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Cherwell District Council

Executive

Minutes of a meeting of the Executive held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 1 July 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present: Councillor Barry Wood (Chairman), Leader of the Council
Councillor G A Reynolds (Vice-Chairman), Deputy Leader of the Council

Councillor Colin Clarke, Lead Member for Planning
Councillor John Donaldson, Lead Member for Housing
Councillor Tony Ilott, Lead Member for Financial Management and Governance
Councillor Andrew McHugh, Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing
Councillor Richard Mould, Lead Member for Performance
Councillor Lynn Pratt, Lead Member for Economy, Regeneration and Property

Also Present: Councillor Sean Woodcock, Leader of the Labour Group

Apologies for absence: Councillor Ian Corkin, Lead Member for Customers and Transformation
Councillor Dan Sames, Lead Member for Clean and Green

Officers: Graeme Kane, Chief Operating Officer (Assistant Chief Executive)
Adele Taylor, Executive Director: Finance (Interim) & Section 151 Officer
Claire Taylor, Director: Customers and Service Development
Gillian Douglas, Assistant Director: Housing
Nicola Riley, Assistant Director: Wellbeing
Hedd Vaughan Evans, Assistant Director Performance and Transformation
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

15 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

16 **Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting**

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

17 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

18 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements, however the Chairman invited John Bridgeman and Jill Edge from the Sunshine Centre to address the meeting regarding the work of the centre and future projects.

On behalf of Executive, the Chairman thanked and commended John Bridgeman and Jill Edge for their hard work at the Sunshine Centre, which provided a valuable resource and support to residents.

19 **Joint Housing and Homelessness Strategy for Vulnerable Young People and Families in Oxfordshire**

The Assistant Director, Housing and Social Care Commissioning submitted a report to present the Joint Housing and Homelessness Strategy for Vulnerable Young People and Families in Oxfordshire and adopt the Strategy.

Resolved

- (1) That the Housing and Homelessness Strategy for Vulnerable Young People and Families (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book) be adopted.

Reasons

The Strategy is based on a comprehensive and countywide needs analysis which highlighted a range of gaps in current services. It is vital that the County and District Housing Authorities work jointly to address these.

The other 4 housing authorities are also taking the Strategy through their democratic processes for adoption. The County Council is the lead authority for this Strategy and the Cabinet will adopt the Strategy at its meeting on 18 June 2019.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to have a strategy. This has been rejected on the basis that partnership working with a shared vision and objectives is necessary in order to meet the needs of vulnerable young people and families and to inform service development and commissioning plans.

Cherwell District Council's Contribution to the Oxfordshire Adult Homeless Pathway

The Assistant Director, Housing and Social Care Commissioning submitted a report to set out proposals for continuing to deliver the Oxfordshire Adult Homeless Pathway which was a partnership between the District Councils, the County Council and Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and provided housing related support services and accommodation for single homeless people. The report sought agreement to Cherwell District Council's funding contribution from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2022.

Resolved

- (1) That Cherwell District Council's continuing contribution to the Oxfordshire Adult Homeless Pathway for a further 2 years at a level of £83,930 per annum in 2020/21 and 2021/22 be agreed.

Reasons

The Housing Related Support Joint Management Group is now working to formalise its plans and requires agreement from all district/city councils that they are supportive of continuing the partnership and will increase their annual contributions from April 2020.

This new proposal ensures CDC continues to have access to supported accommodation for rough sleepers and remains within the countywide partnership for 2 further years.

Looking to the future there will be work done by the JMG to re-commission services beyond 2022 to ensure integrated and countywide provision, without the need for districts to commission separate provision to supplement what is available through the joint commissioning arrangements.

Alternative options

Option 1: Not to be part of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group from April 2020 and stop making financial contributions to the pooled Budget – this option would result in Cherwell losing access to 24 units of supported accommodation. Cherwell would need to procure and identify new accommodation independently and would likely result in increased costs to the council

Option 2: To continue to be part of the Housing Related Support Joint Management Group but to maintain its existing funding contribution – this option would ensure that some supported accommodation continues to be available but would result in a reduction in the number of beds available to support single homeless people from Cherwell.

New Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

The Executive Director of Finance (Interim) submitted a report for Executive to consider a new Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy for Cherwell

District Council (CDC) following the split between South Northamptonshire Council (SNC) and CDC.

The policy identified the responsibilities of Elected Members, Chief Executive, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and Employees in the management of Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing risks throughout the organisation.

Resolved

- (1) That the new Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy (annex to the Minutes as set out in the Minute Book), which includes using the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) "Managing for Health and Safety" HSG65 framework for the management and control of health and safety risks going forward be adopted
- (2) That, further to resolution (1), it be noted that a plan would be developed by the Corporate Health and Safety Team for its communication to all employees and key stakeholders.

Reasons

It is recommended that the policy be ratified by the Executive to ensure that CDC meets its legal obligations under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

Alternative options

Members are asked to note the new policy. There are no alternative options

22 Monthly Performance, Finance and Risk Monitoring Report - May 2019

The Executive Director: Finance (Interim) and Assistant Director: Performance and Transformation submitted a report which summarised the Council's Performance, Risk and Finance monitoring position as at the end of each month.

Resolved

- (1) That the monthly Performance, Risk and Finance Monitoring Report be noted.

Reasons

The Council is committed to performance, risk and budget management and reviews progress against its corporate priorities on a monthly basis.

This report provides an update on progress made so far in 2019-20 to deliver the Council's priorities through reporting on Performance, the Leadership Risk Register and providing an update on the financial position.

Alternative options

Option 1: This report illustrates the Council's performance against the 2019-20 business plan. As this is a monitoring report, no further options have been considered. However, members may wish to request that officers provide additional information.

23 **Urgent Business**

There were no items of urgent business.

The meeting ended at 4.42 pm

Chairman:

Date:

Appendix 1

**JOINT HOUSING AND
HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY
AND NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR
VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE
AND FAMILIES IN
OXFORDSHIRE 2019-2024**

Introduction and Why We Need a Strategy

There is common agreement that safe and suitable housing is a basic human right for children, young people and families. Conversely transient lifestyles and inappropriate housing have been identified as one of the risk factors on the pathway to harm¹.

