



Health and Safety Manual

Date of adoption	Full Council 21 st November 2018
Reviewed	November 2020, 27 th October 2021, 26 th October 2022, 25 th October 2023, 23 rd October 2024
Next Review Date	October 2025
Reviewed By	Policy & Resources Committee This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually or in response to any significant change in working practices or environment, by the Council’s nominated responsible person.

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT	5
3. ORGANISATION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY	6
The Full Council	7
Town Clerk	7
4. HEALTH & SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES	7
5. HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES	10
Working conditions/environment applicable to both Councillors, Volunteers and Employees	10
Protective clothing and equipment	11
Fire Precautions	11
Accidents	11
Health	11
The Council's Transport – Councillors and Employees	11
6. ARRANGEMENTS	13
Accident, Incident and ill Health Recording, Reporting and Investigation	14
Contractors	14
Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres	15
Display Screen Equipment	16
Driving	16
Drugs and Alcohol	17
Electricity	17
Fire	17
First Aid	18
Gas installations and appliances	19
Hazardous Substances (COSHH)	19
Infection control	20
Lifting operations and Equipment	20
Lone working	20
Manual handling	21
Outdoor and Peripatetic equipment	21
Risk Assessment	21
Smoking	22
Stress	22
Temporary employees	22
Training	23
Visitors	23
Work equipment	23
Work at height	24
Young people	24
7. RISK ASSESSMENT	26
Risk assessment	27
Fire risk assessment	29
Addendum: Coronavirus, COVID 19 Pandemic practical considerations.	30

INTRODUCTION

1. INTRODUCTION

This Health and Safety manual contains our Health and Safety Policy as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and it defines the way we manage the health and safety hazards and risks associated with our business, premises and activities.

Newton Abbot Town Council are committed to managing health and safety effectively to protect our employees and other persons with whom we interact because we recognise that we have not only a moral and legal duty but also that our employees, councillors and volunteers are our greatest asset.

This Health and Safety Policy Statement sets out Newton Abbot Town Council's commitment and the objectives in managing health and safety.

The approach to managing health and safety will be pragmatic and proportionate and will be prioritised according to risk with the objective of maintaining continuous improvement. It is accepted that risk cannot be eliminated from everything the Council does but it can be managed in such a way that exposure to hazards is controlled as far as is reasonably practical.

Wherever possible the Council will seek to eliminate risk through the selection and design of buildings, facilities, equipment and processes. Where risks cannot be eliminated they will be minimised by the use of physical controls or, as a last resort, through systems of work and personal protection.

This Policy Statement includes the policy documents which specifically cover the following areas in more detail and summarises the remaining areas under those listed in Section 6.

Policies separately covered:

Policy	Adopted	Reviewed	Due for Review
H & S Display Screen Equipment Regs. 1992	29.07.17	Nov 2022	November 2025
H & S Electrical Safety	29.07.17	Nov 2022	November 2025
H & S Guidance Manual Lifting/Handling	29.07.17	Nov 2022	November 2025
H & S Potentially Abusive or Violent Persons	29.01.17	Feb 2023	November 2025
H & S Working Alone	29.07.17	Oct 2023	November 2025
H & S in Offices and Museum	29.07.17	Nov 2022	November 2025

DOCUMENT CONTROL

AMENDMENT RECORD

Any amendments made to the Health and Safety Policy will be recorded below with information on changes made. Where significant changes are to be made, the reasons for change will be considered to see if there are any potential problems and how they should be implemented.

Date	Section	Ref /Title	Details of amendment made	Change made by
April 2020	Throughout Document where relevant	COVID-19 Page 30	In light of move to Newton's Place (new premises) and the COVID-19 Pandemic the Policy Manual has been reviewed and updated to take account of Government Advice	AR
		Risk Ass't Page 28	Highlighted risk of COVID-19 and need for social distancing and potential use of PPE	AR
		Addendum Page 30	Government Guidance subject to regular change therefore addendum practical summary of current working practices and at the end of document to allow quick reference point	AR
October 2023		Addendum Page 30	Updated Government Guidance on COVID-19	LMc
October 2024		Guidance	Removed link to Government Guidance on COVID-19 (no Gov guidance)	LMc

GUIDANCE

Guidance on health and safety issues can be accessed via the HSE website. www.hse.gov.uk

~~Guidance on what you need to do in relation to Coronavirus (COVID-19) can be accessed via the Government website www.gov.uk/coronavirus~~

Guidance on Infectious Disease Control can be accessed via the Public Health Advisory Service at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england>

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY STATEMENT

Newton Abbot Town Council recognises that:

- it has a legal duty of care towards protecting the health and safety of its employees and others who may be affected by the council's activities, and
- that managing health and safety is a business-critical function.

