



URN: 21-097

Subject: Revised Health and Safety Policy

Report to ELT 1st September 2021

Policy and Resources 14th September 2021

Report by Sarah Flatman Corporate Health and Safety Advisor

SUBJECT MATTER

The report provides an overview of revisions made to the Council's Health and Safety Policy that was last updated in 2018.

RECOMMENDATION

That ELT and Policy and Resources formally agree the revisions to the policy.

1. Introduction

The Health and Safety Policy was approved in 2018. Since this time, there have been changes to the organisational structure of the Council, the Health and Safety Policy and Policy Statement of Intent required revision to reflect these changes.

2. Background

The Chief Executive of the Council is the legally accountable officer to ensure the authority's compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

All other employees have either a general or a specific responsibility to ensure the organisation works safely in relation to its own employees and any other persons who may be affected by its activities.

This first part of our Safety Policy is our Health & Safety Policy Statement (sometimes referred to as the Statement of Intent). This sets out our commitment to managing health and safety including how GYBC intends to manage health and safety issues and meet health and safety requirements.

The Council's Health and Safety Policy itself clarifies these responsibilities and details the arrangements we have in place to eliminate or minimise risk to employees and others who may be exposed to risks associated with its activities.

The Policy has been submitted for consultation to members of the ELT Health and Safety Working Group, which includes a union representative.

3. Summary of Changes

The following changes have been made to the document: -

- It has been aligned with the new structure and new Council branding.
- The statement of intent has been incorporated into the policy (This was previously a separate document).
- The document has been simplified removing unnecessary technical jargon.
- Responsibilities have been simplified and updated where ownership has changed.

4. Next Steps

The Policy needs to be approved by ELT and Policy and Resources Committee, Leader of the Council and then the Chief Executive; Leader of the Council and a Union Representative must sign the Statement of Intent.

This policy will then be placed on the loop and brought to the attention of all employees.

5. Financial Implications

The Council could incur financial loss if the Health and safety Executive took action against us as it is a legal requirement to ensure the Policy remains relevant and up to date.

6. Risk Implications

Should the Health and Safety Executive investigate an incident or carry out a safety inspection of the Council they could take formal action if our safety policy does not accurately reflect the safety arrangements we have in place.

7. Legal Implications

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations require that where an employer employs 5 or more employees, there is a written health and safety policy document produced. It is also a requirement that the health and safety policy is kept up to date.

8. Conclusion

An effective health and safety policy is key to creating a safe workplace, but for health and safety policies to remain relevant, they need to be regularly reviewed and updated.

9. Background Papers

Revised Health and safety Policy Attached

Areas of consideration: e.g. does this report raise any of the following issues and if so how have these been considered/mitigated against?

Area for consideration	Comment
Monitoring Officer Consultation	Contacted no comments made
Section 151 Officer Consultation:	N/A
Existing Council Policies:	There is an existing health and safety policy in place
Financial Implications (including VAT and tax):	Detailed above
Legal Implications (including human rights):	Detailed Above
Risk Implications:	Detailed Above
Equality Issues/EQIA assessment:	N/A
Crime & Disorder:	N/A
Every Child Matters:	N/A

Health and Safety Policy

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Version	Author	Date	Changes	Status
2.0	Corporate Health and Safety	August 2021	Updated	Final

Introduction

The Health and Safety Policy sets out Great Yarmouth Borough Council's (GYBC) commitment to the health, safety and welfare. This is identified in Part 1 that contains our Policy Statement.

Part 2 of the policy details the main roles and responsibilities of each and everyone one of us. All of us have a part to play and a responsibility to ensure that the Council's health and safety arrangements are followed and that we help in maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for everyone including ourselves.

This section also identifies the arrangements GYBC have in place to manage and control the risks to the health and safety and wellbeing of our colleagues and others who may be affected by our work activities.

Part 1: Policy Statement

Effective management of health, safety and well-being is integral to delivering our priorities for the Borough of Great Yarmouth.