Our Housing Needs Analysis for vulnerable young people and families highlighted the difficulties Oxfordshire faces in terms of cost and availability of housing. While there are intense building programmes around the county, affordability is still an issue and the number of homeless people is increasing. Young people in our supported housing pathway have increasingly complex needs and progress through the pathway is hampered by a lack of suitable places for them to move on to. The increasing number of looked after children is creating an ongoing pressure on places in the pathway. We need increased support and housing for vulnerable families as evidenced by the number of families in temporary accommodation. We also need specialist housing provision for young people with disabilities and more support for young people in the youth justice system.

(See Housing and Homeless Needs Analysis for Vulnerable Young People and Families 2019-2021 - Appendix 1)

The government is helping local councils and developers work with local communities to plan and build better places to live for everyone. This includes building affordable housing, improving the quality of rented housing, helping more people to buy a home, and providing housing support for vulnerable people.² In addition, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 with the Duty to Refer requires us to tackle the causes of homelessness further upstream.

Oxfordshire County Council Housing Strategy 2015-2018 identified the following objectives under the priority 'Support the Growth of a Balanced Housing Market.'

- Improve housing market operation;
- Increase the supply of public sector land to deliver new homes; and
- Bring forward key strategic sites to support City Deal and meet housing need.

There are practical reasons why it makes sense to clarify the key issues and requirements.

- To be able to influence the spatial planning agenda and ensure that the housing needs are reflected in Local Growth Plans and housing strategies. 'Up front' work ensures these needs are not overlooked.
- To provide clarity for senior managers about the key priorities to try and resolve them.
- To assist housing and planning officers in each district and the city to know the housing needs of young people and families so that they can reflect these when advising and agreeing new affordable housing planning applications.

¹ Pathways to Harm, Pathways to Protection: Triennial Analysis of Serious Case Reviews 2011-14'

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/housing>

- To allow housing providers to know the housing needs of young people and families so that they too can consider such provision when building or buying new homes or when considering how to re-model existing stock.
- To provide a consistent and clear set of needs to the property services and planning departments within the City, District and County Councils.
- To enable all relevant agencies to make a more convincing case for capital grant or land subsidy both within the county council and the district councils.

Vision

Our Vision is that every child and young person in Oxfordshire should have access to a full range of housing services and the opportunity for a decent and affordable home suitable to their needs; and that vulnerable families should be enabled to live in safe and suitable housing as a basis for supportive family relationships and thriving communities.

There are three broad components to achieve improved housing. These can be summarised as:

- the right buildings,
- appropriate support services and
- clear 'pathways' that enable young people and families to access such housing.

The right buildings

- The District, City and County Councils will work in partnership with, housing and other providers, to ensure that the 'bricks and mortar' to supply new homes are built to the correct design, in the right locations and at an affordable price.
- Where possible and appropriate we will increase new specialist housing capacity by conversion of existing buildings that may no longer be fit for their original purpose, or may be empty.
- We will ensure that buildings are fully inclusive and accessible to consider the needs of families with disabled children, young people and adults. Advice from occupational therapists will be considered in planning the right buildings for the future.

Appropriate support services

- We will enable creative and flexible wrap-around services for young people and young families in the pathway.
- We will provide support to landlords working with families in danger of eviction and provide targeted support to vulnerable families.

Clear pathways

- We will devise clear pathways to ensure the right people access the right housing for their needs.
- There is a well-developed multi-agency pathway in place for young people, but there needs to be more creative planning to ensure there is a range of suitable supported accommodation and sufficient move on options.

Our Key Objectives are:

- 1. To support vulnerable families to maintain secure and long-lasting housing.**
- 2. The provision of a range of housing options, with support and intervention, for Care Leavers and other vulnerable young people including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and young people involved with the Youth Justice System.**
- 3. To increase the supply of affordable housing options to meet the needs of families and single young people, and optimise the use of available property.**
- 4. To maintain partnership working between District and County Councils, housing providers, specialist support services and other stakeholders including young people and families.**
- 5. To resource early prevention work with families and young people at risk of homelessness.**
- 6. To support landlords to mitigate negative perceptions of social care service users and/or benefit claimants**

We will tackle these in the following ways:

- 1. To support vulnerable families to maintain secure and long-lasting housing.**

An iMPower analysis into the work of Oxfordshire Children, Education and Families teams revealed a lack of knowledge and engagement with housing issues among front line staff. In response to this we will:

- 1.1 Equip front line social services teams working with families to identify housing issues at an early stage and support families to maintain their tenancies, thus avoiding eviction and disruption to schooling and family networks.**

- 1.2 Target support for families deemed intentionally homeless to enable them to have a second chance.

2. The provision of a range of housing options, with support and intervention, for Care Leavers, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC), young people involved with the Youth Justice System and young people with a range of disabilities.

The increase in the number of Looked After Children and Care Leavers has necessitated a review as to how to effectively support all our vulnerable young people to the point of being able to manage an independent tenancy. The proportion of young people with complex needs in the Supported Housing Pathway has increased.

There is also a need for a range of provisions for young people involved in the Youth Justice Service.

In addition, the sharp increase in arrivals of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children has accentuated the need for increased accommodation and support within the county for this vulnerable group.

In response to this we will:

- 2.1 Optimise the use of available resources to creatively support young people with complex needs and those with lower level needs.
- 2.2 Find creative solutions for vulnerable young people on the edge of care including re-unification with family where possible or supported lodgings with other trusted adults.
- 2.3 Make specific provision for young people involved in the Youth Justice Service.
- 2.4 Enable more consistent use of intervention services such as Mental Health services for young people who need these up to age 25 in the Supported Housing Pathway.
- 2.5 Support Care Leavers to develop independent living skills including the maintenance of a tenancy and regular employment.
- 2.6 Ensure planners are aware in advance of the specific housing needs of young people with disabilities in each district and the city.

3. Increase the supply of affordable housing options to meet the needs of both families and single young people, and optimise the use of available property.

Supply and demand

The overarching concern is the overall lack of supply of housing - both specialist and generic - and fully inclusive and accessible. Whilst the needs and issues may be different for families, care leavers and vulnerable young people, the housing gaps are a common theme.

