



HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Town Council wishes to provide a safe and healthy working environment for their employees. It also recognises its responsibility to minimise risks to the health and safety of any persons who visits the Town Hall and to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the welfare of its staff.
2. The preparation of this statement is seen as an essential step in meeting these objectives. It will also be reviewed and revised regularly and at least annually.
3. To ensure it is effective the Council will encourage and seek comments from the staff, and will make every effort to evaluate these comments and if possible incorporate them in a revised policy statement.
4. Staff meetings, chaired by the Town Clerk will be held at least 4 times per year when health and safety will be a standing item and at least one of these meeting the current safety policy will be reviewed.
5. The Council's Town Clerk, as head of paid service, will act as manager regarding the issues of health and safety. Both members of staff and the public are asked to bring to his or her attention any concerns they may have about hazards and risks arising either from the condition of the building (currently owned by Cheshire East Council) or from the systems of working at the Town Hall.
6. The Personnel Advisory Committee will monitor the working of this policy, and will report regularly and at least annually to Council on its effectiveness and any updates required.
7. An accident book will be kept in the main office in the Town Hall, and all injuries that require first-aid treatment and/or medical attention, together with all incidents which are "near misses" (i.e. which could have caused significant injury) will be entered in this book.
8. All members of staff will ensure that the Town Clerk is made aware of any such accidents or incidents to enable him or her to ensure that it is properly recorded and that, where appropriate, steps are taken to avoid a reoccurrence. The Town Mayor's Secretary will ensure that the contents of the first aid box are regularly checked so that it always contains the correct items.
9. A Register will be maintained in the Town Hall (currently provided and updated by Cheshire East Council) identifying where asbestos has been used within the building. Such asbestos will have been covered or otherwise rendered safe from releasing fibres if left undisturbed. Staff will be made aware of this register and its contents and the attention of all contractors will be drawn to it before carrying any repair or improvement work to the building.
10. Safe entry and exit to and from the Town Hall is a priority, and every effort will be made to ensure that the steps, in winter, do not cause someone to slip and fall. Staff will ensure that passageways are clear of obstructions for the same reason. The normal position of the chair lift will be at the foot of the stairs so that it does not interfere with persons descending the stairs.

The railings around the stair-well will be checked regularly by the Town Clerk to ensure that they are secure and provide adequate protection.

11. The fire extinguishers will be checked annually to ensure they are effective. A fire drill will be called, without notice, by the Town Clerk during the course of each year and a written report of the outcome passed to the Personnel Advisory Committee. Fire notices detailing the evacuation procedure and assembly point will be provided in all rooms in use by the Town Council.
12. Office equipment will be checked for electrical safety annually by a qualified electrician and an inspection sticker added. The staff will not use any equipment that they know or suspect to be unsafe, and will report any defects to the Town Clerk.
13. The temperature in the office should not be allowed to fall below 16°C. It is acceptable to use the Council's electrical heating devices to supplement the gas heating system, subject to them having been checked for electrical safety as in 12 above.
14. The toilets will be cleaned regularly, and will be inspected weekly by the Town Clerk. All cleaning materials will be safely stored and cleaning procedures will reflect current good practice.
15. The catering equipment and facilities will be kept in good condition so that they cannot give rise to risks to the health or safety of persons using them.
16. The Town Clerk will use his discretion in dealing with issues of health and safety and in an emergency he is authorised to act as he believes necessary without delay. On issues where there is time for consultation he is asked to consult, in the first instance, either the Town Mayor or the Deputy Town Mayor.
17. The attention of all staff and visitors is drawn to the advice in **Appendix One** of this Policy regarding furniture and equipment. See **Appendix Four** for a schedule of annual checkups.

APPENDIX ONE

FURNITURE, FITTINGS AND EQUIPMENT

- a) Heavy equipment and furniture must not be moved by individuals.
- b) Office equipment whether manually or electrically operated, must not be used by unauthorised, untrained personnel.
- c) Filing cabinets should always have sufficient weight in the bottom drawer to prevent the cabinet from tipping when a full top drawer is opened. Filing cabinet and desk drawers must always be closed immediately after use.
- d) The Town Clerk will ensure that the filing cabinets are inspected at least every six months to ensure correct loading and smoothness of operation, with particular regard to the effectiveness of the drawer stops. Damaged or defective cabinets must not be used.
- e) High shelves should only be reached through the use of steps provided by the Council for that purpose. It is dangerous to stand on desks and chairs, particularly those fitted with castors, and this will be avoided at all times.

APPENDIX TWO

LONE WORKING

- a) A staffing rota will be maintained to ensure that two members of staff are on duty during office opening hours. Holidays periods and periods when staff are taking time off in lieu present the most difficulties. These require staff to be flexible in covering for one another. During the main holiday period (August) when Council business is generally quiet the opening hours are reduced. During August the office is open Monday to Wednesday and closed on Thursdays and Fridays. The office also closes for a week during August.

APPENDIX THREE

MAXIMUM NUMBERS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

- a) A risk assessment has been carried out which has set a limit of 60 persons in the Council Chamber and this limit should apply to all events. This figure assumes that some of the heavy furniture will be removed (taking care to observe the details set out in Appendix One above) and that up to 15 members of the Council will be present. This leaves a total of only 45 places for members of the public.

APPENDIX FOUR

TIMETABLE FOR ANNUAL CHECKUPS

- a) Review of this Statement of Policy will be done in September each year, including formal consultation with all members of staff.
- b) Fire Extinguishers will be checked annually in the month of November.
- c) A fire drill will be activated during one of the Spring Council meetings.
- d) All electrical equipment will be given a safety check in the month of March
- e) The water is flushed and tested weekly by Cheshire East Council for any signs of Legionella.