In order to discharge its responsibilities, the management will:

- regularly monitor performance and revise policies and procedures to pursue a programme of continuous improvement.
- provide adequate resources to control the health and safety risks arising from our work activities.
- encourage staff to identify and report hazards so that we can all contribute towards improving safety.
- communicate and consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety.
- maintain our premises and provide and maintain safe plant and equipment.
- provide information, instruction and supervision for employees.
- provide adequate training and ensure that all employees are competent to do their tasks.
- carry out and regularly review risk assessments to identify proportionate and pragmatic solutions to reducing risk.
- eliminate risk through selection and design of buildings, facilities, equipment and processes. Where risks cannot be eliminated, they will be minimised by the use of physical controls or, as a last resort, through systems of work and personal protection.
- only engage contractors who are able to demonstrate due regard to health and safety matters.
- bring this Policy Statement to the attention of all employees, councillors and volunteers.

This Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed at least annually or following any significant change in working practice or environment and revised as necessary to reflect changes to the business activities and any changes to legislation. Any changes to the Policy will be brought to the attention of all employees.

Signed:

Position: Mayor

Signed:

Position: Town Clerk

ORGANISATION FOR HEALTH & SAFETY

3. ORGANISATION FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

The overall responsibility for health and safety rests with the Town Council. However, it is the responsibility of every councillor and employee to co-operate in providing and maintaining a safe place of work.

The Town Clerk is required to provide clear direction and accept responsibility to create a positive attitude and culture towards health and safety however it is the personal responsibility of all individuals to control factors that could lead to ill health, injury or loss.

The following positions have been identified as having key responsibilities for the implementation of our health and safety arrangements:

Full Council

Policy & Resources Committee

Town Clerk

4. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Full Council

The Full Council have the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Newton Abbot Town Council; delegates reviews and revisions to the Policy and Resources Committee; but discharges this responsibility through the Town Clerk down to individual employees.

The Full Council have nominated the Town Clerk to have special responsibility for health and safety.

The Full Council will, through the Policy and Resources Committee ensure that:

- they provide a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation
- all its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions
- adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety
- they will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance
- they will review the health and safety performance of the Organisation on an annual basis

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for ensuring compliance with Health and Safety legislation. They will ensure that:

- Our Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required
- a health and safety plan of continuous improvement is created and progress monitored
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and work equipment in a safe condition
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner

- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger

Absence of the Town Clerk

In the absence of the Town Clerk, the Deputy Town Clerk will assume responsibility for all health and safety matters.

Councillors and Staff will ensure that in their areas of control:

- they implement the Health and Safety Policy
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues
- health and safety rules are followed by all
- staff are encouraged to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns
- issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure they are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- safety training for councillors and volunteers is identified and undertaken as required
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported
- personal protective equipment is readily available and maintained, and relevant staff, councillors and volunteers are aware of the correct use of this and the procedures for replacement
- hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures
- councillors, staff and volunteers are responsible for their own risk assessments in all situations. Insurance cover will be in place if not negligent and take responsibility not to place themselves in harm's way.

Therefore, all Employees and Volunteers of Newton Abbot Town Council and Town Museum will adhere to the following:

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety
- take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions
- observe the safety rules
- comply with the Health and Safety Policy
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the work place and refrain from any antics or pranks
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed
- avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their supervisor
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to their supervisor
- report all accidents to their supervisor whether an injury is sustained or not
- attend as requested any health and safety training course
- observe all laid down procedures for processes, materials and substances used
- observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit routes
- ~~Observe the Government Guidance on social distancing as required under the Coronavirus (COVID-19) regulations~~

HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES

This section of our Health and Safety Policy specifies the rules laid down for the attention of all employees. These rules are prepared in accordance with legal requirements and acknowledged safe working practices. In addition to the legal duty imposed upon employees to comply with these rules, failure to observe them will be considered to be a breach of the contract of employment and will result in disciplinary action being taken.

Employees, councillors and volunteers are reminded that a breach of health and safety legislation by an employee is a criminal offence and action taken by an Enforcing Officer against an individual may result in heavy penalties.

Safety rules may vary depending upon the nature of work and the circumstances therefore the overriding requirement is that employees are expected to act in a sensible manner and adhere to verbal instructions given by Management.

General

- It is the duty of all councillors, employees or volunteers to co-operate with management in fulfilling our legal obligations in relation to health and safety.
- Councillors, Employees or volunteers are required to notify to management of any unsafe activity, item or situation.
- Councillors or Employees must comply with all hazard/warning signs and notices displayed on the premises.

Working conditions/environment applicable to both Councillors, Volunteers and Employees

- must make proper use of all equipment and facilities provided to control working conditions/environment.
- must keep stairways, passageways and work areas clear and in a clean and tidy condition.
- must dispose of all rubbish, scrap and waste materials within the working area, using the facilities provided.
- must clear up any spillage or liquids within the work area in the prescribed manner.
- take personal responsibility for assessing personal risk and take action as appropriate, such as protective clothing and systems of work

- must deposit all waste materials and substances at the correct disposal points and in the prescribed manner.

