

COMMITTEE	Finance, Policy & Resources
DATE	18 February 2015
ACTING DIRECTOR	Ewan Sutherland
TITLE OF REPORT	Health and Safety Policy
REPORT NUMBER	CG/15/28
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The report requests ratification of the attached revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy. A legal requirement this outlines in the policy statement how the Council will visibly lead by example in actively establishing a positive health and safety culture within the organisation, the roles and arrangements that underpin the organisation's health and safety management system.

The statement of intent requires to be signed by the current Chief Executive who has ultimate overall responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing within the organisation and the policy communicated to all employees.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The Committee is requested to:

- i. Approve and support the implementation of the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy; and
- ii. Ensure effective communication of the same to employees and trade union colleagues throughout the organisation.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct costs implications in the Corporate Health and Safety Policy. There are potential resource issues in ensuring that the arrangements are fully implemented to effectively manage health and safety in service delivery. Sensible, responsible and proportionate health and safety arrangements must be adequately resourced, this will require planning and appropriate resource allocation based on the level of risk.

Benefits in good health and safety are reduced costs and reduced risks – employee absence and turnover rates are lower, incidents are fewer, the threat of legal action is lessened

#### 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

A legal requirement for employers with more than five employees the written health and safety policy describes how health and safety will be managed within the organisation letting employees and others know the level of commitment to health and safety. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy details who does what, when and how. It comprises of three sections;

- a. statement of general policy on health and safety at work sets out your commitment to managing health and safety effectively, and what you want to achieve;
- b. roles and responsibility section sets out who is responsible for specific actions
- c. arrangements section contains the detail of what you are going to do in practice to achieve the aims set out in your statement of health and safety policy including information on how the organisation are going to eliminate or reduce the risks of hazards in your workplace.

Implementation of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy will assist and enable the Corporate Management Team to “own” and understand the key health and safety issues within the organisation and how best to communicate, promote and champion health and safety.

The policy should be an integral part of the organisations culture, its values and performance standards. Integrated into main governance arrangements health and safety should be included sub-committees such as risk, remuneration and audit.

#### 5. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

Aberdeen City Council recognises that health and safety is a fundamental part of both the efficient and effective delivery of quality local government services. It regards health, safety and wellbeing a key priority for all employees and is committed to partnership working in delivery of all our activities. It is recognised that there are legal, proven financial and morale drivers to effectively manage health and safety as an integral part of service delivery.

A legal requirement the existing Corporate Health and Safety Policy required reviewed and the opportunity has been taken to incorporate the revised compliance monitoring arrangements for management and independent assurance. The policy sets a clear direction for the organisation to follow, it is critical that this is shared with employees so that everyone understands how health and safety will be managed. Employee roles and responsibilities are defined to prevent ambiguity.

The Corporate Health and Safety Policy details the arrangements for health and safety such as:

- how risk assessment will be carried out;
- training;
- safe use of equipment;
- procurement arrangements;
- how accidents/incidents will be investigated;
- how workers will be consulted;
- how equipment will be maintained;
- how health and safety performance will be measured.

The health and safety management system is based on HSG 65, Successful Health and Safety Management. This is based on actively managing health and safety and assessing the risks in the workplace via a 'Plan, Do, Check, Act' approach:

- Plan: Describe how you manage health and safety in your business (your legally required policy) and plan to make it happen in practice.
- Do: Prioritise and control your risks – consult your employees and provide training and information.
- Check: Measure how you are doing.
- Act: Learn from your experience.

Plan	Do	Check	Act
System	Performance	Compliance	Improvement plan
Controls	Risk profile	Measure and review performance	Lessons learned
Co-operation	Organise, planning and implementing system components	Proactive and reactive data	Consultation and involvement
Communication			
Competence			

The four system components that will be checked on a rolling quarterly basis by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team as part of independent compliance are: Controls; Co-operation; Communication; and Competence.

This will be done via the use of both proactive and reactive monitoring by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team in conjunction with Services. The design and format is necessary to provide a level of assurance on the effectiveness of the management of health and safety within the organisation. The gathered and collated information will provide the current status of each component with identified improvements. Key

actions will be fed back to Directorates compared to “What it looks like when done effectively”. Summarised findings will be reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee. Directorates will also be required to undertake management assurance checks.

Health and safety requires a holistic integrated approach by establishing and maintaining a health and safety system that is proportionate to the risks. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy sets a clear direction that will help ensure communication of health and safety duties and benefits throughout the organisation. Co-operation and communication is critical in implementation to ensure a joint approach from employees, management and trade unions. Equally competent employees who are aware of related controls are essential. To further improve health and safety performance senior management need to visibly demonstrate and “champion” the strategic importance of health, safety and wellbeing via a leadership style that promotes, sets and enforces a positive health and safety culture. Ownership and accountability require to be enforced with individuals held to account for serious failings or if failings reoccur.

## 6. IMPACT

Addressing health and safety offers significant opportunities in reduced costs and reduced risks, criminal and civil prosecution, improved reputation for corporate responsibility and increased productivity – employees are healthier, happier and better motivated.

As part of the organisations commitment is the development of effective arrangements for employees and corporate governance to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions and environment for all our employees, clients and any others who may be affected by our work activities. It is critical also to identify, assess and provide adequate control of occupational health and safety risks arising from our work activities, ensuring risks are dealt with sensibly, responsibly and proportionately to eliminate or minimise risks.

The report may be of interest to the public in terms of the arrangements in place for the management of health and safety within the organisation.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

Risk 1	Category (hazard, control or opportunity)	Cause (What could trigger a risk event?)	Impact (What would be the consequences if a risk event occurred?)
Lack of legal compliance	Hazard Control Opportunity	Lack of implementation of revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy	Prosecution by enforcing authorities, health and safety management system not implemented, threat of legal action criminal and civil, reputational impact, increased costs and risks,

			lack of suitable controls for service delivery.
Controls (What do we already have in place which could reduce the likelihood and or consequences of a risk event?)	Risk Class (see guidance)	Further planned mitigating actions (What else could we implement in order to reduce the likelihood or consequences of a risk event?)	
Existing document in place signed by previous Chief Executive and does not reflect changes in the health and safety management system.	Business Legal People Customer / Citizen	For audit purposes ensure that valid documentation is in place.	

This section must include an assessment of risks identified with the potential to impact negatively or positively on the decision required of the Committee. You should refer to the 'Management of Risk' Guidance (<http://thezone/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=27520&slD=4371> ) in completing this section.

#### 8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

#### 9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Mary Agnew, Health and Safety Manager  
Tel: (52)3088  
Email: [magnew@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:magnew@aberdeencity.gov.uk)