

# **Section 1: Health & Safety Policy - Statement of Intent**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc., Act 1974 requires every employer to prepare a written health and safety policy statement and to bring it to the attention of all its employees.

1.2 The Council's Health and Safety Policy is in three parts:-

Section 1 is a statement of the Council's general policy and commitment to the health, safety and welfare of its employees and to the health and safety of other people affected by its work.

Section 2 describes the Council's organisation for carrying out the policy.

Section 3 sets out more detailed policy on specific areas of health and safety and outlines the arrangements in place for ensuring the health and safety of staff, including corporate guidance.

1.3 This corporate policy document is supported by service procedures where appropriate. These may be in the form of instructions, which are supplementary to Section III.

1.4 The organisation described at Section II is that accountable to the Council through the Chief Executive. Comparable organisation in respect of individual departments are to be determined by the respective Head of Service and included in the service procedures.

1.5 The arrangements for ensuring the effective implementation of the Council's policy, described at Section III are those applicable to all services. Arrangements applicable to an individual department or work section will be included in the relevant service procedures.

1.6 Where arrangements in respect of a particular type of workplace, machine, equipment, material, facility or procedure, requires to be described in greater detail than can conveniently be included in either the corporate or a service procedure document, the necessary information will be presented as a separate supplementary document, usually in the form of a code of practice.

Corporate Guidance will generally:-

- (a) Give background information,
- (b) Highlight hazards,
- (c) Specify precautions,
- (d) Lay down rules for a safe system of work to minimise risk.

## **2. CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT**

Surrey Heath Borough Council is firmly committed to Health & Safety. The Council recognises the responsibility to provide and maintain a safe and healthy workplace, environment and systems of work for our employees, visitors and contractors and for those receiving Council services. Everyone should be protected from ill health and accidents arising from work activities. Good health and safety management will help reduce loss and injury, and promote a positive safety culture at work.

The Council will ensure it aspires to achieve the highest standards of health & safety and that all managers work towards this aim. Effective and efficient management of health, safety and welfare is a management responsibility on an equal footing with other management tasks. Adequate financial, human and other resources are to be available to ensure the effective implementation of this policy, and proper monitoring procedures are to be established to monitor health and safety performance and ensure good communication and co-ordination.

The Council's aim can succeed only with the active support and co-operation of all employees at every level, working together to establish, maintain and improve standards. In this connection, the Council would remind its employees at all levels of their legal duties under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work, etc.: Act. To take care for their own safety and that of their fellow workers and to co-operate with the Council and others to enable them to carry out their statutory responsibilities successfully. The Council expects and encourages similar support from clients and other visitors who use the facilities or visit premises.

Further, the Council undertakes to provide whatever information, instruction, training and supervision is necessary to enable employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively towards their own safety and health at work and that of other employees.

The Council also undertakes that where employees are required to work in premises or at locations over which they (the Council) have no control, suitable guidance instruction, and where necessary additional training will be provided to ensure, as far as it is reasonably practicable, that any risks associated with their work are under control.

In addition, the Council will ensure, as far as either is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of persons not in their employ are not placed at risk by their activities or any premises or facilities made available for use by members of the public.

Arrangements for ensuring safe and healthy working conditions are a primary responsibility of Heads of Service, exercised through managerial and supervisory staff of the service. Without detracting from this principle, the Council undertakes to provide competent technical advice on matters of health, safety and welfare at work wherever that is necessary to assist line management in its task through the Community Services team.

The Council believes that no policy is likely to be successful unless it actively involves staff themselves. For this reason, the organisation and arrangements for fulfilling the provisions of the policy will include appropriate consultation between representatives of the Council and those of their employees and arrangements to encourage employees to identify hazards and suggest measures for improving safety performance.

In addition to ensuring that their statutory obligations are, fulfilled and satisfactory standards maintained. The organisation and arrangements in support of this general policy are intended to provide that by a continuous programme for progressive improvement wherever necessary, the safest and healthiest working conditions possible in the circumstances, are provided, that accidents are reduced to a minimum, and wherever practicable are eliminated.

To this end the policy will be reviewed and amended as appropriate, to take account of new legal requirements, approved codes of practice, technological advances, authoritative and local experience.

## Principles

It is the policy of the Council as far as is reasonably practicable:

1. To ensure that in the decision making process, where relevant, health and safety will be given full consideration.
2. To provide and maintain machinery, equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health.
3. To ensure safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
4. To provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of employees, Council Members, members of the public and others whilst engaged in Council business.
5. To maintain all places of work under the Council's control, including means of access and egress, in a condition that is safe and without risk to health.
6. To provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risk to health, and to provide appropriate facilities for welfare.
7. To identify and assess all risks, and to seek to achieve their elimination or control.
8. To establish, maintain and develop arrangements for effective consultation with staff on health and safety.
9. To comply with the statutory requirements as a minimum standard for health, safety and welfare of employees at work, Council Members, members of the public and all others toward whom the Council has statutory obligations.
10. To ensure that effective arrangements exist to deal with incidences that could arise in public offices and any large-scale emergency.
11. To ensure that the responsibilities of management are clearly allocated at all levels and those individual roles are defined.
12. To recognise the link between efficiency and health and safety, and to minimise the costs, losses and disruption which arise from accidents, ill health and dangerous occurrences?
13. To ensure that employees are aware that they are required to work safely and to co-operate with Managers in all matters that affect their health and safety at work.
14. To undertake a triennial review of the Safety Policy. However additions to, or modification of this statement may be made at any time and may be supplemented as appropriate by further statements relating to the work of particular services and in accordance with any new Regulations or Codes of Practice.

This policy has been prepared in furtherance of Section 2(3) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and binds all Executive Service Heads, Managers, and Employees, in the interests of Employees and Visitors.

All Visitors and Members are required to respect this Policy, a copy of which can be obtained on demand.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Roberts', written in a cursive style.

Dated: 30 April 2021

**Damian Roberts**

Chief Executive  
Surrey Heath Borough Council