



# Health and Safety Policy

**ADOPTED: 05.04.2022**

**REVIEW: 04.2023**

## **Westgate on Sea Town Council**

**Town Council Offices • 78 St Mildreds Road • Westgate-on-Sea • Kent • CT8 8RF**

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## Introduction

This is the Health & Safety Policy for:

### **Westgate on Sea Town Council**

**Town Council Offices • 78 St Mildreds Road • Westgate on Sea • Kent •  
CT8 8RF**

**Tel: 01843 836182**

This Policy gives the direction for Health and Safety by setting down a framework for management activity and relationships, which will deliver and maintain the control of Health and Safety.

## General Statement of Health and Safety Policy

**Purpose:** To provide a business framework for the development and maintenance of effective management systems to ensure a safe and healthy workplace with regard to the Council's activities and undertakings.

**Scope:** All Council employees, service users, contractors and any other persons affected by the Council's operations and facilities.

**Responsibilities:** Westgate on Sea Town Council recognises its corporate responsibility for the Health, Safety and Welfare of its Employees and for all activities under its remit which may affect service users and others (for example members of the public, contractors and councillors).

The Town Clerk is responsible for ensuring an effective Health and Safety management system is in place. Employees are encouraged to participate actively in, and accept individual responsibility for, Health, Safety and Welfare matters and to work with the Council to assure legal and policy compliance and support continuous improvement.

**Policy:** Reflecting its commitment to Health and Safety, the Council will promote the welfare, and protect the health and safety, of its employees, sub-contractors, visitors and others affected by its activities by:

- Promoting an interest in and enthusiasm for Health and Safety throughout the Council creating a strong safety culture and a positive Health, Safety and Welfare culture throughout the organisation
- Promoting clear channels of communication for Health, Safety and Welfare within the Council
- Providing information, instruction, training and supervision for all employees
- Ensuring adequate and competent HSE advice is available to all Managers, employees and Members
- Providing and maintaining safe and healthy working conditions, plant and machinery
- Providing adequate control of risks arising from work activities
- Consulting employees on matters affecting their Health and Safety
- Liaising effectively with contractors and other organisations as appropriate for the purposes of Health and Safety
- Ensuring the safe handling and use of substances
- Ensuring all employees are competent to perform their tasks and provide adequate training
- Investigating accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- Committing to continuous improvement of Health and Safety through regular reviews and auditing
- Complying with legal requirements
- Making Health and Safety integral to all business processes, planning and decision making
- Reviewing this Policy annually, or when changes in circumstances dictate, to ensure validity.