In response to this we will:

- 3.1 Seek to influence potential use of empty council buildings for families and young people.
- 3.2 Embed a mechanism across the partner organisations to quantify the types of housing needed and level of demand for families and young people.
- 3.3 Provide clear forecasting of requirements for various types of property including family housing, accommodation for young single people and adapted housing for people with learning disabilities or physical disabilities including those in need of ceiling track hoists.
- 3.4 Seek to influence local planning in a timely manner to enable suitable housing to be located within a reasonable distance from services, schools, colleges and places of work.
- 3.5 Build priorities for young people, young adults and families into the district council Growth Plans and the Joint Strategic Spatial Plan for Oxfordshire 2050.
- 3.6 Work with providers to develop creative solutions for older young people with learning disability such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Affordability

Oxfordshire's extremely high rents increase the vulnerability of both single people and families who may become reliant on benefits to afford a home. The housing benefit element of Universal Credit is unlikely to cover the full cost of rent. For care leavers there is an additional impact when their housing benefit drops at aged 22.

In response we will:

- 3.7 Assist families and young people with budgeting to maintain regular rental payments as a build-up of rent arrears greatly adversely affects their chances of a future affordable tenancy.
- 3.8 Help Care Leavers to hold realistic expectations of the type of property available to them when they leave the supported housing pathway.
- 3.9 Plan early to allow care leavers to move to affordable accommodation prior to the reduction in their benefit.

4. To maintain partnership working between District and County Councils, housing and support providers and other stakeholders including young people and families.

Joint working between housing authorities, social services and other statutory, voluntary and private sector partners is required by a range of legislation relating to homelessness, social care and children. (see Appendix 1 Needs Analysis pages 8-9)

In response to this we will:

- 4.1 Hold quarterly meetings of the Joint Housing Steering Group with representatives from the City and each District Council along with key operational and commissioning staff in the County Council.

Through this we will problem solve issues which affect the delivery of this strategy and aim to provide an effective and co-ordinated response to prevent homelessness amongst vulnerable young people, and families.

- 4.2 We will escalate issues, concerns and gaps in service provision to senior officers and members as appropriate to ensure they are informed and able to influence local provision and developments.
- 4.3 Engage with city and district councils, registered social landlords, letting agencies, private landlords and other community and faith groups to develop solutions using properties they may no longer wish to keep.
- 4.4 Develop creative partnerships with skills providers and employers.
- 4.5 Develop co-location opportunities for members of different teams, local authorities and support agencies.
- 4.6 Work to remove the “catch 22” situation around housing allocation for potential foster carers.

5. Resource early prevention work with families and young people at risk of homelessness.

The Homelessness Reduction Act and the Duty to Refer, encourages early intervention into the causes of homelessness by obliging a range of statutory services to address housing issues with families or individuals and to make referrals to the appropriate authority.

In response to this we will:

- 5.1 Increase channels of communication between social services staff and housing and support providers to enable timely intervention.
- 5.2 Increase awareness of housing related issues amongst frontline staff and increase staff confidence in assisting families facing housing issues.

6. Support landlords to mitigate negative perceptions of social care service users and/or benefit claimants

There can be negative perceptions of social care service users by private and social landlords due to issues relating to rent arrears, damage to property, behaviour and disturbance to other residents. Strategies to prepare and support landlords are needed to help mitigate these issues as well as to support and ensure young people and families have the right skills and best chances to sustain their tenancies.

In response to this we will:

- 6.1 Develop a clear programme of support for landlords of social care users with well-defined roles and responsibilities and make sure this is well publicised.

- 6.2 Initiate early conversations with landlords regarding issues with tenants known to social services with a view to providing early intervention to support families and young people at risk of losing a tenancy.
- 6.3 Provide initial financial support to enable vulnerable young people and families to take on a tenancy or move into temporary accommodation.
- 6.4 Provide guarantees/contracts to help a young person secure a tenancy and pay for damage.

Action Plan

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
1. To support vulnerable families to maintain secure and long-lasting housing.			
1.1 Following on from the current model of an embedded specialist housing worker in front line Children, Education and Families teams, provide a programme of training and resources for front line teams in identifying and tackling housing issues. including a network of housing champions.	Earlier intervention in housing issues including "Duty to Refer". Locally based housing knowledge and connections available to all front-line Children, Education and Families staff	Oxford City Trailblazer programme until funding ends in 2019 and County Council Housing and Immigration Team	County Council champions recruited, Training taken place, Housing referrals made
1.2 Develop an agreed programme of support to enable families deemed intentionally homeless to have a second chance at maintaining a tenancy.	Families supported into secure tenancies.	Cherwell District Council / County Council Local Community Support Service and Housing and Immigration Team	Agreed programme in each district. Number of families supported into secure housing
1.3 Ensure all staff across partner organisations are aware of funding streams that are available for support e.g. Troubled Families Resources Budget, flexible use of pupil premium budgets.	Optimum use of available funds to support vulnerable families.	County Council Housing and Immigration Team	Training and information on funding given and disseminated

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
2. The provision of a range of housing options, with support and intervention, for Care Leavers and other vulnerable young people including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children and young people involved with the Youth Justice System.			
2.1 Review existing supported housing pathway provision	Knowledge of what is working well and changes in nature of provision that may be necessary	County Council commissioning team	Recommendations for new service written
2.2 Recommission the supported housing pathway in consultation and conjunction with all stakeholders including the providers of the Adult Homeless Pathway.	An effective, safe and value for money service which enables vulnerable young people to move into independence, or other appropriate accommodation in a timely manner.	County Council Commissioning Team/ City and District Councils/provider organisations	Number of young people who move through the pathway and gain independent accommodation
2.3 Create additional provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children	Local and safe accommodation with wrap around support for UASC	County Council Commissioning Team/Cherwell District Council	Additional provision available
2.4 Ensure that Mental Health support is available to all young people in the supported housing pathway.	Vulnerable young people are supported towards independence	County Council Commissioning Team/Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group	Number of young people in pathway supported with mental health
2.5 Explore the potential to redirect funding to support young people's identified housing and support needs including piloting council tax exemptions	Optimum use of available funds	County Council Operational Team, Cherwell District Council	Increased funding for housing and support needs. Council tax exemptions in place for care leavers in some or all Districts.
2.7 Consider options for additional support for young people in the Youth Justice Service including the recruitment of a team of high tier foster carers.	Appropriate support to keep these young people safe and minimise the risk of re-offending.	Youth Justice Service, County Council Fostering team	Crisis provision for young people in youth justice service in place

