

# Health & Safety Policy Commitment Statement



## Monica Fogarty, Chief Executive

At Warwickshire County Council, we believe that the best way we can show a person that we care is to be concerned for their health, safety, and wellbeing. The safety of our people continues to be one of our top priorities and is central to supporting our people to be their best at work. Maintaining this focus enables the Council to achieve and exceed its Health and Safety objectives.

We are committed to promoting Health and Safety and supporting our people to be the best they can be. I know that we all look forward to sustaining our ability to adapt and learn innovative ways to enrich the Health and Safety of our people.

## Warwickshire County Council - A place where our people are healthy and safe every day at work.

The aim of this policy is to ensure the Council continuously looks at ways to improve our Health & Safety management systems to prevent occupational accidents, incidents, and cases of work-related ill health; and to promote and implement safe systems of work, a safe working environment, with a safe and healthy workforce.

The policy also demonstrates the Council's obligation to the legal duty of care we owe to employees and non-employees (such as, residents, visitors, customers, contractors, pupils, and members of the public) by ensuring the Council's activities and services are provided in such a way as to not put them at risk.

I, and the Council's leadership team, believe successful implementation of our Health and Safety policy will:

- Ensure we protect the Health and Safety of all employees and others affected by the Council's activities.
- Ensure continuous improvement in the Council's Health and Safety performance.
- Demonstrate attitudes and behaviours that promote good Health and Safety practices.

We all have our part to play in making Warwickshire County Council a safe and healthy place to work. With your support the Council will achieve the following commitments.

# Our Health & Safety Commitments

- Ensure the Council remains compliant with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all relevant statutes, regulations, codes of practice and guidance concerning Health and Safety.
- Ensure the Health and Safety Roles, Responsibilities and Accountabilities are understood and accepted by all employees, and those carrying out work on behalf of the Council.
- Support the implementation of appropriate arrangements to manage Occupational Health and Safety aligned with the requirements of the internationally accepted ISO 45001:2018 Health and Safety management standards.
- Ensure significant risks to Health and Safety are recorded as part of the Council's risk management process, and ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, control measures to eliminate, prevent, reduce, or protect against risks remain in place.
- Ensure all Council employees, and others working on our behalf, are provided with appropriate information, instruction, training, equipment, and supervision to carry out their work safely and effectively.
- Ensure clear Health and Safety performance targets are agreed by our leadership teams and they effectively support the continued improvement in the Council's Health and Safety performance by effective monitoring, auditing, and reviewing on a regular basis.
- The Council will seek to benefit from advancements in technology where it supports the continuous improvement of Health and Safety insights across the organisation, enabling greater evidence-based decisions to focus on priorities, outcomes and agreed actions to improve performance.
- Promote communication, consultation, and co-operation with employees to develop and share innovative and sustainable solutions that benefit all parties in achieving our shared Health and Safety annual objectives.

To enable the Council to meet these commitments, the Council requires all our employees, contractors, partners, economic operators, consultants, and voluntary groups to demonstrate the same level of commitment in matters of Health and Safety.

## What this means in practice for all employees and others working on the Council's behalf

The Council expects everyone to

- Take responsibility for their own Health and Safety and the Health and Safety of others.
- Follow Health and Safety procedures and work in accordance with any instructions and training provided.
- Co-operate with supervisors and managers on Health and Safety matters.
- Not to misuse or recklessly interfere with anything provided to protect Health or Safety.
- Promptly report any accidents and incidents, unsafe conditions, near misses and dangerous practices.
- Use work equipment and personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with instructions and training provided.
- Support the Council in achieving the Health and Safety performance targets.

- Play their part in maintaining safe and healthy workplaces.

### How the Council will measure its Health and Safety performance

To ensure that this policy is effective, we will:

- Review the effectiveness of the policy annually to ensure it remains relevant and appropriate to the Council's activities and needs.
- Communicate any resulting changes to employees and others affected.
- Monitor safety performance through effective on-going monitoring and measuring for all Council services.