**Signed**

**Print Name**

**Position**

**Town Clerk**

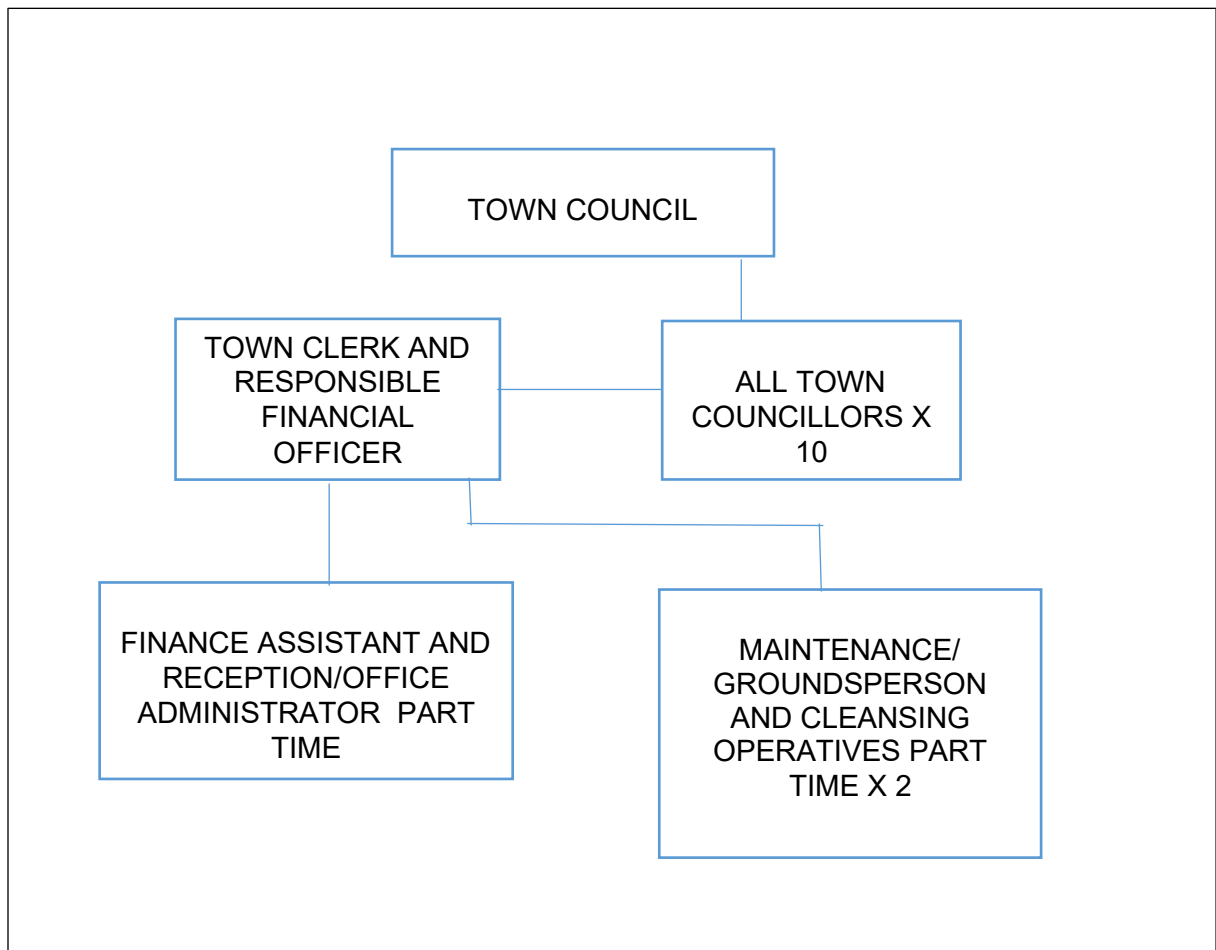
**Date**

## Organisation and Responsibilities

Westgate on Sea Town Council has ultimate responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and for all other persons likely to be affected by its activities and makes appropriate budgetary provision for training, personal protective equipment (PPE) and other health and safety measures.

This section sets out the responsibilities of post-holders within Westgate on Sea Town Council, including the Town Clerk and Employees.

## Organisational Chart



## All Employees

All Employees (including Contractors) are expected to bring to the notice of the Town Clerk any areas where this Policy appears to be inadequate.

They must also:

- Comply with Council and Legal rules and procedures regarding safe working.
- Report unsafe plant, tools and equipment and potentially unsafe procedures. Never interfere or misuse anything provided in the interests of Health and Safety.
- Use correct methods of work and not improvise by using methods, tools or equipment which entail unnecessary risk.
- Not operate any machinery, equipment or vehicle unless they have been adequately trained and authorised to do so.
- Maintain good housekeeping standards.
- Wear all appropriate personal protective equipment as instructed.
- Attend all Health and Safety training, as instructed.
- Immediately report to the Town Clerk all injuries, accidents and ill health caused by or affecting the work activity, and any near miss incident or dangerous occurrence, and assist in the investigation of accidents that occur, where requested.

The Town Clerk is ultimately accountable for the management of Health and Safety within Westgate on Sea Town Council and for implementing measures to ensure compliance with its legal requirements. The Town Clerk will:

- Provide overall management for all Health and Safety matters.
- Make recommendations to Council to ensure adequate funding for health, safety and welfare issues.
- Respond appropriately to any Health and Safety matters of concern.
- Ensure that a complete copy of this Policy is available for all Employees and Councillors and that a current copy of the Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate is held and displayed in each department.
- Ensure that this Policy is regularly reviewed and that relevant up to date competent Health and Safety advice is obtained.
- Ensure that the Town Council is kept informed of relevant information. Any major injury, seven-day injury or dangerous occurrence as defined by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) will be reported at the next monthly HR and Council Meeting.

In accordance with Regulation 7 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Council has appointed the Town Clerk as a competent person to assist in the management and implementation of Health and Safety Policy and legal compliance.

The Town Clerk will:

- Provide operational management for all Health and Safety matters.
- Respond appropriately to any Health and Safety matters of concern.
- Review the Council's overall Health and Safety performance and establish any programme necessary to improve performance.
- Liaise with all persons on Health and Safety issues and discuss any such matters raised by the workforce or by any other person affected by the organisation's activities.
- Ensure that Risk Assessments are regularly reviewed and that relevant up to date competent Health and Safety information and advice is obtained.
- Assist in the regular review of this Policy.
- Receive reports of all incidents and ensure that, where necessary, they are reported to the relevant authorities.
- Establish and maintain good lines of communication through the Council at all levels to share all relevant information relating to Health, Safety and Welfare in the workplace.
- Liaise with employees and contractors for the purposes of ensuring adequate Health and Safety measures and standards.
- Promote a pro-active and positive attitude towards Health and Safety at work
- Ensure Contractors, and Employees under their control, understand their responsibilities and comply with the requirements of this Policy and have received appropriate training and instruction at induction and afterwards and that records are maintained.

