

**To:** Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

**On:** 02 February 2022

---

**Report by:** Acting Director of Finance and Resources

---

**Heading:** Revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy

---

## **1 Summary**

- 1.1 The Council recognises the importance of effective identification, evaluation, and control of any risks which employees and others affected by the Council's undertakings may be exposed to. It is therefore necessary to ensure the continued application of an effective Health and Safety Management system within the Council. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy has been revised to reflect legislative changes and best practice and to continue to meet the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- 1.2 The aim of this revised policy is to continue to provide a health and safety framework which defines corporate responsibly and assists directors to:
- control the risks to employees and others who may be affected by their Service 's undertakings.
  - comply with current legislation.
  - promote best practice; and
  - continually improve on health, safety, and well-being.
- 1.3 In line with the Councils' health and safety system review process, this policy updates and replaces the Renfrewshire Council Health and Safety Policy approved and adopted in March 2018.

The health and safety policy continues to promote the Council's approach towards a management-led health and safety culture that embraces and complements the Council and Community plans and also promotes and encourages Service ownership of health and safety.

---

## **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Board approve the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy document.
- 

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) place duties on the Council to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety, and welfare of their employees at work.

- 3.2 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974:

- Section 2(1) states "It *shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all of his employees*"
- Section 2(3) requires *that an employer with five or more employees must prepare, and revise as appropriate, a written health and safety policy statement, together with the organisation and arrangements for carrying it out, and to bring this to the notice of the employees.*

## **4 Key Changes**

- 4.1 The most significant change to the policy is the signature by the new chief executive, other changes throughout the document include revised and modernised wording, linking to other key documents such as the People Strategy and refreshed terminology.
- 

## **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** - Continuing to improve health and safety performance will reduce accidents/occupational ill health and associated costs.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - This report supports the Council's commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of employees and the People Strategy.

3. **Community/Council Planning** – This policy provides arrangements to ensure the safe delivery of our services
4. **Legal** – *This policy ensures legal compliance with The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all subsequent legislation*
5. **Property/Assets** - The safe working arrangements for Services promoted by this policy should assist to protect assets and property.
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
  - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** – This document demonstrates the council's commitment to ensuring effective health and safety management.
9. **Procurement** -
10. **Risk** - minimal impact as legal and statutory requirements, including health surveillance, are being maintained.
11. **Privacy Impact** - minimal impact as legal and statutory requirements are being maintained.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable
13. **Climate Risk** – none directly arising from this report.

---

## List of Background Papers

- (a) Corporate Health and Safety Policy Document
-

**Author:** Steven Fanning  
Principal HR Adviser  
T: 07747790211  
E: [steven.fanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:steven.fanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

Revision : Rev 9.0  
Issued : Dec. 2021  
HR /Circ : 04/ 21

# ***Renfrewshire Council Corporate Policy on Health, Safety and Welfare***

**Corporate Policy Document  
Health & Safety**

## **Corporate Policy on Health, Safety and Welfare**

### **FOREWORD**

This Health and Safety policy document is designed to contribute to the business performance of Renfrewshire Council as part of a demonstrative commitment to the continuous improvement in health and safety performance.

**Managers are responsible for motivating and empowering employees to work in a safe and healthy manner and to demonstrate and encourage a positive attitude towards health, safety and welfare being in the workplace.**

This document requires the commitment, support and action from everyone working within Renfrewshire Council and will be central to the ongoing effective management of health and safety.

To this end, I commend this document to you.



Chief Executive  
Renfrewshire Council

22<sup>nd</sup> December 2021

## **INTRODUCTION**

**This policy updates and replaces the Renfrewshire Council Health and Safety Policy approved and issued March 2018**

The policy reflects the legal obligations placed upon Renfrewshire Council by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended).

It is supported by other Corporate and Service Policies. These policies detail the organisation and arrangements in force and the procedures in place for its successful implementation at a local level.

The policy is also linked with the Council's People Strategy, Health, safety and welfare Strategy Document which sets out objectives both Corporately and requires action by Services.

The enforcement authority for Health and Safety legislation for Renfrewshire Council lies with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

## **PART 1**

### **RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**

#### **GENERAL STATEMENT OF HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

Renfrewshire Council will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of its employees and all other persons who may be affected by its undertakings.

The Council is committed to the objective of continually improving health and safety performance in the delivery of its Services.