**Signed and dated.**



**Monica Fogarty**  
Chief Executive  
June 2024

#### INFORMATION IN OTHER FORMATS

If this information is difficult to understand, we can provide it in another format, for example, large print, audio tape, easy read, or in another language.

Please contact the Health & Safety Service on 01926 476803  
Email: [healthandsafety@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@warwickshire.gov.uk)

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# **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

## **ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES & ACCOUNTABILITIES**

**Understanding Individual Roles, Responsibilities and  
Accountabilities for the Management of Health & Safety in  
Warwickshire County Council**

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## Introduction

This document supports the implementation of the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy and forms part of the Council's Health and Safety management system by:

- defining the Health & Safety roles, responsibilities, and accountabilities for all employees.
- outlining the governance arrangements in place and how statutory consultation on Health and Safety matters is undertaken.

## Scope

This document describes the arrangements that must be followed by all Council employees, (which includes employees within Warwickshire County Council maintained schools and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service) to ensure the Council remains compliant to legislation and delivers the commitments defined in the Health and Safety Policy.

Arrangements apply to all Council employees, and those carrying out work on behalf of Warwickshire County Council.

## Duty of Care

To meet the Council's legal duty of care there is a cascade of delegated Health and Safety accountability that runs through the Council, primarily via the structured organisational responsibilities outlined in this document. This is supported by the Health and Safety policy commitments ensuring responsibilities are adequately implemented via monitoring and reporting measures.

## Council Leader and Elected Members

The individual and collective attitudes, behaviours and beliefs of Elected Members play a key role in how employees and the residents of Warwickshire perceive the Council's approach to managing Health and Safety risk.

Through the Council's policy and decision-making processes, Elected Members have a crucial role in ensuring employees and the public are protected from Health or Safety risk. They also have an integral and key role in ensuring the Council achieves its Health and Safety Policy commitments.

**The Council Leader** will confirm the commitment of Members to the management of Health & Safety through the Council's Health and Safety Policy commitment statement.

The **Cabinet member with the portfolio for Customer and Transformation** will be the lead Councillor for Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing matters and be part of the Council's annual review of Health and safety.

**All Elected Members** will, individually and collectively:

- Promote a positive Health and Safety culture.
- Ensure Health, Safety and Wellbeing matters are considered and accounted for in decision making and that all such decisions conform to Health & Safety legislation and the Council's commitment to Health & Safety.

## Chief Executive and Executive Directors

The Chief Executive and Executive Directors along with the Council's appointed Monitoring Officer and the Deputy S151 officer make up the Council's Corporate Board.

The Chief Executive retains the overall accountability and responsibility to ensure Health and Safety is managed appropriately and effectively within the organisation.

The Executive Directors have been delegated to support the Chief Executive in discharging the legal duties. However, the Chief Executive still retains the overall accountability and responsibility (as this cannot be transferred).

The Chief Executive and Executive Directors will lead by example, supporting the development of a culture of positive behaviours and compliance, enabling continuous improvement in the Council's management of Health and Safety.

Collectively and individually the Chief Executive and the Executive Directors are responsible for:

- Providing clear and visible Health and Safety leadership and commitment that champions the importance of proportionate Health and Safety risk management within the workplace and encourages employee involvement in this process.
- Ensuring that all decisions made reflect the Council's Health and Safety commitment statement. Consulting and seeking advice from the Workforce Health and Safety Technical Specialist on Health and Safety matters when required.
- Ensuring suitable and sufficient resources are provided to ensure effective management of Health and Safety risks.
- Ensuring Health and Safety matters receive appropriate priority and are considered within the organisational decision-making process and strategic planning (as set out within policies and arrangements, and any statutory provisions set out in legislation).
- Setting and monitoring Health & Safety performance targets and objectives through the Directorate quarterly reports and the Corporate annual review process.
- Personally, responding to any legal notice received by the HSE (Health & Safety Executive) or other enforcing bodies, (although the Chief Executive may assign this requirement to the most appropriate member of Corporate Board.) seeking advice and guidance from the Workforce Health & Safety Technical Specialist throughout any investigation and / or correspondence.
- Ensuring that the Council has competent professionals appointed to provide Health and Safety assistance, advice, and guidance, as required by The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 2006.
- Ensuring consultation with Trade Unions and elected staff safety representatives on matters of Health and Safety.
- Attending relevant Health and Safety training courses and subsequent refresher courses every 5 years to ensure they remain competent to undertake their Executive Health & Safety duties.