Our overall objective is to provide a safe and healthy working environment for our employees, the people we work with and those that access our services. We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring that health and safety management is an integral part of decision making and organisational processes
- Developing and maintaining a positive health and safety culture with an emphasis on continually improving our performance
- Implementing an effective health and safety management system to ensure compliance with legal requirements
- Adopting a sensible and proportionate approach to managing risks
- Providing and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment, safe machinery, equipment and systems of work for our employees
- Communicating and consulting with employees and their trade union representatives so that employees are well informed and engaged in our health and safety arrangements.
- Complying with statutory requirements and where possible industry best practice
- Investigating and learning the lessons from accidents and work-related ill health incidents
- Providing effective information, instruction and training to employees to ensure safe working practices
- Monitoring and reviewing systems and preventative measures, including those of our partners and commissioned and contracted organisations, to make sure they are suitable, sufficient and effective.
- Ensuring adequate resources are made available to fulfil our health and safety responsibilities and objectives
- Regularly reviewing and monitoring this policy

Overall accountability for health and safety is recognised as a prime responsibility for all those who manage and supervise activities, commission and contract services under their control. However, for these commitments to be effective, employees throughout the organisation must play their part in creating and sustaining a positive health and safety culture.

Signed

Signed

Signed

Sheila Oxtoby
Chief Executive

Carl Smith
Leader of the Council

Ian Hampshire
On behalf of Unison

Date

Date

Date:

Part 2: Arrangements and Responsibilities for Health and Safety

1 The GYBC Health and Safety Management System

The purpose of a health and safety management system is to enable an organisation to understand and control its health and safety risks in a proportionate way and to improve its performance. It aims to eliminate or minimise risk to employees and others who may be exposed to risks associated with its activities. It enables the organisation to assure itself of its conformance with its stated policy and to demonstrate such conformance to others. The system will also assist the organisation in meeting applicable legal obligations.

The policy statement is reviewed regularly by the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor. Any revisions are agreed with Unions before being authorised by Executive Leadership Team and signed by the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council and Union representative.

Policies and guidance detailing the arrangements that the Council have in place to eliminate or minimise risk to employees and others who may be exposed to risks associated with its activities are contained on the loop, (GYBC Intranet site) [Health and Safety Homepage](#)

These documents that set out our expectations and levels of mandatory compliance known as 'policies' as well as other documents which have a guidance status to help employees to comply with their duties. All published documents provide advice and guidance on how to achieve safe systems of work taking into account legislation, enforcement agencies/industry best practice, case law and incidents.

Most of these documents are owned and reviewed by the Head of Environmental Services, and they apply to all areas of GYBC business. However, there are service-owned procedures which relate to very specific service issues. These are owned by named managers within that service, and it their responsibility to ensure these are reviewed and kept up to date as appropriate.

Local procedures and work instructions are also produced and owned by teams and services. These describe the local arrangements for that area of GYBC for managing tasks or activities.

2 Organisational Responsibilities

GYBC recognises that overall responsibility for health and safety lies with all levels of management having direct responsibility for activities, employees, commissioned and contracted services under their control. However, all employees have a legal and moral responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and for those other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

GYBC, through the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, has overall responsibility for the GYBC Health and Safety Policy Statement.

The following meetings have specific health and safety actions as follows:

2.1 Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

ELT are responsible for ensuring that health and safety is effectively managed.

2.2 Corporate Health and Safety Working Group

This overarching aim of the group is to raise/address concerns around health and safety within the Council, to raise the profile of health, safety and welfare management and ensure that actions in the Council's existing Policies are implemented. Full details of the group's objectives are detailed in their Terms of Reference.

3 Management Responsibilities

For the Organisational Structure of the Council see **Appendix 1**.

3.1 Leader of the Council

Joint responsibility with the Chief Executive for strategic direction of health and safety in GYBC and policy.

3.2 Elected Members

Elected Members form the body corporate of the Council and have the collective and individual responsibility for the planning, resourcing and overseeing of its activities.

Collectively, the Members and the Executive Leadership Team constitute the "directing mind" of the Council in the provision of its services and conduct of its undertaking.

Each Elected Member will therefore:

- Consider health, safety and welfare issues as part of their decision-making process
- Use the advice provided by the Senior Officers to help in their decision-making process to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all likely to be affected by these decisions

3.3 Chief Executive

As the Head of Paid Service, the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for health and safety at GYBC. They are responsible for ensuring:

- The Policy Statement and management system is implemented and adhered to across the organisation
- The effectiveness of the health and safety strategy, organisation and arrangements
- The provision of appropriate resources to enable persons with specific responsibilities to perform their duties effectively
- That effective management exists to secure implementation and review of the GYBC health and safety arrangements
- Their demonstration of commitment towards a positive health and safety culture

3.4 Strategic Directors

- Agree the contents of the annual work plan for the management of health and safety for adoption and agreement by the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) with the Head of Environmental Services
- Ensure that all Directors/Heads of Service remain risk focused and are aware of the key risks in the Department
- Ensure that appropriate reporting mechanism are in place to agree, consult and secure health and safety standards
- Influence the integration of the health and safety requirements as part of the Council's decision-making processes and strategic planning
- Ensure representation by Strategic Directors at Corporate Health and Safety Working Group in line with terms of reference
- Adequate budgetary provision is made to meet the cost of fulfilling individual service requirements in relation to health, safety and welfare