Protective clothing and equipment

- must use all items of protective clothing/equipment provided as instructed.
- must store and maintain protective clothing/equipment in the approved manner.
- must report any damage, loss, fault or unsuitability of protective clothing/equipment to their supervisor.

~~In accordance with Government Guidance following the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) must use Protective clothing and equipment as instructed and ensure its safe disposal of any materials used.~~

Fire precautions

- must comply with all laid down emergency procedures.
- must not obstruct any fire escape route, fire equipment or fire doors.
- must report any use of fire fighting equipment to their supervisor.

Accidents

- must seek medical treatment for work related injuries they receive by contacting a designated first aider. Upon returning from treatment they must report the incident to their supervisor.
- must ensure that any accident or injury treatment is properly recorded in the Accident Book.
- must notify management of any incident in which damage is caused to property.

Health

- must report to management any medical condition or medication which could affect the safety of themselves or others.
- must co-operate with the management on the implementation of the medical and occupational health provisions.
- ~~In accordance with Government Guidance on Coronavirus (COVID-19) must report to management any symptoms associated with COVID-19 and follow appropriate social isolation as advised by Public Health England.~~

The Council's transport – Councillors and Employees

- must carry out prescribed checks of Council vehicles prior to use and in conjunction with the laid down checking procedure.
- must not drive or operate any vehicles for which they do not hold the appropriate driving licence or permit.

- must not carry unauthorised passengers or unauthorised loads.
- must not use vehicles for unauthorised purposes.
- must not load vehicles above the stated capacity.
- must not drive or operate vehicles whilst suffering from a medical condition or illness that may affect their driving or operating ability.

ARRANGEMENTS

6. ARRANGEMENTS

Accident, Incident and Ill-Health Recording, Reporting and Investigation

This policy sets out the procedures that are to be followed when any employee, visitor or contractor has an accident, near miss or dangerous occurrence on the Council's premises during the course of their employment. This will also apply to visitors who are members of the public and are therefore not at work. In addition, employees who develop a work-related illness must also report via these procedures.

Definitions:

An **accident** is an unplanned event that causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both.

A **near miss** is an unplanned event that does not cause injury or damage but could do so.

A **work-related illness** is a prescribed illness that is obtained by an employee through the course of work or from a non-employee as a result of activities carried out by the Council.

The Accident Book

All accidents resulting in personal injury must be recorded in the Council's Accident Book.

The Accident Book will comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

The Accident Book will be reviewed regularly by the Nominated Officer for Health & Safety to ascertain the nature of incidents that have occurred in the workplace. This review will be in addition to any investigation of the circumstances surrounding each incident.

All near misses must also be reported to management as soon as possible so that action can be taken to investigate the causes and to prevent recurrence.

Employees must ensure that they are aware of the location of the accident book.

Reporting Requirements

Certain accidents causing injury, both fatal and non-fatal, certain occupational diseases and certain dangerous occurrences are reportable to the Enforcing Authority under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR).

The following reportable events must be reported by the quickest means practicable, usually the telephone:

- death
- major injury

- hospitalisation of a non-employee as a result of a work activity

Incapacitation for work of a person for more than 3 consecutive days as a result of an injury caused by an accident at work must be notified within 10 working days.

For further advice on injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences requiring notification please contact the HSE www.hse.gov.uk

The completed report form should be kept with other accident records and documents on the accident investigation. They will be kept to advise the insurers of a potential claim and to present to the Enforcing Authority in the event of an investigation.

Records are to be kept for 3 years from the date of the incident.

Investigation

All injury related accidents that are either notified to the Enforcing Authority or where a serious injury has occurred will be investigated:

- to ensure that all necessary information in respect of the accident or incident is collated
- to understand the sequence of events that led to the accident or incident
- to identify the unsafe acts and conditions that contributed to the cause of the accident or incident
- to identify the underlying causes that may have contributed to the accident or incident
- to ensure that effective remedial actions are taken to prevent any recurrence
- to enable a full and comprehensive report of the accident or incident to be prepared and circulated to all interested parties
- to enable all statutory requirements to be adhered to

The investigation will include obtaining signed witness statements, photographs and drawings as appropriate.

All material accidents must be specifically brought to the attention of the Town Clerk

- Accident/Incident Investigation Report Form

Contractors

When working on our premises it is considered that contractors are joint occupiers for that period and therefore we have both joint liabilities in "common areas". In order to meet our legal obligations with regard to contractors we will ensure that prior to engaging any contractor they are competent and that any works are carried out safely.