## Delegated Executive Champions for Health and Safety

To ensure Health and Safety consideration at Corporate Board the Executive Directors have been authorised by the Chief Executive to be the delegated Executive Champions for Health and Safety in their areas of responsibility.

The Executive Champions will:

- Promote the adequate and proper consideration of Health and Safety to Corporate Board / senior Managers and more widely within the County Council.
- Be accessible to the Workforce Health & Safety Technical Specialist so that significant Health and Safety concerns can be raised and corrected immediately.

## Health and Safety Consultation Arrangements (Part of the Quarterly Joint Consultative Committees)

The Council currently operates a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with all recognised trade unions and elected employee safety representatives to discuss Corporate Health and Safety matters. The senior Managers in HR&OD regularly arrange these meetings.

The purpose of the Health and Safety consultation arrangements are to:

- Be the statutory consultative committee as required under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996.
- Be a forum for consultation on Health and Safety matters, sharing information and raising concerns over workplace hazards or unsafe practices.
- Be a forum for sharing appropriate Health and Safety information.

Further information on the Joint Consultative Committees can be found by searching 'Trade Unions' on the Councils iWarwickshire intranet pages.

## Directors

Directors have responsibility for ensuring effective management of Health, Safety and Wellbeing and ensuring that all Managers are aware of, and held accountable for, the specific application of their Health and Safety duties outlined below.

Where the Director delegates Health and Safety responsibilities, they must ensure that those nominated are competent to undertake the role and understand their delegated responsibilities.

Directors will:

- Support the Executive Directors to deliver their Executive Health & Safety champions duties.
- Implement Corporate Health and Safety action plans to ensure continuous improvements to the Council's Health and Safety management arrangements.
- Ensure Managers and all employees (including 'Interim Managers' and Agency Employees) under their management are made aware of and understand their



specific roles and responsibilities; and are accountable for their duties regarding Health and Safety.

- Use relevant data and information to develop, monitor and review Health and Safety objectives, targets, and priorities in line with the overall Corporate / Directorate objectives and action plans.
- Attend relevant Health and Safety training courses and subsequent refresher courses every 5 years to ensure they remain competent to undertake their Health & Safety duties.
- Support and co-operate with any Health and Safety workplace inspections and audits where necessary.
- Maintain risk registers with attention on the most significant risks within their business areas and ensure risks are being appropriately assessed, controlled, and managed through effective and sensible risk management.
- Ensure that the Executive Directors and the Workforce Health and Safety Technical Specialist are informed of any breach of Health and Safety statutory requirements; and immediately when there is Health & Safety Executive (HSE) or other enforcing body involvement.

## **Managers (including Head Teachers within Warwickshire County Council maintained Schools and Managers within Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service)**

For the purpose of these arrangements, the term 'Manager' relates to all WCC employees and interim / agency personnel who are responsible for managing people, projects and activities with potential Health and Safety risks.

Managers will:

- Ensure they attend the appropriate Health and Safety training course for the Management of Health & Safety and refresh every 3 years.
- Ensure they comply with any Manager responsibilities within the relevant Health and Safety policies and arrangements, (for example, the Asbestos Policy) and ensure that local arrangements to manage Health and Safety are in place (for example, Site Responsible Persons are named and appointed) as required.
- Ensure that risk assessments are undertaken and recorded for their work activities / processes / operations identifying all significant risk(s), and control measures that eliminate risks or reduce them to the lowest possible level are put in place. Further guidance on completing risk assessments can be found on the Council's iWarwickshire intranet pages under Health and Safety.
- Provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, including plant, machinery and work equipment and suitable welfare provision is provided (e.g., drinking water, adequate toilets and washing facilities, etc.).
- Ensure all new starters are provided with an appropriate Health and Safety induction upon commencement with Warwickshire County Council.
- Ensure that arrangements are in place detailing their responsibilities for the Health and Safety management of agency workers as the host employer and detailing the

responsibilities of the agency as employer. Similarly, arrangements must be in place for all volunteers.