This standard will be achieved by:

- a) Creating and maintaining a positive health and safety culture which ensures the commitment and participation of all employees;
- b) Meeting its responsibilities to employees, other persons and to the environment in a way which recognises that legal requirements are the minimum standard;
- c) Adopting a planned and systematic approach to the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy to ensure:
  - i) The provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are, so far as reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health;
  - ii) Arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances and recognise the impact of any biological or chemical agent which may affect employees and service delivery;
  - iii) The provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of its employees and other persons;
  - iv) Any place of work under the Council's control must provide safe access and egress, without risks to health, so far as is reasonably practicable; and
  - v) The provision and maintenance of a working environment for employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health (including biological risk), and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their well being at work.
- d) Identifying and assessing the risks associated with all undertakings of the Council with the aim of eliminating or controlling the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable;



- e) Allocating resources to meet the requirements of the Council's Health and Safety Policy;
- f) Planning for health and safety including the setting of realistic short- and long-term objectives, deciding priorities and establishing adequate performance standards;
- g) Monitoring and reviewing performance on a regular basis to ensure that high standards are maintained; and
- h) Maintaining an effective system of joint consultation with trade union appointed safety representatives and, where elected, non-trade union representatives of employee safety, as appropriate, and providing safety representatives with appropriate resources to enable them to carry out their functions.

The effectiveness of this policy relies on all employees accepting responsibility for its implementation and adhering to the relevant policies, procedures and standards.

**Signed:**   
**Chief Executive**

**Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2021**

## **PART 2**

### **THE ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY**

This Health and Safety Policy is supported by Service Health and Safety Policies and associated guidance. Safe systems of work will be implemented across the Council as a result of an effective health, safety and strategic risk management process.

#### **Health and Safety Assistance/ Advice**

The Director of Finance and Resources (FAR) and Head of People and Organisational Development (HP and OD) have overall responsibility to ensure that advice on matters relating to health safety and welfare at work is provided throughout the Council.

The FAR Health and Safety Section and Occupational Health Professionals, as competent persons, will provide support through the HP and OD in order to achieve this.

#### **Organisational Responsibilities**

An outline of the responsibilities of the Chief Executive, Directors and Employees are set out below.

#### **Chief Executive**

The Chief Executive, so far as is reasonably practicable, is responsible for ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of Council employees and others who may be affected by Renfrewshire Council's undertakings. This will be achieved by:

- a) Detailing the organisation in the Council through which the policy will be implemented and delegating the duty for implementation of the policy to the Directors of each Service;
- b) Ensuring adequate resources are available to enable the Council's Health and Safety Policy to be implemented;
- c) Visibly demonstrating management's commitment towards **maintaining** a positive health and safety culture by promoting and encouraging high standards of health and safety performance;
- d) Appointing competent persons to assist the Council in overseeing the application and provision of health and safety legislation. Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended), the FAR Health and Safety Section will provide such advice, guidance and assistance to Services with regard to the implementation of this policy.

- e) Ensuring the maintenance of effective health, safety and welfare management systems within Services to reduce and control risks: and
- f) Monitoring and reviewing health, safety and welfare performance on a regular basis to ensure that high standards are maintained.
- g) Demonstrate a visible commitment to health and safety leadership by setting a good personal example to employees, service users and others.
- h) The Chief Executive gives executive authority to authorised Health and Safety Officers (in the event of an imminent risk or danger to the health and safety of employees, contractors or others including members of the public) to prohibit any such work activity undertaken on or on behalf of the council. Any such action must be notified to the Chief Executive and Head of Service.

## **Directors**

Directors are, so far as is reasonably practicable, responsible for ensuring the health safety and welfare at work of employees and others who may be affected by the undertakings in their respective Services. They will:

- a) Prepare and revise, in accordance with legislative requirements, their Service Health and Safety Policy, which identifies the key risks related to Service undertakings;
- b) Set out the organisational responsibilities within their Service through which the Policy will be implemented;
- c) Set out the arrangements which will assist to control Service risks, as outlined in the Service Health and Safety Policy;
- d) Ensure adequate resources are available to enable the Service Health and Safety Policy to be implemented;
- e) Implement and introduce measures to achieve and continually improve standards of health and safety performance within their Services in order to develop a positive attitude to health and safety amongst employees, contractors and service users;
- f) Implement and maintain an effective health and safety management system, which will include assessing, planning, organising, monitoring and reviewing the measures required to eliminate, reduce or control service risks;
- g) Monitor and review health and safety performance on a regular basis to ensure that high standards are maintained and compile reports on a quarterly basis to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee (CHSC).