- Ensure that all work equipment is appropriately maintained, in a serviceable condition and only used by competent persons and in line with their training.
- Remedy and/or report (to the Human Resources Committee) any hazards or defects that may affect Health and Safety.
- Ensure a safe working environment is maintained at all times through, for example the safe storage of articles, equipment and good housekeeping.
- Report all accidents to the Human Resources Committee, so they can be investigated, ensure remedial actions are taken and information included in the accident book.
- Ensure that suitable personal protective equipment is readily available and used.
- Ensure that suitable first aid and welfare facilities are provided and maintained on site.
- At all times set an example for Employees to follow.
- Ensure that Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments are undertaken for office-based staff.
- Ensure that a fire drill is carried out annually for the Council's occupied premises as a minimum and that all fire detection and fire-fighting equipment is maintained in good order. The assembly point in the event of fire at the Council office is outside on the corner of Ethelbert Terrace
- Ensure that the safety rules within this Policy and the Staff Handbook are enforced.



## Arrangements Asbestos

Westgate on Sea Town Council has ensured that all premises under the Council's control have been surveyed for the presence of asbestos containing materials (ACM's). The reports, detailing findings, location and condition of ACM's are held by the Town Clerk.

The condition of ACM's will be reviewed annually by the Town Clerk and the register updated accordingly. Where the condition of ACM's has deteriorated, advice will be sought as to whether or not stabilising or removal works should be instigated.

For all work on the fabric of buildings under the Council's control, reference must first be made to the relevant asbestos register, prior to work commencing. All work involving ACM's must be risk assessed to identify necessary control measures.

Should work expose suspect ACM's, not previously recorded in the asbestos registers, work will stop immediately, and advice sought.

Disposal of any ACM's will comply with all current environmental legislation and be handled by licensed waste contractors.

## Arrangements Computer/Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

This section applies to computers whether desktop, laptop or handheld, wherever they may be used. Using a computer or other display screen is not high-risk work and activities are generally limited to the office.

All Employees habitually using DSE equipment as a significant part of their normal work must complete the DSE Workstation Checklist.

As identified through the Assessment all workstations must be maintained in a safe condition. This includes:

- Chairs that are capable of being adjusted and have adequate back and leg support
- Adequate space under the work surface;
- Footrests available to those who need them
- Adequate ventilation and lighting.

Computer work does not damage your eyesight, but it can make you temporarily short sighted. Eyes can also become tired from focussing at the same distance for too long; tired if your glasses/ eyes do not focus on the computer screen; dry when you are concentrating on screen work (because you blink less) and dry if your monitor is high because it exposes more of the eye surface.

Consequently, Westgate on Sea Town Council will provide habitual DSE users, on request, with an eye sight test every two years or more frequently if recommended by a doctor or optician. It is also recognised that some Employees may require glasses solely and specifically for DSE work because their usual glasses are not effective at the relevant viewing distance.

Where an Optician recommends corrective vision spectacles specifically for DSE use, the Council will pay for these in accordance with the policy set out in the staff handbook.

Many of the problems encountered can be controlled through good workstation design and set up.

These elements are identified in detail in the DSE Workstation Self-assessment.

## Control of Substances Hazardous to Health

Hazardous substances (as defined by the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations) will be stored appropriately. Every effort will be made to ensure that, so far as possible, non-hazardous substances are purchased for use or, where there is no non-hazardous substance which is suitable, that the least hazardous substance is obtained.

The Council will identify all hazardous substances to which persons may be exposed. They will compile a register of all such substances.

Attached to the register will be suppliers/manufacturers' safety data sheets, which suppliers must provide by law. These outline the hazards of the substance, also indicating any precautions which are necessary.

Before any hazardous substances are used by staff for the first time, manufacturers/ suppliers' safety data sheets will be obtained and suitable judgements made of the necessity for, and utility of, the substance.

A control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) assessment will then be carried out by a competent individual. All such assessments will be recorded in writing. The assessment will also include an assessment of the risks arising from Blood-borne viruses (HIV, Hepatitis etc). Any recommendations made for gaining or improving control of hazardous substances will be implemented by the Council. The assessments will be reviewed when there is a material change in circumstance and, in any event, on an annual basis. Where relevant, changes to assessment findings will be communicated to employees.

All measures intended to prevent, or control exposure will be regularly monitored as identified by the assessments. All employees will be responsible for ensuring that control measures are maintained. In the event of any failure of any control measure, the cessation of use of the substance be implemented with immediate effect and advise the Town Clerk immediately.

## Health Hazards

The following general rules should always apply when handling any chemicals:

- Read the information, such as container labels, before using any products.
- Never mix chemicals together.
- Never transfer chemicals into another container without ensuring that all safety information on the original container is copied onto any new container.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully.
- Chemical products must never be allowed to come into eye contact and contact with skin. Mucous membranes must likewise be avoided.
- Wear protective equipment and clothing supplied.
- Do not swallow materials or use in areas where food is being consumed
- Always store chemicals away from food.
- Inhalation of chemical vapours or dust should be avoided. Adequate ventilation must be provided.
- Facilities for the washing and cleansing of the skin are made available.
- If any person handling the materials shows the symptoms which may possibly have been caused by exposure to chemical products, they should be removed from the area and

medical advice sought without delay. First aid information is available on the relevant Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

Waste materials such as broken glass or other “sharps” should be adequately wrapped to prevent injury and disposed of safely i.e. not in plastic bags.

