



Council

Mon 4 April
2016
7.00 pm

Council Chamber
Town Hall
Redditch

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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a
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Democratic Services**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Tel: (01527) 548240
e.mail: sheena.jones@bromgroveandredditch.gov.uk**



Council

Monday, 4th April, 2016

7.00 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Pattie Hill (Mayor)	Gay Hopkins
	Joe Baker (Deputy Mayor)	Wanda King
	Tom Baker-Price	Jane Potter
	Roger Bennett	Gareth Prosser
	Natalie Brookes	Antonia Pulsford
	Juliet Brunner	Mark Shurmer
	David Bush	Rachael Smith
	Michael Chalk	Yvonne Smith
	Greg Chance	Paul Swansborough
	Anita Clayton	Debbie Taylor
	Brandon Clayton	David Thain
	Matthew Dormer	Jennifer Wheeler
	John Fisher	Pat Witherspoon
	Andrew Fry	Nina Wood-Ford
	Bill Hartnett	

1. Welcome	The Mayor will open the meeting and welcome all present.
2. Apologies	To receive any apologies for absence on behalf of Council members.
3. Declarations of Interest	To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.
4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10)	To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 22 nd February, 2016 (attached)

5. Announcements	To consider Announcements under Procedure Rule 10: a) Mayor's Announcements b) Leader's Announcements c) Chief Executive's Announcements. (Oral report)
6. Questions on Notice	No questions have been submitted to date under Procedure Rule 9.2. Under the Council's constitution questions are only permitted on an exceptional basis during the formal pre-election period.
7. Motions on Notice	No Motions have been submitted under Procedure Rule 11. Under the Council's constitution motions are only permitted on an exceptional basis during the formal pre-election period.
8. Executive Committee (Pages 11 - 132)	To receive the minutes and consider the recommendations and/or referrals from the meetings of the Executive Committee held on 8 th March. There are recommendations on the following matters: Minute no. 106- Health and Safety Policies Minute no. 107 – Finance Monitoring – HRA Case Management IT system. The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting are included in minute book no. 6. The recommendations and reports relating to these items are included in the agenda.

<p>9. Regulatory Committees</p>	<p>To formally receive the minutes of the following meetings of the Council's Regulatory Committees:</p> <p>(a) Audit, Governance and Standards Committee – 28th January 2016. The recommendations at minute no. 39 relating to the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Indicators were considered and approved by the Council at its meeting on 22nd February. There are no further recommendations for the Council to consider.</p> <p>(b) Planning Committee – 13th January and 10th February 2016. There are no recommendations for the Council to consider.</p> <p>The minutes for these meetings are contained in minute book no.6.</p>
<p>10. Redditch Polling Place Amendments (Pages 133 - 136)</p>	<p>To consider the enclosed report proposing amendments to arrangements for polling places in Batchley and Brockhill and Lodge Park wards.</p> <p>(Batchley & Brockhill Ward); (Lodge Park Ward)</p>
<p>11. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2015-16 (Pages 137 - 152)</p>	<p>To consider the attached Annual Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2015-16.</p>
<p>12. Urgent Business - Record of Decisions</p>	<p>To note any decisions taken in accordance with the Council's Urgency Procedure Rules (Part 6, Paragraph 5 and/or Part 7, Paragraph 15 of the Constitution), as specified.</p> <p>(None to date).</p>
<p>13. Urgent Business - general (if any)</p>	<p>To consider any additional items exceptionally agreed by the Mayor as Urgent Business in accordance with the powers vested in her by virtue of Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>(This power should be exercised only in cases where there are genuinely special circumstances which require consideration of an item which has not previously been published on the Order of Business for the meeting.)</p>



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Monday, 22 February 2016

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Pattie Hill (Mayor), Councillor Joe Baker (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Roger Bennett, Natalie Brookes, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Greg Chance, Anita Clayton, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins, Wanda King, Jane Potter, Gareth Prosser, Antonia Pulsford, Mark Shurmer, Rachael Smith, Yvonne Smith, Paul Swansborough, Debbie Taylor, David Thain, Jennifer Wheeler, Pat Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford

Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton, Sue Hanley, Anne-Marie Harley, Sheena Jones and Jayne Pickering

Committee Services Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

79. WELCOME

The Mayor opened the meeting and welcomed all present.

80. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Tom Baker-Price.

81. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

82. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 25th January 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

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Chair

Council

Monday, 22 February 2016

83. ANNOUNCEMENTS

a) The Mayor

The Mayor advised that she had attended a number of events since the last meeting of the Council. One event in particular had been the funeral of Roger Hollingworth, former Leader of Bromsgrove District Council. Mrs Hollingworth had requested that her thanks be passed on to Councillors for their cards and well wishes.

b) The Leader

Roger Hollingworth

Councillor Hartnett spoke of the sad news of Roger Hollingworth's recent unexpected passing, which had come as a shock to all concerned. Councillor Hartnett had sent a letter and card to Roger's wife Jacqueline and family Mark, James and Sarah expressing the Council's condolences. A large number of people had attended Roger's funeral, with many tributes having been paid to Roger on both a personal and professional level.

Councillor Brunner also paid tribute to Mr Hollingworth, stating that he would be sadly missed by all.

Councillor Hartnett had attended a number of events and undertaken certain work in his capacity as Leader and he highlighted the following:

- Syrian refugee resettlement programme – Councillor Hartnett had been interviewed by Central TV on behalf of the Leaders in Worcestershire regarding the offer to accept up to 50 refugees throughout Worcestershire as a whole in the first year. This would equate to approximately 2 families per district, the costs of which would be met by central government. A further meeting was due to take place with the Home Office Minister in Birmingham later that week, which would hopefully provide more information on the situation.
- Special Olympics Redditch Awards Night, which this year had included a Young Athlete of the Year award. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and MP had also attended this event.
- NHS Trust Development Authority (TDA) – meeting attended in parliament with TDA along with Bromsgrove and Stratford-on-Avon Council Leaders and MP. This had provided an update on the current situation regarding the special measures which the Worcestershire Acute

Hospitals NHS Trust had been placed in. A number of concerns had been raised by the Leader in relation to financial and clinical stability, patient choice and flows and proposed consultation on the clustering of the Worcestershire and Wye Valley (Herefordshire) NHS Trusts.

84. AUDIT, STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2016-17 TO 2018-19

The Council received the recommendations of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee meeting of 28th January 2016 in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy and Investment Strategy.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Strategy and Prudential Indicators at Appendix 1 to the report be approved; and**
- 2) the updated Treasury Management Policy at Appendix 2 to the report be approved.**

85. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council received the recommendations of the Executive Committee meeting on 2nd February 2016 in relation to the Independent Remuneration Panel's report and recommendations.

As in previous years Members expressed concern that they were placed in the position of determining their own remuneration, despite requests for this not to be done at local level. Members did not feel that in such austere times they could support the proposed increases to the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances.

RESOLVED that

- 1) regard be had to the report and recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2016/17;**
- 2) the recommendations at Appendix 1 to the Panel's report for the following allowances not be accepted:**

**Basic;
Leader;
Deputy Leader;
Portfolio Holders;
Executive Members without Portfolio;**

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
 Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
 Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups;
 Chair of Audit, Governance and Standards Committee;
 Chair of Planning Committee;
 Chair of Licensing Committee;
 Political Group Leaders; and
 Borough Council representatives on the Local Government Association and General Assembly and West Midlands Employers;

- 3) the Panel's recommendations relating to travel, subsistence and dependent carers' allowances be accepted;
- 4) for 2016/17 the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in the Council's Allowances Scheme continue at the level set for 2015/16, as set out in the final column of Appendix 1 to the Independent Remuneration Panel's report;
- 5) the recommendation relating to the Parish Council be noted; and
- 6) the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2016/17 remain unchanged, with the exception of the following inclusion into the travel allowances section:

“The rate for travel by Taxi Cab shall not exceed:

- (i) In cases of urgency or where no public transport is reasonably available, the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid, and
- (ii) In any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.”

86. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS

The Council considered the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 2nd February 2016, together with the recommendations of the Executive Committee meeting of 22nd February which had taken place immediately preceding the meeting of the Council, in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan and Council Tax Resolutions. An updated Medium Term Financial Plan report and the Council Tax Setting details appeared in Additional Papers 1 and 2 respectively to the 22nd February Executive Committee papers. An amalgamated/updated set of recommendations from the Executive on 2nd February (page 53 of the Council agenda) and Executive on 22nd February

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(recommendations from the report in Additional Papers 1) were tabled for Members' reference/assistance.

Further to the Officer presentation of the Medium Term Financial Plan which had taken place earlier in the evening at Executive Committee, opposing views were expressed by the controlling and opposition groups in relation to the budget.

During the course of the debate a number of issues were raised on both sides of the divide, including:

- the significant negative financial impact to the authority of the local government finance settlement 2016/17, which had included a 43% cut in Revenue Support Grant in the proposed settlement and Council payback of monies to the Government from 2019/20;
- changes to the final finance settlement in light of issues raised by local authorities following consultation on the proposed settlement, together with an appeal by the Leader of the Council, some of which it was noted were of a transitional nature only;
- delays with the Leisure Services review and the consequential financial impact of this;
- government restrictions on rent increases; and
- differing approaches which were being taken by local authorities in relation to how budgets, expenditure and savings plans were being addressed.

Thanks were expressed to the s151 Officer and Finance Team for their work in producing the updated budget following unprecedented changes as a consequence of the local government finance settlement.

In accordance with the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the recommendations on the budget calculation and Council Tax setting were the subject of the following named vote:

Members voting FOR the resolutions below:

Councillors Joe Baker, Natalie Brookes, Greg Chance, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Pattie Hill, Wanda King, Mark Shurmer, Rachael Smith, Yvonne Smith, Paul Swansborough, Debbie Taylor, Jennifer Wheeler, Pat Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford.

Members voting AGAINST the resolutions below:

Councillors Roger Bennett, Juliet Brunner, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Anita Clayton, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, Gay

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Hopkins, Jane Potter, Gareth Prosser, Antonia Pulsford and David Thain.

Accordingly, the motions were approved, and it was consequently

RESOLVED that

- 1) the savings and additional income for 2016/17 of £654K as set out in Appendix 1 to these minutes be approved;
- 2) the revenue bid for 2016/17 of £10k for Planning – Redditch Town Centre be approved;
- 3) the capital bids of £1.220m as set out in Appendix 2 to these minutes be approved;
- 4) the unavoidable pressures for 2016/17 of £305k as set out in Appendix 3 to these minutes be approved;
- 5) the transfer from balances of £479k in 2016/17 be approved;
- 6) the increase in Council Tax by £5 (2.2%) per band D equivalent be approved;
- 7) it be noted that at its meeting on 12th January 2016, the Executive Committee calculated the Council Tax Base 2016/17 as follows:
 - (a) for the whole Council area as 25,144.49 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and
 - (b) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates; this being Feckenham Parish as 365.88;
- 8) the Council Tax requirement for the Council’s own purposes for 2016/17 (excluding Parish precepts) is calculated at £5,587,357;
- 9) the following amounts be calculated for the year 2015/16 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
 - (a) £59,466,364 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils) (*i.e. Gross expenditure*);

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- (b) £53,870,707 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. (*i.e. Gross income*);
- (c) £5,595,657 being the amount by which the aggregate of 9(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 9(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);
- (d) £222.54 being the amount at 9(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (7(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
- (e) £8,300 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Feckenham Parish precept) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act;
- (f) £222.21 being the amount at 9(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 9(e) above by Item T (7(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;
- (g) £244.90 being the amount given by adding to the amount at 9(f), the amount of the special item relating to the Parish of Feckenham 9(e), divided by the amount in 7(b) above;
- (h) the amounts below given by multiplying the amounts at 9(f) and 9(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in B and D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken

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into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation band;

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	163.27	148.14
B	7/9	190.48	172.83
C	8/9	217.69	197.52
D	1	244.90	222.21
E	11/9	299.32	271.59
F	13/9	353.74	320.97
G	15/9	408.17	370.35
H	18/9	489.80	444.42

10. it be noted that for the year 2016/17, Worcestershire County Council, Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated below;

Valuation Band	Worcestershire County Council £	Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia £	Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority £
A	748.21	126.40	52.00
B	872.91	147.47	60.67
C	997.61	168.54	69.33
D	1,122.31	189.60	78.00
E	1,371.72	231.74	95.33
F	1,621.12	273.87	112.67
G	1,870.52	316.01	130.00
H	2,244.63	379.21	156.00

- 11) Having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 9(h) and 10 above, that Redditch Borough Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown below as the amounts of Council Tax for

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2016/17 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings;

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	1,089.88	1,074.75
B	7/9	1,271.53	1,253.88
C	8/9	1,453.17	1,433.00
D	1	1,634.81	1,612.12
E	11/9	1,998.11	1,970.38
F	13/9	2,361.40	2,328.63
G	15/9	2,724.70	2,686.88
H	18/9	3,269.64	3,224.26

- 12) that the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments under Section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund by ten equal instalments between April 2016 to March 2017 as detailed below;

	Precept £	Surplus on Collection Fund £	Total to pay £
Worcestershire County Council	28,219,978	516,402	28,736,380
Police & Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	4,767,493	88,909	4,856,402
Hereford & Worcester Fire	1,961,249	36,585	1,997,834

- 13) that the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make transfers under Section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund to the General Fund the sum of £5,595,655 being the Council's own demand on the Collection Fund (£5,587,355) and Parish Precept (£8,300) and the distribution of the Surplus on the Collection Fund (£104,039);

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- 14) that the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments from the General Fund to Feckenham Parish Council the sums listed above (£8,300) by instalment on 1 April 2016 in respect of the precept levied on the Council;
- 15) that the above resolutions 9 to 11 be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Taxes;
- 16) notices of the making of the said Council Taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992; and
- 17) the Pay Policy Statement 2016/17 as set out at Appendix 2 to the report to the 22nd February Executive Committee be approved.

87. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

There were no Urgent Decisions to note.

88. URGENT BUSINESS - GENERAL (IF ANY)

There were no separate items of urgent business to consider at this meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 7.35 pm
and closed at 8.07 pm

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Chair

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106. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures at Appendix 1 to the report be approved;**
- 2) the Manual Handling Policy and Procedures at Appendix 2 to the report be approved;**
- 3) the Accident Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy and Procedures at Appendix 3 to the report be approved;**
- 4) the Display Screen Equipment Policy and Procedures at Appendix 4 to the report be approved;**
- 5) the Contractor Safety Policy and Procedures at Appendix 5 to the report be approved;**
- 6) the Lone Working Policy and Procedures at Appendix 6 to the report be approved; and**
- 7) the Substance Misuse (Drugs, Alcohol & Other Substances) at Work Policy at Appendix 7 to the report approved.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE8th March 2016**Health & Safety policies for Approval by Committee**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Head of Transformation & OD – Deb Poole
Ward(s) Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

1.1 Members are asked to consider the following Health & Safety policies:

Fire Safety
 Manual Handling (revised)
 Accident and Incident Investigation and Reporting
 Display Screen Equipment Policy (revised)
 Contractor Safety & Security
 Lone Working (revised)
 Substance Misuse Policy

These policies incorporate recent changes in legislation and are either new policies or existing policies that have been revised as identified above.

1.2 All of the above Policies have been approved by the Council's Health and Safety Committee and the trade unions.

1.2 As an employer we have a legal duty to have these policies in place for all of our employees. Whilst the Corporate Health and Safety Policy is an overarching policy, there is a requirement to also have specific policies.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** to Full Council the approval of the Health & Safety policies listed above.

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from these policies.

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- 3.2 However if the Council does not have such policies in place it should be noted that enforcement action could be taken against the council by the Health and Safety Executive as the enforcing authority.

Legal Implications

- 3.3 The Council has a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 to ensure health and safety in the workplace.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.5 These policies are applicable to all service areas throughout the council. Appropriate training in respect of these policies will be provided.
- 3.6 Health & Safety policies will be available to all employees on the Orb or in hard copy format where appropriate. All employees are required to undertake a Health & Safety induction, and health & safety policies form part of this induction process.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.7 A robust Health & Safety approach ensures that the services we provide to our customers are carried out safely, with the needs of all individuals taken into account.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Whilst the Council has a Health and Safety Policy in place it is recommended that specific policies are written to cover specific risks within the business.
- 4.2 The Council could be subject to prosecution and or investigation by the Health and Safety Executive if the council are found not to have appropriate policies in place. This will have an impact on the reputation of the Council and could also lead to a prosecution.

5. APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 - Fire Safety Policy
- Appendix 2 - Manual Handling Policy
- Appendix 3 - Accident and Incident Investigation & Reporting Policy
- Appendix 4 - Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Appendix 5 - Contractor Safety & Security Policy
- Appendix 6 - Lone Working Policy
- Appendix 7 - Substance Misuse Policy

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8th March 2016

Not applicable

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Becky Talbot, HR & OD Manager

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL



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HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

FIRE SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Human Resources and Organisational Development
Redditch Borough Council
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire.
B98 8AH

Health and Safety Team 01527 64252

Fire Safety Policy

Fire Safety Policy Statement

The Elected Members, the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service of Redditch Borough Council are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of their valued employees and recognises that fire prevention is a health and safety issue and acknowledge the importance of identifying and reducing potential causes of fire within the workplace.

Redditch Borough Council actively seeks to create and maintain a working environment safe from the risks of fire, in compliance with the legislation of specific relevance to fire safety:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmosphere Regulations 2002
- Building Regulations 2000

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare with regard to fire, of all its employees and any others who may use their Council buildings. It also acknowledges its responsibility to protect Council buildings and assets from the threat of arson and the accidental outbreak of fire and the risk of serious disruption to Council activities.

The Fire Safety Policy and Procedures supports the Councils Health and Safety Policy. The Council will:

- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to carry out their duties effectively and safely.
- Provide safe equipment and systems of work.
- Carry out suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments for all areas and implement appropriate remedial actions.
- Be proactive in fire prevention and reactive in fire and near miss investigation.
- Carry out fire drills to test the effectiveness of procedures and equipment as appropriate.

Objectives

To eliminate or minimise so far as is reasonably practicable, the risk of injury to:

- All Council employees
- Staff, Agency workers, Apprentices, work experience and Contractors
- All non-employees of the Council, including the general public, visitors to Council premises, to include Councillors, and any other person who may be affected by the activities or undertakings of the Council or its employees at work.

The Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for ensuring the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures are implemented and that responsibilities are assigned, accepted and

fulfilled at all levels. The Corporate Health and Safety Committee will support the implementation of the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures.

All staff are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm. They have the responsibility for ensuring that they are familiar with and understand the content of any relevant documents that relate to fire safety for the Council and must cooperate fully with the Council in complying with all procedures and measures to protect the safety and wellbeing of all.

Problems relating to fire safety in any Council building must be reported to the Health and Safety Team and Place Partnership (PPL) at the earliest opportunity, so that remedial action may be taken.

Introduction

This document provides all staff with guidance in relation to fire safety at the Council. The Fire Safety Policy and Procedures will be reviewed and updated at least every 3 years or if there are any significant changes e.g. Legislation, technology, new premises etc. by the Health and Safety Team. This document consists of three parts:

- Part One: Fire Safety Policy
- Part Two: Procedures
- Part Three: Roles and Responsibilities

Though Procedures are referred to in this document the Council has a number of premises for which it is responsible. Therefore reference also needs to be made to the Procedures for each individual premise as there will be slight differences.

Part One: Fire Safety Policy

1. Safe Working Environment

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO) is the primary legislation for fire safety. The Fire Safety Order applies not only to persons at work, but to all persons lawfully on the premises and those not on the premises that may be affected by a fire on the premises. Risk Assessment is used as the basis for compliance and the “responsible person” for the Council is held liable in case of any breach.

To comply with current legislation, the Council will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of all people on their premises or affected by their activities, with regard to fire.

In order to create and maintain a safe working environment the Council will:

- Safeguard the wellbeing of all employees, visitors and contractors through adherence to best practice and through managerial support.
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to enable all persons to carry out their duties effectively and safely.
- Carry out suitable and sufficient fire risk assessments for all areas. Assess any deficiencies and implement recommended improvements to buildings and procedures as appropriate.
- Provide safe systems of work for all hazardous activities.
- Ensure that flammable substances are stored and used in accordance with DSEAR (The Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations of 2002) and the Councils policy and technical guidance notes.
- Conduct fire safety inspections of buildings, plant, equipment and work practices to ensure safe standards are maintained.
- Conduct evacuation drills in each building at least twice per year to maintain over all awareness and practice procedures.
- Be proactive in fire prevention and encourage a no blame culture for the reporting of incidents or near misses.
- Be reactive by investigating incidences of fire and false alarms that have occurred, concentrating on the cause and response, rather than just the outcomes.
- Promote risk management by implementing and maintaining effective control measures.
- Ensure visiting contractors activities are controlled in accordance with council policies.
- Ensure that the buildings are maintained to a high standard with regard to fire prevention, containment, detection, alarms, means of escape etc. and in compliance with latest legislation, approved codes of practice and relevant standards.
- Review and audit all the arrangements for fire safety to ensure that they remain current and relevant.
- Carry out fire drills to test the effectiveness of procedures and equipment as appropriate.

All staff should note that the ownership of fire safety responsibility lies with the person in charge of the workplace or activity and is devolved to each member of staff, but every person may contribute to the effective management of risks.

The Council will achieve control by securing the commitment of employees to clear fire safety objectives. Line Managers must take responsibility for controlling factors which could lead to a fire.

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the details of the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures are implemented and that responsibilities for fire safety are properly assigned, accepted and fulfilled at all levels with operational assistance and advice from the Health and Safety Team. Good working relationships shall be maintained between the Health and Safety Team, Managers and staff so that a partnership exists and any fire safety issues that are raised are resolved through discussion and consultation.

2. Reporting, Measuring and Monitoring Performance

The Council recognises that for fire safety management to be successful, supervisors and managers must monitor all activities. Everyone in the Council is encouraged to be proactive in promoting fire safety in existing practices and systems of work.

The Council recognises that on one occasion the outcome of a fire or near miss may be insignificant and that on another, the result may be serious. Therefore all fires and near misses must be reported to the Health and Safety Team immediately. These will be investigated and suggestions sought as to how such an occurrence may be avoided in the future if appropriate.

The data collected is analysed by the Health and Safety Team to identify trends and make recommendations. All such reports are provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee and Corporate Management Team.

Fire Risk Assessments will be carried out for each building or more frequently if required, and remedial action plans will be produced. This process will prioritise any management or building improvements necessary to comply with legislation and best practice.

Auditing will be undertaken by competent persons who are trained in the task and will achieve the following:

- Review the fire safety policy and procedure
- Ensure compliance with Fire Safety Legislation.
- Identify improvements needed to maintain safety standards such as additional lighting, sounders or detection
- Promote fire safety awareness throughout the organisation.
- Assess performance of fire safety systems.
- Check the monitoring arrangements.
- Monitor the effectiveness of fire drills.