- h) Prepare a bi-annual report in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Plan, evaluating the health, safety and welfare at work performance of their Service and setting future objectives and measurable targets including performance indicators;
- i) Demonstrate a visible commitment to health and safety leadership by setting a good personal example to employees, Services users and others; and
- j) Bring to the attention of Heads of Service, Managers and Supervisors that health safety and welfare is a shared responsibility, and that they will be accountable for the health safety and well being of employees or others who may be affected by the work of the Service.

## **Employees**

All employees are reminded that health, safety and welfare is everyone's responsibility and that co-operation is required to implement Council and Services' Health and Safety Policies, procedures and safe systems of work by:

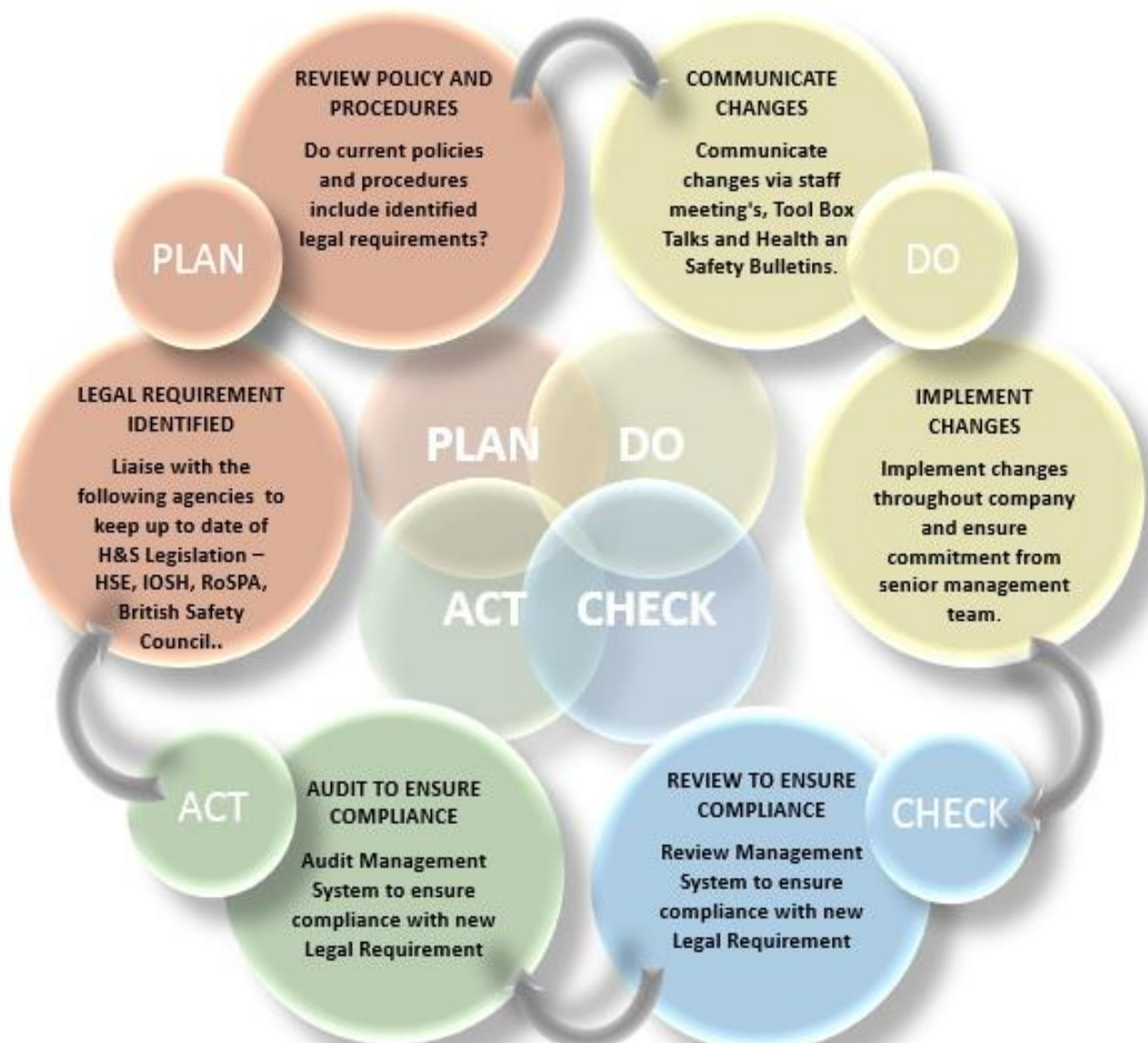
- a) Acting in the course of their employment with due care for their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- b) Co-operating, so far as is necessary, to enable the Council to perform any duty or to comply with any arrangement, as a result of health and safety legislation which may be in force (for example correct use of personal protective equipment or attending health surveillance);
- c) Using work equipment correctly, safely and in accordance with appropriate training and instruction; and
- d) Bringing to the attention of their manager or supervisor, any situation they would reasonably consider, that represents a concern about health, safety and welfare whilst at work including reporting any incident timeously.

