

Councils Health & Safety Policy, Risk Assessment Policy and COSHH Policy 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 To update the Council's Health and Safety Policy, the Risk Assessment Policy and the COSHH Policy following the Health and Safety Audit undertaken in April 2014. These documents incorporate recent changes in legislation and best practice.
- 1.2 All three of these Policies have already been to the Council's Health and Safety Committee for approval in November 2014 and January 2015 and some changes have been made since the meeting as requested by the Committee.
- 1.3 As an employer we have a legal duty to have such policies in place for all of our staff. The Health and Safety Policy is overarching covering all areas, and there are then specific ones for different regulations. There will be more to follow in the coming months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND**

- 2.1 that the Health and Safety Policy, Risk Assessment Policy and COSHH Policy be approved for publication to all Members and Council employees in order to meet their legal duties.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from these policies at this time.
- 3.2 However if the Council does not have such policies in place and ones that are current reflecting best practice they could have enforcement action taken against them 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 to have such policies in place for the safety of everyone who may be affected by the Councils Acts or omissions in the course of its work.
- 3.4 As an overarching piece of legislation we are legally required to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.5 These policies will be applicable to all Service Areas of the Council. Though comprehensive they should not have much additional impact on work activities as the practices referred to in these policies are already being undertaken.
- 3.6 All such persons will be required to read these documents which on publication will be widely available on the Orb. All staff will be required to sign as to having read the Health and Safety Policy as part of their Induction process, a copy of which will be held electronically on their personal file.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.7 These documents detail the roles and responsibilities of members of staff of the Council regarding health and safety. These responsibilities particularly at senior level cannot be devolved to persons at lower levels. Ultimately the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council are accountable in a Court of Law should anything occur.
- 3.8 The Council could be subject to prosecution and or investigation by the Health and Safety Executive if they are found to not have a current policy in place. This will have an impact on the reputation of the Council and could also lead to a prosecution.
- 3.9 These policies will be communicated out in the first instance to CMT and Managers via briefings, and training will be provided where deemed appropriate. Following on from this the policies will be disseminated down to all members of staff via briefings and the Orb.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Whilst the Council has a Health and Safety Policy in place it is recommended that this is reviewed on a regular basis, as highlighted in the 2014 Audit.
- 4.2 The Council could be subject to prosecution and or investigation by the Health and Safety Executive if they are found to not have a current policy in place. This will have an impact on the reputation of the Council and could also lead to a prosecution.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Health and Safety Policy
Appendix 2 - Risk Assessment Policy
Appendix 3 - COSHH Policy

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

7. KEY

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Ruth Wooldridge

email: ruth.wooldridge@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel.: 01527 881686