The Council promotes quality auditing, which highlights any problem areas, suggests remedial measures and monitors the action taken to control the risks to employees, other persons and property from fire.

3. Fire Safety Training

The Council will provide fire safety training for all staff at the appropriate level. All new employees will receive a fire safety briefing as part of Induction training. Refresher training will be carried out at appropriate intervals.

All staff with an identified role e.g. Fire wardens will receive training sufficient to ensure their competency in their specific role.

Fire evacuation drills will be held for all buildings at least twice per year. Fire drills will be organised by building managers and or the Health and Safety Team and Place Partnership. A record of fire drills will be kept in the building Fire Log Book. The Health and Safety Team will monitor and assist with fire drills where required.

Part Two: Fire Safety Precautions

All Council premises have fire safety precautions in place following the completion of fire risk assessments and a review of fire compartmentation and fire prevention in each building. The complexity of the provisions of fire safety precautions provided depends on the usage and age of the building.

These are all subject to regular checks and maintenance through the Officer in Charge and the provider of the equipment. All defects and concerns are to be reported through the Place Partnership in the first instance for remedial action to be taken.

1. Fire Doors

Fire doors must be kept closed at all times (unless the doors are fitted with automatic closers which activate when the alarm sounds) to maintain compartmentation of the building and to prevent the spread of fire, smoke and toxic fumes.

Corridors, stairways, landings and escape routes must be kept clear at all times of anything that is likely to cause a fire, accident or to impede evacuation in an emergency.

Hazardous materials must be stored, used and disposed of in accordance with all legal requirements and safe working practices.

All firefighting equipment must be kept free from obstruction and be readily available for use in an emergency. Portable fire-fighting equipment must not be removed or repositioned without consultation with the Health and Safety Team

Any damage to equipment provided for fire safety purposes must be reported immediately to the Health and Safety Team and Place Partnership.

2. Means of Escape – routine inspection

All Council buildings will be visually inspected at the start of each working day. The inspection should include that:

- All exit doors and gates are unlocked and readily available for use, or they are capable of being opened quickly and easily in the event of a fire.
- Any emergency fastenings are working efficiently
- Any doors, gates or shutters that are required to be locked in the open position are so locked;
- All escape routes and exit doors are clear of any obstructions
- Fire doors are not held open except with approved devices
- There are no obvious fire hazards on escape routes, such as accumulated waste
- Any evacuation lifts for disabled persons are working where installed.
- All defects reported, logged and programmed for remedy.

Fire doors will be regularly visually checked by Place Partnership or nominated Contractor on a periodic basis. If in the meantime any issues are found they must be reported immediately.

3. Testing and Maintenance

3.1 Fire Alarms

The fire alarm system will be tested weekly by Place Partnership, a member of staff or an external provider sourced by them using a different call point for each successive test. The duration of the test will be sufficient to check that the system operates satisfactorily. Any defects should receive immediate attention to Place Partnership helpdesk. A record of tests will be kept in the Fire Log Book for each property. The fire alarm system will be maintained in the manner and at the intervals recommended by the manufacturers of the equipment.

In the event of a fire alarm failure:

If the failure is due to last for more than 12 hours additional security arrangements and fire watches/patrols will be introduced for that respective building. All staff will be briefed through Communications on the actions to take and kept up to date.

In such circumstances any activities/works being undertaken which could pose a fire risk will be suspended until the fire alarm is up and running again i.e. hot works.

If the outage is due to last for the working day staff are to be advised of the outage and everyone is to remain extra vigilant for the duration including Fire Wardens, Caretakers and Managers.

3.2 Portable Fire Extinguishers

All portable fire extinguishing equipment will be tested and maintained on an annual basis by a competent person. Place Partnership has responsibility for organising this contract for all Redditch premises.

3.3 Emergency Lighting

All emergency lighting systems will be regularly tested and properly maintained to an appropriate standard. Most existing systems will need to be manually tested. However, some modern systems have self-testing facilities that reduce routine checks to a minimum. The monthly testing is either done by staff within the building or sub-Contracted out by the Place Partnership.

A record of the tests will be kept in the Fire Log Book and any formal reports will be held by Place Partnership but at least an electronic copy should be available on site.

3.4 Special procedures

In some situations (e.g. gas isolation, shut downs, personal emergency evacuation plans etc.) there may be a need to have special procedures in place. These procedures will be produced by the relevant department in conjunction with the Health and Safety Team. The relevant department will ensure that members of staff have been trained or briefed on the procedure as appropriate.

4. Fire Log Book

A Fire Log Book is kept and maintained in each Council premise. The Fire Log Book includes:

- Useful telephone contacts
- Senior Advisor's (Health, Safety & Wellbeing) and Fire Wardens' details
- Visits by the local Fire and Rescue Service
- Fire Alarm System – record of tests
- Fire Alarm System – Contractors record of maintenance
- Emergency Lighting System – record of tests
- Emergency Lighting System – Contractors record of maintenance
- Fire door Inspection – Record sheet
- Fire door Inspection Guide
- Staff Fire Instructions/Evacuation Drill-Record sheets
- Fire Evacuation Record

5. Fire Action Procedure

Fire action notices are posted throughout each building and can be found on exit routes normally adjacent to call points or portable fire equipment. These will identify the location of the Assembly Point and how to contact the Emergency Services.

If you discover a fire:

- Raise the alarm immediately by shouting fire
- Operate the nearest fire alarm call point (break-glass box located at all exits).
- Leave the building via the nearest and safest exit
- Report to your designated assembly point.
- Do not stop and collect personal belongings.
- Do not use the lift.

If trained to do so and if minimal risk exists, tackle the fire with appliances found at exits and other key locations.

Fire Wardens will carry out their duties as described in part three of this policy. The Officer in Charge will coordinate information and activities as described in part three of this policy.

6. Disabled People

People with disabilities which may hinder the evacuation in an emergency situation must have a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) in place. These can be drawn up in consultation with the Health and Safety Team.

Visiting persons with disabilities are required to inform a member of staff if they require help evacuating a building in an emergency.

7. Cooperation and Coordination

The Council will take all reasonable steps to coordinate the arrangements for managing fire safety, where premises are shared with other organisations.

Part Three: Roles and Responsibilities

1. Overall Responsibility

The Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the arrangements for managing Fire Safety are in place and regularly monitored. This ultimate responsibility cannot be delegated. However, the functions related to that responsibility may be delegated.

Contained within the Fire Safety Order is reference to a 'responsible person' who has overall responsibility for fire safety within workplaces under his control. The 'responsible person' within the Council is the Chief Executive who is ultimately responsible for the following:

- To take such general fire precautions as will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of all their employees.
- In relation to relevant persons who are not their employees, take such general fire precautions as may reasonably be required in the circumstances.
- Establish procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to relevant persons.
- Arrange for fire safety matters to be discussed by the corporate management Team where necessary.
- Ensure arrangements are made for joint consultation of all employees with regard to all fire safety matters.

2. Directors

The Directors are responsible to ensure the discharge of the fire safety function on behalf of the Chief Executive through the following means:

- The implementation of the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures
- Acting upon the recommendations and requirements of the fire risk assessment
- Fire safety linked to a particular process or procedure under their control
- Ensure that adequate fire safety information, instruction, training and supervision is provided to all employees within their directorate.
- Appointing suitable responsible persons to undertake all necessary fire arrangements and procedures.

3. Heads of Service

Fire safety legislation as it affects each directorate, together with training, administration and day to day working requirements, justify the need for delegation to personnel under the directorate control. For this purpose, Heads of Service are responsible to the Chief Executive and Directors (as applicable) for all matters relating to fire safety within their service area through the following means:

- Corporate safety arrangements, instructions and section guidance relating to fire safety are practised and information relating to regulations and codes of practice is disseminated to those employees for whom they are responsible.

- Publish written and signed safe working arrangements (systems of work) where necessary to safeguard against the risk of fire and to bring them to the attention of their employees.
- Maintain fire safety when reorganising workplaces, changing systems of work or introducing new plant or machinery. In consultation with the Health and Safety Team and or Place Partnership.
- Ensure that the responsibilities of their managers/supervisors are carried out.
- Support the Chief Executive and Directors in implementing & discharging their duties under the Fire Safety Order.
- Identify and ensure that suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision is provided and that all employees in their Service Areas are competent in the fire safety aspects of the work they are required to undertake.
- Identify and appoint a sufficient number of fire wardens for their service areas.
- Ensure that the appointed fire wardens receive suitable & sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to fulfil their role.

4. Line Managers and Supervisors

Line Managers/Supervisors are responsible to their Head of Service for all matters relating to fire safety within their area of responsibility. Each manager or supervisor will be responsible within their section for ensuring that:

- Corporate safety arrangements, instructions and section guidance relating to fire safety are practised & information relating to regulations and codes of practice is disseminated to those employees for whom they are responsible.
- They will also ensure that safe working methods are practised at all times and necessary controls are maintained.
- They are familiar with the Corporate Fire Safety Policy, Organisation and arrangements document, and any safety rules or codes of practice developed from it.
- All fire hazards are identified, the necessary risk assessments completed and control measures developed or maintained to reduce or eliminate the risk of harm to all persons who interface with the work area or operations.
- Suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision is provided and that all employees in their section are competent in all aspects of fire safety.
- Fire wardens are appointed and additional fire safety training is provided for the appointed fire wardens within their areas of responsibility.
- Employees under their control comply with safe working arrangements and systems at work as it relates to fire safety.
- Fire safety provisions or procedures as set out in the Section 3 Arrangements document (see below), or elsewhere are understood and followed by all persons within their section including visitors and contractors.
- All new employees attend a health and safety induction course that covers basic fire safety procedures, followed by on the job fire safety training and familiarisation or refresher training (where necessary).
- Fire safety inspections are carried out to determine the effectiveness of the safe working arrangements.

- To work closely with the Health and Safety Team and Safety Representatives in respect of matters that may affect the fire safety of their employees.
- To maintain and update their skills, information and knowledge relating to fire safety matters.
- Plant, machinery and equipment used at work as it relates to fire safety, is safe, maintained in good working order and used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and inspection and maintenance records kept.
- Adequate supervision is available at all times where necessary, especially where young people are involved.

5. Health and Safety Team

The Health and Safety Team is responsible for conducting fire risk assessments and for providing advice, training, monitoring and auditing of the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures. The Health and Safety Team will have the following responsibilities:

- Provide or arrange assistance, on fire safety matters for the Council and its officers, to enable management to meet their statutory obligations and ensure consistent application of the Council Fire Safety Policy.
- The maintenance, amendment and distribution of the Fire Safety Policy and supporting documents.
- Advise and assist management to fulfil their responsibilities for the fire safety of employees and others affected by their actions.
- Source information and advice on the design and implementation of safe systems of work, selection, provision and use of appropriate fire safety equipment.
- Promote regular fire safety training for all employees in collaboration with all Heads of Service.
- Promote and deliver fire safety training for all fire wardens at appropriate intervals.
- Liaise with statutory bodies such as the HSE and the Fire and Rescue Service as necessary.
- Carry out periodic assessments, inspections or audits and draw to the attention of the appropriate Head of Service, concerns as to any unsafe working practices, procedures, plant or any breach of legislation concerning fire safety and wherever possible, advising on remedial action.
- Assist Line Managers, through on site visits where appropriate, to ensure that contractors comply with all fire safety considerations and other relevant requirements affecting their undertakings on behalf of the Council.
- Promote a positive fire safety culture in conjunction with line management, encouraging fire safety consciousness at all levels within the organisation.

6. Fire Marshal

Sufficient numbers of Fire Wardens will have been identified for each premises to assist the evacuation of staff and visitors from the building in the event of a fire or another emergency occurring.

A workplace fire warden must not put themselves at risk while carrying out their duties, they are essentially there to carry out many elements of a fire risk assessment, to increase the chances of preventing a fire in the first place. There are often times where fire occurs, and the warden needs to react. In a reactive position, their responsibilities are:

- Attend any training in relation to their duties for the building in which they are responsible.
- Fighting fires / use of fire extinguishers if they feel it is safe to do so.
- Raise the alarm via the nearest call point and ensuring all staff in their area make their way to a place of safety outside.
- Sweep all rooms where safe to do so ensuring toilets and places like walk in cupboards are checked.
- Assist disabled people where identified.
- Close all windows in rooms and corridors and close all doors and fire doors as they make their way out of the building.
- Report to the Chief Fire Marshal that their area is clear, any observations etc.
- Ensure that all new staff (in their Service area) are familiarised with the layout including exit routes within the first day of their arrival by either themselves or their Manager.
- Ensure through regular inspection that all walkways, exit routes etc are kept clear and tidy within their work area.
- Report any deficiencies in fire-fighting equipment, alarms etc to the Health & Safety Team and Place Partnership.
- Ensure that all staff evacuate from their work area in a timely manner should the fire alarm sound including checking toilets, meeting rooms etc.
- Refer any persons who may have difficulty evacuating the building in the event of a fire to the Health and Safety team for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan to be drawn up.

7. Officer in Charge (OIC)

A member of staff has been nominated as an OIC for each Council premise and will take day to day responsibility for ensuring that all systems in place are running as required and for reporting any deficiencies to Place Partnership.

8. Place Partnership

Place Partnership is responsible for the implementation of the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures where it applies to building structure.

9. Safety Representatives

In addition to their general duties as employees, Safety Representatives have fire safety responsibilities to their members to:

- Promote co-operation between management and employees and monitor the local arrangements for effecting the authority's Fire Safety Policy.
- Make periodic inspections of selected areas of the authority's work places and equipment in the interest of fire safety in conjunction with management and/or the Health and Safety Team

10. All other employees

Staff must be familiar with and comply with the Fire safety policy and procedures and report any shortcomings in fire precautions to their manager. All staff must familiarise themselves with the fire procedures for the building in which they work as each may differ slightly due to building use, layout, numbers of staff etc. All employees will comply with the following requirements:

- To co-operate with their employers so far as is necessary to enable the employer to comply with their legal obligations.
- To act in accordance with all fire safety procedures, safe systems of work or instructions that have been initiated by management for their health and safety.
- To take reasonable care of their own health and safety and the health and safety of any other person who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Not to intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of fire safety.
- Report without delay any work situation to that person's line manager that represents a serious and immediate danger to fire safety.
- Report without delay any matter to that person's line manager that represented a shortcoming in the Council's protection arrangements for fire safety.

11. Visitors

Visitors must comply with the Fire Safety Policy and Procedure. These will be provided to them on arrival and be printed on the reverse of their Identity badge.

12. Contractors

Contractors must comply with:

- The Fire Safety policy and procedures
- The Safety Guidelines for Contractors specifically the fire precautions element.



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HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Human Resources and Organisational Development
Redditch Borough Council
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire.
B98 8AH

Health and Safety Team 01527 64252

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. Statement of Intent

Redditch Borough Council recognises its responsibilities to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Manual Handling Operations Regulations (1992) as well as other related legislation in regard to the manual handling of loads for all employees of the Council.

The Council recognises that also musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) pose a significant risk of injury to employees and recognises the responsibility to ensure all measures are taken to provide and maintain working conditions that are safe, healthy and comply with Statutory requirements and Approved Codes Of Practice (ACOP).

To this end, the Council will ensure that adequate resources are made available, so far as is reasonably practicable, to ensure the implementation of this policy.

This policy is based on an ergonomic risk assessment approach. Its aim is to avoid, assess and reduce risk, so far as is reasonably practicable, from manual handling tasks, involving people and inanimate loads.

The emphasis is on risk assessment resulting in recommended safe systems of work/handling plans that involve, where appropriate and so far as is reasonably practicable, the use of appropriate mechanical or automated equipment.

The aim of this policy is to set out the systems and procedures by which the Council will achieve, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe systems of work and a safe working environment with regard to manual handling operations by any of its staff. Such operations may be carried out on any Council premises or in community locations.

1.1 Objectives of the Policy

The primary objective is to avoid the need for hazardous manual handling. Where any such handling tasks cannot be eliminated a competent risk assessor will carry out an ergonomic assessment in order to minimise the risk of injury due to the manual handling task.

A manual-handling hazard can be defined as:

“any transporting or supporting of a load, by one or more workers, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling, carrying, or moving a load, which, by reason of its characteristics or of unfavourable ergonomic conditions, involves a risk particularly of back injury to workers.”

2. LEGISLATION

2.1 Current legislation and guidance documents

There are several pieces of legislation relating to the practice of safe manual handling at work and the most relevant are listed below. Key points that relate to policy and procedures which are required are also given; however for full details of the specific legislation, reference should be made to RBC Health and Safety Policy.

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995
- Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (“PUWER ‘98”)
- Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER ‘98)

The Health and Safety at Work Act etc. (1974)

This act remains the enabling act for all subsequent legislation and sets out responsibilities for both employer and employee. The employer is required to provide:

“such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of his employees”.

The act requires employees to:

“take reasonable care for his or her own safety and the health and safety of other people who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions.”

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992

These regulations establish a clear hierarchy of measures to be taken by employers:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided and taking account of all factors: task, load, individual capacity, environment and equipment.
- Reduce the risk of injury from these operations as far as is reasonably practicable and using an ergonomic approach.

The employee also has a specified responsibility to:

- Co-operate with safe systems of work and follow Health and Safety instructions
- Participate in training and to report defects

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The employer is further required to:

- Make suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk to the Health and Safety of their employees whilst at work as well as the risk to the health and safety of others who may be affected. The assessment must be written if more than 5 people are employed
- Record any group of people who may be at risk of injury
- Give information on the nature of manual handling hazards
- Set up emergency procedures

Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (“PUWER ‘98”)

These regulations specify requirements of the employer to ensure that all equipment provided for use at work is:

- Suitable for the intended use
- Maintained in a safe condition so that people’s health and safety is not at risk
- Inspected in certain circumstances to ensure that it is and continues to be safe for use. Inspection must be by a competent person and a record must be kept

Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER ‘98)

In addition to PUWER above, these are further requirements to maintain the safety of lifting equipment – i.e.: hoists, slings and adjustable height furniture; in particular these regulations specify the time scale for maintenance:

- Equipment for lifting persons that may be exposed to conditions causing deterioration is inspected and maintained at six monthly intervals and a record kept of the inspection
- Employees should be trained in use of equipment and in pre-use checks

Reasonably practical - Legislation requires that control measures are put in place to reduce identified risk so far as is reasonably practicable; that is to assess the cost of the control measure against the consequences of the identified risk. It should be remembered that there are potential financial implications to the consequences of unmanaged risk as well as to control measures to reduce risk.

High risk ↑ ↓ Low risk	High risk – low cost imperative	high risk – high cost imperative or acceptable alternative
	Low risk – low cost Advisable	low risk – high cost may not be required
	Low cost ←	→ high cost

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This section documents the roles and responsibilities of all individuals and groups of staff involved in manual handling at Redditch Borough Council.

3.1 The Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Directors have ultimate accountability for ensuring compliance with Health and Safety Legislation within Redditch Borough Council.

3.2 Heads of Service have the responsibility for ensuring implementation of the policy in their service area, with particular attention to the following:

- The avoidance where reasonably practicable of hazardous manual handling activities and work situations involving poor postures.
- Where these situations cannot be avoided, risk assessments are undertaken and control measures implemented to reduce the risk.
- Ensuring that Managers are adequately trained and competent to manage manual handling risk within their area of responsibility.
- Ensure that sufficient funding is available in order to purchase manual handling aids to assist staff in manual handling activities.
- Ensure that all manual handling activities are kept to a minimum and avoided wherever possible through mechanisation, automation etc.

3.3 Line Managers and Supervisors

Due to the fact that Managers and Supervisors are aware of the activities that their staff undertake in the workplace they have the following responsibilities:

- Be aware of the manual handling activities within their own area of responsibility and ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place and suitably recorded.
- Ensure systems are in place to identify all staff involved in manual handling activities, and ensure that they receive adequate training (including temporary and relief staff).
- Where equipment has been identified as required to reduce manual handling risks to acceptable levels this shall be provided, recorded and appropriately maintained as per the regulations.

- Ensure that all staff receive appropriate training before carrying out any manual handling tasks and that accurate records are kept of the training content and attendance
- Ensure that written risk assessments are kept and updated to identify appropriate control measures to minimise manual handling risks as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure employees are made aware of the findings of risk assessments, manual handling operations plans and safe systems of work
- Ensure that equipment provided is suitable and sufficient and is maintained in accordance with relevant legislation (PUWER, LOLER)
- Ensure that systems are in place for the periodic review and updating of risk assessments, with changes communicated to all those that face the risk from the manual handling hazard
- Give details of moving and handling requirements in job descriptions and person specifications
- Give full information to staff on the nature and weight of manual handling hazards within their workplace.
- Ensure that any equipment which is identified as necessary following risk assessment, is available for employees to use and they are all trained in its use
- Manual handling accidents/incidents are reported via the Orb and investigated with aim of preventing a reoccurrence.

3.4 Employees

Each employee is required to -

- Take reasonable care for their own health & safety and for that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions;
- Be aware of health and safety issues and the hazards associated with manual handling tasks including the cumulative effect of repeated manual handling operations
- Utilise appropriate equipment, where provided, in order to reduce the risks associated with a manual handling operation. The equipment should be used for its intended purpose and in line with any information and instruction the employee has received.
- Undertake manual handling operations in the way in which they have been instructed and trained
- Undertake visual checks on all relevant equipment used in conjunction with manual handling operations prior to its use
- Inform their immediate supervisor of any condition from which they are suffering which could affect the ability to comply with the requirements of this policy or carry out their duties safely;
- Inform manager of any concerns regarding their health and safety or that of any other relevant person in relation to safe manual handling operations
- Identify and alert managers or any new activity, equipment or change in circumstances that may require a risk assessment

- Ensure that any clothing /uniform that is worn will not be restrictive to the movement and posture required for safe handling; ensure footwear will be protective, offering good support and grip.
- Comply with Redditch Borough Council's policy on incident and accident reporting and report all accidents and incidents, however minor.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Legislation requires that all manual handling operations that may present a risk of injury must be the subject of a risk assessment carried out by a competent person and using an ergonomic approach. The assessment must be suitable and sufficient and if more than five people are employed it must be in writing. Legislation also suggests that where employees of different employers work in the same workplace that their employers co-operate to produce an overall risk assessment.