- Ensure that relevant information, instruction, training, and supervision programmes are in place, provided, maintained, and monitored to help secure the competence and knowledge of all employees and others carrying out work on behalf of the Council.
- Ensure they consider Health and Safety implications at the planning stage of any new plant and / or equipment purchases, changes in processes or building designs and alterations.
- Ensure that all Health & Safety incidents resulting in injury or ill health are investigated, with the assistance of a competent Health and Safety adviser where necessary, so that appropriate action can be taken to prevent any recurrence. Further guidance on accidents and incidents can be found on the Council's iWarwickshire intranet pages under Health and Safety.
- Report to the Health and Safety service, without delay, any situations that could be described as a 'near miss' (any incident that could have resulted in injury, damage or loss but did not on this occasion but could in the future)
- Ensure that all employees, including Site Responsible Persons, can carry out their responsibilities, and encourage them to work with Managers to promote an attitude of safe working across Warwickshire County Council.
- Ensure that Health and Safety inspections and audits are supported.
- Ensure that communication arrangements are in place to brief and inform employees on Health and Safety matters as required.
- Ensure co-operation and consultation with employees, including colleagues from other services, organisations, and employees' safety representatives, when sharing premises.
- Reinforce a positive attitude to Health and Safety with employees (i.e., recognise positive contributions and safe behaviours of employees).
- Ensure any Health and Safety reports or concerns are openly discussed at management meetings.
- Seek Health and Safety assistance from the Health and Safety Service where necessary.

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 Health and Safety management within their area of responsibility.

## Employees

For the purpose of this document, the term 'employees' includes any individuals working on behalf of Warwickshire County Council as well as direct full-time employees (which also includes employees within Warwickshire County Council maintained schools and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service).

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Take reasonable care, while at work, of their own and other's Health and Safety.
- Co-operate with their employer or other person (i.e., Line Manager, Senior Manager, or Directors in respect of their Health and Safety duties and follow all instructions, control measures, training, arrangements, etc. (written and verbal) to protect their own and other's Health and Safety.
- Ensure they follow relevant arrangements (i.e., risk assessment controls, safe systems of work, arrangements, etc.) to avoid Health and Safety risks, and consult their line Manager on any areas of concern.
- Not misuse or interfere with anything that has been provided in the interest of their Health, Safety and Welfare (for example, personal protective equipment, machinery guarding, toilets and welfare facilities etc.).
- Check that any equipment, plant, or substances used at work are in a safe condition prior to use. Report any defects, loss, or damage to their manager immediately.
- Report all work-related accidents, incidents (including incidents of violence/ aggression, diseases, and dangerous occurrence) to their Manager and the Council's Accident Reporting System, which can be found on the iWarwickshire intranet pages under Health and Safety.
- Report to their Manager and the Health and Safety service, without delay, any situations that could be described as a 'near miss' (any incident that could have resulted in injury, damage or loss but did not on this occasion but could in the future)
- Never take short cuts or change work activities which could create unnecessary risks to their Health and Safety without first consulting with their manager or Health and Safety service.
- Always use safety equipment and / or personal protective equipment that is provided.
- Confidentially report any unsafe or dangerous practices witnessed to the Health and Safety service.
- Be aware of the first aid provision at their workplace and understand the fire / emergency evacuation and fire prevention arrangements, position of fire alarms and equipment and participate in fire drills as required.
- Take part in Health and Safety awareness training and development, as necessary.
- Co-operate with health surveillance programmes and other control strategies for the protection of their health, as necessary.
- Set a good personal example in respect of Health and Safety.
- Make suggestions and comments to improve Health and Safety through communication channels found on the Council's iWarwickshire intranet.