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
2.8 Recruit additional Supported Lodging providers to offer flexible support options for care leavers	Out of term time accommodation for care leavers at university with appropriate level of support.	County Council Commissioning and Care Leavers' team	Additional flexible provision for care leavers with low level support needs
2.9 Negotiate with partners to provide a 'Team around the Worker' to support the lead professional in the supported housing pathway through specialist consultation and advice.	Effective and timely intervention for young people with complex needs.	County Council Commissioning/ partner organisations/pathway providers	Specialist professionals ready to provide support in flexible way to worker with best relationship with young person
2.10 Ensure pathway providers are equipped to identify signs of domestic abuse in the pathway and resourced to support victims and keep them safe.	Young people in the Supported Housing Pathway are safe and know how to obtain support.	County Council, Pathway providers, Action on Ending Violence against Young Women and Girls	Greater awareness of potential Domestic abuse in pathway and prevention strategies in place.
2.11 Start earlier to plan for young people to return to their family where possible and invest resource on whole family approaches such as Family Group Conferences and restorative practice.	Maximise chances for family re-unification and take fewer children into care.	County Council	More children and young people leaving care to return to families
2.12 Provide support for young people with low level needs such as Asperger's Syndrome and their families to prevent the young person becoming homeless	Vulnerable young people and their families are supported to stay together.	Housing Authorities and Commissioned Services for support to families	Fewer young people with low level needs in supported housing pathway
2.13 Work with young people on the edge of care to secure private arrangements with trusted adults	Vulnerable young people are cared for by adults they know and trust and pool of approved care providers is widened.	County Council Residential and Edge of Care team	Fewer young people referred into the supported housing pathway

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
where re-unification with family is not possible			
2.14 Develop “The House Project” to support a group of care leavers to take on HMO tenancies and develop necessary skills to live independently.	Young care leavers equipped to take on independent tenancies	County Council	Young people supported to live in nominated properties and begun to move on
2.15 Work with employers to develop pathways to employment in addition to gaining housing related skills such as DIY, painting/decorating, maintenance, and furnishing.	Young care leavers equipped with employment related skills and able to take on independent tenancies	Pathway providers, County Council “House” project manager	Young people from pathway gain employment in related fields
2.16 Work with planners and Disabled Facilities Grant departments to ensure buildings are fully accessible and inclusive and consideration is given to factors like electric wheelchair accessibility, up to date technical aids to facilitate independence for young people, storage, sound proofing, planned adaptations so that a disabled child can live and play safely.	Adequate supply of appropriately adapted housing in the locations where it is needed	City and District Councils, County Council	Timely supply of appropriately adapted housing
2.17 Consider opportunities for pooled budgets and targeted commissioning to meet housing need for specific groups e.g. learning disability, mental health.	Financially efficient sustainable support for the people who need it.	County Council, Clinical Commissioning Group	Housing developed for specific named groups using pooled budgets

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
3. To increase the supply of affordable housing options to meet the needs of both families and single young people, and optimise the use of available property.			
3.1 Identify existing data sources, plot pathways and identify gaps. Draw up sustainable mechanism to gather information	Ongoing accurate information on forthcoming needs	County Council	Required data available from LCS or another identified regular source
3.2 Look at Oxon and national statistics to identify trends.	Ongoing accurate information on forthcoming needs	County Council	Needs Analysis reviewed at end 2020
3.3 Following the review of empty buildings and land ownership assessment which has identified empty/underused spaces/buildings both by county council and partners and explore the potential to include this in the county council Place Reviews.	Increase supply of sustainable property options for young people and families	City and District Councils, County Council	Underused buildings become available for young people or families
3.4 Work with specialist architects and estate agents to develop community solutions to housing such as building conversions leading to longer term more sustainable solutions such as housing co-operatives or emergency/transitional accommodation like container homes or empty building conversions.	Additional housing through optimising use of existing buildings	City, District and County Council	Increase in available properties, through this route
3.5 Work with specialist providers to clarify what delivery of homes for young people with learning	Plan in place	City, District and County councils	Supply of houses built to specification

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
disabilities such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder might look like.			
4. To maintain partnership working between District and County Councils, housing and support providers and other stakeholders including young people and families.			
4.1 Review use and scope of move on agreements with city and district councils in relation to extended responsibilities for care leavers up to 25.	Joint working across districts and social work teams leading to joined up plans for young people	City, District and County Council	Extended group of care leavers given support
4.2 Improve and increase the use of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management plan (MARAMP) to manage risk more effectively in placement planning particularly in the Supported Housing Pathway	Increased and effective use of MARAMP	Pathway providers, County Council Care Leaver team	Fewer evictions from the pathway
4.3 Develop the role of the 'Team around the Worker' to support lead professionals with specialist advice and consultation in areas such Mental Health and specialist substance misuse.	Specialist advice is in place and used effectively. Workers more confident about response and support/interventions they can offer	County Council Commissioning and operational staff/partner organisations/pathway providers	Specialist professionals ready to provide support in flexible way to worker with best relationship with young person
4.4 Housing providers to be part of the Team Around the Family (TAF)	Housing issues addressed at an earlier stage and support offered.	County Council, City and District Councils and other housing providers.	Fewer homeless families because of earlier, joined up support.
4.5 Agree a protocol between Housing Authorities and Children, Education and Families teams to allow potential foster carers to move into suitable properties to house foster children.	Increased number of Council foster carers leading to a reduction in use of high cost independent fostering agencies	Cherwell District Council, City and other District Councils and Oxfordshire County Council	Increased number of Council foster carers.