The purpose of a risk assessment is to:

- Identify all hazardous moving and handling tasks carried out at work and determine the likelihood and severity of any injury or harm arising from these tasks and to whom
- Assess all factors, including existing control measures, involved in the hazard using the TILE(E) analysis – given below (loads may be animate or inanimate)
- Identify control measures that will reduce the risk of injury to acceptable levels
- Identify all employees who may be at risk of injury from moving and handling tasks in the performance of their duties

The TILE(E) analysis in risk assessment

Manual handling risk assessment can be divided into the five areas, each of which has factors that influence the level of risk associated with the moving and handling operation. All of these areas require consideration during the assessment:

T(ask) – does the task involve:

- Twisting or stooping
- Strenuous pushing or pulling
- Excessive lifting or lowering
- Handling at a distance from the trunk
- High task frequency without adequate rest periods

I(ndividual movers) – do the people carrying out the tasks require:

- Specialised training
- Unusual strength or ability
- A uniform or personal protective equipment
- Consideration during impaired ability – for example if pregnant

L(oad) – is the person or object being moved:

- Heavy or large

- Unwieldy or difficult to grasp
- Unpredictable or unstable
- Vulnerable to injury or fragile
- Sharp, hot or hazardous in any other way

E(nvironment) – does the area in which work is carried out have:

- Restricted space
- Slippery or uneven floors
- Slopes ramps or steps
- Adequate levels of heat light and ventilation

E(quipment) – is any equipment used:

- Suitable for the task
- Available in all circumstances
- Maintained and inspected
- Clean

The three different types of risk assessment are:

4.1 Generic risk assessment covering the whole office or work activities together with any locations visited by staff outside these sites as part of their duties. A generic assessment must be completed at least annually and more frequently should significant changes in equipment, work place or staffing occur. The risk assessment is used to identify manual handling hazards and required control measures using the TILE(E) assessment.

4.2 Individual risk assessment to be completed for any member of staff whose capacity for moving and handling at work may be impaired.

4.3 Service User Risk Assessment - In respect of service user risk assessment and handling plans, it is recognised that a specific assessment for each user is required.

All these areas form the basis for both the assessment and the control measures that can be put in place to minimise risk and enable safe systems of work.

4.4 Monitoring risk assessments

It is the Managers responsibility on behalf of the Council to ensure that risk assessments are in place, accurate and updated at agreed intervals. Such intervals must be at least annually, but may be more frequent where conditions are prone to change. It is also necessary to review the risk assessments following significant changes in circumstances. Completion of the risk assessment document can be delegated to a competent risk assessor within the school or office; such an assessor is also likely to discuss moving and handling issues and control measures with the staff. However the Manager must confirm the suitability and accuracy of the assessment.

External monitoring of risk assessment completion and its translation to safe systems of work will be conducted through audit processes carried out by the Health and Safety Team.

5. TRAINING PROCEDURES

5.1 Training format and content

Training and instruction in awareness and safe handling principles will occur in conjunction with other risk control options. Training alone is not effective in the controlling of risks and other organisational and ergonomic factors must also be considered, with safe systems of work developed

All training will meet the standards laid down by Redditch Borough Council and will be tailored to service requirements and will be linked directly to risk assessment.

Managers must carry out a training needs analysis based on the modules as identified by Redditch Borough Council. Managers will be required to identify which modules are required to control the risks involved in the work activities their staff undertake.

Managers will ensure that employees receive appropriate training prior to undertaking any manual handling tasks, or following any significant change in circumstances.

5.2 Refresher Training

Refresher training seeks to ensure that members of staff having received foundation training have retained their competencies. All staff regularly involved in manual handling activities of significant risk will receive refresher training.

5.3 Risk Assessor Training

Line managers and supervisors or appropriately delegated employees who are responsible for undertaking manual handling risk assessments, will be provided with appropriate training that meets the current standards and which allows them to be competent to carry out this requirement.

5.4 Training Records

Records of all training undertaken must be kept by the manager with a copy of the individual training record being forwarded to the employee. Managers and staff will be responsible for booking training and subsequent updates through Human Resources.

6. EQUIPMENT STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

Current legislation in manual handling practice requires that the first duty of employers is to **avoid** manual handling tasks at work. Where manual handling tasks cannot be completely eliminated, they must be assessed and all associated risks reduced as far as reasonably practicable – generally by the provision of further handling aids and equipment, staff training and modifications to the environment.

6.1 Selection of appropriate equipment

Provision of manual handling equipment should be subject to risk assessment. All mechanical equipment used for moving and handling will be maintained in accordance with the Lifting Equipment Lifting Operations Regulations 1998 and the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998.

Equipment will be subject to a six monthly thorough inspection and test by a competent person with records kept centrally and locally. All lifting accessories must be individually identified and subjected to a six monthly documented inspection and test.

An inventory of all equipment must be kept by the manager of a team or establishment who is accountable for the maintenance and review of the inventory.

Managers are responsible for the safe working order of all equipment and ensuring that it is subject to this regime. They are also responsible for contacting the relevant agency for repair or replacement.

All those using manual handling equipment will be required to undertake visual inspections of all equipment prior to use to ensure that there is evidence of above checks and to identify any faults which should be reported to their manager.

Equipment provided to carry out moving and handling actions in the workplace must be:

- fit for the purpose
- available in sufficient quantity
- maintained in good working order
- cleaned in accordance best practice to avoid cross-infection

Maintenance of equipment within the Council must comply with the standards set out within these regulations. Maintenance must be carried out by a suitably qualified person, which may be organised directly with the provider or be on a service contract arranged by Place Partnership Ltd.

6.2 Purchase and funding of equipment

Manual handling equipment must be provided in circumstances where it has been assessed by a competent assessor to be the most appropriate

and reasonably practicable method to reduce manual handling risks to acceptable levels. In the first instance Departments/Service areas will be responsible for the provision of such equipment from their delegated budgets.

7. MONITORING OF MANUAL HANDLING ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Any manual handling injury or incident that occurs at work must be recorded and reported as soon as possible. In certain areas paper forms are available but the incident still needs to be reported on the Orb. Any required remedial action to prevent a similar injury or incident must be undertaken immediately or warning signs put in place to reduce the risk of further incident.

The Accident Form on the Orb must be completed in all cases and sent to the Health and Safety Team. If the accident is deemed to be reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) the Health and Safety Team will file the report.

Following any such incident Risk Assessments and work procedures should be reviewed to ensure the continued safety of all staff members.

Further information regarding the reporting and recording of accidents at work can be found in the Accident & Incident Reporting Policy which can be found on the Orb.

8. Review

This policy will be reviewed if there is a significant change in legislation or standards, change in any relevant structure or following any reason to suspect it is no longer valid.

Appendices

There are Four Appendices to this Manual handling operations policy –

Appendix 1 – Glossary of Terms

Appendix 2 - **The HSE's Manual handling operations Risk assessment filter** which has been reproduced from the Manual handling operations Regulations Guidance publication for information and explanation purposes. The Manual handling operations Assessor should be fully competent to understand and implement the contents of this appendix when undertaking Risk assessments.

Appendix 2 – **The HSE's Manual handling of loads Assessment checklist** which has been reproduced from the Manual handling operations Regulations Guidance publication. This assessment checklist has been adopted as the Council's Manual handling operations assessment form and should be used when assessing the manual handling of **loads**.

Appendix 3 – **The HSE’s Pushing and pulling of loads assessment checklist** has been reproduced from the Manual handling operations Regulations Guidance publication. This assessment checklist has been adopted as the Council’s Pushing and pulling of loads assessment form and should be used when assessing the Pushing and pulling of **loads**.

Appendix 1

DEFINITIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

Current legislation in manual handling defines both the employers' and the employees' responsibilities in providing and maintaining a safe working environment. Some of the required terms used within the legislation are as follows:

Manual handling:

The transporting or supporting of a load, (including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving by hand etc. or by bodily force).

Load

Includes any movable object or material supported manually or by tools or equipment. This definition includes people and animals.

Musculoskeletal Disorder (MSD)

Involve the muscles, tendons, joints and skeleton, particularly in the back, hands and arms – symptom from mild aches and pains to severe swelling and inflammation.

Hazard - A hazard is anything that has the potential to cause harm (e.g.: slippery floors, a frayed electric flex or a heavy load).

Risk - A risk is the chance that somebody will be harmed by the hazard and can be quantified as high, moderate or low depending on the severity and likelihood of an incident.

Ergonomics - The study of the relationship between workers and their environment. Ergonomics can be used to assess the 'fit' between people, the work that they do and the things that they use.

Safe systems of work - Safe systems of work require risk assessment and analysis of all manual handling tasks undertaken, the individuals performing such tasks, the loads being handled, the environment in which handling takes place and the equipment available. Control measures to reduce all such identified risks to acceptable levels will result in safe systems of work that can be recorded and implemented.

Generic Risk Assessment

An assessment that encompasses a number of related operations which have similar characteristics.

Individual Risk Assessment

An assessment of the risks arising specifically from the provision of the duty of care to a person. The risk assessment assesses the risks to both the Post holder and anyone else who may be affected by the activities of the Post holder.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

ACCIDENT INCIDENT REPORTING

and INVESTIGATION

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Human Resources and Organisational Development
Redditch Borough Council
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire.
B98 8AH

Health and Safety Team 01527 64252

Accident & Incident Reporting Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Redditch Borough Council has a legal duty to report certain types of accidents, injuries and dangerous occurrences arising out of work activity to the HSE. It also has a responsibility to investigate and keep a record of all accidents causing injury, dangerous occurrences and occurrences of disease or ill-health where they arise out of the work of the Council.

Health and Safety legislation requires employees to inform their employer about anything related to work which has caused or had the potential to cause harm to themselves or others and the monitoring of such reports is an important aspect of the control of health and safety at work. Although an accident free workplace does not necessarily mean that all risks are being controlled adequately it is accepted as a sensible objective and all reasonably practicable measures should be taken by the Council to prevent accidents and work related ill-health to staff.

The reporting and investigation procedure is in place so that accidents and or work related ill-health problems can be recorded and those in appropriate managerial positions can determine the likely cause of the accident and consider action which may be required to prevent recurrence.

The Council promotes an open approach towards accident and incident reporting and positively encourages staff, contractors and visitors to report accidents and incidents and to learn from the outcomes.

2.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the policy are:

- To identify the legal requirement for reporting and investigating accidents and incidents.
- To identify the procedure for reporting accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses at the Council.
- To set out duties and responsibilities in relation to accident and incident reporting and accident and incident investigation of all persons working at the Council or on their premises.
- To identify how accidents and incidents will be recorded and investigated at the Council in order to prevent recurrence.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this policy:

- *Accident* – an unplanned event which lead or could have lead to an injury to people or damage to property. The outcome is often a matter of chance

- *Incident* – any event planned or unplanned which is nevertheless unwanted and which may have resulted in damage to or loss of property or even injury to a person
- *Near Miss* – is an unplanned event which had the potential to cause harm, resulted in no injury, illness or damage to people or property.
- *Dangerous Occurrence* – an event which may or may not have caused damage to or loss of property, but which could also have caused serious injury or death had circumstances been different, e.g. a heavy object falling from a building.
- *Hazard* – a hazard is something which has the potential to cause harm. Thus working at height, dangerous chemical or broken paving slab are all hazards and should be considered when assessing risks associated with them.
- *Work related ill health* – any illness, disability, or other physical problem which reduces either temporarily, or permanently, the functioning of an individual and which has been caused by, in whole or part, by the working conditions of that individual.

4.0 LEGAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Council is bound by the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013 to report certain accidental injuries, incidents and occurrences of disease to the Health and Safety Executive as follows:

- Any fatality involving an employee or a non-employee arising out of the Councils work or occurring on Council premises, including an act of physical violence to a worker
- Any major injury to employees
- Injuries to non-employees which require the injured person to be taken straight to hospital for treatment and have arisen out of the work of the Council
- Injuries to employees which lead to them being absent from work, or unable to do their normal duties for more than 7 days
- Certain dangerous occurrences listed in the regulations (See Appendix 2)
- Certain occupational disease listed in the regulations. (See Appendix 2)

The Council ensures that when reportable injuries, occurrences and diseases arise out of or in connection with the work of the Council:

- The HSE are notified as soon as practicable
- A written report is sent to the HSE within 10 days. For accidents resulting in the over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker, you must notify the enforcing authority within 15 days of the incident, using the appropriate online form.
- Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives are notified as soon as practicable.

Further details regarding the reporting requirements under RIDDOR 2013 can be found in the Appendices at the end of the policy.

5. REPORTING PROCEDURE

Procedure for reporting accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses:

- All forms are available on the Orb: where staff do not have access to the Orb hard copy forms will be provided.
- Report forms may be completed by anyone who has knowledge of the event in question; ideally this will either be someone directly involved in the incident, a witness, first aider or line manager.
- Forms should be completed as fully as possible, but at the very least should include the date, the incident location, a brief description of what happened, the names and contact details of anyone directly involved and a description of any injuries suffered.
- All completed online forms will be forwarded to the Health and Safety team who will maintain a record of all accidents and incidents.

Any serious accident or incident should be reported immediately by the quickest means possible (by the next working day) to the Health and Safety team (in addition to filling in the online form). Accidents serious enough to require immediate reporting would include:

- Any death on Council premises or arising out of the work of the Council
- Any serious injury e.g. amputation, break or dislocation of a major limb, injury leading to significant blood loss, burns, electrocution, injury leading to unconsciousness
- Any industrial illness e.g. asbestos related disease, Legionnaires disease, diseases contracted from animals, any disease contracted through exposure to chemicals or dusts.
- Collision involving a Council vehicle or persons on Council business whether an injury was sustained or not.
- Any accident which has resulted in legal action or a threat of legal action.

In the above circumstances, it will be necessary to inform the Councils Insurers of the details of an accident or incident. This will be done via the Councils Insurance Officer.

6. FORMS AVAILABLE ON THE ORB

6.1 First Aider Form

It is important that for first-aiders and/or appointed persons to record incidents they attend. In some situations paper copies are provided of the Accident Form which must be completed and then entered onto the Orb. The information can help to identify accident trends and possible areas for improvement in the control

of health and safety risks. It can be used for reference in future first-aid needs assessments. Useful information to record includes:

- the date, time and place of the incident;
- the name and job of the injured or ill person;
- details of the injury/illness and what first aid was given;
- details about what happened to the person immediately afterwards (e.g. went back to work, went home, went to hospital);
- the name and signature of the first-aider or person dealing with the incident.

6.2 Accident & Incident Report Form

Any accidents and incidents which occur on or in Council premises need to be reported on the Orb at the earliest opportunity using this form. This includes injuries to members of the public including children.

It is imperative that this form is completed in full with as much information as possible so that in the event of the incident needing to be reported to the Authorities all the necessary information is already available.

Upon completion of the form details are forwarded to Heads of Service and to the Health and Safety team. Upon receipt of reports these are then assessed and investigations are initiated as appropriate.

6.3 Near Miss & Hazard Report Form

This form is for members of staff to report incidents whereby an event has occurred, nobody was necessarily injured but could have been if the circumstances had been different.

The purpose of this form is to highlight potential problems so that they can be dealt with thus preventing an accident from actually happening. This includes preventing injuries and also damage to equipment, property etc.

Again, on completion these are forwarded automatically to the Health and Safety Team who will assess and investigate where appropriate. Managers will be responsible for addressing any concerns which may have been raised this will include looking at work procedures, risk assessments and working practices involved.

6.4 The purpose of the On-line accident and incident reporting forms

- To enable swift and accurate reporting of an incident by a member of staff, to those managers and staff who need to have the information, in order to carry out an investigation and take appropriate actions.
- To record incident data accurately in order that a range of reports can be generated for management reporting purposes.
- To enable on-going monitoring of the management of all incidents by the responsible service areas thus identifying any trends.

- To enable a formal completion of each incident by the Health and Safety Team when all appropriate actions have been addressed by the relevant service area.
- All staff with IT access in the workplace will be able to enter any accident forms online at the time of the incident.
- Ensure that relevant Managers names are included on the form for reporting purposes.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

- Failure to comply with this policy could lead to a failure to comply with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013 which is a criminal offence.
- Failure to comply with this policy could lead to a failure to comply with statutory legislation.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Heads of Service

- Ensure that any accident or incident occurring during any activities under their control or involving Council premises is reported on the Orb and investigated as deemed necessary. Please refer to the table in Appendix one for guidance regarding levels of investigation.
- Any occurrence which is perceived to be either a dangerous occurrence, or a near miss, which has not actually resulted in an injury to a person, but may or may not have resulted in loss or damage to property and therefore has the potential to cause harm should be reported on the Orb and investigated as deemed necessary.
- Any case of ill-health which is, or is thought to be, caused or aggravated by Council work activities or the work environment controlled by them, is investigated and reported on the Orb to the H&S Team.
- Ensure that all members of staff for whom they are responsible are aware of the accident and incident reporting procedure and of their duty to use it.

8.2 Line Managers

- Ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents at the Council.
- Ensure that members of staff within their areas of responsibility are aware of the Councils requirements and procedures for the reporting and investigating of accidents and incidents which occur during the course of their work duties.
- Ensure that all incidents are reported via the Orb as soon as they are aware of them, and all boxes completed fully with as much detail as possible.
- Ensure that the H&S Team are informed as soon as possible if an incident is likely to become reportable to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013.

- Ensure that accidents are adequately investigated and cooperate fully with any accident or incident investigation. If appropriate, conduct an investigation into any significant accident or incident within their area of responsibility in liaison with the Health and Safety team.
- Take appropriate action in respect of any outcomes or recommendations following an investigation into any accident or incident. The implementation of the actions must be managed and reported back to the Health and Safety team at the earliest opportunity.

8.3 Health and Safety Team

- Review and validate accident/incident reports to ensure the investigation remit has been achieved and the report is of a good standard.
- Review and validate the report or request further investigation/action within 2 weeks of received draft report.
- Ensure that requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents are adequately communicated throughout the Council to all staff.
- Ensure that any accident or incident they are aware of is reported through the appropriate procedure.
- Take the role of 'responsible person' in relation to the reporting of injuries, diseases, and dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR 2013.
- Take the lead in investigating or advising on investigating, where appropriate, any accidents and incidents occurring on Council premises or arising out of the work of the Council.
- Ensure that trade union representatives are kept informed of any serious or reportable accidents which may involve or have an impact on the health and safety of their members.
- Communicate issues relating to and arising from accidents and incidents to the Health and Safety Committee. Ensuring that the Chair is informed at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that trade union representatives are kept informed of any serious or reportable accidents which may involve or have an impact on the health and safety of their members.
- Ensure that the Council's Insurers are made aware of accidents and incidents as and when necessary at the earliest opportunity.
- Monitor reports of accidents and incidents for trends which may indicate the need for action at a more fundamental level.

8.4 Employees

- Ensure that they are aware of the requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents at the Council.
- Obtain the necessary first aid treatment as soon as possible.
- Ensure that any accident or incident they are aware of is reported to their Line Manager and the appropriate forms are thoroughly completed on the Orb.

- Fully cooperate in any accident and incident investigations as required by the investigating team, whether it is as an injured party or witness.

8.5 Councils Insurance Officer

- Ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents at the Council.
- Provide any advice and support to the Health and Safety team with ensuring that any accidents are reported and recorded for Insurance purposes.
- Work with the Councils Insurance Company with regard to any claims.
- Monitor for any trends and or areas where improvements could be made to reduce claims against the Council.

9. INVESTIGATION OF ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Competent investigation of both accidents and incidents will accurately identify the immediate and underlying causes. Good quality accident investigation will assist in reducing the number of accidents and their consequences should they occur.

The scale of the investigation should be based on the consequences (potential or real). The level and extent of the investigation should reflect the seriousness or potential seriousness of the accident or incident. It is important that extensive resources are not employed on conducting minor investigations.

Investigations may be initiated by the Health and Safety team, the Head of Service, Line Manager or other suitably competent persons depending on the nature of the accident or incident (persons who have completed the minimum of Managing Safely (IOSH)).

In circumstances whereby the Council is required to report to the HSE the investigations should always involve a member of the Health and Safety team.

A high level of investigation will be conducted if:

- The injury is likely to result in the injured person being off work for more than 7 days
- Major injury/ill health including fractures (other than fingers or toes), amputations, loss of sight, a burn or penetrating injury to the eye, an injury resulting in loss of consciousness, requiring resuscitation or requiring hospital admittance for over 24 hours
- The incident or near miss had the potential to cause serious damage or harm.
- The incident or near miss has a likelihood of happening again if not controlled.
- A dangerous occurrence as defined in the RIDDOR 2013
- Recurring minor injuries.

Accident investigation reports should include:

- What happened – the immediate cause of the accident
- Why it happened – underlying causes of the accident
- Necessary corrective actions
- Necessary system changes
- Details of policies or procedures requiring review.

The subsequent Action Plan will detail any proposed deadlines for completing any remedial actions. When the investigation is concluded, a draft report should be submitted to the Health and Safety team for review and validation. If the accident/incident involves a member of the H&S Team the draft report will be sent to the HR Manager.

Upon agreement from the Health and Safety Team and the HR Manager the report can be issued to those concerned. These people may include:

- Individuals to whom recommendations have been allocated
- Individuals whose employees were involved
- Individuals responsible for managing safely in that area
- Trade Unions and the Councils Insurance Officer

When recommendations are received they should be thoroughly evaluated at an appropriate level and actions agreed or, if no action is to be taken, the issuing department should be informed and given a justification for the reason. Those responsible for implementing recommendations should report on progress and completion to the Health and Safety team and the H&S Committee.

The results of any investigations will be reviewed by the H&S Committee to ensure that all necessary actions are completed, any lessons can be learnt and best practice circulated when appropriate.

10. DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

The data supplied on the Online form is covered by the *Data Protection Act 1998* and as such will be treated as confidential data and used to enable the Council to comply with its statutory obligations, to process insurance claims, to monitor health and safety and to implement appropriate remedial actions. Summary data (anonymised, wherever possible) will be presented to the Councils Health and Safety Committee and also provide anonymous data for the Dashboard.

Specified Injuries as defined in RIDDOR

The list of 'specified injuries' in RIDDOR 2013 replaces the previous list of 'major injuries' in RIDDOR 1995. Specified injuries are (regulation 4):

- fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes
- amputations
- any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight
- any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs
- serious burns (including scalding) which:
 - covers more than 10% of the body
 - causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs
- any scalping requiring hospital treatment
- any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
- any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which:
 - leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness
 - requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

Reportable Dangerous Occurrences covered by RIDDOR

The list of Dangerous Occurrences below does not cover all that are listed in the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013*, but is a selection of those that might be associated with the Council's activities. Where doubt exists about whether an incident is reportable or not, advice must be sought from the Health and Safety Office.

Dangerous occurrences are certain, specified 'near-miss' events (incidents with the potential to cause harm.) Not all such events require reporting. There are 27 categories of dangerous occurrences that are relevant to most workplaces. For example:

- the collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment;
- plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines;
- explosions or fires causing work to be stopped for more than 24 hours.

For a full, detailed list, refer to the online guidance at: www.hse.gov.uk/riddor.

Reportable gas incidents

A distributor, filler, importer or supplier of flammable gas learn, either directly or indirectly, that someone has died, lost consciousness, or been taken to hospital for treatment to an injury arising in connection with the gas you distributed, filled, imported or supplied, this can be reported online.

