

Appendix 2



Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

March 2023

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This document will be distributed to all employees of Cherwell District Council.

DATE FOR REVIEW

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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.

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.

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 Executives, Directors, Assistant Directors, Managers and employees. The purpose of the Policy is to demonstrate that the Corporate 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 Executives and Leaders 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.



Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive
Cherwell District Council

Health and Safety Policy Statement

Cherwell District Council (CDC) as the employer recognises the importance of effective health and safety management and we 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 relevant health and safety legislation and management standards.
- 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.

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

Councillor Barry Wood
Leader
Cherwell District Council

Organisation for Health, Safety and 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 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 and Wellbeing Management System

The Council 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 and 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 and 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 and co-operation: 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, acting on lessons learned; accidents & incidents, ill-health data, revisiting plans, policies, procedures & risk assessments.

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 and 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.

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.
- Ensuring that the Council have 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.

Corporate 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 (Chief Executive)

The Chief Executive has been appointed as the Corporate Champion for Health and Safety with Claire Cox, Assistant Director for Human Resources as her Deputy. 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 reflect current priorities of the Corporate 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.
- 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/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/Health and Safety Team.
- Ensure the Council's health and safety performance is regularly reviewed and reported on.

Deputy Health, Safety and Wellbeing Champion (Nominated Assistant Director)

To support the Corporate Health and Safety Champion to achieve these responsibilities, the **Assistant Director Human Resources 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 Health and Safety Team to carry out their role effectively across the Council.

- 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 Corporate 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.

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

- Ensuring that effective arrangements are in place for building management and maintenance requirements across the Councils property portfolio, ensuring assets are safe and compliant.
- Being the named Assistant Director with corporate responsibility for Asbestos Management, Water Hygiene and Legionella and Fire Risk Management compliance across the Council.

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 and 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, corporate arrangements, and guidance 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/postholders 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, corporate arrangements, and guidance 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 systems of work.
- 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 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 systems of work 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 Executive Leadership Team (ELT) Group on a monthly basis.
- Together with the Learning and Development Team, ensure the provision of health and safety training to managers and employees relevant to their roles and responsibilities.
- 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 Councils appointed providers 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.

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 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.

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 systems of work 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 who will be responsible for cascading the information down to all employees.

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 Council recognises 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 Council. All employees should have sufficient knowledge, skills and

information to carry out their work safely and without risk to their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts and omissions.

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.

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 Health and Safety Team.

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 and 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 Council 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 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.