The following factors will be considered as part of our procedures for vetting contractors:

- sight of the contractor's own safety policy, risk assessments, method statements, permits to work, etc as applicable

- clarification of the responsibility for provision of first aid and fire extinguishing equipment
- details of articles and hazardous substances intended to be bought to site, including any arrangements for safe transportation, handling, use, storage and disposal
- details of plant and equipment to be brought onto site, including arrangements for storage, use, maintenance and inspection
- clarification for supervision and regular communication during work including arrangements for reporting problems or stopping work in cases where there is a serious risk of personal injury
- confirmation that all workers are suitably qualified and competent for the work (including a requirement for sight of evidence where relevant)
- evidence showing that appropriate Employers and Public Liability Insurance is in place

Clearly, it will not be necessary to go to such elaborate lengths if the contract is very short and will not create hazards of any significance. The complexity of the arrangements will be directly proportional to the risks and consequences of failure.

Similarly we have a parallel duty to the contractor and must ensure that the contractor is not put at risk by our own activities for the duration of the contract.

We will stop contractors working immediately if their work appears unsafe. Staff should report any concerns to the Town Clerk immediately.

Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure dangerous substances in the workplace are controlled to minimise risks of fire and explosion.

Definition

The term 'dangerous substance' covers any substance that could cause harm to people from fire or explosion as a result of its properties or the way it is used. This includes petrol, LPG, paints, varnishes, solvents and dusts that could cause an explosive atmosphere with air.

Implementation

The Council will:

- assess the risks from dangerous substances in conjunction with assessments for health risks and fire
- provide measures to eliminate those risks, or reduce them so far as is reasonably practicable
- ensure that the content of any vessels or containers are identified
- provide equipment and procedures to deal with accidents and emergencies

- provide information and training to employees

Disabled Persons

Newton Abbot Town Council will give full and proper consideration to the needs of disabled employees and visitors.

To achieve this, the Council will:

- treat all disabled employees and visitors with respect and dignity, both in the provision of a safe working environment and in equal access to the organisation's facilities
- ensure that risk assessments are undertaken of the special needs of the disabled and carry out reasonable adjustments to the premises and/or employment arrangements
- encourage employees with special needs to suggest any premises or task improvements to their line managers
- discipline any employees found treating their disabled colleagues with less than the expected standards of respect and dignity
- in an emergency evacuation, ensure suitable plans are in place which will assist disabled people to leave the premises swiftly

Display Screen Equipment

This area is covered in more detail by a specific Policy.

Driving

Driving is an integral part to some roles within the Council and as such requires driving on Council business. Driving has inherent risks associated with it which drivers should be made aware of.

The Council is committed to reducing the risks its staff face or create when driving at work and therefore will:

- ensure risk assessments are completed and that journeys are planned
- not put unreasonable time constraints on travel
- ensure those driving for business are competent (and where required, authorised) and fit to do so
- provide any additional training that may be deemed necessary to reduce driving related occupational risks

Where providing Council vehicles that :

- we maintain them to the required legal standard and ensure suitable for their purpose

- provide and maintain additional tools and equipment necessary for the purposes of the journey
- provide them with regard to safety and the environment i.e. higher ENCAP ratings, lower emissions, better fuel consumption
- provide access to breakdown support and recovery
- provide no smoking signs for inside the vehicle

Implementation

The Council asks its entire staff to play their part, whether they use a Council vehicle, their own or a hire vehicle.

Drivers

Drivers will remain responsible for their safety and others and must comply with the Highway Code and Road Traffic Act.

It is the responsibility of drivers to inform their manager of:

- anything that could affect their driving e.g. health conditions or injuries, use of prescribed medication
- changes to licence such as; limitations, offences recorded, period bans
- vehicle defects that affect ability / safety to drive

Drugs and Alcohol

Alcohol

Employees must not drink alcohol on the Council's premises or the premises of its customers or clients without express permission from the Town Clerk.

Any employee who is found consuming alcohol on the Council's premises or the premises of its customers and clients without permission or is found to be intoxicated at work will normally face disciplinary action on the ground of gross misconduct under the council's disciplinary procedure.

Drugs and medication

The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on the Council's premises is strictly forbidden and a gross misconduct offence.

If you are prescribed drugs by your doctor which may affect your ability to perform your work you should discuss the problem with your manager or supervisor.

Electricity

This area is covered in more detail by a specific Policy.

Fire

All reasonable steps will be taken to prevent a fire occurring. In the event of fire, the safety of life will override all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.

In order to prevent fire and to minimise the likelihood of injury in the event of a fire the Council will:

- assess the risk from fire at our premises and implement appropriate control measures
- ensure good housekeeping standards are maintained to minimise the risk of fire
- provide and maintain safe means of escape from the premises
- develop a fire evacuation procedure for all buildings
- provide and maintain appropriate firefighting equipment
- regularly stage fire evacuation drills, inspect the means of escape and test and inspect firefighting equipment and any fire warning systems
- provide adequate fire safety training to employees, plus specialist training to those with special responsibilities
- make arrangements for the safe evacuation of deaf or otherwise disabled persons
- make arrangements for ensuring all visitors are made aware of the fire evacuation procedures
- display fire action notices
- keep fire safety records

The Council does not require persons to attempt to extinguish a fire but extinguishing action may be taken if it is safe to do so.