COSHH Assessments are undertaken where significant hazards are identified.

The Town Clerk will ensure that any protective clothing, equipment or hygiene measure is provided, worn and maintained as required.

## Arrangements - Driving at Work and Vehicles

All vehicles are registered, taxed and regularly serviced. Any defects must be brought to the attention of the Operations Manager immediately.

All persons driving vehicles shall be over 21 years old and hold a full driving licence. The main driver will regularly check the water, oil, fuel, lights, tyre pressure, brakes and steering. However, all drivers are expected to:

- report any defects
- report any endorsements and any medical conditions that may affect their ability to drive
- must not smoke during refuelling
- must not use a hand held mobile telephone whilst driving or engage in making calls or receiving lengthy duration calls where hands-free kits have been installed
- park sensitively at delivery locations bearing in mind road conditions, neighbouring businesses and other road and pavement users

A Drivers Daily/Weekly Vehicle Check List is used to record vehicle inspections.

Where privately owned vehicles are used for business purposes, the driver **must** ensure that their insurance covers business use.

Personnel using Council vehicles will be asked to provide copies of their driving licence on a 12-monthly basis.

## Drugs and Alcohol

Even very minor alcohol or drug misuse can lead to some loss of concentration and affect judgement and physical co-ordination, which in turn can lead to accidents. Consequently, the use of illegal drugs and misuse of alcohol is forbidden in all Westgate on Sea Town Council activities and you must therefore ensure that alcohol or drug use does not have an adverse effect on your work performance, other people or safety arrangements.

Before consuming any medication, you should ask the pharmacist about side effects or read enclosed information. Where the effects of the prescribed drug may compromise safety, you should tell your Town Clerk and reassess your ability to carry out that work safely while potentially affected.

## Arrangements - Electricity

All electric wiring and fittings are kept in good repair by the landlord of the building. Unauthorised alteration to, or interference with, electric wiring or fittings is strictly forbidden. Any failure,

breakdown, overheating or chaffing of wires is to be reported immediately to the Town Clerk and, wherever possible, the electric current turned off until the defect has been rectified.

No light or power point is to be used for any purpose other than that for which it is intended.

## Portable Electrical Appliances

Portable electrical equipment is any electrical item connected to the mains electricity supply by means of a flexible cable, plug and socket which includes office equipment such as computers and printers and any on-site power tools. The definition of portable electrical equipment also includes equipment that is hand held or hand operated whilst connected to the electrical supply as well as extension leads, plugs, sockets and adaptors.

The following steps are to be taken to ensure you are not exposed to any risk of electrocution:

- Portable electrical equipment must only be used for the purpose for which it was intended and in the environment for which it was designed and constructed.
- Only qualified electricians are permitted to carry out repairs or modifications to portable electrical equipment.
- All portable electrical equipment purchased conforms to UK and/or EC product safety standards. Wherever possible equipment will be double insulated (Class II type – 2 wires) to ensure it is constructed with high integrity insulation without the need for an earth connection. (Double insulated equipment is marked with by the 'double square' symbol).

To assist, all Employees must:

- Visually inspect new equipment for damage.
- Only connect portable electrical apparatus to the mains supply by means of suitably fused plug and socket outlets. Under no circumstances should multi-point adaptors be used.
- As all portable electrical equipment must be adequately maintained, users should undertake regular visual checks and report any fault, damage or defect to the Town Clerk. If any users have any safety concerns, they should immediately stop using the equipment, disconnect it from the power source and ensure that nobody else can use it.

Portable appliance testing is undertaken on a 5-year cycle by the Council's approved electrical contractor and a register of all testing is maintained and held by the Town Clerk.

## Fire

The main causes of fire are likely to be an accumulation of rubbish or other flammable waste materials near a heat source, faulty electrical appliances, overloaded socket outlets or arson. Therefore, good housekeeping and regular inspection and testing of appliances will reduce these fire risks to a minimum.

The Town Clerk will ensure:

- Adequate egress from the premises is available.
- Adequate firefighting facilities are available.
- Emergency procedures are in place.
- Appropriate instruction is provided, particularly at induction.

Fire extinguishers are located in the premises and their function is distinguished by the information signs posted alongside each extinguisher:

The following arrangements have been made in order to ensure that Employees and visitors can be evacuated safely in the event of a fire or other emergency:

- i. A Fire Risk Assessment has been undertaken.
- ii. Town Clerk is responsible for checking escape routes and exits regularly.
- iii. Fire equipment is maintained annually.

All fire exit routes and doors are to be kept free from obstruction of any sort. Designated fire doors are not, under any circumstances, to be wedged open or otherwise modified to prevent closure. They are to be kept closed at all times except when persons are passing through them.

## Fire Precautions

**a) It is the responsibility of every Employee to be familiar with fire evacuation procedures including:**

- How to raise the alarm.
- Where the fire exits are.
- Where the firefighting equipment is and how to use it, where appropriate.
- The route to and location of the assembly point and to whom you must report.