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
4.6 Increase lines of communication between Housing Authorities and Children, Education and Families teams regarding kinship foster carers need for housing.	More children cared for by wider family through access to suitable housing.	County Council operational teams City and District Councils and housing providers	Increase in kinship foster placements
5. To resource early prevention work with families and young people at risk of homelessness.			
5.1 Put in place a programme of training and resources to enable front line social services' staff to identify and address housing issues at an early stage.	Housing issues are recognised at earlier stage and homelessness prevention work carried out	County Council, Oxford City Trailblazer	Fewer homeless young people and families because of earlier, joined up support.
5.2 Promote the use of the ALERT portal for referrals of anyone who may be homeless or threatened with homelessness in Oxfordshire.	Young people and families threatened with homelessness are identified earlier and receive support into accommodation	City and District Councils Oxfordshire County Council	Fewer homeless young people and families because of earlier, joined up support.
5.3 Initiate earlier communication and a programme of support for families in danger of making themselves intentionally homeless.	Families threatened with homelessness receive timely advice and support	Cherwell District Council/ Oxfordshire County Council, City and other Districts	Fewer homeless families because of earlier, joined up support
5.4 Initiate earlier conversations between supported housing pathway providers and CEF team regarding rent arrears and other behaviours which are detrimental to gaining an independent tenancy.	Young people are more able to access independent accommodation	Oxfordshire County Council operational teams/pathway providers	Greater throughput through the supported housing pathway
5.6 Work with housing providers to ensure they are part of Team	Housing issues addressed at an earlier stage and support offered	County Council, City and District Councils	Fewer homeless families because of earlier, joined up support.

Action	Desired Outcome	Lead Organisation/s	How Success will be measured
Around the Family meetings, joint visits etc.		and other housing providers.	
6. To support landlords to mitigate negative perceptions of social care service users and/or benefit claimants.			
6.1 Institute a mechanism for early conversations with landlords and programmes of support for people in danger of breaching their tenancy agreements.	Young people and families are supported to maintain a tenancy	City and District Councils, housing providers, County Council operation teams.	Fewer evictions and fewer homeless families
6.2 Make funds available, following strict criteria, to allow families to access temporary accommodation, or private rental accommodation through the provision of deposits, rent in advance and rent for families who are subject to immigration law	Families are supported to gain secure housing and children remain with family.	Oxfordshire County Council Housing and Immigration team	Number of families supported into secure housing
6.3 Work with Registered Social Landlords and the Care Leavers Forum to create a junior tenancy course to help young people sustain housing.	Young care leavers equipped to take on independent tenancies	City and District Councils and Care Leavers Association	Course compiled and delivered



DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy

June 2019

DRAFT

Foreword by the Chief Executive

The successful management of health, safety and wellbeing involves everyone who works for Cherwell District Council, our customers, the partners we work with, and members of the public.

Reducing incidents, accidents and work-related ill health is an important outcome of successfully managing health, safety and wellbeing.

This health, safety and wellbeing policy outlines our commitment to managing health, safety and wellbeing proactively with clear roles and responsibilities assigned and embedded throughout the organisation.

Managers have an important role to play in supporting and implementing the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy. We expect the Senior Leadership Team to lead by example on the policy and ensure that health, safety and wellbeing is fully integrated into day to day decision making, strategic planning and processes as 'business as usual' not a stand-alone concept.

Whilst everybody has a part to play, the responsibility for ensuring that the correct standards for health, safety and wellbeing are put into place rests with managers, who must involve employees in achieving any objectives and targets which have been set.

Employees also have a responsibility in achieving the highest possible standards of health, safety and wellbeing in every workplace and service by taking all reasonable steps to look after their own health and safety, as well as other fellow employees and customers.

This policy will be kept under review and updated as necessary to reflect the needs of the organisation and any future changes to legislative requirements.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive
Cherwell District Council



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1. Introduction

This Policy outlines the framework developed by Cherwell District Council to manage health, safety and wellbeing. The policy is a declaration of the Council's commitment to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and healthy conditions for employees and persons other than employees who use or visit the Council's premises, or who may be affected by its activities.

Each directorate will develop more detailed and specific systems and procedures to ensure that health, safety and wellbeing on a day-to-day basis is adequately managed. The management systems required to manage health, safety and wellbeing should be kept proportionate to the level of risk within directorates.

Cherwell District Council will establish and adopt procedures to ensure that health, safety and wellbeing objectives and priorities are monitored and delivered to a high standard and that a pro-active culture to health, safety and wellbeing is maintained throughout.

The policy has been produced as required by Section 2 (3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 to clearly identify the responsibilities of Elected Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and employees. The purpose of the Policy is to demonstrate that the Senior Leadership Team of Cherwell District Council are totally committed to the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees and persons other than employees that are affected by its activities.

The Chief Executive may delegate responsibilities to Directors, Assistant Directors and Managers. However, the Chief Executive retains the overall accountability and responsibility.

This Policy is set out in four parts:

Policy Statement	The Chief Executive and Leader of the Councils corporate declaration of intent on behalf of Cherwell District Council
Organisation	The management system in place and the defining of roles and responsibilities within the organisation
General Arrangements	The corporate procedures and systems necessary for implementing the policy
Monitoring and Review	The system for measuring the effectiveness of the arrangements and for reviewing health and safety performance

2. Health and Safety Policy Statement

Cherwell District Council (CDC) as employers recognise the importance of effective health and safety management and are committed to managing health, safety and wellbeing with equal importance as other core business aims and objectives.

This Policy Statement outlines the framework developed by CDC to manage health, safety and wellbeing. It is a declaration of the Councils commitment to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and healthy conditions for employees and persons, who use, visit or may be affected by the Councils activities.

Our aim is to protect all employees and customers from accidents and work related ill health. This will be achieved by;

- Complying with all applicable health and safety legislation.
- Committing to the prevention of ill health and injury across the organisation.
- Providing strong and visible leadership and management.
- Ensuring that adequate resources are provided for health, safety and wellbeing.
- Encouraging the implementation of a management system within directorates, to identify and control risk throughout the organisation.
- Identifying significant risks to health, safety and wellbeing and implementing adequate measures to prevent, reduce or protect against those risks.
- By providing a focus on higher risk activities/topics within the organisation such as waste and recycling operations, construction, fire safety, manual handling, personal safety and work-related stress.
- Ensuring a competent workforce through the provision of information, instruction, training and supervision.
- Providing effective communication, consultation and cooperation with employees and key stakeholders on all relevant health and safety matters.
- Ensuring that appropriate monitoring and reviewing processes are in place, so that the organisation continually improves the way health, safety and wellbeing is managed.
- Continually setting targets to meet the objectives of this policy and continual improvement of the health and safety management system.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive
Cherwell District Council

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader – Cherwell District Council

Date: June 2019

3. Organisation for Health, Safety & Wellbeing

Successful health, safety and wellbeing management depends on a systematic approach throughout the organisation, so that health, safety and wellbeing becomes fully integrated with all other aspects of business management. Cherwell District Council and will ensure adequate resources are available to implement the principles of its health, safety and wellbeing policy and conform to all relevant health and safety statutory regulations.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Management System

The Councils have adopted the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) "Managing for Health and Safety" HSG65 as their health and safety management system. The model applies the principles of other recognised Occupational Health and Safety Management System specifications such as BS ISO 45001.