3.5 Head of Environmental Services

The Head of Environmental Services has overall responsibility for the development, maintenance and improvement of the health and safety management system including:

- Advising Management Team on the strategic direction for health, safety and well-being
- Ensuring that the Chief Executive is kept apprised of significant issues which may be identified as having an impact on GYBC
- Ensuring that the Health and Safety Policy Statement is reviewed every two years and is effectively implemented
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements and resources are in place to:
 - Develop review and publish health, safety and well-being policies and procedures to ensure they remain valid and strive for continuous improvement
 - Provide focused operational support to managers and employees regarding key risk activities
 - Provide competent health and safety advice and guidance
 - Monitor, benchmark and review health and safety performance against the published policies and procedures
 - Oversee accident reporting and monitor incident investigation (including reporting under RIDDOR)
 - To maintain the Warning Marker System and review associated policies and guidance
- Monitoring the implementation of the Council's health and safety policy and to prepare reports to the ELT, Audit and Risk Committee and Health and Safety Working Group on health and safety performance, making recommendations for improving performance as necessary
- Establish an annual work plan for the management of health and safety for adoption and agreement by the Management Team
- Developing and maintaining a health and safety training strategy and ensuring training services align with this in conjunction with the Head of Organisational Development

3.6 Head of Property and Asset Management

Ensure that the following are in place for GYBC property in line with policy:

- Fire risk assessments are undertaken, fire improvements identified are implemented and adequate evacuation procedures are in place
- Fire safety equipment is adequately maintained and tested
- Management of asbestos containing material at premises
- Management of Legionella and water hygiene
- To facilitate and coordinate the monitoring and management of compliance within commercial and residential assets across the borough and to ensure the actions of the Council and others do not compromise health and safety.
- Facilitate, manage and monitor the work of contractors in public buildings
- Act as the main point of contact for Facilities Management, including liaising over the decommissioning and commissioning of buildings they manage
- Ensure that all Council operated / managed premise related plant and equipment is adequately maintained and tested in accordance with statutory requirements
- To facilitate the implementation of the GYBC display screen equipment requirements
- To facilitate the implementation of the First Aid requirements for GYBC property

3.7 Head of Organisational Development

- To ensure the integration of health, safety and wellbeing training and awareness in induction and on an ongoing basis
- To ensure that systems are in place for identifying work-related ill health, and ensuring appropriate actions are taken in all cases to support employees
- To ensure that all managers and staff are aware of how to identify signs of work-related stress and how to deal with them, whether or not they result in a period of absence from work
- To raise awareness of mental health and the support available to staff

3.8 All Directors and Heads of Service

Each Director and Head of Service is responsible for ensuring that suitable and adequate arrangements are in place for the management of health and safety. In particular, they must ensure that health and safety policies are implemented and ensure that:

- A positive health and safety culture is actively demonstrated and promoted through good leadership
- Procedures are developed and implemented for specific service risk, along with detailed work instructions where necessary
- Key risks are identified and monitored
- Managers or other directly reporting staff are provided with appropriate support, guidance and resources to enable them to discharge their health and safety duties
- Adequate time and resources are given to managers and employees to fulfil their roles
- There are adequate and effective arrangements in place for consulting all employees and their representative trade unions within their areas of responsibility on matters that affect their health and safety
- They have systems in place for monitoring health and safety within their areas of responsibility, including setting targets for improvement and reviewing performance

- Where their service works with partnership organisations, or they commission or contract the provision of services on behalf of GYBC, suitable health and safety arrangements are established and monitored
- Out of hours use of buildings and delivery of services are managed
- Relevant health and safety monitoring in line with the annual audit plan is carried out in their service and that monitoring information is provided to the Corporate Safety Advisor in line with policy
- Escalate as required health and safety matters of concern to the relevant Strategic Director and ultimately the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service