A gas engineer registered with the Gas Safe Register, must provide details of any gas appliances or fittings that are considered to be dangerous to the extent that people could die, lose consciousness or require hospital treatment. This may be due to the design, construction, installation, modification or servicing, and could result in:

- an accidental leakage of gas;
- inadequate combustion of gas; or
- inadequate removal of products of the combustion of gas

Reportable occupational diseases

Employers and self-employed people must report diagnoses of certain occupational diseases, where these are likely to have been caused or made worse by their work. These diseases include (regulations 8 and 9):

- carpal tunnel syndrome;
- severe cramp of the hand or forearm;
- occupational dermatitis;
- hand-arm vibration syndrome;
- occupational asthma;
- tendonitis or tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm;
- any occupational cancer;
- any disease attributed to an occupational exposure to a biological agent.

Appendix 4: Level of Investigation

	MINOR	SERIOUS	MAJOR	FATAL
CERTAIN				
LIKELY				
POSSIBLE				
UNLIKELY				
RARE				

MINOR: No injury or short term harm, minimal first aid treatment required.

SERIOUS: Semi-permanent harm

MAJOR: Permanent or long term harm

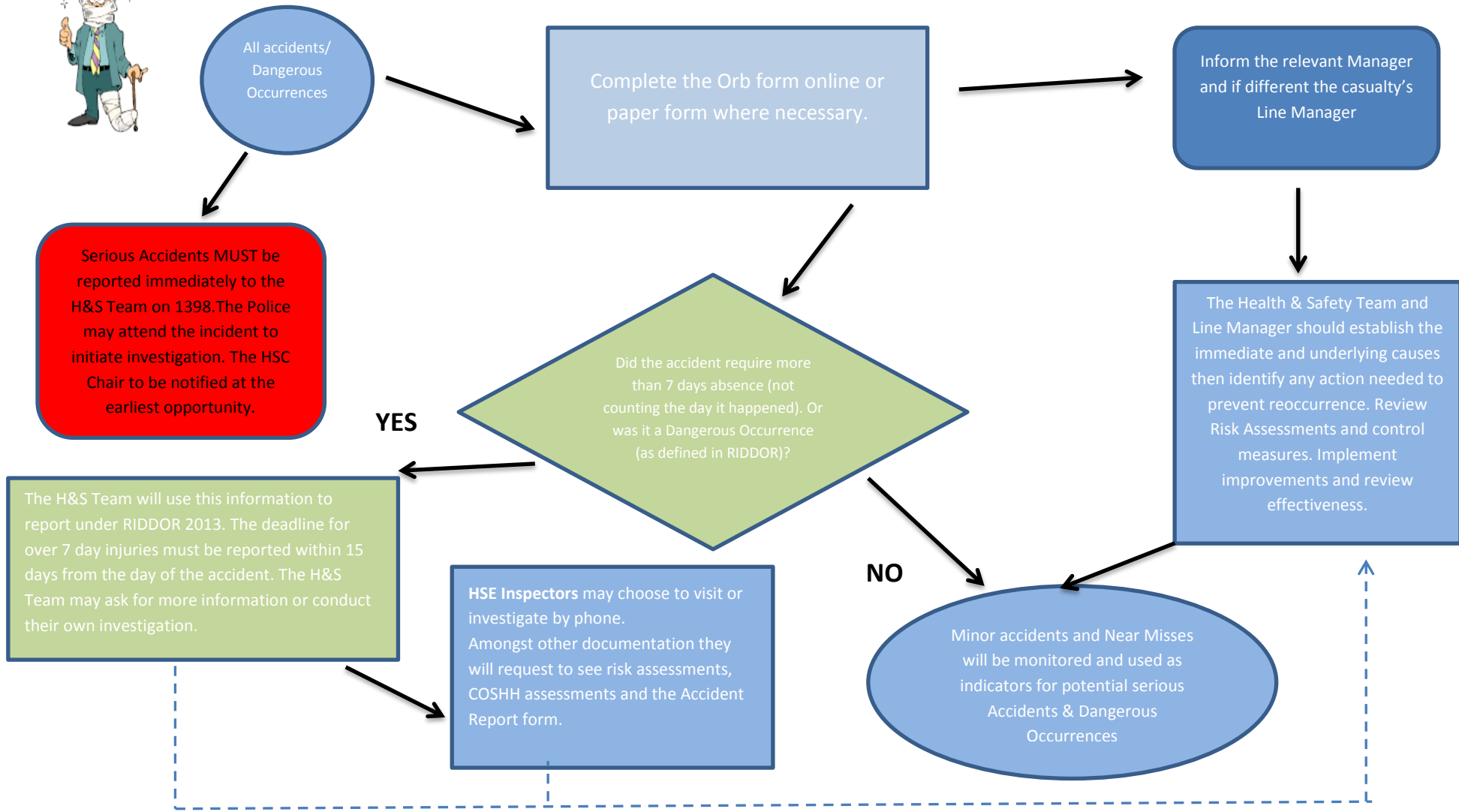
FATAL: One or more fatalities

	Low level investigation by Service area into immediate and underlying causes. Short investigation into circumstances and immediate, underlying and root causes to try and prevent a recurrence and learn any general lessons.
	Medium level investigation involving the H&S team and will involve Service line managers and employee representatives.
	High Level investigation under the direction of a member of Senior Management Team

Appendix 4



Accident and Incident Reporting procedure



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL



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HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Human Resources and Organisational Development
Redditch Borough Council
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire.
B98 8AH

Health and Safety Team 01527 64252

DSE Policy and Guidance

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 require employers to assess potential risks to the health of users of display screen equipment (DSE) and take appropriate action to control them.

This policy is intended to assist the identification of those employees at risk from the use of DSE – and is designed to reduce risks and protect the health of DSE users. It also provides a framework to identify, report and deal with identified problems. It will ensure that DSE use is monitored and will provide support to staff who report any health problems associated with the use of DSE. Whilst it is the Councils obligation to see that the assessment is done, in practice it is much better for employees to assess their own work stations with a trained DSE Assessor and then discuss their findings with their supervisor.

It is recognised the display screen equipment may cause, in some instances, adverse effects on health in some circumstances. It is the Councils responsibility for assisting staff and providing any necessary additional equipment to reduce any risks so far as is reasonably practicable.

2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

In compiling this policy, the following documents have been referred to:

- Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 – Section 2
- Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 1999 (amended by the Health Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 (as amended)
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (as amended)

3.0 DEFINITIONS

DSE (Display Screen Equipment) – any alphanumeric or graphic display screen includes microfiche viewers, computer monitors and laptop computers, but not calculators, cash registers or typewriter.

DSE User – an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his/her normal work. Including working at their base office workstation, home workstation or at another employee's workstation.

VDU – Visual Display Unit, an alternative name for Display Screen Equipment.

Workstation – the immediate work environment around DSE, including screen, disk drives, keyboard, mouse, telephone, printer, document holder, chair and desk/work surface.

Laptop – a laptop is a portable computer often used for working outside the routine office environment. The screen is attached to the keyboard, which often has an integrated mouse.

3.1 Defining DSE ‘user’

As a basic guide, a user is someone who uses a DSE on most days. I.e. intermittently for a total of more than three hours a day or continuously for periods of at least an hour.

Part-time workers should be assessed using the same criteria – e.g.: if an employee works only two days a week, but spends most of the time on DSE work, that person should definitely be considered a user.

Young persons are not classed as “users”, except when they are on work experience with an employer. For those who fall outside this definition, the employer still has a general obligation to ensure their health and safety so the issues discussed are relevant although specific requirements which relate to more intensive use e.g. eye tests are not required.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Elected Members, the Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service of Redditch Borough Council recognise, and as far as is reasonably practicable, will fulfil their responsibilities to:

- Acknowledge the risks faced by its employees and provide a working environment and processes designed to minimise those risks. This may include risk assessments, monitoring and health surveillance.
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient DSE risk assessments are undertaken that, whenever possible, eliminate or, if not, reduce all identified risks to as low as is reasonably practicable.
- Provide sufficient resources to monitor and control use of DSE equipment
- Provide appropriate risk assessment training for all managers whose staff are likely to be affected by the use of Display Screen Equipment;
- Provide additional training for all managers whose staff are likely to use equipment and to ensure that they take appropriate action if health problems are identified, including follow up procedures and advice;

4.2 Managers Responsibilities

- Will ensure that employees under their supervision are conversant with relevant parts of the DSE policy and safe working practices in order that they may carry out their duties safely and without risk;
- Will ensure employees receive a workplace induction prior to starting work and adequate, appropriate information and training in safe use of equipment and will maintain adequate records of such information and training;
- Ensure that all necessary information, training and support to users and operators to enable them to understand and manage these risks is in place

- Will ensure that as part of a new starters induction that a DSE Assessment is undertaken of their workstation by a trained DSE Assessor
- Will periodically inspect workplaces and work-activities, in order to determine whether the DSE policy is being complied with and whether the highest standards of health, safety and welfare, which are reasonably practicable to attain, are being achieved;
- Will ensure that procedures for reporting of accidents, incidents and near-misses are being followed. Investigations into such reports are carried out and suitable remedial action, where necessary, is taken to prevent a recurrence.
- Ensuring that the results of assessments are discussed with employees.
- Arranging for further assessment if they are advised of a pre-existing health problem.
- Resolving any problems highlighted by the assessments as soon as possible with assistance from Occupational Health when required.

4.3 Employees

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act, all employees will:

- report any defects in equipment to their line manager supervisor and will not use any equipment that is deemed to be faulty or unsafe.
- Will follow the procedures and information given in training sessions or information supplied by the employer.
- Undertake a DSE Assessment with a qualified DSE Assessor for workstations at work (or at home if applicable) and submitting this to their Manager.
- Adopting good posture at their workstation.
- Organising their work in order to take suitable breaks from their DSE (which allow change of posture).
- Reporting any pain, discomfort or eyestrain to their Manager/Supervisor.
- Reporting any medical conditions, so that appropriate action can be taken.

4.4 DSE Assessors

Staff members have been trained to undertake DSE Assessments in support of the Health and Safety Team. They have been provided with suitable and sufficient training in order that they have the ability to:

- identify hazards and assess the risks from a workstation and the type of DSE work being undertaken;
- draw upon additional sources of information on risk as appropriate;
- identify steps to reduce risks;
- plan work activities to avoid prolonged periods of DSE use;
- make a clear record of the assessment and communicate the findings to those who need to take action, and the employee concerned;
- provide training to users.

Where complex issues are identified these can be referred to the Health and Safety Team for further assessment.

5. DSE AND HEALTH ISSUES

The following conditions have been associated with the use of display screen equipment:

- Musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain;
- Upper limb disorders such as pains and discomfort in hands, wrists, arms, neck, shoulders or back (also called Repetitive Strain Injury [RSI], which occurs especially after long periods of uninterrupted DSE work);
- Visual fatigue (including sore eyes, eye strain and headaches),
- Fatigue
- Mental stress
- Photo-sensitive epilepsy, where people may be susceptible to seizures from flickering screens

Early detection of health problems will allow the Council to tackle the cause and protect staff from permanent damage. Every option will be fully explored, in consultation with staff and the Councils Occupational Health provider.

Generally potential problems can be prevented by: -

- Adequate training, instruction and understanding
- Assessment of the workplace and work patterns
- Visual assessment (eye and eyesight tests) and appropriate action

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

Redditch Borough Council is required to assess all DSE workstations. In addition all new DSE workstations should be assessed prior to use for the first time and if the nature of the work changes significantly.

All existing workstations should be re-assessed when there is a significant change in matters such as software, hardware, furnishings, increased use time, task change, workstation re-location or if there are environmental changes e.g. lighting significantly modified. Any reported ill health associated with DSE use should also trigger a re-assessment. The Council's Health and Safety team are available to offer advice and assistance, but will not routinely undertake risk assessments.

The volume of work expected of the user will form part of the assessment and in any event regular breaks will be expected. For most tasks, natural breaks or pauses will occur as a consequence of the work and most 'users' will have some discretion over the organization of their work to introduce appropriate change in activity. Where this is not possible, with jobs such as data entry, then rest breaks should be introduced.

The Health and Safety Executive do not give detailed guidance on rest breaks, but suggest that shorter breaks taken more frequently e.g. five minutes after sixty minutes, are likely to have more beneficial effect than occasional longer breaks.

Like all risk assessments of workplace activities they should be subject to periodic review by a competent Assessor. The typical circumstances when DSE assessments need to be revised are when:

- major changes to the DSE, furniture or software are made;
- new users start work or users change workstation;
- workstations are re-sited;
- the nature of the work changes considerably;
- a user complains of discomfort or pain.

8. EYESIGHT TESTS

Sometimes, users can experience discomfort and fatigue whilst using DSE. Also it may make users with pre-existing vision defects more aware of them. If problems are experienced, it is important that simple physical causes are eliminated like draughts, very dry atmospheres and even staring at the screen – which tends to reduce the rate of blinking.

Employees wishing to take advantage of “free” optometrist tests and/or special correction (if this is required exclusively for DSE work), should make their request via Human Resources who will provide an Eye care voucher.

If spectacles are required solely for DSE use the Council will pay a contribution of £50.

The guidance to the regulations does allow the Council to select optometrists. This facilitates a good professional relationship between the optometrist and the Council.

The full eye test includes a check for disease and should certainly be taken up if an employee experiences symptoms such as persistent headaches and/or gritty eyes, which cannot be attributed to more general work problems like stress or draughts.

For those who need no correction initially, repeat tests or screening should be offered at regular intervals ideally every 2 years. If in the meantime should employees experience any difficulty they should raise the problem with the Health and Safety Team.

The screening and eyesight tests are entirely voluntary and employees cannot be required to have a test against their will. However, if an eye test is deemed appropriate and an employee refuses to have one this should be noted on their Personnel file.

9. MOBILE WORKING AND USE OF LAPTOPS

Portable DSE such as laptops and handheld devices are also subject to the Regulations if in prolonged use for work purposes. People who habitually use portable DSE should be trained in how to minimise risks, for example by sitting comfortably, angling the screen so it is easy to read and taking frequent breaks.

Wherever possible, portable DSE should be placed on a firm surface at a comfortable height. Where portables are in prolonged use at the user's main place of work, additional steps can be taken to reduce risks, e.g. by using a docking station.

Increasingly staff are working with a laptop rather than a conventional PC, in such cases they should comply with guidance on workstation set up, as far as they can.

It is important to provide portable DSE users with sufficient training and information to make their own risk assessment. This training should also include advice on how to set up and use equipment in the locations where it is to be used.

Short periods of work or work where typing volume is not intensive should not cause any undue difficulty. However wherever possible and for lengthy or repeated use in the same location the laptop should be "docked" or supplied with separate keyboard, mouse and monitor riser/racking system, which will assist in reduction of repetitive strain injuries. This is appropriate when using a laptop in the base office or their home office. The use of laptops on without a proper workstation should be kept to a minimum.

Employees using laptops should be aware that some design compromises inherent in portable DSE equipment, can lead to postural or other problems. For example a bent neck or headaches arising from low, fixed position of the screen, for these reasons it is recommended to "dock" the portable DSE equipment wherever possible.

Employees with laptops who satisfy the criteria of 'users' must complete the DSE assessment and share their results with their Manager. The following practical points should also be considered when selecting portable computers:

- Low weight (less than 3kg if possible). Keep accessories as few and as light as possible.
- Largest screen possible. If possible, choose a detachable or height-adjustable screen.
- Purchase a lightweight carrying case with handle and shoulder straps. To reduce risk of theft or assault, avoid manufacturer-branded cases.
- Choose portables capable of being used with a docking station or at least a separate keyboard and mouse.

As well as the risks associated with the use of desktop computers, users of laptops need to take into account the risks due to manual handling when moving between locations. The risk assessment should also consider the risk of theft, possibly involving assault.

For equipment other than laptops i.e. notebooks and tablets, ensure that such hand held computers for prolonged use are carefully selected for ergonomic features, which match requirements of the tasks undertaken. For example

equipment to be used outdoors should be adequately waterproof, legible in bright sunlight and keyboards and screen should be large enough to be used comfortably.

10. HOT DESKING

The use of 'shared' workstations is becoming increasingly common within Council premises. Relevant health and safety issues associated with such arrangements include the following:-

- It is essential that the furniture and equipment used in a shared workstation are good quality and appropriate to meet the health and safety standards. It is foreseeable that the 'Hot Desk' could become the recipient of the unwanted, recycled and even damaged furniture etc. This will contravene the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations.
- Employees who are required to 'Hot Desk' should have received appropriate Training and instruction to enable them to arrange the workstation accordingly to reduce their risks to musculoskeletal disorders and upper limb disorders.
- They will also be required to complete a DSE Assessment for their main, or most frequently used, workstation.
- Extra hygiene precautions are required. Anti-Bacterial wipes should be available and used to wipe down telephones and desks where people are 'Hot Desking'.

11. REFERENCES

In compiling this policy, the following documents have been referenced:

- HSE information leaflet – INDG36 (rev2)
- HSE Guidance Notes – HSG90 – the law on VDU's, and easy guide
- HSE Guidance Notes – L26 – Work with Display Screen Equipment - Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 (as amended 2002)

12. EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy document shall be monitored, and reviewed as appropriate to evaluate its effectiveness. The document shall be revised as necessary, and in light of such evaluation.

Appendix 1

TRAINING, INSTRUCTION AND UNDERSTANDING

All staff will be made aware of the DSE Policy and provided with the necessary training during staff Inductions. Managers/Supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that a DSE Assessment is undertaken of all new starters' workstations as part of their Induction process.

Users will get the best out of their equipment and working arrangements if they understand the principles behind good workstation layout and use. However, in particular, they should be able to:

1. Minimise glare by adjusting the position of the DSE in relation to room lighting sources and windows.
2. Arrange the optimum layout and relative heights of keyboard, screen and seating.
3. Recognise correct posture: limb joints neutral, e.g. back of wrist in line with the forearm, head in line with spine, not bent unnaturally backward or forward.
4. Forearms and thighs parallel to the floor.
5. Appreciate the key role of the chair (and footrest if necessary) in permitting the user to adjust seat height and back rest to permit correct posture irrespective of the desk height.
6. Position work material; document holders and papers to avoid undue twisting from side to side.
7. Realise the importance of changing position regularly and relaxing, to avoid holding fixed positions for long periods.
8. Understand that periodically changing eye focus by looking away or even going away from the screen to do a different job helps to prevent fatigue.
9. Make use of an offer of an eye check.
10. Use simple mobility exercises to keep the body supple.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL



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HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

CONTRACTOR SAFETY

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Human Resources and Organisational Development
Redditch Borough Council
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire.
B98 8AH

Health and Safety Team 01527 64252

Policy Statement

The council will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure that Council employees are not put at risk from the work performed by contractors, and that contractors are aware of the risks and preventative measures they may be exposed to by council activities.

The Council acknowledges and accepts its statutory responsibilities to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare for all who are employed or contracted to work within any Council premise.

1. PURPOSE

The procedure below details the arrangements that shall be made between the Council, Place Partnership Limited (PPL) and Contractor(s) to ensure safe working in all Council owned premises.

2. SCOPE

A contractor is anyone who works for the council but is not an employee (including PPL). This policy includes all Contractors who may work in number of different types of Contractor including:

- short term one off, employed for a particular task
- short term repetitive, employed for a recurring task
- medium term, such as to carry out a small refurbishment or maintenance task
- long term, continuing function.

The following provides examples of the type of work that is covered:

- non-Council employees working on buildings, plant or equipment
- service or maintenance engineers working on Council equipment.

This list is not exhaustive but any works which is undertaken by another party on behalf of the Council. Some contracted works may be a one off or on a regular basis.

Any contractors employed to undertake any services/work for the Council are required to follow this procedure. Likewise any staff members who employ Contractors to undertake works for whatever purpose are to familiarise themselves and comply with this policy.

Apart from the potential financial and legal penalties for failing to plan and manage contractors work, poor management of contractors is likely to expose people and property to unacceptable risks. Almost certainly, poor planning and management will increase costs, cause delays and/or disruption of services as well as increase the likelihood of accidents or ill health.

Contractor's staff carrying out maintenance work can be a significant cause of accidents in the workplace as they are generally less familiar with the workplace and yet often carry out hazardous tasks.

3. POLICY

As a controller of premises, the Council has a statutory duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, visitors and guests, and further, to take necessary actions to ensure Council activities do not endanger others, including contractors, who may undertake work on or visit any Council premises or its neighbours.

This policy aims to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of contractors working on Council premises and also those affected by their work, through:

- identifying the potential for harm arising from the proposed work
- identifying who may be affected
- instigating appropriate controls.

Those staff who manage contractors undertaking work at Council premises will conform to the provisions of this Council policy. If there is a requirement to deviate from this policy another process must be followed which ensures, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health safety and welfare of contractors and those affected by their work. Observation of this policy does not in any way relieve contractors of their own statutory and other contractual obligations.

All building occupiers/users must organise any works to buildings and their associated services via Place Partnership Ltd.

Place Partnership must ensure that Officers in Charge are consulted and provided with the necessary information of work being undertaken by contractors on behalf of Place Partnership which may affect their operations. Wherever possible they must be notified when the works will be carried out so that any necessary adjustments can be made and staff notified.

4. RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY

4.1 General

Contracting is a recognised method of transferring risk but this does not mean that responsibilities for health, safety and legal liability are also transferred. The Council and the contractor are employers and have the same responsibilities to **ensure**, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of:

- Their employees;

- Other people working on their site; and
- Members of the public who may be affected by the work.

Good communications, cooperation and coordination are therefore essential. Both parties must exchange information on hazards, risks, emergency procedures and welfare provisions to ensure safe working. Further measures will be needed if the work is taking place in a publicly accessible area and may pose a risk to members of the public.

4.2 The Council

The Council has a duty to ensure that contractors (and sub-contractors) have safe working practices and adhere to them. In reality, this means that for every contract there should be a council officer who is responsible for placing and supervising the contract. These officers must have the competencies for placing and managing contracts and have the authority to suspend work that puts council or contractor employees at risk.

The supervising council officer could be a project manager, a representative of Place Partnership / officer-in-charge, a line manager, administrator, or suitably qualified person depending on the size and complexity of the project. Some of these responsibilities will be done by PPL on our behalf and others will need to be undertaken at a local level. Their responsibilities are to **ensure**:

- The contractor is competent to carry out the required work
- There is clarity about the work to be performed and the timescales
- The contractor is aware of site information including emergency procedures and welfare provisions
- Employees and the public (where appropriate) are notified of the work being performed and the risks to them
- That work is carried out in a safe manner
- That they have seen the any Risk Assessments and Method Statements from the Contractor before work commences and that they are happy with their content.
- That agreed health and safety procedures that we as a Council require are followed
- That the work is monitored and,
- That channels for communication, cooperation and coordination are maintained.
- Arrangements are in place to review risk assessments, method statements and safe systems of work before work commences, and monitoring of practices takes place during contracted works.
- Arrangements are in place to ensure sufficient communications with those that may be affected by the works undertaken.
- Any contractor-related incidents, including near misses, reportable accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences are reported and that appropriate actions taken to prevent a recurrence, so far as is reasonably practicable (refer to section 6).