**b) If you discover a fire:**

- Shout '**Fire**' and sound any alarm.
- Try to put out the fire with the appliances provided but without taking any personal risk.
- Evacuate the building.

**c) On hearing the word 'fire':**

- Leave the building immediately by the nearest safe exit closing all doors behind you. Do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Proceed to the assembly point.
- The Town Clerk or in their absence, most senior person, will assume responsibility for ensuring the total evacuation of the building. He/she must then proceed to the assembly point, ensure that all Employees are accounted for and report the fact or otherwise to the Fire Officer in charge.
- If you are unsure of procedures, ask your Town Clerk.

### Arrangements - First Aid

First aid equipment is readily accessible at each premises and is kept stocked, clean and ready for use. The minimum stock levels are:

Item	Quantity
First aid guidance card.	1
Individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressing (blue).	20
Sterile eye pads with attachment	2
Triangular bandages	2
Sterile individually wrapped unmedicated dressings, medium size (12cm x 12cm)	6
Sterile individually wrapped unmedicated dressings, large size (18cm x 18cm)	2
Safety pins.	6

Tablets and medication must **not** be kept.

Responsibility for maintaining stock of first aid materials and provision of qualified first aiders lies with the Town Clerk.

Small first aid kits are also available in all Council vehicles.

### Arrangements - Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)

Vibration White Finger (VWF) is the most common symptom of Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS). This is frequently associated with road drills, compactors, power hammers and chain saws. HAVS can damage blood cells, thus reducing the blood supply, and also injure the nerves in the hand/fingers causing permanent damage. The symptoms are usually set off by the cold. The first sign is frequently an occasional attack when the fingertips become white or numb.

The Council is committed to reducing this aspect of risk exposure. It will conduct a suitable tool risk/health analysis, to identify possible health trends, and take reasonable precautions to reduce exposure to HAVS.

Typical risk reduction measures may include:

- The provision of suitable warm clothing i.e. gloves and coats for prolonged exposure within a cold climate.
- Assessing the suitability of the tool at the purchase stage. This is to ensure that not only the calculated vibration is minimal, but also the right tool is provided for the right job. This should condense the vibration magnitude and avoid the need to grip tools more tightly.
- Encouraging breaks for prolonged work using plant and equipment that produces high vibration.
- Ensuring that all tools are maintained through a planned maintenance scheduling system and any patent defects should be reported to the Town Clerk.
- Promoting active Health and Safety awareness training and vibration hazard consciousness for staff.
- Removing defective tools from service, until they have either been repaired or replaced.
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, anti-vibration devices are incorporated within the tool design, taking into consideration current technology.
- Carrying out a Risk Assessment of each worker's daily vibration exposure and taking initial steps to assess, and reduce the vibration levels of the vibratory tools, including inspection of resilient mounts/flanges.
- Wherever possible mounting vibration jackets for road tools and providing anti-vibration gloves for use by all staff potentially exposed.
- Providing health surveillance for workers who are exposed to vibrations above the action level or otherwise continue to be at risk and stopping any activity where exposure limits are breached.

### **Arrangements - Housekeeping**

All persons should ensure that their work area is kept clear and free of tripping and slipping hazards. It is important that all Employees can move about freely and be able to exit their work area without hindrance in the event of an emergency.

Coats and bags must not be hung on the backs of chairs or left on the floor around workstations.

All waste materials should be promptly removed to designated waste storage areas and disposed of regularly to avoid build up by the cleansing operatives at the Thanet District Council Waste Depot.

Any defects in the work environment or conditions must be reported to the Town Clerk

### **Incident, Ill Health and Dangerous Occurrences Reporting**

All injuries or damage resulting from incidents on site or in other workplaces, however minor and all near misses, must be reported to the Town Clerk and Town Clerk.

In the event of a fatal or major injury to any person, over seven-day injury or dangerous occurrence as defined by the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR), the Health & Safety Executive must be notified by telephone immediately by the Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk will ensure that an investigation is carried out as soon as possible and confirm details of accidents to the Health & Safety Executive within 10 days via their website. Details will

also be recorded in the accident book which is held in each operation premises. Reports can be made through the following methods:

The Incident Contact Centre is contactable between 8.30am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, on (Tel) 0345 300 9923.

RIDDOR incidents can be sent by e-mail to: [riddor@natbrit.com](mailto:riddor@natbrit.com), or by visiting the Centre's website at: [www.riddor.gov.uk](http://www.riddor.gov.uk)

Online reports can be submitted using an appropriate online report form which can be found at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm> the forms are listed below:-

- [Report of an injury](#)
- [Report of a dangerous occurrence](#)
- [Report of an injury offshore](#)
- [Report of a dangerous occurrence offshore](#)
- [Report of a case of disease](#)
- [Report of flammable gas incident](#)
- [Report of a dangerous gas fitting](#)

If a medical certificate or other written diagnosis from a doctor has been received in respect of an Employee who is absent from work and the disease diagnosed is one of those listed in the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, the Town Clerk will complete and send form F2508A to the Health & Safety Executive.