### PART 3

#### ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements will be incorporated into Service's own Health and Safety Policies where necessary. They should be expanded or altered to meet the specific requirements of the Service concerned and developed with the support of the FAR Health and Safety Section.

Arrangements will be based on the HSE publication '**Successful Health and Safety Management (HSG65)**' **Plan – Do – Check – Act** methodology (illustrated below). The HSE states that "The Plan, Do, Check, Act approach achieves a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It also treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than as a stand-alone system".



Services will pursue progressive improvements which should lead to reduction of injury and ill health. This will be achieved by the implementation and management of an effective health and safety management system.

## **1.0 Health and Safety Culture**

### **1.1 Leadership, Commitment and Involvement**

Leadership and commitment are critical to the success of the health and safety management system within the Council and requires the involvement of everyone. Visible leadership and commitment of management at all levels is an essential component to create the required positive health and safety culture. Managers must:

- set a personal example;
- communicate the importance of health, safety and welfare considerations into business decisions;
- openly discuss health, safety and welfare matters and include this as a standard item on meeting agendas;
- encourage employees to suggest health, safety and welfare performance improvement measures;
- reward positive behaviours and the achievement of health, safety and welfare objectives; and
- take disciplinary action where considered appropriate for breaches of health, safety and welfare guidelines, procedures and rules.

### **1.2 Commitment**

Council services recognise that employees have an important contribution to make to the overall organisational health, safety and welfare culture. The Council will ensure that health and safety **remains to be an** integral part of the management system. **The Council will drive** to maintain a positive attitude to health, safety and welfare amongst employees by:

- visibly demonstrating a clear commitment to improving health, safety and welfare performance by setting and monitoring measurable objectives;
- promoting co-operation and consultation across Services by identifying common work interfaces and sharing and agreeing best practice;
- ensuring the communication and dissemination of necessary health, safety and welfare information throughout the Council and confirming understanding and acceptance of the information;
- ensuring and encouraging participation of employees at health and safety groups and meetings; and
- securing the competence of employees by including health, safety and welfare information within the recruitment process and systematically identifying and providing appropriate training.

### 1.3 Health and Safety advice

The FAR Health and Safety Section will provide guidance, advice and support to assist in ensuring the health safety and welfare of employees and anyone who may be affected by the Council's undertakings.

The Occupational Health Service is overseen by the FAR Health and Safety Section and is committed to the identification, assessment and management of work-related health risks, and as appropriate, non-work-related health risks.

### 1.4 Health and Safety Training

Health and safety training is an important factor in the reduction of accidents and prevention of ill health. Services will actively support training by providing the necessary resources and organisation to carry out such training. All new employees will receive a service in-house induction course and, in addition, be offered the opportunity to access online the ilearn course 'First Impressions' developed by FAR, HR and OD. Where health and safety training needs are identified by a Service, suitable training can be arranged through Organisation and Development. Health and safety training courses available are included within the FAR Training Course Planner, which is available from Organisational Development and on the Council's intranet site.

The FAR Health and Safety Section may provide bespoke health and safety training on request, at times and locations suitable to the Services' requests.

### 1.5 Service Health and Safety Link Person

The Service Health and Safety Link Person is not a Health and Safety Officer but supports their own service internally.

The role of a Health and Safety Link Person is to:

- co-ordinate health, safety and welfare activities within each service;
- represent their service at the Corporate Health and Safety Committee;
- to champion health, safety and welfare across their service.

Further guidance on the role is available from the FAR Health and Safety Section.