Immediate evacuation of the building must take place as soon as the evacuate signal is given. All occupants, on evacuation, should report to the pre-determined assembly points.

Re-entry of the building is strictly prohibited until the fire brigade officer or a senior person present declares it is safe to do so.

Employees are encouraged to report any concerns regarding fire procedures so the organisation can investigate and take remedial action if necessary.

First Aid

The Council is committed to providing sufficient provision for first aid to deal with accidents and injuries that arise at work.

To achieve this objective, we will:

1. appoint and train a suitable number of first aid personnel to cover all work patterns
2. display first aid notices with details of first aid provision

3. provide and maintain suitable and sufficient first aid facilities including first aid boxes
4. provide any additional first aid training that may be required to deal with specific first aid hazards

The minimum first aid provision at all sites is an adequately stocked first aid box and an Appointed Person to take charge of the first aid arrangements.

Appointed Person

The Appointed Person duties include:

- taking charge when someone falls ill or is injured, including calling an ambulance if required
- looking after and maintaining the first aid box and contents

The Appointed Person will not be required to provide treatment for which they have not been trained.

First Aiders

First aiders are qualified personnel who have received training and passed an examination in accordance with HSE requirements.

First aid personnel will be provided with refresher training at regular intervals to keep their skills up to date.

Gas Installations and Appliances

The Council will ensure that all work carried out on gas fittings and appliances are in accordance with the requirements of the regulations and the Safety in the Installation and Use of Gas Systems and Appliances Manual.

The Council is committed to achieving high standards of health and safety for all staff, visitors, customers and others. For these reasons employing, training, and arranging the assessments of operatives that are competent to work on gas installations and appliances – servicing, repairing or installing, is highly significant to supporting these aims.

The Gas Safe Register (GSR) is the governing body approved by the Health and Safety Executive to register and monitor the activities of gas installation and use. Gas fitting operatives carrying out work on behalf of the council will be registered with the GSR.

No person shall interfere with any gas appliance or gas fitting or pipe work unless qualified and competent to do so.

Hazardous Substances (COSHH)

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure all exposure of employees to substances hazardous to health is prevented or at least controlled to within statutory limits.

The Council will implement the following:

- maintain an inventory of all substances hazardous to health kept or present on site and retain copies of relevant hazard data sheets
- competent persons will be appointed to carry out risk assessments of the exposure to substances hazardous to health and advise on their control
- all operations which involve, or may involve, exposure to substances hazardous to health will be assessed and appropriate control measures will be taken if elimination or substitution of the substance is not possible
- all employees will be provided with understandable information and appropriate training on the nature of the hazardous substances they work with.
- all changes to control measures and changes of PPE will be properly assessed and no new substances will be introduced into the workplace without prior assessment.

Infection Control

For some work activities, staff may be at risk of infection. Exposure to infections may arise at work from a number of situations, including:

- contact with blood and bodily fluids (e.g. Tetanus, Hepatitis B or C, HIV)
- injuries arising from needles / sharps (e.g. Tetanus, Hepatitis B or C, HIV)
- contact with animals or animal faeces/urine (e.g. Leptospirosis)
- Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Council will:

- provided information, instruction and training to those identified at risk
- where required, provide personal protective equipment (PPE) and monitor its use and maintenance
- organise for the safe cleaning of equipment and where appropriate disinfection and thorough, cleaning of the premises
- arrange for safe disposal of any infected materials

Vaccination

The risk assessment will also identify whether the staff involved in a particular task should be offered vaccinations against Hepatitis B and Tetanus. Where this is identified, vaccinations shall be offered to individuals without charge.

Lifting Operations and Equipment

All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure lifting operations and equipment are suitably managed with regards to health and safety.

Definition

Lifting equipment includes any equipment used at work for lifting or lowering loads, including attachments used for anchoring, fixing or supporting it.

Implementation

The Council will ensure that

- lifting equipment is suitable for the intended use with adequate strength and stability
- lifting operations will be properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised and carried out in a safe manner

Lone Working

This area is covered in more detail by a specific Policy.

Manual Handling

This area is covered in more detail by a specific Policy.

Outdoor and Peripatetic Working

The Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who work outdoors or away from their normal base are not put at any additional risk to their health and safety.