## Lone Working

Refer to Lone Working Policy

## Manual Handling

The main work activity of Westgate on Sea Town Council necessarily involves manual handling. Consequently, the method of work has been arranged to limit the weights handled and also share the lifting and handling amongst operatives.

The following steps are the basic handling procedures that Employees should adopt:

- Consider the acronym TILE and plan the lifting operation and whether the process can be made easier with assistance from another person;
- **Task** – What exactly is required? How much force will be needed? Will the task need to be repeated often? Are there any other means of moving the load?
- **Individual** – Who is available to carry out the task, what is their physical condition, do they have any impairments or disabilities to be taken into consideration?
- **Load** – What needs to be lifted, is it a fixed load or a fluid/loose load? How heavy is it, is it fragile/flammable, toxic? If using a mechanical aid, is it sufficient for the load
- **Environment** – Where is the load, where does it need to go? Could it be dropped off at the other location in the first place? What are the surface conditions (Hot, cold, dry, wet, slippery, sloping)? Are there any obstructions or obstacles on the route?
- Ensure the correct body posture and correct use of available handles etc i.e.



Place the feet apart.

Bend the knees.

Keep the back straight. Shoulders level and ahead.

Keep the arms within the area of the head.

Use a 'hook' grip where possible.

Ensure that the load is securely gripped.

Raise the load smoothly.

Keep the load as close to the body or handling aid as possible.

Avoid twisting, bending or stooping and ensure your vision is not obstructed.

Place the load carefully.

Manual Handling assessments are undertaken for significant tasks using the Manual Handling Assessment Form.

**Whenever possible, use mechanical aids which have been provided to avoid or reduce the need for manual handling.**

## **New Employees**

Whenever a new Employee is appointed to Westgate on Sea Town Council, they will be made aware of the following:

Explain what he/she will be required to do and to whom he/she will be directly responsible

Where the Health and Safety Policy is kept, its purposes and the employee's responsibility

Any potentially dangerous areas of operations

The procedures in the event of an accident, in particular, the necessity to record all accidents, however trivial they may appear at the time.

An induction checklist is used to ensure all relevant areas are covered during the induction phase.

## **Information, Instruction and Supervision**

Westgate on Sea Town Council will consult directly with Employees on matters affecting them relating to Health and Safety. This will include any of the following circumstances:

- Any change which may substantially affect their Health and Safety at work; e.g. changes in procedures, equipment or ways of working
- The employer's arrangements for getting competent people to assist the Council in meeting their legal obligations
- The information that Employees must be given on the likely risks and dangers arising from their work, measures to reduce or get rid of these risks and what they should do if they have to deal with a risk or danger
- The planning of Health and Safety training
- The Health and Safety consequences of introducing new technology or equipment

The following arrangements have been made in order to ensure that Employees are provided with suitable information, instruction & supervision relating to Health and Safety issues:-

- i. External providers will provide competent Health and Safety advice to the Council on request.
- ii. Town Clerk is responsible for the supervision and monitoring of new starters/young persons/trainees.
- iii. The latest Health and Safety Law Poster is displayed at each premises. The person responsible for keeping the information detailed on the law poster up-to-date is the Town Clerk.
- iv. The Employer's Liability Insurance Certificate is displayed. The person responsible for obtaining insurance cover is the Town Clerk.
- v. The Health & Safety Policy is reviewed annually and is available in all departments.
- vi. Risk assessments are available from the council's computer system.
- vii. Provision of training on matters as required.

### **Arrangements - Personal Protective Equipment**

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is a last resort to be used if all other types of control measure have been exhausted

Employees are required to maintain their issued equipment in good condition and will report any loss or damage to the Town Clerk.

Employees and Sub-Contractors are required to comply with any specific site rules regarding PPE.

The issue of non-disposable PPE is recorded, and Town Clerk are responsible for undertaking regular inspections of all PPE issued.

### **Arrangements - Pregnancy**

Once the Council is informed, in writing, of a staff member's pregnancy, the appropriate member of staff must carry out a new risk assessment for all tasks which the member of staff is expected to carry out in their general duties of employment.

Pregnancy is not an illness though pregnant women can often be ill (particularly morning sickness) and are inclined to become very tired in later pregnancy. The changes inherent in pregnancy affect the risks of some work; for instance, the bump affects manual handling techniques and position in relation to a computer, the softening of ligaments increases the risk of Muscular-skeletal injury and the hormonal changes increase the risk of Carpal Tunnel syndrome.

When a female employee declares that she is pregnant or when it becomes obvious that she is pregnant, the Town Clerk will continue to ensure their workstation is comfortable and discuss any control measures with the individual.

### **Arrangements - Smoking**

Refer to Smoking Policy

## Arrangements – Work Related Stress

Work-related stress can develop because a person is unable to cope with the demands being placed on them. Stress, including work-related stress, can be a significant cause of illness and is known to be linked with high levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and other issues such as an increase in mistakes at work.