3.9 Corporate Health and Safety Advisor

- Advising managers and other employees on health and safety matters to enable them to meet their health and safety responsibilities
- Supporting line managers and supervisors in implementing safety policies procedures and arrangements
- Contributing to the development of strategy, policies and procedures
- Work with others to ensure the integration of safety policies, for example Corporate Risk and Business Continuity
- Monitoring the implementation of the Council's health and safety policy, including carrying out safety inspections and audits and preparing reports for the appropriate managers and consultative bodies
- Investigating, as appropriate, reported incidents of injury and ill-health to employees and, other persons, including incidents of aggression and violence and 'near-misses
- Providing health and safety training as appropriate
- To carry out inspections and audits and report findings to relevant groups
- To actively participate in Health and Safety Action Plans, meetings and be part of the process to set realistic targets to maintain progressive progress and continued standards of compliance with relevant statutory provisions
- Escalate as required health and safety matters of concern to the relevant Director/Head of Service and ultimately the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service
- Ensure any audit recommendations are complied with
- Manage the Warning Marker System

3.10 Health and Safety Support Service

As and when required additional health and safety advice and technical support is procured to support the delivery and compliance with the Great Yarmouth Health and Safety Management System

3.11 Managers

Managers will be responsible for employees and activities under their control. They will ensure that requirements of relevant policies are complied with. In particular, they will:

- Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken by competent staff and adequate control measures are applied on a risk basis
- Monitor and review health and safety performance through:

- Undertaking health and safety inspections of the relevant work area/practices in accordance with relevant corporate and departmental policy
 - Setting health and safety targets and objectives through appraisals and other supervisory reviews
 - Ensuring incidents are reported and investigated in line with policy
 - Monitoring commissioned and contracted work under their control for compliance
- Develop and implement safe systems of work
 - Set a personal example by including health and safety management in daily management practice and demonstrating safe personal working practices
 - Ensure action is taken to resolve any situations that may adversely affect the health and safety of employees or other persons. They will rectify any problem within their own resources or see it is raised with the appropriate Head of Service/Director without delay where they do not have the budgetary or management control to do so
 - To ensure that appropriate return to work programmes are in place for all employees that have been absent as a result of an accident or work-related ill health
 - Ensure that they personally undertake all required training and that employees under their control are given adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to carry out their duties safely
 - Ensure that all plant and work equipment provided is selected through a risk assessment process, suitable, properly maintained and subject to all necessary tests and examinations;
 - Ensure that accidents and incidents (including near misses and violence and aggression) are properly reported, investigated and the findings acted upon without delay
 - Ensure that employees and their trade union representatives are consulted on matters of health and safety that affect them
 - Work with nominated Property Staff to ensure premises operate safely
 - Ensure that commissioned and contracted work complies with GYBC requirements for the selection and management of contracts
 - Ensure that they seek timely assistance and advice where expert help is required from the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor
 - Ensure suitable health and communication arrangements are in place including ensuring health and safety is a standing agenda item at team meetings

3.12 Commissioners, Project and Contract Managers

All employees that have a role in managing projects or contracts must ensure they follow the policies relating to this area and in particular:

- All relevant health and safety requirements are included in the selection and set up of contracted/commissioned work
- The Corporate Health and Safety Advisor is consulted in a timely way regarding the development of significant new projects and commissioned services
- Appropriate levels of monitoring are set up to ensure organisations are delivering to the agreed health and safety standards
- They attend all relevant training relating to their role

3.13 Employees

Each employee has a responsibility to themselves, their colleagues and their Line Manager/ Supervisor to:

- Make themselves familiar with this document, and specific health and safety procedures and policies that affect them
- Use the safe working instructions that are provided
- Actively contribute towards good safety practice, setting a good personal example
- Use personal protection equipment and appropriate safety equipment that has been provided
- Report all accidents, incidents and damage, whether persons are injured or not
- Report any hazards/concerns to their line manager
- Request/discuss safety training with their line manager when they feel their skills need updating
- Complete all mandatory health and safety training within the timescales required
- Fulfil additional specific roles in line with GYBC requirements such as: first aider, health and safety co-ordinator, fire evacuation and risk assessor

3.14 Employee Consultation / Safety Representatives

Consulting employees on health and safety matters is very important in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment. It also helps in motivating staff and making them aware of health and safety issues.

Trade Union safety representatives represent employees in day-to-day consultation with management on issues of health and safety. Such representatives are recognised by GYBC as having an important role in achieving employee involvement and in creating and sustaining a positive health and safety culture.

By mutual agreement between the Council and the appropriate Trade Unions, safety representatives will represent both union and non-union employees work areas. GYBC reserves the right to consult the whole workforce.

Safety representatives should be consulted in a timely fashion where possible on all matters of health and safety that may affect employees and on the provision of health and safety information and training.

Before making any decisions, which could have health and safety consequences for employees, managers should inform trade union safety representative about their proposed course of action and give them an opportunity to express their views.

Appendix 1

**Great Yarmouth Borough Council
Management Structure**
June 2021