### 1.6 Safety Representatives

Safety Representatives appointed by recognised Trade Unions are entitled to inspect work places every three months and if necessary, more frequently. These inspections can be accompanied by an appropriate management representative.

Safety Representatives appointed by recognised Trade Unions will be allowed to inspect any statutory document which the Service is required to maintain. On request, they will also be given information necessary to carry out their functions as defined under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977.

Services will consult the relevant Safety Representatives in accordance with the current Council policy as it relates **to staff, health, safety and welfare**.

## **1.7 Raising Health and Safety Concerns**

Should an employee feel that they need to raise a health, safety and welfare concern, the procedure detailed below should be followed in line with service procedures:

- STAGE 1.      Raise concern with their Supervisor. If not resolved;**
- STAGE 2.      Raise concern with the Supervisor's Manager. If not resolved:**
- STAGE 3.      Raise the concern with the Safety Representative. If not resolved;**
- STAGE 4.      Safety Representative can raise concerns at the relevant Service health and safety management forums. If not resolved;**
- STAGE 5.      Raise the concern at the Corporate Health and Safety Committee. If not resolved.**
- STAGE 6.      Raise at Joint Consultative Board (Non-teaching) or Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff**

At any stage during this process, **or if there is an immediate concern**, any employee/safety representative can contact FAR Health and Safety Section for further advice and guidance.

## **2.0 Planning and Implementation**

### **2.1 Corporate Health and Safety Strategy / Service Health and Safety Plans**

A Corporate Health and Safety Strategy is in place which will achieve and support effective health and safety management systems across the Council.

Services will prepare a Health and Safety Plan outlining specific service health and safety objectives, which are measurable, with realistic timescales for their accomplishment. These objectives will be developed in collaboration with the FAR Health and Safety Section.

All health and safety plans must be regularly monitored by the Service health and safety planning groups and reviewed on a regular basis.



## **2.2 Bi-Annual Health and Safety Reports**

Services will prepare a bi-annual health and safety report that evaluates their health, safety and welfare performance for the previous 6 months period. Such reports should include information on the following issues:

- A brief profile of the Service and its main functions and undertakings.
- Management of Health and Safety within the Service. This should include a report detailing the progress of the health and safety plan objectives from the previous year.
- Risk management, planning and progress including percentage of risk assessments reviewed.
- Number and type of service specific health and safety training courses undertaken.
- Percentage of total number of establishments carrying out joint management/trade union health and safety inspections and percentage of satisfactory remedial actions completed.
- Service accident/incident statistics and identified causes for lost time.
- Issues identified by internal and/or external audits and recommendations completed.
- Service Health and Safety objectives for the coming year.

Services' bi-annual reports must be submitted to the FAR Health and Safety Section in advance of submitting them to the appropriate Council Boards.

Guidance on preparing a bi-annual health, safety and welfare report is available from the FAR Health and Safety Section.

## **2.3 Health, Safety and Welfare Planning Groups**

The Director and nominated Head of Service requires to retain, at Service level, a health and safety planning group to assist in the formulation and implementation of the service health and safety policy and plan. Planning for health and safety is also suitable for inclusion as a standing agenda item within the remit of senior management team meetings.

The Service group should identify and prioritise actions and agree key performance indicators including achievable targets that are measurable for implementation of the various elements of the health and safety plan. The group should also monitor implementation of the health and safety plan.

The operational planning group can also serve as a service liaison meeting, safety group or health and safety committees involving employee representation.

For further clarification on Health and Safety planning groups contact FAR Health and Safety Section.

## **2.4 Significant Risks**

The Council recognise that Service health and safety planning groups require to implement an effective risk control strategy to minimise employees and service users' exposure to significant risks. Detailed below is a list of risks (not in order of priority and not exhaustive) that, by the very nature of service provision, may be encountered:

- Biohazards including COVID-19
- Musculoskeletal disorders
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Working at heights
- Traffic management
- Lone working
- Occupational Illness such as hand arm vibration/noise induced hearing loss /skin conditions/ asbestosis
- Occupational driving
- Violence and aggression (including acts relating to a physical or psychological conditions)
- Contractors working on Council premises
- Work related stress (this can be influenced by non-work-related stress)
- Council managed public events
- Fire safety and management

Services must identify any significant service-related health and safety risks in addition to those listed above.

