

West Northamptonshire Council Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

April 2021

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Contents

1. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Statement.....	3
2.1 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy	4
Nominated Director for Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&WB).....	4
2.2 Procedures.....	5
2.3 Managing Properties	5
2.4 Objectives	5
2.5 Risk Profiling	6
2.6 Cooperate	6
Employees.....	6
Consultation.....	6
Enforcement Officers e.g. HSE, Fire Safety Officers	6
Procuring Goods and Services	7
2.7 Information, Instruction and Training.....	7
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Statement.....	7
Induction.....	7
2.8 Competent Advice	7
2.9 Monitor and Measure Performance	7
Proactive Measuring	7
Reactive Measuring	8
2.10 Review Performance and Act.....	8
Policy	8
Annual Report.....	8
Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (JHSWC)	8
Appendix 1: Health and Safety Management System.....	9
Appendix 2: Responsibility, Accountability and Consultation Flow Chart.....	10
Appendix 3: Responsibilities for Managing Health and Safety.....	11
Appendix 3 (Continued): Full RACI Definitions	12
Appendix 4: List of Procedures	13

1. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Statement

West Northamptonshire Council recognises and accepts its statutory responsibility to provide safe and healthy working conditions for employees, clients, and others who use or visit council premises or may be affected by its activities. The council will also take steps to ensure that its contractors and partners in service provision conduct their activities in a manner that is safe, and any risks are appropriately managed

To ensure that health and safety matters are given proper consideration, the council is committed to:

- Comply with all relevant legislation and codes of practice
- Recognise and manage the additional risks arising from Brexit and the current Covid-19 Pandemic
- Work together with employee representatives to develop an effective health and safety management system
- Provide and maintain, plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe and minimise any risk to health
- Ensure arrangements are in place for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
- Assess our activities and implement adequate control measures
- Provide adequate information, instruction, training and supervision
- Provide and maintain a safe place of work, including safe access and egress
- Provide and maintain adequate welfare facilities
- Create a culture of injury and ill health prevention
- Review this policy annually, unless significant changes occur

General responsibilities for health and safety:

The Chief Executive has overall accountability for health and safety for the Authority.

[Leadership Team] and Elected Members:

- Determine the health and safety strategy and objectives
- Resource and implement this policy
- Promote a positive culture towards health and safety
- Monitor the effectiveness of the management systems to ensure that best practice is maintained

Managers:

- Ensure that this policy and supporting procedures are understood and followed to ensure that all risks are managed appropriately.

Employees:

- Must take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by what they do, or fail to do, at work.

Arrangements for Health and Safety:

- Arrangements and responsibilities for managing health and safety are documented within the Health and Safety Management System.

It is a requirement of the Council that this Policy, and its implications, are understood and acted upon at all levels within the Council.

[Name]
Chief Executive
Date: ###/###/2021

[Name]
Leader of the Council
Date: ###/###/2021

To ensure health and safety is given proper consideration and structure, the council will adopt the model outlined in [HSG65: Managing for Health and Safety](#).

The concept of '**Plan, Do, Check, Act**' can help achieve a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than a stand-alone system and encourages a commitment to continuous improvement.

[See Appendix 1: Health and Safety Management System](#)



2.1 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

The requirement for a policy comes from the [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#), which places a duty on employers to prepare a written policy statement and bring it to the attention of employees.

The purpose of the policy is to:

- a) Set out our management commitment to health, safety and wellbeing;
- b) Outline the general responsibilities and arrangements that are in place to fulfil the responsibilities acknowledged in the statement.

The policy recognises that more specific procedures will be necessary to give proper consideration and instruction to comply with more specific areas. Procedures are given the same status as the policy.

Where necessary to ensure compliance with legislation and the health, safety and wellbeing policy, **Directorates** will develop more specific policies and procedures. These documents will recognise the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and supporting procedures as 'parent' documents.

Nominated Director for Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&WB)

The **[Title of Director]** has been appointed by the Chief Executive to fulfil the duties of this position.

They have knowledge of health and safety legislation and the experience to recognise risk across a range of activities and environments. They are committed to the development and ongoing success of the health and safety management system.

Their aims are to:

- provide corporate leadership for HS&WB
- drive continuous improvement in HS&WB culture and practice
- agree and monitor a clear health and safety plan
- make recommendations about the targeting of resources to address areas of highest risk

[See Appendix 2 Responsibility, Accountability and Compliance Flow](#)

[See Appendix 3 Responsibilities for Managing Health and Safety](#)

2.2 Procedures

The nominated director for HS&WB will delegate responsibility for the completion and maintenance of corporate procedures to the **directorate** with the appropriate level of subject expertise.

Procedures will be developed to set out how the council will comply with specific legislation and identify those responsible for implementation.