Westgate on Sea Town Council recognises the dangers of work-related stress. Through effective management and communication, the Council's aim is to create a supportive and positive working environment which will greatly reduce the possibility of an individual being at risk of work-related stress. Positive and supportive engagement between Town Councillors and employees is recognised as key to this.

The Council endeavours to have no job that is inherently dangerous to mental health. Employees are presumed able to withstand the normal pressures of the job unless they know of a particular problem, or unless any reasonable person would realise a colleague could not cope. Westgate on Sea Town Council is also reasonably entitled to accept a colleague's statement that they are able to cope.

Stress is not pressure and pressure is not stress. Stress is defined as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. Stress is not an illness, but if it is prolonged or especially intense, it can lead to physical or mental health problems.

Many of the factors that can produce stress are the antithesis of good management. Consequently, measures to reduce the risk of stress are likely to improve, among other things, efficiency, effectiveness, commitment and personal development.

Specific risk assessments will be prepared if a colleague informs management that they are unable to cope. The findings of the assessment will be used to provide personal controls.

The Town Clerk will endeavour to take the following steps at all times:

- Schedule work sensibly and accept that, where possible, work-travel should be completed in working time.
- Encourage high productivity, discourage long hours and monitor hours.
- Manage under-performance and/or absence at an early stage - before others suffer.
- Manage re-entry after absence.
- Be approachable, communicate clearly, and listen to colleagues' needs.
- Recruit, retain, train and promote so that people are suited to the demands and pressures of the work.
- Set clear objectives, prioritise tasks, eliminate unnecessary work, and try to give warning of urgent work.
- Demonstrate zero tolerance of bullying or harassment.
- Co-ordinate workloads and holidays.
- Ensure colleagues know of other sources of help.

## Arrangements - Stress

To assist, every employee must:

- Be alert to individuals or groups at particular risk - e.g. prolonged, frequent and uncharacteristic absences.
- Not harass or bully any colleague - including senior colleagues.
- Inform a Town Clerk if they recognise a significant change in an activity or recognise a significant stressor that is not being addressed.
- Help colleagues (including senior colleagues) by being alert to signs of distress/failure. Report your concerns to someone who can help.
- Not to deal with your stress by re-distributing it amongst colleagues – e.g. storming into work in a state, banging things around etc. and getting colleagues ruffled while you calm down.

It is encouraged that you should let your Line/Town Clerk know if you are:

- Coming under excess pressure in your private life.
- Suffering from anxiety or depression to an extent that interferes with your current or reasonably foreseeable work demands.
- Suffering physical illness that significantly reduces your resilience - e.g. pain that interferes with sleep or on receipt of a life-limiting prognosis.
- Suffering stress, due to work, that is threatening your health.

Giving consideration to the following aspects of your life may help you to prevent stress arising or reduce its effects:

- Manage your time and set yourself challenging but realistic objectives.
- List tasks in order of priority and tackle the most important first.
- Take care of your health through healthy eating, tackling addictions, avoiding stress crutches (drinking, sleeping pills, comfort eating, etc)
- Exercising, keeping up with friends and family, talking to someone, relaxing.
- Ensure sufficient rest and adequate number of hours of sleep and take short breaks to let yourself recuperate during busy times.
- Raise concerns if you are being mistreated.

It can help to try and identify the possible causes of stress by writing them down. Should you be absent with stress, co-operate with your Town Clerk in developing a sensible return to work plan, as concern for your welfare is not prying. Acknowledge your own success in stress control each step of the way.

## Arrangements - Sub-Contractors

Westgate on Sea Town Council recognises its duty to ensure that the employer of persons who will be working on their premises has been provided with information on the risks to those persons along with details of measures being taken to comply with the relevant legislation as it relates to those Employees.

Town Clerk are responsible for ensuring that all Sub-Contractors are competent and possess the appropriate insurances and qualifications to carry out functions on behalf of the Company. An approval questionnaire is sent to all Sub-Contractors which is vetted the Operations Manager.

Where the contract work carries a higher risk or is of an extended duration outside the typical schedule, this information will be requested prior to the work commencing. This will include written risk assessments and method statements depending on the work activity to be carried out, the content of which should include:

- The hazards that the activity will be presenting to the Employees and customers of the Council.
- The level of risk that these hazards present.
- The controls that will be put in place to ensure that the risks are not realised.
- The monitoring system in place that ensures the risk controls remain in place.

Any incidents should be responded to immediately and a discussion after the project finishes may be appropriate to discuss any lessons learned.

All Sub-Contractors are required to conform to Westgate on Sea Town Council's Health & Safety policy in addition to that of a client for all site work.

### **Arrangements - Violence and Aggression**

All violent incidents must be reported to your Town Clerk and then recorded in the accident book. All such incidents will be investigated.

All visitors who are accessing non-public areas and are not known to Employees should be stopped and challenged immediately.

Where aggressive or threatening behaviour is identified this is brought to the immediate attention of the Town Clerk.