4.4 Heads of Service

All contract works to buildings, services and infrastructure must be communicated and agreed by Place Partnership Ltd. A premise must not start up its own contract procurement process.

4.5 All Staff

All Council staff, engaged with or affected by contracted work, must ensure they take notice of all information available concerning contractors who are working in their area. Staff should report any hazards or concerns regarding contractors working in their area to their line manager. Staff also have a general duty to ensure that their work does not endanger others, including contractors who are working in their vicinity.

4.6 Contractors

Place Partnership and Council employees must ensure that contractors comply with current legislative requirements, best practice and industry standards, contractual terms and conditions and Council policy and procedures.

5. THE CONSTRUCTION (DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT) REGULATIONS 2015 (CDM)

Under the CDM Regulations 2015, a construction phase plan is required for every construction project and where works are of a simple nature and involving a single contractor the need to demonstrate that health and safety on site has been considered in a simple plan.

Construction projects over 30 days, 500 person days or more than 20 people on site at any one time shall be notifiable to the Health and Safety Executive via an F10 form and will require a more rigorous approach to managing the Health and Safety of the project in the form of construction phase plans, health and safety files and Health and Safety folders handed over at completion of works.

Construction projects are defined as any works to construct, dismantle, maintain, repair or alter a structure and also includes domestic households.

5.1 CDM Contracts

CDM projects integrate the five steps approach into a framework where roles and duties of stakeholders are more clearly defined. The roles are defined as follows:

- **Client** – an organisation or individual for whom the work is carried out.
- **Designer** – organisations or individuals who as part of a business develop the initial concept, prepare the construction drawings and

specifications. The designers' role extends beyond the construction phase and must consider the health and safety aspects of the building's whole life, e.g. maintenance, repair, cleaning, refurbishment and eventual removal or demolition.

- **Principal Designer** – Designers appointed by the Client in projects involving more than one Contractor. They can be an organisation or an individual with sufficient knowledge, experience and ability to carry out the role. Liaise with Principal Contractor to help in the planning, management, monitoring and coordination of the construction phase.
- **Principle Contractor** – Contractors appointed by the Client to coordinate the construction phase of a project where it involves more than one contractor.
- **Contractors and Workers** – those performing the work.

The council will ordinarily have the role of Client and Principal Designer and some service functions may be either the Principle Contractor or Contractor. A summary of duties for each role are given in Appendix 2.

5.2 Specific Risks to Manage

Construction work is a high-risk activity and contractors are expected to provide risk assessments, safe schemes of work and / or method statements for the work they are performing. Specific risks associated with construction work are detailed below.

5.2.1 Asbestos

Every building owned by the Council shall have an asbestos register and a copy of the Policy and Procedures for Managing Asbestos. Any work in a Council owned property, with the potential to release asbestos fibres, must be assessed by a competent council officer or a representative of Place Partnership and a procedure to minimise the release of asbestos fibres agreed with the contractor(s). All contractors shall sign the asbestos register before starting any work.

Employees that have concerns about asbestos should contact a representative of Place Partnership or their H&S Adviser.

5.2.2 Equipment and Plant

- Contractors are not permitted to borrow and use any item of equipment owned or controlled by the Council.
- It is expected that contractors will provide their own plant, equipment, tools, etc that are necessary to carry out the work safely.

5.2.3 Vehicles and Traffic

- Contractor's vehicles must obey any traffic controls pertaining to the site.

- All contractor's employees driving or operating vehicles must have a valid driving license and / or certificate of competence.
- The Council expects all contractors to use vehicles that are well maintained and in good condition. Test certificates and inspection records must be produced on request.

5.2.4 Protective Clothing

- The contractor will determine what personal protective equipment (PPE) is necessary for safe working and ensure that their employees abide by that decision.
- Council employees entering any area where construction work is taking place are expected to wear PPE that conforms to that determined by the contractor.

5.2.5 Noise

- Noise levels produced by construction work should not exceed 75dB(A) taken as an average over an eight hour working day.
- Where employees consider that the noise levels are unacceptable they can request noise measurements to be taken by contacting OH&S.

5.2.6 Power Tools

- All power tools must operate from a 110v 50Hz centre tapped earth transformer.
- All cables must be routed to minimise trip hazards.
- Cartridge fixing tools can only be used if authorised by a representative of Place Partnership
- The Council may inspect any power tool that is considered to be in a dangerous condition.

5.2.7 Welding and Hot Work

- Welding and hot work may not be performed without written authorisation from a representative of Place Partnership under a permit to work.
- Welding and similar equipment must not be left unattended with the gases turned on.
- All gas cylinders (especially acetylene – maroon colour) will be supported in an upright position.

5.2.8 Paints, Adhesives

- Adhesives, paints and similar materials will only be used in well-ventilated areas.
- Any council employee who feels unwell or develops signs of an allergic reaction (skin rash, asthma) to any of the substances being used must report the fact immediately to a representative of Place Partnership/

Officer-in-Charge and the Health and Safety Team. The representative of Place Partnership / Officer-in-Charge should ensure that the employee is removed to fresh air or an area unaffected by the fumes.

- If exposure to the fumes results in the collapse of any employees then the emergency procedures should be followed.

5.2.9 Locating and Breaking into Services

- Contractors must not interrupt any services or utilities without prior consent from Redditch Borough Council represented by representative of Place Partnership / Officer in Charge and/or Principal Designer. This shall be a signed consent agreed by all parties.

5.2.10 Radiation

- Contractors are not permitted to bring any source of ionising radiation into any Council properties (land or structures)
- Any proposed use of any sources of ionising radiation must be agreed by Redditch Borough Council, represented by a representative of Place Partnership, Officer in Charge and/or Principal Designer or Designer. This shall be a signed consent agreed by all parties.

5.2.11 Storage

- The contractor must ensure that all equipment, materials and substances are stored correctly and in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- Flammable substances (including petrol) should be stored in a separate locked purpose built cabinet.
- All substances stored on site must comply with local environment and fire prevention strategies.

5.2.12 Waste Disposal

- Contractors are responsible for disposing of any waste they create and for keeping their work areas clean and tidy. Employees should notify a representative of Place Partnership if this does not occur.

5.2.13 Work at ground Level

- Contractors must ensure that their work areas are isolated and protected by fences, ropes, tapes or any other barrier that is suitable for the work being performed.
- Where a site has been handed over to a contractor for the period of the contract a secure fence or other barrier must be erected.
- The barriers must be maintained in a serviceable condition and appropriately signed.
- Contractors must make arrangements to segregate pedestrians and vehicles, with appropriate signage.

- Contractors must take suitable precautions when working in the vicinity of overhead power cables.

5.2.14 Work below Ground Level

- A ground plan or survey must be used to identify any buried services (or other buried artefact or human burials). A written declaration shall be produced to confirm that there are no buried services (or other burials) in the area of the excavation and shall be signed by a member of Place Partnership.
- CAT scans to be undertaken to verify specific location of services, prior to excavating.
- Caution should be taken with any excavation and where services are expected hand digging should be used.
- Ensure that there is an emergency plan to deal with damage to cables or pipes with a system in place to notify the service owner.
- Trenches and excavations should be made in accordance with HSE guidance and best practice:
 - Regular inspections and maintenance
 - Shoring of side walls
 - Safe access and egress
 - Lighting and ventilation
 - Barriers and warning signs.
- Spoil heaps should not be so close to excavations that material can collapse / fall into the excavation.

5.2.15 Work above Ground Level

- Ladders must be maintained in good condition and, when used, must be tied off (at the top) or footed.
- Access to, and use of, ladders must be prevented at night.
- Scaffolding must be erected and dismantled by approved contractors.
- Erected scaffolding must be properly maintained and inspected (written record) every week and after severe weather.
- All scaffolding must be erected on solid ground, securely braced, tied to the building, otherwise supported and have toe boards and guard rails.
- Edge protection or suitable anchorages and safety harnesses shall be used for roof work or on ledges.
- Mobile elevating equipment shall conform to relevant legislation and be used by trained competent persons.

6. EMERGENCIES, FIRE AND FIRST AID

If an accident, incident or dangerous occurrence occurs involving a Contractor they should notify their employer and follow their procedures.

They should also notify the Council Officer overseeing the work so that a suitable report can be made.

Place Partnership or the Officer in Charge will provide the contractor(s) with details of emergency and fire procedures pertaining to the site upon arrival.

The contractor is expected to provide first aid support for their employees. Contractors shall keep their own records of accidents and are responsible for reporting accidents, if appropriate, to the enforcing authorities.

7. RECORDS

A file shall be produced and maintained for any construction project. Where the project invokes CDM a separate H&S file shall also be produced. The files will contain all risk assessments, safe systems of work, method statements, permissions and permits to work.

Prior to any construction project being undertaken a pre-work checklist shall be completed.

Letters, memos and minutes of any meetings shall be kept in the project file.

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Assessing the competence of Contractors

Appendix 2: Pre-work instructions and checklist

Appendix 3: Summary of CDM duties

Appendix 1

Management of Contractors

No matter how small the job is, or how fast it can be completed it is necessary to consider any Health and Safety implications before the contractor arrives on site. The five steps approach below provides the framework.

Five Steps

The following steps should be part of the project plan with information gathered being used in subsequent steps.

Planning

- Define the job, impact on site activities and timescales
- Identify the physical and operational hazards
- Assess physical and operational risks
- Eliminate and reduce the risks
- Specify H&S conditions
- Discuss H&S issues with the contractor.

Choosing a contractor

- What safety and technical competence is needed?
- Ask questions and gather evidence
- Review the job, the site and site rules with the contractor
- Ensure risk assessments, safe schemes of work and method statements are obtained and discussed with the contractor
- If sub-contractors are to be used then find out how Health and Safety is to be managed.

Contractors working on site

- Hold a pre-meeting and run through checklist (Appendix 1)
- Contractors to sign in and out and display a visitor/contactors badge
- Provide a site contact / liaison at all times
- Reinforce Health and Safety information and site rules
- Review job parameters before allowing work to start.

Keeping a check

- Assess the frequency of site meetings
- Monitor work and progress
 - Timescales
 - Health and Safety
 - Accidents
 - Sub-contractors and changes in personnel
- Have a system for dealing with changes to specifications and problems.

Reviewing the work

- Schedule a review meeting before handover
- Record and lessons to be learnt.

APPENDIX 1: Pre-work instructions and Checklist

LOCATION:		DATE:		
DESCRIPTION OF WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN:				
START DATE:		END DATE:		
START TIME:		FINISH TIME:		
WILL OUT-OF-HOURS WORKING BE REQUIRED? (if YES, please supply details below)			YES	NO
DETAILS OF OUT-OF-HOURS WORKING:				
CONTACTS		PHONE	EMAIL	
WCC:				
CONTRACTOR:				
OTHER:				
DOCUMENTS RECEIVED FROM CONTRACTOR:				
H&S POLICY / POLICY STATEMENT?			YES	NO
RISK ASSESSMENTS?			YES	NO
SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK?			YES	NO
METHOD STATEMENTS?			YES	NO
DOCUMENTS GIVEN / MADE AVAILABLE TO CONTRACTOR:				
H&S POLICY / POLICY STATEMENT?			YES	NO
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES?			YES	NO
RISK ASSESSMENTS?			YES	NO
PERMITS TO WORK?			YES	NO
OTHER? (please specify)			YES	NO
INDUCTION CHECKLIST (tick when completed):				
Fire alarms and emergency procedures				
Accident reporting				
First aid				
Welfare				
Access / access restrictions				
Permits to work				
Utilities				
Hazardous substances				

Asbestos register	
Vehicle routes and parking	
Storage of materials	
Security arrangements	
Other (please specify)	
DETAILS OF CONTRACTORS COMPOUND, FENCING AND BARRIERS:	
MEASURES TO CONTROL NOISE, DUST AND OTHER NUISANCE FACTORS:	
DETAILS OF ANY ACCESS AT HEIGHT (work off ladders, scaffolding, mobile equipment etc):	
DETAILS OF ANY WORK IN CONFINED SPACES (possibility of low oxygen atmosphere):	
DETAILS OF ANY 'HOT WORK' (soldering, brazing, welding):	
DETAILS OF WASTE MANAGEMENT / REMOVAL (skips etc):	
DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS:	
MANAGEMENT OF CHANGE ORDERS AND DELAYS:	
FREQUENCY OF PROGRESS MEETINGS:	

SUPERVISING PPL/RBC OFFICER(print name):

Signed: Date:

APPENDIX 2: Summary of duties under Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)

Summary of duties for CDM dutyholders	
CDM Dutyholders* – Who are they?	Main duties – What they need to do
<p><u>Clients</u> – Organisations or individuals for whom a construction project is carried out.</p>	<p>Make suitable arrangements for managing a project, including making sure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other duty holders are appointed • sufficient time and resources are allocated. <p>Make sure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant information is prepared and provided to other duty holders • the principal designer and principal contractor carry out their duties • welfare facilities are provided
<p><u>Domestic clients</u> – People who have construction work carried out on their own home (or the home of a family member) that is not done as part of a business.**</p>	<p>Though in scope of CDM 2015, their client duties are normally transferred to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the contractor for single contractor projects • the principal contractor for projects with more than one contractor <p>However, the domestic client can instead choose to have a written agreement with the principal designer to carry out the client duties.</p>

<p><u>Designers</u> - Organisations or individuals who as part of a business, prepare or modify designs for a building, product or system relating to construction work.</p>	<p>When preparing or modifying designs, eliminate, reduce or control foreseeable risks that may arise during:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • construction • the maintenance and use of a building once it is built <p>Provide information to other members of the project team to help them fulfil their duties.</p>
<p><u>Principal designers</u> - Designers appointed by the client in projects involving more than one contractor. They can be an organisation or an individual with sufficient knowledge, experience and ability to carry out the role.</p>	<p>Plan, manage, monitor and coordinate health and safety in the pre-construction phase of a project. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifying, eliminating or controlling foreseeable risks • ensuring designers carry out their duties <p>Prepare and provide relevant information to other duty holders.</p> <p>Liaise with the principal contractor to help in the planning, management, monitoring and coordination of the construction phase.</p>

<p><u>Principal contractors</u> – Contractors appointed by the client to coordinate the construction phase of a project where it involves more than one contractor.</p>	<p>Plan, manage, monitor and coordinate health and safety in the construction phase of a project. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • liaising with the client and principal designer • Preparing the construction phase plan • organising cooperation between contractors and coordinating their work <p>Make sure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • suitable site inductions are provided • reasonable steps are taken to prevent unauthorised access • workers are consulted and engaged in securing their health and safety • welfare facilities are provided
<p><u>Contractors</u> – Those who do the actual construction work, contractors can be an individual or a company.</p>	<p>Plan, manage and monitor construction work under their control so it is carried out without risks to health and safety.</p> <p>For projects involving more than one contractor, coordinate their activities with others in the project team – in particular, comply with directions given to them by the principal designer or principal contractor.</p> <p>For single contractor projects, prepare a construction phase plan.</p>

<p><u>Workers</u> – Those working for or under the control of contractors on a construction site.</p>	<p>Workers must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be consulted about matters which affect their health, safety and welfare • take care of their own health and safety, and of others who might be affected by their actions • report anything they see which is likely to endanger either their own or others' health and safety • cooperate with their employer, fellow workers, contractors and other duty holders
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* Organisations or individuals can carry out the role of more than one duty holder, provided they have the skills, knowledge, experience and (if an organisation) the organisational capability necessary to carry out those roles in a way that secures health and safety.

** CDM 2015 applies if the work is carried out by someone else on the domestic client's behalf. If the householder carries out the work themselves, it is classed as DIY and CDM 2015 does not apply.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

LONE WORKING

POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Human Resources and Organisational Development
Redditch Borough Council
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
Worcestershire.
B98 8AH

Health & Safety Team
Tel: 01527 64252

Redditch Borough Council

Lone Working/Working Alone Policy and Procedures

Introduction

Redditch Borough Council is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all their employees and recognises that working alone/lone working is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying the potential health and safety risks associated with it.

Whilst there is nothing to prevent an individual working alone, this policy will support managers and employees to meet the requirements of the **Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)**, the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)** and **Health and Safety Executive guidance on Lone Working/Working Alone**, with the aim of reducing the risks associated with lone working/working alone.

Only trained and experienced staff that have completed lone worker training shall be permitted to undertake lone working.

This policy will apply to every employee of the council.

1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to specify the way in which the organisation deals with Lone Working. It is to be used to establish standards and a commitment to safety, and therefore should be used to aid the carrying out of specific Lone Working Risk Assessments and as a guideline to judge all relevant lone working activity.

2. Relevant Legislation

There are two key pieces of legislation regarding lone working (in addition to the legislation applicable to the type of work being undertaken, which may include manual handling, workstation, display screen equipment etc.):

- **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974** requires all employers to provide safe places and systems of work, including those who work alone.
- **The Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999** require all employers to carry out risk assessments. This includes assessments of particular risks associated with lone working. Employers have a duty (as far as is reasonably practicable) to take all necessary steps to prevent risks including adapting the work to suit the individual.

When two or more people have to be involved in the work:-

Although there is no overall prohibition on working alone there are some circumstances when there is a legal requirement for at least two people to be involved in the work. These include:

- Work at or near live electrical conductors – **Electricity at Work Regulations 1989**
- Entry into confined spaces (e.g. entry into storage tanks, inspection holes, boilers etc) – **Confined Space Regulations 1997**
- Young person(s) (under 18) working with certain specified machines who must be under adequate supervision from a person who has thorough Knowledge and experience of the machines – **The Management of Health & Safety at Work regulations 1999**

3. Who are Lone Workers?**Definition of ‘Lone Working’**

A Lone Worker can be anyone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. This group of people includes people in fixed establishments who work alone in premises, separately from others or outside normal working hours, or mobile workers working away from their fixed base.

Detailed below are some examples of employees who, as part of their day to day activities, may be required to work alone:

- Repair and Maintenance Staff
- Caretakers
- Cleaners and Cleansing staff
- Frontline Workers
- Community centre staff
- Community Wardens
- Out of hours workers
- Home Visitors e.g. Tenancy, Rents, Revenue & Benefits Officers, Environmental Health officers, etc.

This list is not exhaustive and will cover all staff who in the course of their employment duties work alone.

4. Potential Hazards associated with Lone Working

The following are examples:-

- An employee going out on site visits to places they may not be familiar with and/ or meeting persons unknown to them. Staff may not know who/what to expect on arriving on site particularly if it is their first visit.

- An employee being threatened by a member of the public and or an animal whilst out on visits in the Community and as a result sustain an injury whether it is verbal or physical.
- An employee who, as part of their role, have to travel alone to an unfamiliar area of the District in inclement weather. Road conditions due to weather may not be suitable for driving especially where there has been heavy rain or snow.
- A vehicle being driven by an employee breaks down or they are involved in a road traffic incident on the way to the visit. The Council can recommend that staff have suitable breakdown cover on their vehicles but this cannot be enforced. If such an incident should occur the member of staff could be left vulnerable and alone unexpectedly. Staff should also consider drawing up a travel plan risk assessment for long journeys in particular to ensure that they are fully prepared in the event of something happening.

5. Special Cases that need to be considered regarding Lone Working

Certain groups of employees may be subject to increased risks from working alone. For example:

- Expectant mothers may experience specific health problems associated with her condition which requires specialist emergency treatment.
- Employees with a disability may be more at risk due to factors arising from the nature of their disability, such as restricted mobility in an emergency situation.
- Temporary or new workers may also be at an increased risk from lone working due to their lack of familiarity with the working environment or with the type of work undertaken.

Lone workers may be exposed to hazards due to sudden illness, for example an asthma attack, fainting episode or heart attack, which may lead to loss of mobility or consciousness in a situation where it may be some time before they are discovered and receive attention.

6. Lone Working Procedure

The procedure below is documented as the method to be employed to carry out effectively an enhanced risk assessment and control programme to minimise the risk associated with lone working. Please also refer to the Councils Risk Assessment Policy for further guidance.

Managers of lone workers are required to ensure that risk assessments are carried out and the required precautions taken and they are recorded. Managers are required to ensure that staff do not experience significant stress as a result of lone working. Any such incidents whereby a member of staff feels vulnerable and/or has been threatened should be recorded on a "Near Miss Form" and where appropriate the details recorded on the Staff Safety Register.

Where it is not possible to devise arrangements for a person to work alone in safety then alternative arrangements are required, Managers shall be responsible for ensuring that this is in place and staff are aware of the process.

Employees should be reminded of the potential risk associated with lone working, and will be required to follow procedures and to report problems back to their manager.

Employees must work with their Manager in the production of such risk assessments.

Agreed procedures must be followed whilst working alone to be discussed and drawn up by employees and Managers.

7. Lone Working Monitoring System

Consideration should be given to use of the Lone Worker Monitoring system through the Lifeline Service. This is an automated 24 hour a day Lone Worker monitoring system which uses the employee's own mobile phone to monitor their whereabouts and raise an alarm should expected contact be lost. Details of the Lone Worker Monitoring System are included at Appendix 3.

If the Lifeline Lone Working Monitoring System is not used an alternative comprehensive written procedure must be identified by Managers and adhered to by all their team members. Failure to adhere to the Lone Working procedures could result in disciplinary action against members of staff and or Managers.

Members of the Lifeline Team have access to the Staff Safety Register via the Orb. Therefore if a member of staff is working out of hours they can check the Register via the Lifeline team who will be able to advise accordingly.

7.1 Staff Safety Register

As part of the Council's strategy for controlling the risk of violence or other harm to staff, it operates a system which alerts employees by keeping a central register of persons and/or premises that may pose a risk and permits the marking of those individuals' files or records.

By recording details of these persons and premises on a register, the risk to those officers can be reduced by forewarning them of likely problems thus allowing them to take appropriate additional steps to protect their health and safety.

8. Training and Instruction

Suitable training and instruction is required under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and this will assist in minimising injury to employees and other persons who they may come into contact with their work.

The specific training and supervisory needs of the lone worker will be entirely dependant on the nature of the work for which they are employed. In seeking to assess such needs, the relevant issues relating to the type of risk to which the employee is exposed (as identified in the risk assessment) should be addressed in the training.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 Heads of Service

- Ensure that all members of staff within their Service Area who have to Lone Work have been identified
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments have been undertaken on those members of staff who have to Lone Work
- Ensure that procedures are in place in the event of someone not making contact with their Manager and procedures are robust enough to cover any eventuality.