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

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

Figure 1: CDC in-house Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Management System

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System will be embedded at Corporate, Directorate and Service level in order to achieve the aims and objectives of this policy.

As part of the planning process, priorities and actions will be set within a Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan, in addition to directorate specific health and safety action plans. Other plans for health, safety and wellbeing will also exist across services/teams as required for their work activities. The Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan will be used as the framework for leadership health, safety and wellbeing risks highlighted in the Corporate Leadership Risk Register.

Roles and Responsibilities for Health, Safety & Wellbeing

The roles and responsibilities are defined across Cherwell District Council hierarchy as follows:

Elected Members

Elected Members are responsible for carrying out specific functions both individually and collectively, and have a responsibility to conduct their business and make decisions in conformity with health and safety legislation and the Council's own policies. Elected Members should ensure that adequate resources are made available to the Chief Executive in order to ensure that successful health, safety and wellbeing management is implemented and embedded across the Council.

The **Lead Members for Economy, Regeneration and Property and Health and Wellbeing** will be the lead councillors for occupational health, safety and wellbeing within the organisation.

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility and accountability throughout Cherwell District Council for implementing and achieving the objectives of the Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy. This includes:

- Having ultimate responsibility for ensuring that significant risks are properly managed throughout the organisation.
- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership and commitment that encourages employee involvement, and champions the importance of sensible health and safety risk management within the organisation.
- Ensuring that all decisions made reflect their health and safety intentions as specified in the Council's health and safety policy statement.
- Integrating health and safety with other core business objectives/management.
- Ensuring that accountabilities and responsibilities for health, safety and wellbeing are properly assigned throughout the leadership structure and hierarchy.
- Ensuring that Directors have arrangements in place for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing within their directorates.
- Ensuring adequate resources are allocated to all directorates, in consideration of their inherent risks.
- Making sure that the Health and Safety Champion and Wellbeing Champion (nominated Directors) have the necessary competence, resources and support of other Directors to carry out their duties.
- Ensuring that the Council has appointed competent persons to provide health and safety assistance/advice, in order to meet the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

- Setting and monitoring health, safety and wellbeing performance in accordance with appropriate Directors and taking appropriate action to overcome any deficiencies.
- Being accessible to the Corporate Health and Safety Manager so that any significant health and safety issues can be raised immediately.

Directors

Directors are responsible for ensuring that the health and safety management system for Cherwell District Council is implemented within their respective directorates. This will be achieved by:

- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership and commitment.
- Integrating health, safety and wellbeing into core business objectives, day to day decision making and strategic planning.
- Making sure that accountabilities and responsibilities for health, safety and wellbeing within their directorate are properly assigned, communicated, understood and carried out.
- Making sure that where operational responsibilities are delegated to lower levels of management, that those who have been nominated are competent, and understand and accept their delegated responsibilities.
- Ensuring that Assistant Directors have robust arrangements in place for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing within their services/teams.
- Ensuring adequate and sufficient resources (time, human and financial) are provided within the directorate to enable appropriate management to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that health, safety and wellbeing is included in relevant action plans for the directorate to drive continual improvement within services/teams. The content to be kept in proportion to the level of risks within the directorate.
- Setting and monitoring health, safety and wellbeing performance in accordance with Assistant Directors and taking appropriate action to overcome any deficiencies.
- Consulting and seeking advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Manager/ Team on health and safety matters when required.
- Promoting a proactive and positive health and safety culture throughout the directorate.

Corporate Health and Safety Champion (Nominated Director)

The **Executive Director for Finance** has been appointed by the Chief Executive as the Corporate Champion for Health and Safety. The appointment supports the principles contained in the HSE's '*Leading health and safety at work*' in recognition of the strategic importance of health and safety. The Champion will:

- Promote the adequate and proper consideration of health and safety to senior managers, relevant Committee's and more widely within the Council.
- Ensure that the health and safety policy statement reflects current priorities of the Senior Leadership Team and the Council.
- Ensure that the Council's Scheme of Delegation to Officers reflects health and safety roles and responsibilities within this policy.
- Be kept informed about any significant health and safety failures and the outcome of investigations into their causes, ensuring the Chief Executive is kept informed.
- Ensure that the lead councillors for occupational health, safety and wellbeing are kept updated and briefed on health and safety matters, promoting clear channels of communication with Elected Members.

- Ensure the Corporate Health and Safety Manager has clear reporting lines within the leadership structure, and has sufficient authority to be able to carry out the role effectively.
- Be accessible to the Corporate Health and Safety Manager/ Corporate Health and Safety Team so that any significant health and safety issues can be raised immediately.
- Carry out periodic health and safety workplace inspections and audits with the Corporate Health and Safety Manager/ Corporate Health and Safety Team.
- Ensure the Council's health and safety performance is regularly reviewed and reported on.

To support the Corporate Health and Safety Champion to achieve these responsibilities, the **Assistant Director Property, Investment and Contract Management** is responsible for:

- Ensuring that sufficient resources are in place to maintain a robust Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System.
- Making provision of competent health and safety assistance/advice within the Council, in order to meet the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Providing management support to the Corporate Health and Safety Manager and ensuring that clear reporting lines are in place for the Manager and Corporate Health and Safety Team to carry out their role effectively across the Council.
- Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for building management and maintenance requirements across the Council property portfolio, ensuring assets are safe and compliant.
- Being the named Assistant Director with corporate responsibility for Asbestos Management, Water Hygiene & Legionella and Fire Risk Management compliance across the Council.