Please note these responsibilities relate to all employees. If an employee has additional post holder responsibilities for Health and Safety, for example, they are a manager, then they must comply with those responsibilities in addition to those above.

## Workforce Health and Safety Service

The Health and Safety Service are the Council's subject matter experts providing advice to the Council in matters of Health & Safety legislation.

In addition, the service undertakes the following activities.

- Provide professional, technical, practical, and competent Occupational Health and Safety advice, guidance, and support as required.
- Develop and maintain the Council's Occupational Health and Safety management system in accordance with ISO:45001.
- Produce Corporate Health and Safety policies, standards, advice, and guidance.
- Provide updates, guidance and alerts relevant to changes in Health and Safety legislation.
- Undertake a programme of internal Health & Safety audits on Council workplaces (including schools where the Council is the employer) tracking actions and recommendations through to completion.
- Undertake a schedule of workplace Health and Safety inspections with the appointed Managers.
- Raise any Health & Safety concerns with the Executive Champions for Health and Safety and senior management teams as deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Provide and deliver a range of Corporate Health and Safety training sessions and advise Managers on local Health and Safety training needs.
- Assist the responsible Manager to complete reports to the Health and Safety Executive under the RIDDOR regulations for reportable incidents for employees and non-employees.
- Assist Managers with the completion of significant rated accident / incident investigations, as appropriate.
- Advise the Chief Executive and Executive Directors on any regulatory interventions or investigations by the Health and Safety Executive and other enforcing authorities.
- Provide quarterly Health and Safety performance insight reports to Directorate leadership teams.
- Use Executive powers (on behalf of the Chief Executive, Cabinet Members and Executive Directors) to stop any work activities where there is a serious and imminent risk of injury or ill health.
- Advise on pro-active preventative projects to reduce incidents of work-related ill health and injuries to the Executive champions of Health & Safety.
- Advise Corporate Board and Executive Directors on Health and Safety matters.
- Produce an annual Staff and Pensions Committee report in conjunction with the Executive Directors outlining the Council's Health and Safety performance and detailing progress on objectives and targets set.
- Analyse trend data to inform organisational Health and Safety strategies.
- Create and deliver Health and Safety training (mandatory and bespoke).

*The Corporate Health & Safety service does not provide direct Health and Safety advice to the Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Services. Professional Health and Safety advice is provided through the operational arrangements within the specific WFRS Group, and the responsibility is delegated from the Chief Executive to the Chief Fire Officer.*

## Health and Safety Arrangements Relating to Specific Buildings and Properties

Strategic Asset Management are responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of building related Health and Safety compliance policies and arrangements, including legally required Responsible Persons for Fire arrangements, Asbestos management, Legionella and water Hygiene and Construction design and management etc...

Strategic Asset Management will:

- Consult with the Workforce Health & Safety technical specialist on Corporate Health & Safety matters.
- Provide professional, technical, practical, and competent Health and Safety advice and guidance on building regulations as required.
- Ensure appropriate levels on responsible persons have been appointed wherever required by legislation or best practice.
- Raise any Health & Safety concerns with the senior management teams as deemed necessary / appropriate.
- Undertake a schedule of programmed inspections to Council premises to advise on compliance arrangements for Health and Safety.
- Produce quarterly and annual reports with the support of the Health & Safety technical specialist on the Council's Health and Safety objectives and targets on Asset Legal Compliance.

### Implementation

It is the personal responsibility of every individual to ensure they are viewing the latest version; this will always be published on the Council's iWarwickshire intranet pages.

### Review of Arrangement

This document will be reviewed by the Health & Safety service every three years or more frequently where there has been any notable change or incidents, and if new legislation requires changes to current best working practice.

### Further Information and References

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
- The Health & Safety (Consultation with employees) Regulations 1996

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