9.2 Managers

Whilst Heads of Service need to check that procedures are in place for staff who work alone it shall be the responsibility of Line Managers to put this into practice. They will be responsible for:

- Identifying those members of staff who have to lone work as part of their role however frequently
- Undertake a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of staff who have to lone work taking into consideration their personal circumstances etc. ensuring that sufficient control measures are in place to protect them.
- Ensure that identified Lone Workers are fully aware of the procedures to follow when working alone and what to do in the event of a problem occurring.
- Ensure that they can account for the whereabouts of their staff at any time and if a member of staff cannot be accounted for there is a robust system in place for tracing their movements.
- Ensure that all Lone Workers have received the necessary training prior to undertaking such activities.
- Ensure that all Lone Workers know the procedures to follow with regard to checking in with Managers, Lifeline etc. as identified in the Risk Assessment and local work procedures (all of which should be thoroughly documented in writing).
- Ensure a suitable '**Safe System of Work**' is developed and documented to control any residual risks

- Ensure all your staff are fully **aware** of and able to comply with Safe Systems of Work. Regularly **check** that your Safe Systems of Work are effective. Ensure that any **personal protective equipment** identified is available, working and used correctly.

Managers have a responsibility and duty of care to their employees, failure to comply with any of the above procedures could lead to disciplinary action being taken.

9.3 Employees

All staff must take responsibility for their Health Safety and Welfare when at work and that of those who may be affected by their actions and omissions. They also have the following responsibilities:

- Follow any guidance provided by their Line Manager with regard to the Lone working arrangements that are in place.
- Report any incidents/accidents to their Line Manager at the earliest opportunity (including Violence & Aggression).
- Assist in the production of Risk Assessments relating to Lone Working and provide all the necessary personal information and contact details as requested.
- Participate in any training with regard to health and safety as identified by their Line Manager.
- Ensure that their work schedule/diary contains relevant information relating to any lone visit/appointment, including address, contact name and telephone numbers, and this information is available for all authorised persons to view.
- Ensure that their mobile phone is fully charged so that they can be contacted.
- Only undertake lone working activities if they have been suitably trained.

10. Record Keeping

Keeping safety records for lone working

The record keeping required for compliance with legal requirements and achievement of best practise is divided into three key elements:

- Audit Check Reports
- Communication and induction – ensuring that everyone knows what do and how.
- Any incidents which may have left a member of staff feeling vulnerable or they have felt threatened in any way.

Records to be kept

- Risk Assessments for each element of lone working for all members of staff
- Directorial procedure to be followed by lone workers (including communication arrangements, supervision etc).
- Records of logging in and out of work.
- Any incidents where a member of staff has not been able to be contacted or has not rung in where required as per local procedures.

11. Risk Assessments (controlling the risk)

Please refer to the Councils Risk Assessment Policy which is available on the Orb.

When carrying out an individual risk assessment the following will need to be taken into account:-

- Identification of 'at risk' employees who work alone
- The nature and reason for them working alone including times they will be working alone.
- The activities that the employee will be undertaking whilst working alone, and if they make them more susceptible to any type of threat.
- Assessing the hazards and risks the work involves
- Assessment of the working environment, including any limitations imposed on employees.
- Devise and implement safe working arrangements to ensure that the risks are eliminated or adequately controlled.
- Ensure employee is suitably instructed and trained in the necessary procedures for lone working and implement training if not.

Managers, or the person completing the Risk Assessment, MUST take into account the following considerations when completing the Risk Assessment of Lone Workers and these steps should be followed before any member of staff goes out on a visit and ideally on the day of the visit as circumstances may change.

1. **Check 'Staff Safety Register.'** For the address that they will be visiting.
2. Has account been taken of the suitability of individual employees for lone working?
3. Can the risk of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
4. Does the workplace (place of work) present a special risk to the worker?
5. Is there a safe way in and out for the lone worker?
6. Can all the plant, equipment and goods involved be handled by one person?
7. Is there a risk of violence?
8. Are women at risk if they work alone?
9. Is the individual a new or expectant mother?
10. Does the individual have a disability which may affect his/her ability to work alone?
11. Is the employee a young person (under 18 years of age) who requires specific induction, training and supervision?
12. Is the individual a new or temporary employee who requires specific induction or training?
13. Has account been taken of the fitness and medical history of the individual?
14. What additional training is required to ensure their safety whilst working alone?

12. Recording of Risk Assessments

All Risk Assessments must be recorded on the standard Risk Assessment Form available on the Orb. Wherever possible the level of risk should be as low as is reasonably practicable for any employee required to work alone for whatever reason.

The findings of any risk assessments should be shared with those involved and they should be allowed to make any comments. If any member of staff has any concerns regarding the risk assessment and having to work alone they should initially raise this with their Line Manager.

As with any Risk Assessment it should be the subject of periodic review, please refer to the Councils Risk Assessment policy for further guidance.

If any assistance is required to complete a risk assessment or to consider control measures please contact the Health and Safety team.

Even following a comprehensive risk assessment has been completed for a member of staff with their Line Manager all persons who undertake Lone Working should take some responsibility for their own health and safety when working. When arriving at your destination whether it be somewhere you are familiar with or a new location all staff must undertake a "Dynamic Risk Assessment" of the situation. If for whatever reason they are not comfortable in working alone they should not proceed and make alternative arrangements. This should then be reported into their Manager at the earliest opportunity.

Staff should not be put under pressure to undertake Lone Working in a situation in which they feel vulnerable and or at risk and have the right to walk away.

Lone Working Guidance for Managers and Employees

Appendix 1**Guidance for Managers and Employees with regard to Lone Working**

The following questions should be considered when assessing the impact of regular or occasional Lone Working:-

- What work and relevant risk are undertaken by people working alone?
- Does the nature of the work require at least two people to be involved?
- Does it involve work at or near live electrical conductors or the use of machines?
- Does it involve a person under 18 working with specified machinery who MUST be under adequate supervision?
- Is it necessary for the work to be undertaken alone?
- Is there a risk of violence to the lone worker?
- Have all hazards associated with the work been assessed?
- Did the assessments take account of the increased hazards associated with lone working?
- Have adequate control measures been implemented?
- Have emergency procedures been identified?
- Is the individual aware of the procedure in place, with regard to:
 - Access and egress points
 - Foreseeable emergency situations and procedures?
 - Signing in and out of workplace
- Has special safety and PPE equipment been provided, i.e. Mobile phone, personal alarm etc?
- What provisions are in place for First Aid?

Communication

Are there appropriate communication systems in place? (Tracker systems)
 Are Communication systems tested at regular intervals? (Lifeline/Mobile Phones)

Training, Supervision and Monitoring

- Have all employees working alone received adequate training, taking into account any increased risks associated with lone working and the specific vulnerability of individual employees?
- Do lone workers receive recorded monitoring and supervision?
- Are working practices reviewed on a regular basis, assessed revised and recorded as necessary?
- Are accidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses experienced by those working alone properly reported, recorded, investigated and monitored?

Appendix 2

Further specific Advice and Guidance For Lone Working**Personal safety when visiting clients at home or at other premises**

- Consider whether the same outcomes could be achieved if the meeting could take place at a safer venue.
- Ensure you are aware of and able to follow your section's Safe Systems of Work.
- Review any sources of information that may be available regarding the client and the premises i.e. local registers, corporate information, police etc.
- Assess if client information justifies taking extra precautions i.e. taking a colleague or other professional to accompany you on the visit.
- Ensure a responsible person at your base knows where you are visiting or working, who you are visiting, when you are visiting or working and when you expect to finish.
- Agree communication procedures and methods e.g. mobile phone, two-way system etc.
- Agree an emergency response in the event of danger or no communication.
- Consider if a personal attack alarm is required.
- Always make appointments for home visits
- Arrange visits during daylight and working hours if possible.
- Plan travel arrangements and parking if needed, avoid parking or walking in poorly lit areas.
- Visit the bathroom prior to the visit
- If someone attempts to take something from you let them have it, but throw it onto the floor to distract them, allowing you to escape.
- Be on time for appointments. Contact the client if you are going to be late.
- Do not peer through letterboxes.
- State clearly who you are, where you are from and provide I.D.
- Clarify who you are talking to.
- Do not enter premises unless invited by a responsible adult.
- Ensure that any family dogs are safe or under control before entering.
- If you feel uneasy do not enter premises or a particular room.
- Only sit if the client intends to do so and choose a seat near an exit.
- Ensure your mobile phone, two-way system or panic alarm is accessible.
- If you start to feel threatened or an incident occurs collect your belongings, stand slowly and move towards the exit. Briefly explain why you are leaving and how the meeting can be re-arranged.
- If someone attempts to prevent you leaving, stay calm, be assertive, talk and ask questions, this may deter or distract the person enough to allow you to escape.
- If you have a personal attack alarm use it or shout to draw attention and distract the assailant.
- After the visit report back to base at the earliest opportunity or as directed in the safe system of work.

Personal safety when working in isolation from other colleagues

- Consider if the activity could be avoided or working alone avoided.
- If working alone, ensure a responsible person at your base knows where and when you are working and when you expect to finish.
- Ensure you are aware of and able to follow your section's Safe Systems of Work.
- Ensure you are trained and competent to carry out the work.
- Ensure appropriate equipment for the task is available and fit for purpose.
- Ensure all safety devices and emergency stops on equipment are in working order.
- Ensure any relevant personal protective equipment is available, serviceable and compatible.
- Ensure you are aware of procedures in the event of an emergency e.g. fire, abuse, accidents.
- Dress appropriately for the activity and avoid wearing valuable jewelry or items that can be grabbed.
- Consider if a personal attack alarm system is appropriate.
- Sign off/report back at the end of the activity as directed in the safe system of work.

Personal safety when travelling by car

- Ensure the vehicle is in good working order – visual checks, regular maintenance, sufficient fuel etc.
- If working alone, ensure a responsible person at your base knows where and when you are working and when you expect to finish.
- Have emergency breakdown cover.
- Carry a small first aid kit in your vehicle along with a torch to be used in the event of a breakdown. Consideration should also be given to carrying a personal attack alarm.
- Plan your route – have directions and carry maps. Plan your journey including routes to be taken prior to travelling and let people know of your plans.
- Plan to travel in daylight hours where possible.
- Ensure an effective communication system is in place
- Have money, cash cards, etc. available in the event of emergency
- Inform those at your destination your estimated time of arrival.
- Stay alert and be aware of your surroundings. If for whatever reason you feel tired or unwell do not proceed with your journey and report in to your Manager.
- Keep vehicle doors locked and windows closed when possible.
- Keep any valuables out of sight.
- Never leave vehicles unlocked and unattended.
- If possible avoid parking in quiet or unlit areas.
- When using car parks – if at all possible, park on ground level, near to exits, avoid pillars and reverse into spaces.
- Always have your keys ready when returning to your vehicle.

- If you leave the vehicle unattended check the back seat area before re-entering.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers or give lifts unless you know and trust the person and you are authorised to do so.
- If you see an incident or someone attempts to flag you down: THINK! – Is it safe to stop and get out?
- Is it safer to stop and summon help via your mobile phone or drive to a phone box?
- If another driver follows you or becomes aggressive; try to stay calm and appear pleasant, avoid eye contact, try to get away from the other car safely and without speeding, drive to a busy area where you can stop and there are other people around – make sure your doors and windows are locked, then write down the registration number and any other relevant details.
- If the other driver follows you - switch on your lights, hazard-warning lights and sound your horn. Continue driving until you reach a police, fire or ambulance station or other busy safe area.
- If another driver pulls in front of you, forcing you to stop – check all doors and windows are locked, keep your engine running, switch on hazard warning lights and sound your horn. If you feel in any way vulnerable do not hesitate to call the police.
- If you are stationary and approached on foot - check all doors and windows are locked, keep or start the engine running. If in doubt drive off. If you are unable to drive off sound your horn and switch on head and hazard lights.
- Use your mobile phone to report the incident to the police.
- Do not leave your car. Do not get out and confront other drivers.

If you break down:

- Pull as far off the road as you are able - If it is feasible, in a well-lit and busy area.
- If you have a mobile phone, call your breakdown organisation, giving your location and description of your vehicle.
- If you do not have a mobile – place a note on the dashboard of the vehicle, hide valuables, lock the vehicles and make your way safely to the nearest phone point to summon assistance.

If you breakdown on a motorway:

- Drive or coast to the nearest emergency phone, stopping with the front passenger door adjacent to the booth.
- If you cannot drive the car any further, pull onto the hard shoulder and switch on hazard warning lights.
- Get out of the vehicle on the passenger side and get behind the barriers away from the vehicle, do not stay in your vehicle. Give the control room your details – registration, location, breakdown organisation and details of any passengers.
- If possible, lock all doors except the passenger door and remove keys.
- It may be safer to wait on the verge than in the car, unless you have disabled, elderly or very young passengers.

- When the breakdown vehicle arrives verify it is from your breakdown organisation.

Personal safety when travelling on public transport –

- If travelling alone, ensure a responsible person at your base knows where and when you are travelling and when you expect to return /arrive.
- If you need to wait for public transport - try to choose a busy well-lit stop or station.
- Have your fare already separated from other money or valuables.
- Avoid having your hands full or carrying valuables – only carry essentials.
- Have a personal alarm at hand.
- Stay alert and appear confident.
- Select a seat near to the driver if possible, in view of others and close to any alarms. Avoid closed compartments, upper levels and corner seats.
- When using taxis only call known reputable companies.
- Before entering the hire-car check the driver knows the name you gave as the pickup.
- Do not hail hire-cars in the street. Only use licensed hackney carriages.

Personal safety when travelling on foot

- If travelling alone, ensure a responsible person at your base knows where and when you are travelling and when you expect to return /arrive.
- Plan ahead – choose a busy, well-lit route that avoids groups or gangs and stick to the route.
- Stay alert – keep your head up and stride purposefully.
- Avoid waiting around – if it is unavoidable, wait in a well-lit area and stay alert and confident.
- If you think you are being followed make your way, at once, to the nearest busy area, open shop or well-lit house and ask for help if necessary.
- Carry a personal attack alarm at hand and use it if you feel threatened.
- Avoid walking in the same direction of traffic.
- Do not accept unplanned lifts unless you know and trust the driver and vehicle.
- If a vehicle stops and you feel threatened in any way, turn and walk in the opposite direction to which the vehicle is facing.
- Take the registration number of any vehicle causing you harassment.
- If you feel unduly threatened, in any way, use your mobile phone or the nearest phone point to summon appropriate assistance.

Appendix 3

Lone Worker Monitoring System

- A lone worker will be required to complete a registration form through the Lifeline service. Once completed a 4 digit pin code will be assigned to the employee for use of the system.
- The Lone Worker System operates by dialling 01527 66454 into the Monitoring Centre system via a mobile phone.
- Before leaving for their first appointment the lone worker will enter a unique PIN number to log on to the Lone Worker System. The lone worker must leave a message stating the address of their visit.
- The lone worker will enter the duration of their visit in minutes from 1 minute to 1,440 minutes (24 hours). For example, 1 hour should be entered 060 minutes. The time should be commensurate with the task to be undertaken. For an installation and demonstration the maximum period permitted is 120 minutes. For all other tasks, the maximum time is 60 minutes. There is no minimum limit; if a call is expected to take 5 minutes then 005 should be entered.
- After each visit the lone worker should enter their PIN number again to show they are travelling, up-date their voicemail message and update the system again on arrival at their next call. This should be repeated until all calls are completed.
- If the lone worker goes over the time they have entered the automated Lone Worker System will attempt to dial their phone every 5 minutes for a maximum of 3 calls. If the lone worker has not responded after the 3rd attempt the system will send a remote message to the Monitoring Centre where an Operator will receive an alarm call and respond to the suspected emergency.
- When an alarm call is raised at the Monitoring Centre the lone workers details will be displayed on the screen. If the Operator is unable to make contact then they will retrieve the message left on the lone workers voice message file to determine their location.
- The Monitoring Centre Operator will contact the lone workers Manager to advise them that the lone worker has failed to check in and to ask them how they wish the Monitoring Centre to proceed.
- If the Line Manager is unavailable the Operator will firstly contact the next of kin and then the Police.
- The Emergency Services will be given details of the lone worker including their description, vehicle details, last known whereabouts etc.

Instructions on Use of Monitoring System

To log on: dial the Lone Worker number: **01527 66454**.

You will hear: "**Welcome to the Lone Worker Monitoring System**"
Please enter your 4 digit Pin Code (xxxx)

You will then be asked to confirm your Pin Code: (xxxx)

To re-enter your Pin Code press 1

To continue press 2

Please leave your message after the tone and press * when complete

You will then hear the following options and be asked to leave a message (it is essential that you leave a message including the name, address and telephone number of the visit you are making for the system to operate effectively and for your safety):

To listen to your current voice message press 1

To change your voice message press 2

To continue press 3

You will now be required to input/amend your check time interval (this is the time you are likely to be at your visit):

Your check interval is ??? minutes

To change your check interval press 1

(Enter a check interval time of between 010 and 900 minutes)

To continue press 2

Your Lone Worker details will then be summarised and the call ended:

Pin code (xxxx) is logged in with a check interval of ??? minutes. Goodbye.

Disconnect the phone call.

Once your visit is complete; log back on to the system and either Log Off by dialling the Lone Worker number as above and re-entering your Pin No and selecting Option 5 or amend your details when requested by selecting the relevant option as shown below.

To check your calls: If you do not check back in with the Lone Worker Monitoring System within the check interval entered your mobile will ring. When you answer the phone you will hear:

This is your automatic check call. Please enter your 4 digit Pin Code (xxxx)

You will then be given the following options:

In an emergency - press 1

If you are OK - press 2

To change your voice message - press 3

To change your check interval - press 4

To Log Off - press 5

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SUBSTANCE MISUSE
(DRUGS, ALCOHOL & OTHER SUBSTANCES)
AT WORK POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Concern has been expressed at a national level, about the rise in consumption of alcohol, drugs and other substances (e.g. solvents) and the associated increase in violence and other anti-social behaviour linked to their use. Alcohol alone is responsible for an estimated 3-5% of all absences from work which equates to approximately 8 -14 million working days lost each year.

This document forms an integral extension to the policy statement contained within the authority's (Redditch Borough Council's) Health and Safety Policy document made under section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work Etc. Act 1974.

By promoting and implementing these arrangements and procedures, the council intends to raise employees' awareness and communicate its approach to the issue of drug and alcohol related problems at work. This document will also assist the council in meeting their legal obligations.

Redditch Borough Council is committed to ensuring a safe, healthy and productive working environment and to minimising problems arising from the misuse of drugs and alcohol at work.

2.0 THE LAW

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 every employer must ensure that employees do not endanger their own health and safety or that of their colleagues. Under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, it is an offence for non-prescribed drugs to be knowingly used, kept or supplied on the premises. It is also an offence to ignore these activities. Arguably, the employer is also at risk of civil law claims from any party injured by an employee under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst at work.

Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act requires employees to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts and omissions at work. This clearly has implications for the use of alcohol and drugs that affect the safety of the individual and or others in and around the workplace.

Employers have a duty under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to assess the risk to the health and safety of our employees. Prosecution may be brought against an employer if the employer knowingly allowed an employee under the influence of drugs, alcohol and other substances to continue working and his or her behaviour places the employee or others at risk.

Under common law, there is also potential for civil claims to be brought against an individual employee in the event of an accident, which resulted in damages or injuries being incurred by an employee who was under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

Employees should also be aware of their duties under the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Transport and Works Act 1992. Drivers of road vehicles must not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while driving, attempting to drive or when they are in charge of a vehicle on a road or other public place.

Please note that this procedure runs in conjunction with the Redditch Borough Council's Equal Opportunities Policy.

The right to privacy under article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (HRA) extends to workplace and cannot be interfered with unless it is in accordance with law and necessary for a variety of purposes, including the protection of health and the protection of others.

3.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

From the viewpoint of health and safety at work, the policy of Redditch Borough Council is to safeguard, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all employees, contractors and any others who may be affected by the operations of the council (e.g. general public). This includes the decision of the Council to include a Substance Misuse Policy to run in conjunction with the Councils Health and Safety Policy as a general duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

The Substance Misuse Policy covers all Council employees (incl. Members) Contractors and includes the requirement to be in a fit condition whilst engaged in Council operations. This requires that the use or misuse of alcohol and drugs is prohibited at work. The Council considers that the creation of a health and safety culture, based on welfare principles, is only achievable by total commitment and complete co-operation between all parties concerned.

Redditch Borough Council has no desire to interfere with an individual's personal life or to reduce any social activities carried out in a reasonable manner. They should however, understand that the psychological and physical effects of alcohol and other substances that affect behaviour could inadvertently be brought into the workplace.

The allocation of duties for safety matters, and particular arrangements that are made to implement the Policy are included in this Substance Misuse Policy Document and are also referenced in the Councils Health and Safety Policy documents.

OUR AIMS:

Successfully tackling substance misuse can benefit the authority and our employees by:

- Promotion of health, safety and welfare of all employees.
- Reducing the risk of accidents and damage caused by impaired judgement.
- Creating a more productive environment by offering support to those employees who declare a substance related problem and improving employee morale.
- Enhancing both the employees and the public's perception as a responsible employer.
- Reducing the cost of absenteeism or impaired productivity.
- Saving the cost of recruiting and training new employees to replace those whose employment might be terminated because of untreated substance misuse.

Our aims will be achieved through working towards and achieving the following objectives.

- By establishing if and where a drug or alcohol problem exists or may occur, and if it does to what extent.
- By intervening appropriately, at the earliest stage possible, where a drug, alcohol or substance misuse problem has been identified, for Health and Safety reasons only.
- By offering professional treatment and support where it is needed in order to maintain a safe and healthy workforce and environment.
- By agreeing a positive and progressive improvement programme and by setting realistic performance improvement targets for individual requiring assistance.

4.0 ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**4.1 Cllrs, Chief Exec & Directors Heads of Service**

Have overall the responsibility of ensuring that this procedure is implemented within each area of the authority, with an aim to improving the overall standards of health and safety.

4.2 Managers and Team Leaders

Managers and Team Leaders have responsibility for communicating and implementing this procedure and ensuring that all action taken within their department, whether signposting or referring on, is done so in accordance with this procedure and that reasonable steps are taken to maintain and where necessary, improve health and safety standards. It is the responsibility of managers to ensure that their employees read this policy and attend any training as appropriate.

4.3 Human Resources Advisors

It is the responsibility of the Human Resources Advisors to offer support and advice, whether signposting or referring on, to both managers and Team Leaders to implement and manage this policy, and employees who may require help to overcome any health issues relating to substance misuse..

4.4 Senior Advisor (Health, Safety & Wellbeing)

The Senior Advisor (Health, Safety & Wellbeing) is responsible for developing and maintaining such policies and procedures jointly with the Human Resources Department, Managers and Trade Union Representatives, offering support and advice to managers and employees where appropriate.

4.5 Trade Union representatives

Local/ branch Trade Union reps are able to discuss with members and assist and liaise with HR and Management and explain the benefits of the procedures , they are also able to assist and signpost to services should members want to seek support or help on a voluntary basis.