[See Appendix 4: List of Procedures](#)

2.3 Managing Properties

To ensure that the council fulfils its obligations and complies with statutory requirements in relation to council operated and commercial premises owned by the council, the **Head of the Facilities Management Team** will:

- Ensure the provision of competent persons to support with statutory inspections and maintenance regarding premises for fire, water, asbestos, radon, electricity, gas, first aid, fixed plant and equipment.
- Maintain a list of 'building managers' and support them in fulfilling their duties.
- Monitor compliance to procedures and provide reports on progress to the **Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (JHSWC)**.

Each council operated building will have a nominated 'building manager' to implement the day to day systems required to ensure safety. The building manager will be given specific training to ensure they are competent to fulfil this role.

Where specific regulations require it, the Building Manager may be notified in writing of his duties.

In multi-occupancy workplaces, the Building Manager/Responsible Person will, where required, facilitate a Building User Group (BUG) for effective co-operation when managing health and safety issues. Each agency or service sharing the space is required to appoint a 'Local Responsible Person' for the BUG membership and to support the overall Building Manager/Responsible Person with their health and safety responsibilities.

2.4 Objectives

The Corporate Health and Safety Plan sets out the corporate priorities for Health, Safety & Wellbeing taking into account priorities agreed by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing committee.

The Corporate Health and Safety Plan is published on the health, safety and wellbeing intranet pages and can be viewed [here](#).

Each **directorate** contributes to the development and implementation of the Corporate Health and Safety Plan and prepares plans which support the achievement of the corporate objectives, these should be cascaded to all levels.

Note: The findings from 'Check' and 'Act' will feed back into the objectives.



2.5 Risk Profiling

Risk profiling is the identification of health & safety risks, the likelihood and potential consequences of these happening for everyone that might be affected by the work activities.

Each Directorate Management Team will develop a health and safety risk profile and continually monitor this through the approaches identified in 'Check' and 'Act' of this policy.

Directorate Management Teams will maintain a risk management plan and ensure that all required assessments are completed, actions are implemented and reviewed when necessary and in accordance with the risk assessment procedure.

See Risk Assessment Procedure.

2.6 Cooperate

Commitment and involvement at all levels means health and safety becomes 'everybody's business'; as well as promoting ownership of health, safety & wellbeing policies by everyone we actively encourage and support consultation on issues that may affect health and safety.

Employees

All employees are responsible for:

- Complying with the Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy and agreed local health and safety arrangements
- Taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their acts or omissions
- Co-operating with their managers on health, safety and wellbeing matters including timely reporting of incidents, problems, system failures or defects
- Using all work equipment and substances in accordance with the instruction and training received
- Co-operating with training and development requirements to meet the needs of their role

Consultation

The council will ensure that employees are consulted on health and safety matters.

Formal consultation will take place through appointed trade union health and safety representatives. The recognised trade unions have agreed to represent all employees, including non-trade union members.

All employees are encouraged to participate in health and safety and will be given the opportunity to do so through the risk assessment process, team briefings, discussions during training and by reporting concerns through line management and the accident and incident process.

The Council will establish a **Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (JHSWC)**, which will support the council in implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy.

See Consulting with Employee's and Employee Representatives procedure

Enforcement Officers e.g. HSE, Fire Safety Officers

The authority welcomes opportunities to work in partnership with enforcement bodies. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team will engage with external enforcement officers as required.

Where an enforcement officer visits the council, the visit will be facilitated by a member of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management Team and representatives of the appropriate Directorate.

Procuring Goods and Services

Devolved management and contracting out does not diminish accountability for ensuring that arrangements are adequate. Statutory responsibility cannot be delegated and must be recognised alongside the duties of other parties.

Contract and purchasing managers must ensure adequate conditions and standards of health, safety and wellbeing in connection with goods and services they obtain. This includes vetting and monitoring contractors and selecting goods and articles that satisfy relevant standards as stipulated in the [procurement policy](#).

[See Contractor Management procedure](#)

2.7 Information, Instruction and Training

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Statement

Directorates must ensure each employee can access the latest version of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Statement. There are several ways this can be achieved; the usual methods are:

- Via the intranet
- Displayed on a notice board
- Hard copy issued to employees (where necessary)
- Available on request to a manager

In addition to this, the following are also required to be made available to employees:

- Health and Safety Law Poster
- Certificate of Employers Liability Insurance

Induction

The health, safety and wellbeing policy will be communicated via mandatory local and corporate induction training. Senior and specialist job roles should have additional health & safety elements included in their job description and attend the manager induction training to ensure the level of competency for their role.

Directorates will need to identify further job specific training. [See Training Procedure](#)

2.8 Competent Advice

Under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, employers are required to have access to competent advice. The Councils Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team act as this point of competent advice based on their knowledge and experience in this role.