Corporate Wellbeing Champion

The **Chief Operating Officer** has been appointed by the Chief Executive as the Corporate Champion for Wellbeing. This appointment is in recognition of the strategic importance of wellbeing. The Champion will:

- Promote the adequate and proper consideration of occupational wellbeing to senior managers, relevant Committee's and more widely within the Council.
- Ensure that the health and safety policy statement reflects current occupational wellbeing priorities of the Senior Leadership Team and the Council.
- Together with the Learning and Development Team and the Corporate Health and Safety Team ensure the provision of appropriate health and wellbeing training for managers and employees.
- Ensure that the lead councillors for occupational health, safety and wellbeing are kept updated and briefed on wellbeing matters, promoting clear channels of communication with Elected Members.
- Be accessible to the Corporate Health and Safety Team and HR Teams so that any significant occupational wellbeing issues can be raised immediately.
- Ensure the Council's wellbeing performance is regularly reviewed and reported on.
- Ensure that there is a corporate overarching action plan to improve & maintain the wellbeing of managers and employees.

Assistant Directors

Assistant Directors are responsible for ensuring effective health and safety management within their areas of responsibility, ensuring that all managers and employees and any other persons under their area of control are held accountable for the specific application of their health and safety duties. This will be achieved by them:

- Providing clear and visible health and safety leadership and commitment.
- Integrating health, safety and wellbeing into core business objectives, day to day decision making and strategic planning.
- Making sure that where operational responsibilities are delegated to lower levels of management, that those who have been nominated are competent, and understand and accept their delegated responsibilities.
- Ensuring that Managers have robust arrangements in place for the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing within their services/teams.
- Ensuring adequate and sufficient resources (time, human and financial) are provided within service areas to enable appropriate management to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Endorsing health, safety and wellbeing action plans in place within the Directorate and implementing the requirements with their managers to drive continual improvement within service areas.
- Setting and monitoring health, safety and wellbeing performance in accordance with managers and taking appropriate action to overcome any deficiencies.
- Consulting and seeking advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Team on health and safety matters when required.
- Promoting a proactive and positive health, safety and wellbeing culture throughout their service areas.

Managers, Supervisors & Team Leaders

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'manager' relates to all employees and interim/ agency personnel who manage staff and/or services, or to any extent has control at work over people and projects.

Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders are responsible for:

- The day to day management of health, safety and wellbeing in areas under their control.
- Integrating health, safety and wellbeing into service plans, action plans and day to day decision making.
- Identifying hazards, initiating and completing risk assessments, recording the significant findings and implementing any necessary control measures.
- Ensuring that local health and safety procedures, safe systems of work and relevant emergency procedures are in place within their teams/services to control any risks.
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision to help secure the competence of all employees.
- Ensuring that effective communication and consultation arrangements are in place with employees and Union Representatives.
- Ensuring robust inductions are carried out for all new employees including agency workers, contractors and interim personnel.
- Attending mandatory health and safety training as part of continued professional development.
- Providing safe and healthy working conditions in areas under their control, including safe plant, equipment and machinery.
- Ensuring that a formalised workplace inspection regime is in place to check that the work environment is safe and healthy.

- Providing equipment, materials and clothing to employees as is necessary to enable them to work safely.
- Cooperating and coordinating their activities with other teams/services and partners to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees and others affected by any risks.
- Reporting and recording all accidents, incidents and near miss events, undertaking investigations and taking appropriate remedial action to prevent recurrences.
- Ensuring that health and safety requirements are included throughout the management of project and procurement processes and contract management agreements.
- Ensuring that health and safety is included when managing contractors and construction-related projects.
- Complying with all corporate health and safety policies, procedures and guidance arrangements in place within the organisation.
- Participating in health and safety workplace inspections and audits, and taking appropriate remedial action where recommendations for improvement have been made.
- Reviewing health, safety and wellbeing performance within their teams.
- Consulting and seeking advice from the Corporate Health and Safety Team on health and safety matters when required.
- Promoting a proactive and positive health and safety culture.

Managers may choose to delegate responsibilities to specific employees/post holders however, they must ensure that those nominated are competent and understand and accept the responsibilities being delegated to them. The Manager will remain accountable for these activities.

Employees

For the purposes of this policy, employees will include students, volunteers, agency workers and contract workers.

All employees, including those with managerial responsibilities, **have a responsibility to:**

- Take reasonable care, while at work, of their own and other people's health and safety.
- Cooperate with their manager and other employees to work safely, to comply with health and safety instructions and information, and undertake appropriate health and safety training.
- Comply with all corporate health and safety policies, procedures and guidance arrangements in place within the organisation.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- Report to their manager any health and safety concerns, deficiencies or defects, or shortcomings in health and safety arrangements and safe working practices.
- Report and record all accidents, incidents and near miss events.
- Make suggestions to improve health, safety and wellbeing.
- Promote a proactive and positive health and safety culture.

Competent Health and Safety Assistance

The Corporate Health and Safety Team have been appointed under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to provide competent health and safety advice and support to Cherwell District Council, covering all relevant health and safety legislation.

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager and Corporate Health and Safety Team will:

- Provide professional, technical and practical competent health and safety advice and guidance to managers and employees.
- Provide advice and guidance on compliance with relevant statutory requirements and the application of best practice.
- Develop, and advise on, corporate health and safety policy, procedures, topic-specific guidance and corporate arrangements.
- Assist and support managers in the development of risk assessments and safe working practices for work activities/processes/operations.
- Develop the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan and support directorates in developing their own directorate/service/section health and safety action plans.
- Report to the Chief Executive Director Reports (CEDR) Group on a quarterly basis.
- Together with the Learning and Development Team, ensure the provision of health and safety training to managers and employees.
- Undertake health and safety workplace inspections and audits to monitor occupational health, safety and wellbeing performance across all directorates.
- Record all accidents, incidents and near misses and ensure relevant reports are notified to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- Carry out and assist managers with the completion of accident investigations.
- Liaise with the HSE and other enforcing authorities on any regulatory interventions or investigations as required.
- Use executive powers (on behalf of the Chief Executive and Corporate Health and Safety Champion) to stop any work activities where there is a serious and imminent risk of injury or ill health.
- Promote a proactive and positive health and safety culture, and investigate ways of improving health and safety performance across the organisation.