The Council will:

- where work is being undertaken on a site under the control of another party, review any risk assessments and agree an appropriate safe system of work
- ensure outdoor activities are planned and risk assessed prior to undertaking the work. This will include visiting of the site(s) to identify potential hazards
- establish safe systems of work from the risk assessments, and provide staff training and instruction in these
- ensure suitable personal protective clothing is made available to staff either from the Council or from the third party in control of the site
- ensure suitable arrangements are in place for emergencies, including adequate first aid

Personal Protective Equipment

Newton Abbot Town Council provides personal protective equipment (PPE) when the risk presented by a work activity cannot be eliminated or adequately controlled by other means. When it is provided, it is because health and safety hazards have been identified that require the use of PPE and it is therefore necessary to use it in order to reduce risks to a minimum.

To effectively implement its arrangements for the use of PPE the Council will:

- ensure that PPE requirements are identified when carrying out risk assessments
- use the most effective means of controlling risks without the need for PPE whenever possible and only provide PPE where it is necessary
- carry out an assessment to identify suitable PPE

- ensure that if two (or more) items of PPE are used simultaneously, they are compatible and are as effective used together as they are separately
- ensure PPE is available to all staff who need to use it
- provide adequate accommodation for correct storage of PPE
- provide adequate maintenance, cleaning and repair of PPE
- inform staff of the risks their work involves and why PPE is required
- instruct and train staff in the safe use and maintenance of PPE
- make arrangements for replacing worn or defective PPE
- review assessments and reassess the need for PPE and its suitability whenever there are significant changes or at least annually

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is a systematic examination of what within our business can cause harm to people and it helps us determine whether we are doing enough or further actions are required to reduce the likelihood of injury or ill health.

Our policy is to complete a general risk assessment of all our known and reasonably foreseeable health and safety hazards covering all our premises, equipment and activities in order to plan and prioritise the implementation of the identified control measures.

More detailed specific risk assessments will also be carried out as determined by the general assessment to address those premises, equipment, people or activities to comply with specific legislation or to proactively manage health and safety risks.

We will ensure that:

- assessments are carried out and records are kept
- control measures introduced as a result of assessments are implemented and followed
- employees are informed of the relevant results and provided with necessary training
- any injuries or incidents lead to a review of relevant assessments
- assessments are regularly monitored and reviewed
- suitable information, instruction and training will be provided to all persons involved in the risk assessment process

We may be controlling risks in various ways, determining the effectiveness of those controls is part of our risk assessment process.

Smoking & Vaping

It is the policy of Newton Abbot Town Council that all of its workplaces are smoke-free and that all employees have a right to work in a smoke-free environment.

Smoking **and vaping** is prohibited throughout the entire workplace with no exceptions. This includes Council vehicles. This policy applies to all employees, customers and visitors.

Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

Stress at work can come about for a variety of reasons. It may be excessive workload, unreasonable expectations, or overly-demanding work colleagues. As a reasonable organisation, we try to ensure that you are in a pleasant working environment and that you are as free from stress as possible.

Temporary Employees

The Council will take the necessary measures to ensure the health and safety of any temporary and casual staff in its employment.

To achieve this, we will provide temporary employees with the following information prior to starting work:

- details of the qualifications and skills are required to do the work safely
- any health surveillance to be provided under statutory provisions
- any risks to health and safety identified by workplace risk assessments
- the preventive measures to be taken
- safe working procedures
- the action to be taken in the event of an emergency

The competence of temporary workers will be assessed to ensure they are capable of working safely.

Training

Training in health and safety is a legal requirement and also helps create competent employees at all levels within the council to enable them make a far more effective contribution to health and safety, whether as individuals, teams or groups.

Competence of individuals through training helps individuals acquire the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude which will be promoted by the Town Clerk to all staff throughout the organisation.

Visitors

In the interest of safety and security, The Council will take the necessary measures to protect staff and visitors from any accidents or incidents that may occur during visiting.

Employees hosting visitors must ensure that:

- they are authorised to enter the premises or accompanied
- they adhere to applicable health and safety instructions and rules during their visit
- adequate information is passed to ensure their safety including emergency information
- any protective clothing required is provided and worn
- any accidents / incidents involving visitors are reported through the accident reporting arrangements

Employees aware of people on the premises who may be unauthorised should report these to their manager for action.

Work Equipment

The Council will provide a safe working environment in relation to work equipment safety and ensure all employees receive appropriate safety information and training in their work equipment.

To achieve this objective the council will:

- provide work equipment that is suitable for the purpose and compliant with the requirements of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations
- retain and make available the manufacturer's instruction manual for each item of equipment, where relevant
- before using any item of work equipment, ensure that a risk assessment is carried out and brought to the attention of relevant employees
- regularly inspect work equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- maintain work equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- provide adequate instruction, information and training to employees to enable the work equipment to be used and maintained safely
- provide refresher training as appropriate and as determined necessary by workplace inspections

Work At Height

The Council will take all reasonable steps to provide a safe working environment for all employees who may be affected by work at height activities.