Employees should have methods of communication such as radio or telephone to call for back up or assistance when lone working.

Cash handling should be reduced or avoided altogether whenever possible to reduce the chance of conflict.

Employees are advised to walk away and seek help if they feel a situation is not manageable.

### **Arrangements - Work at Height**

Westgate on Sea Town Council's activities necessarily involve working at height by trained and competent personnel. Safety harnesses will be worn by operatives in accordance with the findings of risk assessments or as otherwise deemed necessary during erection and dismantling operations.

Access ladders are always inspected prior to use. Defective access equipment is reported and immediately removed from service.

All activities at height will have due regard to persons underneath and segregation will be provided as necessary.

## Arrangements - Work Equipment

All work equipment will be purchased in line with Legislative requirements and bear the CE mark. For major items of equipment, a copy of the Declaration of Conformity will be obtained.

Risk assessments for significant items of equipment will be undertaken by the Town Clerk.

Employees are trained to safely operate and clean equipment and use the correct equipment for the task. No persons under 18 years are authorised to use machinery or other equipment without authorisation.

## Tools

A selection of hand and power tools is used. The following steps are taken to ensure the safety of the user and third parties:

### Hand Tools

- Use the right tool for the job
- Maintain all tools in a serviceable condition – if unserviceable either repair or replace
- Control/protect tools with obvious risks (Stanley knives, etc)
- Files should be fitted with handles to prevent hand injuries and should not be used as punches or for levering as they may break
- Chisels and punches with mushroom heads must be ground down to prevent splinters of metal flying off
- Hammer heads should be tightly wedged onto shafts, and split or damaged wooden handles replaced
- Edges of cutting tools should be kept sharp and hands kept behind the cutting edge when working

### Power Tools

- All equipment should be checked prior to use for defective plugs, sockets, cables or switches.
- 110V or battery powered tools should be used wherever possible.
- Tool adjustments or changes must not be carried out unless the equipment has been isolated.
- Cables must be long enough for use without strain on the connection.
- All defects must be reported to the Town Clerk.
- Maintenance and repairs are only to be undertaken by a competent person.

## Young Persons at Work

The Health and Safety Executive classify all people under the age of 18 years of age as a young person, including children under the age of 16. This definition applies to students, trainees and children on work experience and classifies them as Employees regardless of the number of hours worked or the period of employment.

Current legislation requires all employers to undertake risk assessments for all Employees; this includes young workers who may be working on the Council's premises. When the assessment has been completed the employer must implement suitable and sufficient control measures to ensure that the risks are controlled.

Young workers are particularly at risk of injury in the workplace due to their lack of awareness of potential hazards, immaturity and inexperience.

Children under the age of 13 years of age are prohibited from any form of employment; however, children between 13 and the Minimum School Leaving Age (MSLA) can undertake work experience schemes approved by local education authorities. If the company offers placements to students, trainees or children they will be treated as Employees and will be provided with the same health and safety protection as any other employee.

Before engaging any young Employees, the Council will complete specific risk assessments, these will include: -

- The fitting out and layout of the workplace and the location of where the individual will work.
- The type of work equipment that will be used and how it is to be handled.
- How various work and processes being undertaken are organised.
- The extent of training that has been provided or that will need to be provided to the individual concerned.

Before any children are employed or they are offered work experience, the Council will notify the parental guardians of the key findings of the risk assessments and the control measures that have been implemented to reduce the likelihood of an injury occurring.

All young people who start work with the Council will receive suitable training in order that they can undertake the work task safely without putting themselves or others at risk. All training will be assessed on a regular basis to ensure that the key instructions have been understood. Westgate on Sea Town Council views this training as a bare minimum and will ensure that the individuals are fully supervised at all times to ensure that they are competent to carry out the task.

In addition to the normal health and safety records that are documented relating to work activities, the following information will be kept with regard to young persons.

Specific risk assessment records for the tasks that young people within the Council are required to undertake.

Details of training and information that has been given to the young person, along with records to show that the individuals have accomplished an acceptable standard of competence.

Where the young person has not reached minimum school leaving age a record will be kept of any correspondence and information that is communicated to the parents/parental guardian.

### **Volunteers, visitors and Equality Act 2010**

- All visitors must report to the reception area and visitors book signed if requested.
- Any PPE worn and/or equipment used by volunteers or visitors should only be supplied and authorised by the Town Council.
- On request suitable access equipment will be provided to visitors to Council premises and have measures in place to ensure the Health and Safety for all those who attend Council premises.
- Volunteers are required to abide by the Council's Health and Safety Policy when representing the Town Council.

### **National/Local Emergency including Pandemics**

- The Town Council as a local authority maybe called upon by the UK Government and/or KCC and TDC during national emergencies including such events as a pandemic outbreak to undertake activities to support the local community, the health, safety and welfare of all Council employees will be the priority and any risk associated to their normal working practices will be risk assessed. The results will be communicated to individuals and Council; the situation will be appraised and appropriate instructions will be issued as required.