2.9 Monitor and Measure Performance

Performance is measured in two ways, Proactive and Reactive

Proactive Measuring

- Routine audits ([See Audit Procedure](#))
- Health surveillance ([See Health Surveillance Procedure](#))
- Equipment servicing and inspection ([See Compliance Checklist](#))
- Regularly reviewing risk assessments ([See Risk Assessment Procedure](#))

Reactive Measuring

- Investigating incidents
- Monitoring cases of ill health and absence records ([may link to HR policy](#))

[See Accident and Incident Procedure](#)



2.10 Review Performance and Act

Carrying out reviews allows us to check whether our health and safety systems are suitable and sufficient. For example, we will:

- Check the validity of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing policy
- Ensure the Safety Management System is effective

We will do this in the following ways:

Policy

The policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary to take account of new or changed circumstances.

Annual Report

Overall performance will be collated into an annual report by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team, which will be submitted for review to:

- [\[Leadership Team\]](#)
- Councillors
- [Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee](#)

This will be completed on a [standard annual report template \(link to template\)](#).

Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee (JHSWC)

The [JHSWC](#) will ensure employees are able to contribute effectively to the review process.

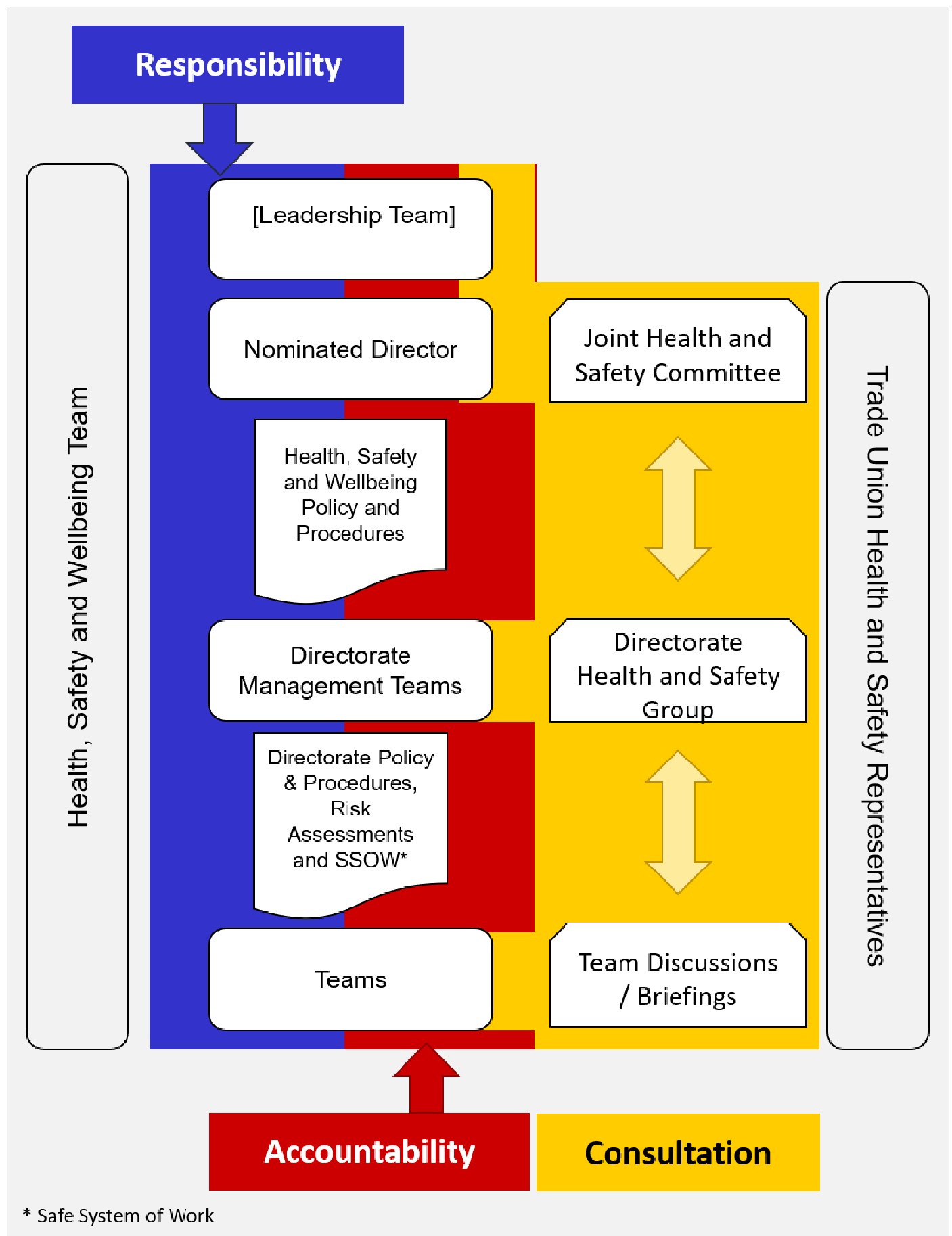
Agreed outcomes will be moved forward to the following years Health & Safety Plan.