The Council will ensure that:

- all work activities that involve work at height are identified and assessed
- the need to undertake work at height will be eliminated whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so

- all the necessary equipment to allow safe access to and egress from the place of work is provided
- competent persons are appointed to be responsible for the supervision of all work at height and associated activities

Young People

Whilst precautions taken to protect the health and safety of the workforce as a whole will, in many cases, also protect young persons, there are occasions when different and/or additional measures will be necessary due to their lack of experience, knowledge or absence of awareness of potential risks.

A 'young person' is defined as one who is below the age of 18 years.

To ensure the safety of young persons the organisation will:

- carry out risk assessments to cover the activities of young persons
- implement the actions determined by the risk assessment process
- inform the young persons of any risks associated with their work and the control measures taken to protect them
- provide a copy of the risk assessment to the parent/guardian of any young person below the school leaving age
- provide additional appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training, etc as determined by the risk assessment

RISK ASSESSMENT

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment involves identifying the hazards present in the work place or arising out of any work activity and evaluating the extent of the risks involved to employees and others, taking into account existing precautions and their effectiveness.

A **hazard** is something with a potential to cause harm and can include articles, substances, plant or machines, methods of work and the work environment.

Risk is the likelihood of harm from that hazard being realised. Risk increases with the number of people exposed to the hazard and also with the potential severity of the harm i.e. the resultant injury or ill health effect. If there are no hazards there are no risks.

The regulations require that risk assessments are '**suitable and sufficient**' in that they should identify all the significant hazards present within the business and its activities and that they should be proportionate to the risk. The assessment should cover all risks that are reasonably foreseeable.

The risk assessment must identify all those people who may be affected by the hazard, whether they are workers or others, such as members of the public.

Health and safety law does not demand absolute safety when considering what safety controls are required but measures taken should go as far as is '**reasonably practicable**'; a balance between risk and costs, the greater the risk the greater the need to commit resources in terms of time and money to remove or control the risk.

It is a legal requirement that the significant findings of our risk assessments are brought to the attention of our employees.

Carrying out risk assessments

Those who are involved in risk assessments should:

- be competent
- have knowledge and experience of working procedures in practice, potential dangers and strengths and weaknesses of existing precautions
- have knowledge and experience of how to solve problems identified by the assessment
- be in a position to give the commitment, co-operation and resources required to implement the assessment results

It is important that the person carrying out the risk assessment is competent. This means that the person must have the necessary skills and knowledge gained through experience and training and may have qualifications that enable them to make sound judgments.

The Five stages of Risk Assessment

STEP 1 - IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS

Look for hazards by walking around the workplace. List the hazards that could reasonably be expected to cause harm. Ask for the opinion of employees as they may have noticed things that are not immediately obvious.

STEP 2 - IDENTIFY WHO MAY BE HARMED AND HOW

List groups of people and individuals who may be affected by the hazards e.g.:

Pay particular attention to vulnerable persons, e.g. those with disabilities, visitors, female employees who are pregnant or who have recently returned to work after having a baby, inexperienced employees or young persons.

STEP 3 - EVALUATE AND CONTROL THE RISK

Evaluate the risks arising from the hazards and decide whether existing precautions are adequate or if more should be done. When evaluating the extent of the risk, account should be taken of the chance of some harm occurring (likelihood), the likely severity of this, and the number of people who could be affected. The formula: $\text{Severity} \times \text{Likelihood} = \text{Risk}$

IMPLEMENTING AN ACTION PLAN

Once the level of risk has been determined and the control measures needed to reduce or eliminate the risk established, an action plan should be drawn up with timescales for implementation of the control measures.

STEP 4 - RECORD YOUR FINDINGS

The significant findings of the assessment must be recorded since these provide evidence that something has been done, it is also a legal requirement.

Keep any written assessments for future reference and ensure that employees are informed of the findings and control measures, either existing or additional, that have to be observed and used. In some circumstances the findings of the risk assessment should also be given to others who could be affected, for example agency workers, contractors etc.

Hazards and example controls

Hazard	Example control measures
Manual handling	Mechanical aids, hoists, getting assistance, breaking loads into smaller units, training

Hazardous substances	Substitution for less hazardous alternatives, extract ventilation, personal protective equipment, training
Work equipment (machinery, tools, etc.)	Guarding, demarcation of danger zones, restricted operation and use planned preventative maintenance, training
Ladders	Avoid working at height. correct type of ladder/stepladders, maintained, training
Electricity	Insulated tools, residual circuit breakers, fuses, earthing, inspection and testing of systems and appliances
Stairs, etc	Good lighting, handrails, non-slip surfaces, slightly raised/highlighted front edges
Fire	Detection/warning systems, fire drills, extinguishers, signs, suitable storage facilities for substances and goods, fire retardant furniture and fittings
Noise	Reduction at source, isolation, ear protection, demarcation of danger zones
Stress	Reduce/increase workload, more control over work, work suitable for the individual, avoidance of monotonous repetitive work
Work environment	Good lighting, ventilation, redesign layout of area, heaters/coolers
COVID-19 prevention control	Ensure Government Guidelines adhered to particularly in relation to social distancing and use of PPE where necessary