## **2.5 Emergency Procedures**

The following issues should also be given due consideration by Service health and safety planning groups as part of their ongoing oversight of health and safety.

- a) Fire Safety and emergency evacuation procedures
- b) First Aid provision
- c) Security measures
- d) Welfare arrangements
- e) Health and Wellbeing
- f) Mental Health First Aiders

For further guidance contact the FAR, Health and Safety Section.

### **3.0 Active Monitoring**

#### **3.1 Audits**

An audit is a systematic examination of the health and safety management systems in place, including implementation of policies, procedures, training and safety awareness of staff.

FAR Health and Safety Section will actively monitor the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Plan. This will be achieved by auditing the health and safety management systems within Services over a 3-year period, relevant to their risk profile, and on a timescale agreed with their respective health and safety planning groups.

#### **3.2 Inspections**

A safety inspection is the physical examination of the workplace including tools and equipment.

Safety inspections, preferably joint management and union safety representative's inspections shall be undertaken within all Services as part of their service health and safety plan and to support the audit programme.

A corporate wide health and safety inspection programme will continue to be developed over a rolling 3-year period

To ensure health and safety standards are maintained, Services should have arrangements in place to undertake inspections of their premises, on an annual basis.

### **4.0 Re-active monitoring**

#### **4.1 Accident , Incident and Ill-health data**

Accidents, incidents and ill-health data will be analysed by service management, FAR health and safety section, service planning groups, safety groups and safety committees involving employee representation, with a view to determining and where possible eliminating the causes of:

- Major injury/dangerous occurrence;
- Lost time accidents of 7 days or more;
- Work related ill health and diseases;
- Injury/ ill health claims.

#### **4.2 Accident Investigation and Reporting Investigation**

Every accident, incident or near miss must be investigated by the injured person's supervisor or line manager to the degree required to prevent a recurrence. A report completed on the Business World and shall contain outlined recommendations to

prevent a recurrence; however, further investigation may also be carried out by the FAR Health and Safety Section.

Further advice can be obtained from the FAR Health and Safety Section as required.

#### **4.3 Reporting of Incidents, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 (as amended)**

Every employee who suffers personal injury or ill-health at work must give notice to their supervisor of any accidents or incident, as soon thereafter as is practicable. The employee must ensure that details of the incident is entered on Business World system or in line with Service local procedures. The FAR Health and Safety Section will be responsible for reporting any relevant incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under RIDDOR.

### **5.0 Statutory Compliance of Domestic and Non-Domestic Properties**

Services that manage and maintain domestic and non-domestic properties, are the first point of contact in providing advice and guidance, prior to any works carried out for individual property users and services. They must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that statutory compliance is met in accordance with Corporate Guidance and appropriate records are available for inspection. Further advice can be obtained from the FAR Health and Safety Section as required.

### **6.0 Contractors**

When appointing a contractor the health and safety risks should be considered. Services should follow corporate guidance. Further advice can be obtained from the FAR Health and Safety Section as required.

All contractors shall be assessed in terms of health and safety at procurement stages by the employing service. Only contractors who can demonstrate their ability to meet the standards set by the Council will be employed.

The undertakings and activities of any contractor should be monitored by the employing service, to ensure that any risks presented to employees, members of the public, service users or visitors are minimised. Commissioning officers must monitor contractor's activities throughout the duration of the contract, heavily scrutinising areas of high risk. Any contractor's activities that cause Health and Safety concerns may require the commissioning officer's intervention although immediate action may be necessary by the responsible person for the premises. Works should be discussed with the responsible person for premises.

### **7.0 Supplementary Policies and Guidance**

This Health and Safety Policy is supplemented by specific policies and related guidance, such as Accident and Incident Reporting, Risk Assessments, Statutory Inspection and Maintenance, Asbestos, Legionella, Stress as well as additional health, safety and welfare topics.

All supplementary corporate health and safety policies and guidance are available on the intranet. Further advice can be obtained from the FAR Health and Safety Section as required.

## **8.0 Policy Review**

The FAR Health and Safety Section shall monitor this policy for its effectiveness.

This policy and accompanying documentation contained within will be reviewed and where necessary revised on a three-yearly cycle, unless an earlier revision is prompted by significant changes in legislation, procedures or best practice.

Any changes or amendments to this policy will be done in consultation with the trade unions and employees where appropriate.

This policy and any revision of it will be drawn to the attention of every employee of the Council.