of concern.

Records of all risk assessments should be kept. A central register of risk assessments will be maintained by the Health, Safety and Insurance Team. Service areas shall have available for all staff copies of all current risk assessments, safe systems of work, specific procedures and instructions relating to their area. All risk assessments should identify any significant hazards, the persons who may be affected and the steps taken to control the risks.

Current legislation requires records of all accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and cases of occupational ill-health to be kept for at least three years and also to make extracts of such records available to the enforcing authority, if required.

The maintenance of employee training records is necessary to establish competency, authorisation and certification of employees to carry out specified duties, tasks and functions within the organisation. Section 2 of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires employers to document details of all training given and received.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed at least on a yearly basis or sooner following significant incidents, legislative change, or organisational change.

The Policy Statement of Intent, contained on the first page, shall be signed and dated by the Chief Executive and the Leader, thereby indicating top level commitment to the management of safety and health within Spelthorne Borough Council.