STEP 5 - MONITOR AND REVIEW THE ASSESSMENT

It is important that the control measures are monitored and that records are kept. A regular review of the assessments should be made to take into account any changes to the methods or systems of work. You should also review the assessment following an accident, where there has been a significant change to the work, if new information comes to light, or if there is any other reason to believe that it may no longer be valid. Following the review, additional control measures should be implemented if required. Even if there are no significant changes since the original risk assessment, it should be regularly reviewed to confirm that it is still relevant and valid.

Fire Risk Assessment

A fire risk assessment is an organised and methodical look at the premises, the activities carried on there and the likelihood that a fire could start and cause harm to those in and around the premises.

The aims of the fire risk assessment are:

- to identify the fire hazards
- to reduce the risk of those hazards causing harm to as low as reasonably practicable

- to decide what physical fire precautions and management arrangements are necessary to ensure the safety of people in your premises if a fire does start

The significant findings of the fire risk assessment, the actions to be taken as a result of the assessment and details of anyone especially at risk must be recorded.

It is important that the fire risk assessment is carried out in a practical and systematic way and that enough time is allocated to do a proper job. It must take the whole of your premises into account, including outdoor locations and any rooms and areas that are rarely used. Small premises may be able to assess as a whole, in larger premises you may find it helpful to divide them into rooms or a series of assessment areas using natural boundaries, e.g. process areas, offices, stores, as well as corridors, stairways and external routes.

Risk assessments must take account of other users of the buildings and co-operation and communication of hazard and risk must be shared between businesses to ensure a co-ordinated response is prepared and implemented.

You need to appoint one or more competent persons to carry out any of the preventive and protective measures needed to comply with the legislation. This person could be you, or an appropriately trained, employee or, where appropriate, a third party.

Your fire risk assessment should demonstrate that, as far as is reasonable, you have considered the needs of all relevant persons, including disabled people.

Five Steps to Fire Risk Assessment

- 1. Identify the hazards**
- 2. Identify people at risk**
- 3. Evaluate, remove, reduce and protect from risk**
- 4. Record, plan, inform, instruct and train**
- 5. Review**

Addendum -

~~Practical Considerations Coronavirus COVID-19~~

~~There are no COVID-19 restrictions in the UK. (Government Advice October 2023).~~

~~Government Advice as at October 2023~~

~~COVID-19 will remain a public health issue, and guidance for workplaces has been replaced with [public health advice](#) and advice from [ACAS](#)~~

Working Environment within Newton's Place

The requirement for every employer to [explicitly consider COVID-19 in their health and safety risk assessment has been removed](#). Employers may choose to continue to cover COVID-19 in their risk assessments. Employers that specifically work with COVID-19, such as laboratories, must continue to undertake a risk assessment that considers COVID-19.

Employers should continue to comply with the requirements for cleaning, ventilation and welfare facilities in the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 or the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015 to control occupational health and safety risks.

What to do if you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, including COVID-19, and have not taken a COVID-19 test

If you have COVID-19 you should try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people. Most people cannot get free COVID-19 tests. You can buy tests in shops but you cannot report your results to the NHS.

If you have symptoms of a respiratory infection, such as COVID-19, and you have a high temperature or do not feel well enough to go to work or carry out normal activities, try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people, until you no longer have a high temperature (if you had one) or until you no longer feel unwell.

It is particularly important to avoid close contact with anyone who you know is at higher risk of becoming seriously unwell if they are infected with COVID-19 and other respiratory infections, especially those whose [immune system means that they are at higher risk of serious illness, despite vaccination](#).

Try to work from home if you can. If you are unable to work from home, talk to your employer about options available to you.

There is [separate guidance for people who have been informed by the NHS that they are at highest risk](#) of becoming seriously unwell and who might be eligible for new COVID-19 treatments.

1. What to do if you have a positive COVID-19 test result

Try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people

If you have a positive COVID-19 test result, it is very likely that you have COVID-19 even if you do not have any symptoms. You can pass on the infection to others, even if you have no symptoms.

Most people with COVID-19 will no longer be infectious to others after 5 days. If you have a positive COVID-19 test result, try to stay at home and avoid contact with other people for 5 days after the day you took your test. There is [different advice for children and young people aged 18 and under](#).

During this period there are actions you can take to reduce the risk of passing COVID-19 on to others.

Try to work from home if you can. If you are unable to work from home, talk to your employer about options available to you.

[Reducing spread of respiratory infections and COVID-19 at work \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)