[See consulting with Employee's and Employee Representatives procedure](#)

Appendix 1: Health and Safety Management System

PLAN	
Leadership	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Management Commitment & Engagement, Accountability and Responsibilities
Planning	Health and Safety Action Plans (Corporate/Directorate/Service level), Objective Setting
DO	
Arrangements	Corporate policies, arrangements & procedures, local health and safety procedures
Risk Profiling and Control	Arrangements for completing risk assessments, implementing controls, risk registers. Implementation of action plans to control risks & ensure policy objectives are met
Communication	Systems in place for the communication of health, safety & wellbeing throughout the organisation
Consultation and Cooperation	Procedures in place for cooperation between employees, managers H&S representatives and third parties.
Competence	Competence of individuals through recruitment, selection, induction, training and development
CHECK	
Measuring and Monitoring	Measuring performance to assess effectiveness of arrangements in place; inspection and audit, tracking of action plans, statutory equipment checks, investigating causes of accidents, incidents and near misses, health surveillance, sickness absence/ill health data, health and safety reports.
ACT	
Reviewing	Reviewing performance, taking action on lessons learned; accidents & incidents, ill-health data, revisiting plans, policies, procedures & risk assessments

Appendix 2: Responsibility, Accountability and Consultation Flow Chart



Appendix 3: Responsibilities for Managing Health and Safety

		Roles							
Key:		[Leadership Team]	[Nominated Director for Health and Safety]	Directorate Management Team (inc. Schools Governing Bodies)	H, S&W Team	Facilities Management	Joint H&S Committee	Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives	Employees
	R Responsible - Ensures the task is completed A Accountable - Final decision maker C Consulted - Provides an input I Informed - Is informed of the outcome								
	Main Reference: <u>Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65)</u>								
Plan	2.1 Develop and maintain a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.	A	R	C	C		C	C	I
	2.2. Develop and maintain procedures which set out the steps needed to comply with the HSW Policy.		A	R	R		C	C	I
	2.3 Implement systems to ensure the safe use of buildings and compliance with statutory requirements.	A	C	R	C	R	C	C	I
	2.4 Set objectives which drive improvement of the H&S management system and culture.	A	R	R	C		C	C	I
Do	2.5 Develop a risk management plan, ensuring all significant risks are assessed and agreed controls are implemented.	A	I	R	C		C	C	I
	2.6 Cooperate with each other, external services, contractors and others to ensure the effective management of health and safety.	A	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
	2.7 Provide employees and others with adequate information, instruction training and supervision.	A	I	R	C		C	C	I
	2.8 Provide competent advice on health and safety matters.	A	C		R	R	C	C	I
Check	2.9 Monitor and measure performance.	A	R	R	R	R	R	C	I
Act	2.10 Review performance and take action to address concerns and continually improve the management system.	A	R	R	R		R	C	I

Appendix 3 (Continued): Full RACI Definitions

Accountable – This person / job role has been given direct responsibility for ensuring the requirement is met and may not further delegate this. There will only be one Accountable person/group for each task. They will have significant influence on the decisions being made, which will quite often come down to cost.

Responsible – This person(s) / job role(s) will achieve given task(s) to support the accountable person. They will have an appropriate level of authorisation to achieve the task and are responsible for escalating concerns to their superior or the accountable person. They may further delegate specific tasks.

Consulted – This person(s) / job role(s) / Group will have an opportunity to input into decisions, they may be accountable for their advice and input but will not generally make decisions. They will escalate concerns to the respective responsible persons or accountable persons.

Informed – It is important that this person or job role is informed of the outcome of decisions in this area to ensure health and safety, this may also be a legal requirement.

Appendix 4: List of Procedures

Title
Accident / Incident Reporting and Investigation
Asbestos
Audit and Inspections
Communicable & Infectious Disease Management (including Covid-19)
Confined Space Working
Construction Design Management (CDM)
Consulting with Employees and Employee Representatives
Contractor Management
Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres (DSEAR)
Display Screen Equipment
Driving for Work
Electricity
Fire Protection and Prevention
First Aid at Work
Gas & Hot Works
Health Surveillance
Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment (LOLER)
Manual Handling
Noise at Work
Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
Pressure Systems (PSSR)
Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER)
Radon & Ionising Radiation
Risk Assessment
Staff Alert, Lone Working & Personal Safety
Stress at Work
Training
Waste Management & Recycling
Water Management & Legionella
Whole Body & Hand Arm Vibration
Working at Height
Working on the Highway
Workplace Standards / Welfare