4.6 All Employees – inc. permanent, temporary or casual

All employees (including permanent, temporary or casual staff and no matter what level and status) have a responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others and to comply with these procedures. Employees also have a duty to report any potential health and safety risks or concerns that they become aware of to their manager.

4.7 Agency

All Agency staff will be made aware of this policy procedure during their induction. All Agency staff must comply with the contents of this procedure. Any Agency staff failing to comply with this procedure will be referred to their Employer (the Agency) for assistance and for this policy to be adhered to.

4.8 Contractors & Sub-Contractors

All contractors and sub-contractors will be made aware of this policy procedure when applying or being commissioned to carry out any work for RBC. Sub-Contractors and their employees must comply with the contents of this procedure. Failure to comply with this procedure will mean the failing contractor being removed from the list of approved sub-contractors.

5.0 PROCEDURES

5.1 ESTABLISHING THE PROBLEM – Key Indicators

Managers and Team Leaders should be aware that the misuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances by employees might come to light in various ways. The characteristics highlighted within this section, especially when arising in various combinations, may indicate the presence of an alcohol, drug or other substance misuse related problem.

The characteristics are for general guidance only and the presence of some or indeed all of them are not an exhaustive list to alcohol or drug misuse. Other illnesses such as Alzheimer's, diabetes, thyrotoxicosis, epilepsy, depression or cerebral tumour and even the accidental misuse of 'over the counter' medication may mimic alcohol or drug misuse.

It is also important that employees notify their immediate supervisor if they are taking either prescribed drugs or taking 'over the counter' medication that may affect or impair their judgement or performance. Employees who are in doubt or have any concerns relating to any medication being taken or received that could affect their performance, should discuss this issue with their Line Manager or the Human Resources Department. An Occupational Health Advisor can advise both the employee and the employer on the appropriate course of action.

General characteristics:

- Absenteeism
- High accident levels
- Work performance may be affected
- Mood swings
- Physical symptoms
- Misconduct

An employee's alcohol, drug or substance misuse problem may come to light as a mitigating factor in a disciplinary interview. It should be treated as a mitigating factor for certain "less serious" disciplinary offences, such as poor time keeping or lateness, provided the person is prepared to undergo treatment.

5.2 INTERVENTION

Managers and Team Leaders who feel an employee's unsatisfactory performance may be drug, alcohol or other substance related should inform their line Manager and the Human Resources Department in order to discuss the matter, logging any evidence/reasons for suspecting a problem.

It is important to remember to be non-judgemental and that it is not a foregone conclusion that an employee is guilty of using or being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances without a full investigation into the facts. The issue must be dealt with, with integrity and with the employee's health as the foremost paramount importance. Employees will be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

If thought necessary the Manager or the Team Leader in conjunction with the Human Resources Departmental Advisor should arrange for a meeting with the employee. This should be arranged and conducted in private and without it becoming obvious to other colleagues.

During the interview all parties should endeavour to establish the cause of the problem (although it must be noted that some individuals with drugs or alcohol problems may go to great lengths to conceal the situation). Sensitive enquires should be made to whether there are any domestic issues causing concern or difficulties.

At the meeting the unsatisfactory performance or conduct should be discussed in detail with the employee and his/her representative, if requested. Employees should not be interviewed if the consensus of opinion of the interviewing panel is that the employee is not fit to be interviewed. In particular, if they suspected that the employee has been drinking, is actually drunk or suspected of being under the influence of another substance. In such cases management should reschedule the meeting.

The Manager and or the Human Resources Advisor should reiterate, in detail, the authority's expected and required standards of behaviour, ensuring the employee clearly understands what is expected of him or her.

The highlighted shortfall in standards or performance being currently achieved must be discussed in detail and the difference between his/her current performance and what is expected must be agreed. Measurable

targets should then be set by the Manager and the Human Resources Advisor and communicated to the individual concerned in writing.

On health and safety grounds, it may be decided and necessary to refer an employee to an Occupational Health Advisor to ascertain the degree of the problem and to seek advice on the most appropriate course of action. The referral may interrupt the interview process, but corrective action should continue as soon as possible after the referral is concluded. The Human Resources Advisor may intervene in the interview process, if it is deemed the meeting is becoming unproductive or it is thought to be too stressful for the employee concerned.

The Data Protection Act (part 4) applies to the records being kept by the Occupational Health Provider and Redditch Borough Council.

The employee should be informed of the assistance the authority is prepared to give an employee who is trying to overcome a drink, drugs or other substance related problem and should also be informed and guided towards outside agencies where help can be obtained.

The employee should be informed that the authority requires his or her performance to be improved to a measurable, quantifiable and acceptable standard and that failure to achieve this over an acceptable, specific period of time may result in further action being taken.

Management should then agree a realistic and appropriate course of action is to be taken. Where it is established that alcohol, drugs or other substances is, or could be, the problem, an appointment will be arranged with the Occupational Health Advisor or Doctor as soon as possible.

However, if there are strong signs and suspicions that the employee's unsatisfactory performance is drug or alcohol related and he or she will not admit or acknowledge this, further encouragement and support should be given at all stages of the investigation to recognise the true underlying problem.

At all stages throughout this process the employee must be treated with respect and dignity and all information relating to the situation will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

5.3 TREATMENT & SUPPORT

Where employees acknowledge that they have a problem and are given help and supportive treatment, this will be on the understanding that:

- a) Whilst they are undergoing treatment, they will be on sick leave and will be entitled to the usual sick pay benefits. Some treatment may be built into a working pattern or programme and not affect work.

To enable an employee to continue working, professional advice will be sought by way of a personal risk assessment to ascertain an employee's ability to continue working in a safe manner.

- (b) Every effort should be made to ensure that on completion of the recovery programme employees are able to return to the same or equivalent work.

All those seeking help will be treated sympathetically and in confidence.

However, where such a return would jeopardise either a satisfactory level of job performance or the employee's recovery the Manager or Human Resources Advisor will review the full circumstances surrounding the case and agree a course of action to be taken. This may include the offer of suitable alternative employment within the organisation, subject to the individual's capabilities, the consideration of retirement on the grounds of ill-health or dismissal.

5.4 WHERE FURTHER ACTION IS LIKELY

Further action may be likely in certain circumstances as highlighted below.

- In the event of a relapse
- Where recovery is unlikely
- Serious misconduct caused by alcohol, drugs or other substances
- Alcohol, drugs or other substance abuse on the premises
- Supplying, selling, consuming or possessing drugs on the premises or whilst at work

5.4.1 Relapse

Where an employee, having received treatment, suffers a relapse, the authority will consider the case on its individual merits. Medical advice will be sought in an attempt to ascertain how much more treatment or rehabilitation time is likely to be required to facilitate a full recovery. At the authority's discretion, more treatment or rehabilitation time may be suggested or given in order to help the employee to recover fully. Accurate confidential records should be kept of all absences relating to this particular issue.

5.4.2 Recovery unlikely

If, after an employee has received treatment and a full recovery is reported as unlikely, affecting the employee's ability to return to full work duties, dismissal of the employee may result. Such action will only be taken after a full internal and medical investigation has been carried out.

6.0 SERIOUS CASES OF MISCONDUCT

Employees are expressly forbidden to take, consume, use or supply drugs, alcohol or other substances (such as solvents, legal highs, etc) when at work, on authority's premises or on authority's business. Breach of this rule could result in disciplinary action being taken which may result in summary dismissal.

If an employee is known to be, or strongly suspected of being, intoxicated by alcohol, drugs or other substances during working hours, the Manager or Human Resources Advisor must be informed and consulted immediately.

Where a serious accident or incident has occurred or another employee has expressed a sincere concern or suspicion that an employee may be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any other substance(s), the Manager and authority's Health and Safety Advisor must be informed immediately. In serious cases the Police are likely to be informed and involved in investigations.

In such extreme cases externally qualified personnel will be requested to carry out immediately, or as soon as is practicably possible, a series of in-offensive and dignified, simple but scientific tests to ascertain whether the employee is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other known substances at work.

To ensure that these tests are sensitively and professionally carried out the following principles apply:

- That a Trade Union Representative or another person within the organisation, of choice by the employee, is present while the test is being carried out.
- That the tests are carried out immediately or as soon as is practicably possible after the request is made.
- That the tests are carried out sensitively and discretely.
- That the test results are shared with the employee and the representative immediately and are recorded as positive or negative evidence.
- That the Manager will lead the initial and immediate corrective action following a positive result.

Any employee refusing to participate in such a test, following a serious incident relating to their or another person's health and safety will be suspended pending an investigation. Usual suspension criteria apply.

A disciplinary investigation will be initiated immediately by the appropriate Manager who will be appointed by the Head of Service. The authority's disciplinary procedures and guidelines will be followed.

7.0 DRUG ABUSE ON THE PREMISES

Employees who take drugs, which have not been prescribed, on medical grounds will, in the absence of mitigating circumstances, be deemed to be committing an act of gross misconduct and will thus render themselves likely to be dismissed. Any employee believed to be buying or selling drugs, or in possession of unlawful (i.e. un-prescribed) drugs will also be committing an act of gross misconduct. In these cases the Police are likely to be informed and involved.

The Council reserve the right to undertake drug and alcohol testing where appropriate.

8.0 CONFIDENTIALITY

All matters relating to individuals employed by Redditch Borough Council concerning alcohol, drugs and other substances at work will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. Only those people who need to know will be made aware of the problem. All employees are entitled to representation during all the stages of these processes, Trade Union or otherwise, and at the request of the individual concerned.

Detailed notes and records relating to these issues must be kept private and confidential. Management must ensure that the numbers of employees involved with an individual case and the procedural processes are kept to a minimum.

9.0 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

All employees' will be made aware of the effects of alcohol, drug and other substance misuse. Employees will be encouraged not to cover up for colleagues that suffer with a drink, drug or substance misuse related problems, but alternatively to recognise that collusion represents a false sense of loyalty and that false sense of loyalty to one of our fellow colleagues, will, in the longer term, have a damaging or devastating

effects on those employee's lives and quite possibly directly or indirectly on others.

Employees who recognise that they have a drink, drug or substance misuse related problem, or that they are at risk of developing one, should be encouraged to come forward for confidential and supportive help.

Employees should be encouraged to seek support, in confidence, with the Human Resources Department, our Occupational Health Advisor, a colleague that they may have an affinity or an independent professional.

Contacts of outside agencies where help can be obtained will be made readily available to all employees via staff notice-boards.

COUNCIL

4th April 2016

107. FINANCE MONITORING Q3 2015/16

RECOMMENDED that

the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital budget for 2016/17 is increased by £60k to £160k for a Demand Case Management IT system, funded by HRA reserves.

Finance Monitoring Quarter 3 2015/16

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management.
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report details the Council’s final financial position for both General Fund Revenue for the period April – December 2015 (Quarter 3 2015/16)

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to:

- 1) RECOMMEND that the HRA capital budget for 2016/17 is increased by £60k to £160k for a Demand Case Management IT system, funded by HRA reserves, and
- 2) RESOLVE that the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report be noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 This report provides details of the financial information across the Council. The aim is to ensure officers and members can make informed and considered judgement of the overall position of the Council. The report reflects the financial position across the Strategic Purposes to enable Members to be aware of the level of funding attributed to these areas. This following summary shows the financial position for revenue funding for the period April – December 2015.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8th March 2016

**Revenue Budget Summary – Overall Council
Financial Year 2015/16**

3.3 Internal recharges have not been included in these figures to allow comparison for each service area. However Support costs have been included.

Strategic Purpose	Annual budget £'000	Budget to date £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projection £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Keep my place safe and looking good	4,216	4,012	3,912	-100	4,055	-161
Help me run a successful business	-82	-188	-197	-8	-88	-6
Help me be financially independent	377	402	368	-35	326	-50
Help me to live my life independently	411	195	226	31	442	31
Help me find somewhere to live in my locality	1,379	1,009	960	-49	1,299	-80
Provide Good things for me to see, do and visit	2,217	1,710	1,779	70	2,275	58
Enable others to work/do what they need to do (to meet their purpose)	6,824	5,588	5,486	-102	6,730	-95
Totals	15,343	12,728	12,534	-193	15,039	-303
Minimum Revenue Provision (Borrowing Costs)	1,057	1,057	933	-124	933	-124

Financial Commentary:

For the period April to December 2015 there is an overall underspend showing which is then forecast to a significant saving by the end of the financial year. This relates partly due to essential spend only across the council following the financial settlement announcement, together with vacancies and additional income generated in a number of services. In addition to the overall general underspend of £303k it is anticipated there will be a saving on our borrowing costs of £124k due to slippage on the capital programme.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8th March 2016

**Capital Budget Summary – Overall Council
Financial Year 2015/16**

3.3 Internal recharges have not been included in these figures to allow comparison for each service area. However Support costs have been included.

Strategic Purpose	Annual budget £'000	Budget to date £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projection £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Keep my place safe and looking good	4,713	3,535	3,339	-196	3,885	-828
Help me run a successful business	12	9	8	-1	10	-2
Help me be financially independent	0	0	0	0	0	0
Help me to live my life independently	887	665	508	-157	632	-255
Help me find somewhere to live in my locality	9,611	7,333	6,575	-759	9,611	0
Provide Good things for me to see, do and visit	133	100	17	-83	137	4
Enable others to work/do what they need to do (to meet their purpose)	230	190	140	-50	230	0
Totals	15,586	11,832	10,587	-1,246	14,505	-1,081

Financial Commentary:

The capital expenditure in the third quarter of the financial year 2015/16 shows that most projects are currently work in progress. There will be requests made to carry budgets to next financial year within the strategic purpose 'keep my place safe and looking good' on the Crematorium Enhancements and the town landscape scheme due to due to works not being able to take place in the winter months.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8th March 2016

Treasury Management

- 3.4 The Council’s Treasury Management Strategy has been developed in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance prudential indicators and is used to manage risks arising from financial instruments. Additionally treasury management practices are followed on a day to day basis.

Credit Risk

- 3.5 Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Council’s customers. Credit risk is minimised by use of a specified list of investment counterparty criteria and by limiting the amount invested with each institution. The Council receives credit rating details from its Treasury Management Advisers on a daily basis and any counterparty falling below the criteria is removed from the list.

- 3.6 At 31st December 2015 short term investments held comprised:

	31st Dec 2015 £'000
Deposits	5,000
Total	5,000

Income from investments

- 3.7 An investment income target of £25k has been set for 2015/16 using a projected rate of return of 0.25 %.

General Fund Balances

- 3.8 The General Fund Balance as at the 31th March 2015 was £2.005m. Should the projected savings be made in the financial year as forecast the revised balance will be £2.432m

Legal Implications

- 3.9 No legal implications have been identified.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.10 Budget holders manage their financial position on a monthly basis to ensure that services are delivered within the financial budget allocated to each area.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE8th March 2016**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.11 In delivering a robust financial framework the Council can deliver services to all members of its community..

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

The robust and accurate financial monitoring is a key area within the Council that is managed to ensure any risks are mitigated.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Strategic purposes financial position April – December 2015

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Kate Goldey
E Mail: k.goldey@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881208

Keep my place safe and looking good.

please note figures have been rounded

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Bereavement Services	-353	-264	-350	-86	-488	-136
Building Control	-33	-25	-7	18	-9	25
Community Services - Community Safety	542	410	397	-13	534	-8
CCTV	332	249	212	-37	299	-33
Development Management	211	159	90	-69	126	-85
Environmental Health	571	429	428	-1	598	27
Highways & Drainage	471	353	378	24	509	38
Landscape and Ground Maintenance	1,350	1,857	1,887	30	1,351	1
Planning Policy	246	185	212	28	257	10
Waste Management - Refuse & Recycling	880	660	665	5	879	-1
Totals:	4,216	4,012	3,912	-100	4,055	-161

Financial commentary:

Bereavement Services income is higher than anticipated due to an increase in the number of cremations.

Within Development management there is an underspend due to an increase in income against budget and also some salary vacancies.

In Highways & Drainage the variance is due a reduction in Civil Parking Enforcement income as a result of higher levels of compliance. There have also been staffing issues resulting in fewer penalty charge notices being issued however there is a saving in the fee payable to Wychavon District Council to offset this.

CCTV has received extra one off funding from Police and Crime Commissioners due to community safety bid.

The estimated variance for Landscape and Waste Management may change to reflect savings as the final analysis for the new place team structure is projected to the end of the year

Help me run a successful business
--

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Asset & Property Management	-329	-336	-321	15	-311	19
Economic Development	177	133	127	-6	188	11
Manager Taxi Licensing	-172	-157	-166	-9	-186	-14
Community Services - Grants to Vol bodies	242	172	164	-8	220	-22
Totals:	-82	-188	-197	-8	-88	-6

Financial commentary:

There are no significant variances this quarter.

Help me to be financially independent (including education & skills)

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Benefits	160	160	149	-11	124	-36
Council Tax	202	231	208	-23	187	-15
Property Management - Rents grants	15	11	11	0	15	0
Totals:	377	402	368	-35	326	-50

Financial commentary:

This saving is due to a combination of opportunities taken to reduce expenditure. There has been reduced spend on bailiffs costs and a number of vacant posts within the service. As with Customer Services shared management arrangements have realised further savings which have been reflected in the 16/17 budgets.

Help me to live my life independently (including health & activity)

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Community Services (incl dial a ride & Shopmobility)	424	283	287	4	431	6
Lifeline	-63	-137	-110	27	-38	25
Manager Care & Repair	50	50	50	0	50	0
Totals:	411	195	226	31	442	31

Financial commentary:

Lifeline has a variance is due to a loss of supporting people funding.

Help me to find somewhere to live in my locality

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Housing General Fund	1,224	908	870	-37	1,168	-56
Community Services - Housing Policy	179	134	123	-11	165	-14
Democratic Services - Land charges	-23	-32	-33	-1	-33	-10
Totals:	1,379	1,009	960	-49	1,299	-80

Financial commentary:

The variance in community services - housing policy is due to salary vacancies.
The variance within housing general fund is because of additional income received.

Provide things for me to do, see and visit

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Cultural Services	658	520	514	-7	649	-9
Leisure & Cultural Man	127	84	77	-6	121	-5
Parks & Green Spaces	769	573	575	3	763	-6
Sports Services	665	533	612	79	741	76
Business Development - Cultural	0	0	1	1	2	2
Totals:	2,217	1,710	1,779	70	2,275	58

Financial Services:

There is a projected overspend on sports services due to a rates revaluation at Abbey stadium, an increase in licence fees payable for fitness classes and overtime payments incurred for covering vacant posts (these posts have now been filled).
Income at the Abbey stadium on health and fitness is down due to difficulties in retaining members due to limited capacity in dance studios resulting in customers being unable to access classes and ultimately cancelling membership. However there are savings within sports development due to staff vacancies(which have now been filled) and a refund on Business rates for Hewell road which has reduced the overall variance.

Enable others to work/do what they need to do (to meet purpose)

Department	Annual budget £'000	To date budget £'000	Actuals to date £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Asset & Property Management - Town Hall	981	839	840	1	985	4
Asset Maint	344	258	258	0	344	0
Business Development	139	104	85	-19	124	-15
Business Transformation	1,124	843	819	-24	1,093	-31
Corporate Admin, Central post and printing	456	347	302	-45	396	-61
Corporate Management & Audit	176	131	138	8	206	30
Corporate Services	707	761	756	-4	663	-44
Corporate Strategy	86	65	67	2	88	2
Cultural Services - Management	125	99	102	3	132	7
Customer Support Services	555	426	390	-36	533	-23
Democratic Services	341	256	247	-9	339	-2
Elections	230	172	173	1	238	8
Financial Services & Procurement	600	533	547	14	609	9
Human Resources	451	344	355	11	464	14
It Licences Direct Services	154	154	157	2	164	10
Legal Services	253	205	203	-2	254	1
Property Management	21	7	7	-0	22	1
Sports Services - Management	73	55	52	-3	70	-3
Supplies And Transport	-0	-0	-2	-2	-3	-3
Climate Change	8	-10	-10	1	9	1
Totals:	6,824	5,588	5,486	-102	6,730	-95

Financial commentary:

The elections budget, whilst currently projecting on target may result in savings when the current work on analysing any external funding is complete.

Customer Services - Reduced demand and transformation of service delivery means there is a reduced resource need and therefore vacant hours have not been filled. In addition shared management arrangements are now in place across Customer Service and Benefits services realising a further saving. These have been reflected in the 16/17 budgets.

There has been a review of printing facilities, which has generated a projected underspend for the year of £33k. There is also a projected saving of £17k within postal services, however this is a demand led budget, therefore the final outturn figure may change.

Corporate Services savings is due to unfunded superannuation actual lower than original estimation from the County.

COUNCIL4th April 2016**REDDITCH POLLING PLACE AMENDMENTS**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	Batchley & Brockhill, Lodge Park
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	Yes
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The report sets out where changes may need to be made to Polling Places in advance of the May Elections and the June European Union Referendum. These are changes to the agreed Polling Districts and Polling Places review made in 2014.
- 1.2 The recommendations set out below are arising from investigations and Members' comments.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council is asked to RESOLVE

whether having considered the contents of this report to

- 2.1 change the polling place for the electors in Polling District BYA from Batchley One Stop Shop to Batchley Community Centre;**
- 2.2 change the polling place for the electors in Polling District LPA from Oak Hill First School to Lodge Park Social Club; and**
- 2.3 that if 2.1 is accepted to take effect for May 2016 elections and if 2.2 is accepted to take effect for the EU Referendum in June 2016.**

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are some minor financial implications for the Council which arise from this report but will be contained within existing budgets.

COUNCIL4th April 2016**Legal Implications**

- 3.2 a) Authority to set Polling District boundaries and to designate Polling Places rests with the Council (Statutory elements of the Council's Constitution under the Local Government Act 2000).
- b) Decisions about the situation of Polling Stations within designated Polling Places are for the (Acting) Returning Officer. Arrangements must comply with relevant provisions of the Representation of the People Acts and Regulations and the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.3 "Relevant authorities" (such as Redditch Borough Council) must:
- "a) seek to ensure that all the electors in the Constituency have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances"; and
- "b) seek to ensure that, so far as is reasonable and practicable, the polling places they are responsible for are accessible to all electors, including those who are disabled and, when considering the designation of a polling place, must have regard to the accessibility needs of disabled persons. If it is necessary to use a place where the access is not ideal, then every reasonable adjustment must be undertaken to provide access for all electors."

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.4 A review of Polling Places and Stations for Redditch was carried out in 2014.
- This report considers two areas, one where there is a problem with the polling place and one where a request has been made to move the polling place:
- a) Batchley One Stop Shop – Polling District BYA – Batchley & Brockhill
- b) Oak Hill First School – Polling District LPA – Lodge Park

A) Batchley One Stop Shop

- 3.5 Due to a change of use for part of the building Officers were asked to consider the viability of the Polling Station.
- 3.6 It was decided there would not be space to hold a poll within the room. Alternatives were considered and it was thought that Batchley Community Centre would be reasonable to send electors to. The Community Centre is already a polling place but could accommodate the 1,509 electors of Polling District BYA.
- 3.7 Relevant Members and Group Leaders have been consulted and no adverse comments were received.