Occupational Health

The Council's appointed provider will work pro-actively with all stakeholders to pro-actively maintain a healthy workforce by meeting the needs of individual employees and managers. Occupational Health is responsible for providing a number of occupational health services these include, but are not limited to:

- Pre-employment screening checks.
- Absence management and return to work planning.
- Advice on the management of health conditions and reasonable adjustments.
- Medicals and driver clearances for specific job role occupations, e.g. HGV.
- Health/medical surveillance monitoring; audiometry, hand arm vibration, lung function testing and ergonomic assessments.
- Vaccination and immunisations.
- Advice to managers and employees on health related matters.
- Physiotherapy.

Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

An Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is available for all staff and provides a confidential counselling and information service which is available 24/7 to assist with personal or work-related problems that may be affecting health, wellbeing or performance.

The EAP can provide help, information, guidance or support with a wide range of issues including counselling and emotional support, money and debt information, legal information, health and wellbeing information and family care information including young and elder care. The EAP is free to use, confidential and is entirely secure and independent of the Council.

4. General Arrangements

The Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy sets out the framework for the organisation and arrangements for health, safety and wellbeing across Cherwell District Council.

Corporate arrangements and guidance (corporate level)

To support this policy and to effectively manage the health, safety and wellbeing risks at a corporate level, a series of topic-based health and safety guidance documents and corporate arrangements have been developed for managers and employees to follow.

This information provides specific detail on a range of different topics, and where required, further information on specific roles and responsibilities. These guidance documents are developed by the Corporate Health and Safety Team in conjunction with relevant managers/teams where specialist input is required. corporate health and safety arrangements and guidance can be accessed from the health and safety pages of the Intranet at:

<https://intranet.cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk/info/23/health-and-safety>

Local health and safety arrangements/procedures (service/team level)

To demonstrate compliance and implementation of this policy and corporate guidance, services/teams must have their own **written local health and safety arrangements in place** as relevant to their work activity. Managers may choose to include these within their risk assessments as existing control measures, or as part of a specific written procedure or safe working practice note where a significant risk to health and safety has been identified.

Health and Safety Communication

A comprehensive source of all available information on corporate health, safety and wellbeing in the Council can be found on the health and safety pages of the Intranet. Health and safety information and guidance can also be sourced directly from the [Health and Safety Executive](#) internet site.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team will communicate any new or updated corporate health and safety information through managers.

Communication channels for the exchange of health and safety information should also exist day-to-day in teams/services, e.g. at team briefings, team meetings, one to ones etc. It is recommended that all team meetings have health, safety and wellbeing as a standing agenda item.

Health and Safety Consultation

The Councils recognise the importance of effective cooperation between employees, their representatives and managers through active consultation and involvement. The two relevant pieces of health and safety legislation that apply to the Council are:

- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and;
- Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996

Managers should identify how they consult with employees and share information on any significant changes affecting their health, safety and wellbeing.

Trade union (TU) appointed safety representatives are encouraged to cooperate with managers regarding any health and safety issues or concerns in the workplace.

A meeting is held between Human Resources, Health and Safety and the trade union representatives on a quarterly basis.

Health and Safety Training/Competence

The competence of employees through recruitment, selection, induction and training is an important part of the health, safety and wellbeing management system in place across the Councils. All employees should have **sufficient knowledge, skills and information** to carry out their work safely and without risk to health.

The mandatory health and safety training requirements within the Council include the following:

- **Health and Safety Induction** for all new starters (includes health, safety & wellbeing e-learning (or hard copy) and completion of the corporate health and safety induction checklist).
- **Health, Safety & Wellbeing e-learning (or hard copy version) – for all employees.**
- **Introduction to the Management of Health and Safety training** - for all managers.
- **Risk Assessment Workshop** – for all managers or nominated employees who undertake risk assessments.

In addition to these core mandatory sessions, managers and employees will need to consider attendance on other specific training programmes, including refresher training that may be relevant to their job role or setting. Examples include first aid, fire safety/fire warden, manual handling, management of contractors/CDM, personal safety awareness/lone working etc. Also the consideration of any specific health and wellbeing training programmes, e.g. developing personal resilience, management of work-related stress etc.

In areas where there is a **greater element of risk**, e.g. Environmental Services operations (waste collection, street cleansing, vehicle fleet management etc.) more comprehensive health and safety inductions and training will need to be carried out to ensure employees are trained and competent. Examples include driver CPC training, defensive driving, street works and highways training etc.

Health and safety training/development needs for employees should be determined as part of the risk assessment process and in conjunction with the employee appraisal system. Further advice/guidance can be provided by the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

5. Monitoring and Review

The content of this policy and its effectiveness in terms of performance will be the subject of a two-year review unless significant changes occur.

Monitoring of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System and its effectiveness in the organisation will be assessed at a Corporate, Directorate and Service level in order to ensure compliance. Monitoring will be both pro-active and reactive, incorporating spot checks, comprehensive inspections and audits and accident investigations and statistical analysis. Monitoring the requirements of this policy will be carried out by Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and the Corporate Health and Safety/HR Team to establish whether:

- Legal compliance is being achieved.
- Health and safety responsibilities are being properly assigned and discharged correctly.
- Leadership teams are accepting and dealing effectively with their delegated health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities.
- Corporate health and safety arrangements and guidance are being followed.
- Employees are aware of their roles and responsibilities.
- Accident trends and occupational health data are showing a continuous improvement.
- Health and safety targets are being monitored and are being achieved.
- All employees and managers are receiving appropriate health and safety inductions, training and development.

The Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan, Corporate Leadership Risk Register and Directorate Health and Safety Action Plans will also be used to track progress of health, safety and wellbeing performance in the organisation. Health and safety reports to the Senior Leadership team will also be used.

Auditing the Management System – Corporate level

At a corporate level, the Councils appointed internal and audit assurance service will independently audit the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System in place within the organisation. This will include work activities undertaken by the Corporate Health and Safety Team. This process covers health, safety and wellbeing as part of corporate governance assurance.

Auditing the Management System – Directorate level

At a directorate level, the Corporate Health and Safety Team will audit the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System in place in services/teams across the organisation. This will be carried out on a rolling programme using a risk-based approach. The aim of audits undertaken will be to establish whether appropriate management arrangements are in place, adequate risk control systems exist, are implemented and reflect the hazards the organisations need to manage.

A health and safety workplace inspection programme will also be carried out to identify and evaluate health and safety hazards in the workplace and identify actions where improvements need to be made.

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Author:	Ceri Harris, Corporate Health & Safety Manager	Review date:	2 year cycle
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