COUNCIL4th April 2016B) Oak Hill First School

3.8 Officers received a request from Oak Hill First School to review use of the school as a polling station; Lodge Park Social Club was suggested as an alternative.

3.9 The school is still suitable as a polling place but a visit was made to Lodge Park Social Club and Officers noted that the room offered would be suitable for a polling station.

3.10 Members have been consulted and the following comments were made:

- “I would like to object to the moving of the polling station in Lodge Park to the lodge park club.

I feel that parents bringing their children to school and picking them up in the evening will cause a real problem for potential voters. Oak Hill has a severe problem with parking at these times and many use the car park at the Lodge Park Club. This may cause potential issues with voters being unable to park and maybe not voting.

A separate concern is the siting of a Polling Station on licensed premises. I understand that the club is normally open all day with beer, wines and spirits being consumed throughout this time. This may cause a problem.”

- “...Not agree with the lodge park change, keep Oak Hill First School as the polling station”
- “I am happy with the current Polling Station and therefore I oppose any change in venue”

3.11 When considering this Polling Place members should note that:

- Schools can be used as polling places free of charge (although heating, lighting and caretaking duties must be covered).
- There are other licensed premises within Redditch Borough that are used as Polling Places.

Customer/Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.12 The Council's policies directly cross-relate, particularly in relation to access issues. Accessibility for members of minority or disadvantaged groups is a key issue in the selection of suitable Polling Stations.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 Choice of Polling Place / Polling Station should not give rise to significant grounds of complaint which might put election results at risk of challenge.

COUNCIL4th April 2016

- 4.2 Due to timescales involved and the One Stop Shop not being viable Poll Cards will have been distributed to Polling District BYA with the Batchley Community Centre printed on them. If Council decides not to go forward with this new poll cards must be issued.

5. APPENDICES

None.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Government Boundary Commission for England and Electoral Commission Guidance.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Darren Whitney, Electoral Services Manager

Email: darren.whitney@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel: (01527) 882547



Overview & Scrutiny

Annual Report
2015 - 2016



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR

I am very pleased to present the annual report for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report provides an account of the work that the Committee has undertaken during the last twelve months, highlights progress that has been made, and identifies potential areas for further development.

As Chair, the last year has been a busy yet rewarding period. The Committee has scrutinised the Council's budget-setting process, helping to improve the accountability and detail provided. It was also pleasing to note that the Committee was able to scrutinise elements of the budget earlier than in previous years which made our work easier.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has worked to ensure that Council services are fit for purpose and enhance the wellbeing of our residents. It has also embarked on a number of Task Group and Short Sharp reviews. In particular, the work undertaken on our services for the LGBT community was particularly successful in making proposals to improve the lives of those residents.

This year we have welcomed two Portfolio Holders to meetings when significant services within their remit were the subject of review. Councillor Witherspoon, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism, and Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, contributed during debates about the future delivery of leisure services in the Borough and the Medium Term Financial Plan respectively. I feel that having an opportunity to consult with the Portfolio Holders was really helpful, ensuring that our discussions were informed by decision makers and that those decisions could be held to account where appropriate. I would like to thank them both and I hope that we can continue to build on this process of involving Portfolio Holders constructively in scrutiny debates in the future.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my fellow Committee Members for the hard work, support and enthusiasm that they have shown. I am also very appreciative of the hard work of Officers who support the work of the Committee, and would like to thank our lead support officers, Jess Bayley and Amanda Scarce, for the excellent work they have produced.



Councillor Jane Potter
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Redditch Borough Council

INTRODUCTION

There is an annual requirement for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to produce a report outlining its work and achievements during the previous year. The report contains information about the reviews that have been undertaken by Task Groups, Short Sharp Review Groups, and the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel. The report also provides Members with an opportunity to assess developments in scrutiny during the year.

This report has been produced by the Democratic Services Officers with lead responsibility for Overview and Scrutiny in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and the remaining eight Members.

KEY PRINCIPLES OF SCRUTINY

Members at Redditch Borough Council aim to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny process complies with the four key principles of scrutiny identified by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), the organisation set up to promote effective scrutiny in local government. The four key principles of effective scrutiny are:

- to provide a critical friend challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers;
- to enable the voice and concerns of the public and its communities to be heard;
- for scrutiny to be carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny process; and
- to drive improvement in public services.

MEMBERSHIP GALLERY

The following Councillors have served as members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee this year.



Councillor Jane Potter
Chair of the Committee



Councillor Gay Hopkins
Vice Chair



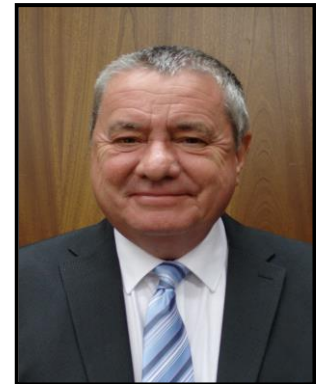
Councillor
Joe Baker



Councillor
David Bush



Councillor
Andy Fry



Councillor
Gareth Prosser



Councillor
Paul Swansborough



Councillor
Jenny Wheeler



Councillor
Nina Wood-Ford

CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY

Membership: Councillors Gareth Prosser (Chair), Wanda King, Jane Potter, Paul Swansborough and Nina Wood-Ford.

The Police and Justice Act 2006 required every local authority in England and Wales from April 2009 to have a designated Committee with responsibility for scrutinising the work of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CRDP). The North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership is the CDRP in Redditch. In Redditch the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, established in 2010 as a Sub-Committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, has been allocated responsibility for scrutinising the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership.

The Panel held its annual meeting on 16th September 2015 when it considered a briefing paper which provided an update on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership covering the previous 12 months. This included updates on the following areas:

- A recent review of Community Safety Partnership arrangements in the county.
- The future introduction by the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner of a new commissioning approach to funding community safety projects.
- Work on Hate Crime Awareness Week.
- The Worcestershire Safer Places Scheme.
- Redditch Roadway Arts.
- Delivery of Crime Prevention training to Council staff.

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Councillor Nina Wood-Ford was the the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) in 2015/16. District and Borough Councils are invited to appoint representatives to the HOSC to ensure that the interests of the district in relation to health are taken into account.

Councillor Wood-Ford has provided regular updates on a range of issues which had been discussed by HOSC including the following topics:

- Primary Care commissioning and GP access.
- Ongoing developments with the review of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust and the outcomes of an unannounced Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection.
- The work of the Patient Flow Centre at Wildwood in facilitating the return of patients from hospital to their homes.
- Maternity and Paediatric Services.
- The draft Joint Health and Well-Being Strategy for Worcestershire.
- Oncology services in the county.

A SNAPSHOT OF REPORTS / PRESENTATIONS RECEIVED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

During the course of the year the Board received a number of reports and presentations on a variety of subjects, including the following:

Leisure Services Pre-scrutiny

During the first three meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in June and July 2015 Members undertook detailed pre-decision scrutiny of an item listed on the Executive Committee Work Programme: *Review of the Operation of Leisure Services*. This report outlined findings from an Options Appraisal of leisure and cultural services that had been completed by external consultants on behalf of the Council. Members felt that this scrutiny work was appropriate as it followed directly on from the completion of a Task Group review of the Abbey Stadium in June 2014 and a decision made by the Executive Committee that month that the Council should explore the options for a leisure trust to manage some or all of its leisure facilities, including the Abbey Stadium.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee on 14th July 2015 Members considered the Options Appraisal. During this meeting Members agreed that further work by Officers was required prior to a decision on the future delivery of leisure and cultural services being taken. Meanwhile a decision was taken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to launch a Short, Sharp Review of the future options for the delivery of the Council's leisure and cultural services (further information about this review is provided on page 11).

The scrutiny review reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in December 2015 alongside a report from Officers on the outcomes of the additional work they had undertaken. In respect of the Officers' work it was concluded that additional investigations were required into the current operation of leisure and cultural services. To ensure that the Executive Committee could make a considered decision about the future of leisure and cultural services at the Council Members agreed to postpone making any decisions about the scrutiny group's recommendations until the additional work had been completed.

Future Management of Redditch Outdoor Market

In 2012/13 Members completed a scrutiny review of Redditch outdoor market. The group proposed a considerable number of recommendations, the majority of which were approved. In summer 2015 Officers reported to the Council regarding proposals for the future management of Redditch market. Given the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's previous investigation of this subject and the likely public interest in the matter the Committee concluded that Redditch Outdoor Market was suitable for pre-decision scrutiny.

At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2015 Members considered a report on the subject of the market. This report detailed actions that had already been taken to implement the scrutiny group's recommendations. Various options for the future management of the market were also detailed within the report. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee supported the option that Members felt would be best for the future sustainability of the market, market stall holders and the public. This proposed that the Council should conduct a procurement and contracting process to select and appoint a contractor to manage Redditch Outdoor Market. This proposal was

approved by the Executive Committee and a procurement process was subsequently undertaken.

Voluntary Sector Grants Programme

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to monitor the implementation of recommendations that have been made as part of the scrutiny process on a quarterly basis. In September 2015 Members raised concerns about limited progress in relation to the implementation of the recommendations that were made by the Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group in July 2014. An update was provided by relevant Officers in October 2015 and Members welcomed reports that these recommendations would be implemented once Officer support for the Council's grants programme had been resolved.

Gas Safety Testing

Members were concerned to learn in the summer of 2015 that gas safety inspections had been overdue at some Council houses in the Borough. The Committee was advised that in response the Council had self-referred to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and the matter would be reviewed by their Consumer Regulations Panel. Members welcomed the action that was taken by Officers in various teams to ensure that all outstanding inspections were resolved. However, the Committee noted that Members were also keen to ensure that the local authority learned lessons so that this problem did not recur in future. It was anticipated that the Internal Audit report which investigated this issue in detail would help the Council achieve this objective.

Quarterly Recommendation Monitoring Report

The Committee continued to monitor recommendations made through the scrutiny process to ensure that wherever possible these are implemented in a timely fashion. In consultation with the Chair this document was revised in the previous municipal year in order to make it more "user friendly". It now includes "smiley" and "sad" faces so Members can see at a glance when recommendations are progressing either satisfactorily or no action has been taken. This approach has been well received by Members and enabled the Committee to urge additional action where they have considered this to be appropriate

Budget Scrutiny

This year the Committee has also continued to make an active contribution to the Council's budget setting process. To a significant extent this has been conducted through pre-decision scrutiny including consideration of; the fees and charges 2016/17, Bereavement Services' fees and charges, and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The Committee would like to thank the Executive Committee for agreeing to release the fees and charges report for publication earlier than usual as this provided the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with sufficient time to consider the proposed charges in detail and enabled Members to make informed recommendations on the subject. It is hoped that a similar arrangement will be implemented in future years to the benefit of the Council's finances.

In line with previous years the Committee has also considered and commented on the Council's overarching budget. Various reports, including drafts of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19, have been considered by the Committee. Members

have been mindful of the challenging financial circumstances facing Redditch Borough Council, like many local authorities, and this has informed the debate at meetings. Despite the fact that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not make any recommendations Members were pleased to note that the points raised during consideration of the Medium Term Financial Plan were noted and informed the Executive Committee's decision making on this subject in February 2016.

Housing Provision

An Overview and Scrutiny training session was provided to all Non-Executive Committee Members at the beginning of the municipal year. During this training exercise there were interactive workshop sessions designed to enable Members to identify items of interest to the local community, which linked to the Council's strategic purposes, that would be suitable for scrutiny during the year. One of the issues that was identified during this training session was the quality, quantity and accessibility of private, social and Council housing in the Borough.

At a meeting of the Committee in October 2015 Officers from the Council's Housing and Strategic Housing teams provided further information about the housing available to residents living in the Borough. As part of this process Members considered data relating to demand for social housing, the Council's allocations system and policy, the Council's holistic approach to allocating housing and supporting tenants in their own homes and action taken to resolve problems with any void properties.

Housing Benefits

The subject of housing benefits was also identified by Members as an issue of concern to local residents during the Overview and Scrutiny training session. In March 2016 Members received a detailed presentation which outlined the nature of changes that had been made to welfare support and housing benefit payments since 2013. The Committee learned about the impact that these changes had had locally and action that had been taken by Council staff to make sure that appropriate support could be provided to residents affected by the changes. This had included the introduction of a hardship scheme to vulnerable customers in need of support. Information was also provided about the introduction of Universal Credit in the Borough and the number of residents who were subject to the new benefits rules under this system.

Further legislative changes relating to housing benefits and the welfare system were announced in July 2015. These changes have not yet been implemented by the Government and, at the time of writing, it was unclear when this would take place. However, Members recognised that this subject can have significant implications for customers, particularly some of the more vulnerable residents living in the Borough. The Committee has therefore requested a further update on the impact of these changes at a future meeting once they have been implemented.

Redditch Partnership

In 2010 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was allocated responsibility for monitoring the work of the Redditch Partnership and progress in respect of local partners' priorities, as detailed in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS).

This year the update report was received in March 2016. Members were interested to learn about the work of various theme and sub-groups which form part of the

partnership, and particularly welcomed the work of the local Economic Development Theme Group. The Committee was also advised about amendments that had been made to the partnership's priorities. A new priority had been introduced committing the partnership to act as a lead on transformational change of services for residents in Redditch initially through a pilot project; the Connecting Families programme.

Whilst Members remained supportive of the work of the partnership there was general agreement that further action could be undertaken to monitor and report back on the impact of work undertaken by the partnership. Members also agreed that it would be useful for contact details for key partner organisations and projects to be provided for Members' consideration in order to facilitate effective signposting where appropriate. It is anticipated that Officers will address these concerns prior to the next annual update report to the Committee.

S106 Funding

Whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not propose any recommendations during consideration of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19 Members did identify that further information about s106 funding would be useful. A briefing on this subject has therefore been arranged for the meeting of the Committee that is due to take place on 12th April 2016. Due to general interest in this subject all Members have been invited to attend this meeting.

Performance Dashboard

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has an important role to play in monitoring the performance of Council services. In recent years a dashboard, containing comprehensive information about service performance in relation to the Council's strategic purposes, has been developed. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is keen to explore opportunities for the Committee to access and use the information provided on the dashboard. In order to identify the most appropriate way to utilise this resource a presentation on the subject of the dashboard is due to be provided for the Committee's consideration on 12th April. As this will continue to be a resource available to Members the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may want to revisit the dashboard and the findings from this presentation in the new municipal year.

TASK GROUPS AND SHORT, SHARP REVIEWS

The final reports of all completed investigations can be found on the Council's website within the Overview and Scrutiny section.

PROVISION OF SUPPORT NETWORKS FOR THE LGBT COMMUNITY TASK GROUP

Membership: Councillors Joe Baker (Chair), Natalie Brooks, Gay Hopkins and David Thain.

Deadline: The work of the Task Group was completed in July 2015.

A gathering took place at Redditch Town Hall in June 2014 to enable participants to demonstrate solidarity with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGB&T) community. Councillor Baker was approached after the gathering had taken place by a number of representatives of the LGB&T community who were concerned about the support available to them and who sought reassurance about the action being taken locally to address homophobia, biphobia and transphobia.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee subsequently agreed to undertake a review of the support networks available to the LGB&T community in the Borough.

The Group's investigations included the following actions:

- An interview with the Council's Policy Manager
- Consideration of scrutiny reports on similar subjects produced by other local authorities.
- Assessing the content of the Homophobic Hate Crime report produced by Stonewall in 2013.
- An interview with a representative of the Council's Community Safety team.
- An interview with senior representatives of West Mercia Police.
- An interview with the Council's Head of Leisure and Cultural Services.
- An Interview with representatives of Stonewall.
- A visit to the Birmingham LGB&T community group and interview with a representative.
- An interview with representatives of Arrowside Sexual Health Clinic.
- An interview with a representative of the Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

At the end of the review the group proposed six recommendations based on the evidence they had gathered. The recommendations promoted policies and services that benefitted the health of members of the LGB&T community and highlighted the need for improved communications locally to help better inform the LGB&T community about local support services. Recommendations were also proposed which focused on enhancing the support provided by Redditch Borough Council to LGB&T staff and by Worcestershire County Council to LGB&T pupils in local schools as well as to their families. Each of these recommendations was endorsed by the Executive Committee, though a number require action from external partner organisations. The response to the group's review and findings has been overwhelmingly positive. Updates provided to date indicate that action is being taken locally to implement the group's proposals with a leaflet for the LGB&T community having been launched in February 2016 to coincide with LGBT History month.

LEISURE SERVICES SHORT SHARP REVIEW

Membership: Councillors Jane Potter (Chair), Tom Baker-Price, Gay Hopkins and Paul Swansborough.

Deadline: The work of the Task Group was completed in December 2015.

In September 2015 a Short, Sharp Review of all of the Council's Leisure and Cultural Services was launched. Members agreed it was appropriate to launch this review partly due to the expertise that Members had developed during the Abbey Stadium Task Group exercise in 2014/15 as well as through pre-scrutiny of reports on this subject in June and July 2015. The review was tasked with addressing a number of objectives including the following:

- To consider the general requirements of a number of different operating models for the delivery of leisure and cultural services.
- To review the financial implications for the Council of all of the delivery models.
- To assess the implications of each delivery model for the quality of services delivered to the customer.
- To consider the governance arrangements that would apply in relation to each model.
- To consult with other local authorities about the operational models that they have adopted for the delivery of leisure and cultural services.
- To identify suitable delivery models for leisure and cultural services. This included considering whether different delivery models might be suitable for different elements of leisure and cultural services.

During the course of the review the group addressed these objectives by gathering evidence from a variety of sources. This included interviews with relevant Officers, consideration of appropriate documentation and consultation via questionnaires with other district Councils which deliver services to residents in an area with similar demographics to the Borough of Redditch. Members were pleased to receive completed questionnaires from 12 local authorities. The group was also very impressed by information provided by the Leader of Tamworth Borough Council during an interview and by representatives of Cannock Chase District Council during a visit to Chase Leisure Centre.

At the end of the review Members proposed three recommendations about the future delivery of leisure and cultural services. These recommendations, as detailed in the group's final report, were considered at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 8th December 2015. The Committee also received an update on the work of Officers in respect of leisure and cultural services at this meeting. As Officers were suggesting that they needed to undertake further work in their review of leisure and cultural services Members agreed that it would be premature for the Executive Committee to make a decision about the scrutiny group's recommendations in December 2015. For this reason the Committee agreed to postpone a vote on the group's recommendations and on referring the matter to the Executive Committee until the outcomes of this additional work by Officers is available for Members' consideration. At the time of writing it was anticipated that this additional work would be completed by April 2016.

**IMPROVING DISABLED PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO REDDITCH'S TAXI FLEET
SHORT, SHARP REVIEW**

Membership: Councillor Gay Hopkins (Chair) and Councillor Tom Baker-Price (the rest of the membership remained to be confirmed at the time of writing).

Deadline: April 2016.

In 2011-12 a Task Group investigation of action that could be taken to improve access for people with disabilities to Redditch town centre took place. The group proposed a number of recommendations, including two which were designed to enhance provision of taxi services to passengers with disabilities living, working in or visiting the Borough. These two recommendations were approved by the Licensing Committee and action has been taken to implement these proposals.

However, in January 2016, during a meeting of the Taxi Licensing Forum, concerns were raised about the taxi services that were available to people with disabilities in the Borough. The Forum was advised about the recent experiences of a lady with disabilities who had become stranded at local shops because she had not provided 48 hours' notice to a taxi firm of her requirements for travel. Information was also provided about issues that had been raised with Disability Action Redditch (DAR), which had learned about customers with disabilities being charged three times more than people without disabilities for undertaking the same journey. Furthermore, concerns were raised that some taxi firms were refusing to take bookings for passengers who used wheelchairs.

In this context in February 2016 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee concluded that a review of action that could be taken to improve access of people with disabilities to Redditch's taxi fleet would be useful and help to address public concerns.

The group has been tasked with addressing three key objectives:

- 1) to identify ways to prevent taxi firms from overcharging passengers who have disabilities for using their services;
- 2) to determine action that could be taken to encourage firms to increase the number of wheelchair accessible vehicles operating in local taxi fleets; and
- 3) to identify appropriate action that could be taken to reduce the length of notice required when booking a wheelchair accessible vehicle.

As this investigation is being conducted as a Short, Sharp Review Members are aiming to complete this exercise by April 2016.

JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INVESTIGATIONS**INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY JOINT SCRUTINY TASK GROUP****Review Host: Worcestershire County Council****Redditch Borough Council representative: Councillor Gareth Prosser****Deadline: Original deadline January 2016, final deadline date to be confirmed.**

The Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) at a meeting on 26th February 2015 discussed the Worcestershire Public Health Annual Report 2014. A key theme in this report is a local aim to increase opportunities for participation in physical activities. The report highlighted that "*...physical activity rates decrease quite steeply after the age of 45...*" (although) "*...when comparing with the region and England, Worcestershire participation rates are relatively high...*" It also noted that "*...there is fragmentation of responsibility between County, District and national (Sport England) levels...*" The County Council was keen to ensure opportunities to access sport and physical activity were available to all, and were interested to find out what impact the 2012 Olympics had had on participation rates. For these reasons the Board concluded that a review of this subject would be worthwhile.

The Board recognised that, due to the involvement of district Councils with the delivery of leisure and cultural services at the local level, it would be appropriate for this review to be conducted as a joint exercise. The Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the terms of reference for this review on 7th July 2015. The Committee agreed that this was an important subject and noted that participation would correspond with addressing two of the Council's strategic purposes including: provide good things for me to do, see and visit and help me to live my life independently (including health and activity). The review could also help to address significant issues relating to health inequalities which the local authority is committed to addressing as a member of the Redditch Partnership. Furthermore, Members noted the links to a previous review completed by the Committee, a review of action that could be taken to tackle obesity levels in the Borough, which was completed in March 2015.

Worcestershire County Council is hosting this joint scrutiny exercise. At the time of writing the deadline for the review and the substance of the group's proposals remained to be confirmed.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CONTACT DETAILS

For additional copies of this report, or to find out more about Overview and Scrutiny at Redditch Borough Council, please contact:

Jess Bayley, Democratic Services Officer
Jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 64252 Extn: 3268

Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officer
a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881443

Address:

Overview and Scrutiny,
Democratic Services,
Redditch Borough Council,
Redditch Town Hall,
Walter Stranz Square,
Redditch
Worcestershire
B98 8AH

Further Information

Further information about the Overview and Scrutiny process at Redditch Borough Council can also be found on the Council's dedicated web pages. To access these web pages please use the web address attached here:

<http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/the-council/overview-and-scrutiny.aspx>