



Odiham
Parish Council

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 OPC recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy working environment for all of its employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and others who may be affected by the activities of the council.
- 1.2 The council will meet its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and will provide, as far as it's reasonably practicable, the resources necessary to fulfil this commitment.
- 1.3 The council will seek, as and when appropriate, expert technical advice on Health and Safety to assist the council in fulfilling its responsibility for ensuring safe working conditions.

2. Aims of the Health and Safety at Work Policy

- 2.1 To provide as far as is reasonably practicable:
 - A safe place of work and a safe working environment.
 - Arrangements for considering, reporting and reviewing matters of Health and Safety at work, including regular risk assessments of working activities.
 - Systems of work that are safe and without risks to health.
 - Obtaining specialist technical advice and assistance on matters of Health and Safety when necessary.
 - Providing sufficient information, instruction and training for employees, contractors and voluntary helpers to carry out their work safely.
 - Care and attention to the health, safety and welfare of employee's, contractors, voluntary helpers and members of the public who may be affected by the council's activities.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The full council has the overall responsibility for Health and Safety.
- 3.2 The direction of the implementation of the policy is the responsibility of the Executive Officer.
- 3.3 The Executive Officer shall:
 - Keep informed of relevant Health and Safety policy legislation and inform the council accordingly.
 - Advise the council on the resources and arrangements necessary to fulfil the council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Policy.
 - Make effective arrangements to implement the Health and Safety at Work Policy.
 - Ensure that matters of Health and Safety are regularly discussed at OPC meetings.
 - Ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices, with subsequent consideration and review of any necessary corrective/protective measures.
 - Consider requesting contractors to supply a written method statement prior to starting major works. Maintain a file of risk assessments, summarised in the minutes.
 - Make effective arrangements to ensure those contractors or voluntary helpers working for the council comply with all reasonable Health and Safety at Work Policy requirements. All contractors will be given a copy of the council's Health and Safety at Work Policy.
 - Ensure that work activities by the council do not unreasonably jeopardise the health and safety of members of the public.
 - Maintain a central record of notified accidents.
 - When an accident or hazardous incident occurs, take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.
 - Act as the contact and liaison point for the Health and Safety Inspectorate.

All employees, contractors and voluntary helpers will:

- Co-operate fully with the aims and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Policy and comply with codes of practice or work instructions for health and safety.

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety, to use appropriate personal protective clothing and, where appropriate, ensure that appropriate first aid materials are available.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their activities.
- Not intentionally interfere with or remove safety guards, safety devices or other equipment provided for health and safety.
- Not misuse any plant, equipment tools or materials so as to cause risks to health and safety.
- Report any accidents or hazardous incidents to the Executive Officer.

4. Arrangements

4.1 First aid kit

- The first aid kit is located in the front office.
- Use of an item from any first aid kit must be notified to the Executive Officer who will then arrange suitable replenishment.
- It is the duty of the Executive Officer to ensure that the contents of the office first aid kit is always at least at the prescribed stock level and in date.

4.2 Fire safety

- Fire extinguishers and smoke alarms are sited at the specified locations in the Bridewell and are maintained by the library on behalf of HCC.
- Fire extinguishers in the parish room and south chapel are maintained annually by Walker Fire.

4.3 In the event of outbreak of smoke and/or fire

- At the risk of, or in the event of a fire at the parish office, all employees, visitors and other persons in the building should immediately proceed and assemble in an orderly manner to the Mayhill Junior School playground, which is the fire assembly point. The emergency services should be summoned.

4.4 Fire - general

Employees and visitors shall not:

- Remove a fire appliance from its designated place unless it is to be used in an attempt to extinguish a fire.
- Obstruct any fire exit or passageway.
- Take any risks with articles or substances that could cause a fire.

5. Accident and injury at work procedures

5.1 Although every effort will be made to ensure a safe environment, it is accepted that accidents can occur. Accidents and incidents occurring in the OPC offices and/or OPC premises shall be reported immediately to the Executive Officer and recorded. Allergies, illness and other such injury believed to arise at work should also be recorded by the Executive Officer.

5.2 If any of the following occur they must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the RIDDOR procedures (see www.riddor.gov.uk):

- Fatal accidents.
- Major injuries.
- Accidents resulting in a period of absence of more than 7 days.
- Injuries to the public where they have to be taken to hospital.

5.3 In addition, some work-related diseases and dangerous occurrences must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

- 5.4 Following any accident the situation will be investigated to determine whether changes need to be made to equipment, training or systems to work so that a similar situation can be prevented in the future.

6. Hazards and risks

- 6.1 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (the Management Regulations) generally make more explicit what employers are required to do to manage health and safety under the Health and Safety at Work Act, they apply to every work activity.

3.5 The main requirement on employers is to carry out a risk assessment. Employers with five or more employees need to record the significant findings of the risk assessment.

- 6.3 Risk assessments should be straight forward in a simple workplace such as a typical office. It should only be complicated if it deals with serious hazards such as those on a nuclear power station, a chemical plant, laboratory or an oil rig.

- 6.4 Besides carrying out a risk assessment, employers also need to:

- Make arrangements for implementing the health and safety measures identified as necessary by the risk assessment;
- Appoint competent people (often themselves or company colleagues) to help them to implement the arrangements;
- Set up emergency procedures;
- Provide clear information and training to employees;
- Work together with other employers sharing the same workplace.

6.5 Premises

When it is necessary to employ, engage or facilitate outside contractors (any other persons) in or about the OPC premises, the Executive Officer shall determine, in discussion with the contractors, the following information:-

- How the contractor plans to undertake the contract project, in particular, with the contractor submitting a scheme of Health and Safety as specified by the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 and other such statute as might apply, which is to include detailed method statements and risk assessments undertaken by the contractor or its agents, and which are to include for continuing operation of the premises, the hire vehicles and continuing occupancy of the premises by employees and other persons, including:-
 - The hazards imposed upon OPC employees and other persons.
 - The hazards that OPC employees, etc. may create for the contractor and the works.
 - The areas of OPC premises that are to be used and/or secured by the contractor.
 - As appropriate, that the contractor maintains adequate third party and public liability insurance cover.

6.6 Premises and equipment

- All electrical equipment and circuits shall be tested as per the risk assessments.
- This information shall be recorded in the Health and Safety file.

6.7 Risk assessment

- The Executive Officer will complete a risk assessment for each building owned by OPC.
- Risk assessments will be completed for all events by the lead Cllr.
- Risk assessments shall be reviewed regularly or at any time that new equipment, procedures are introduced and/or are substantially modified.

7. Housekeeping

7.1 Under the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, OPC is required to provide:

- Effective and suitable ventilation.
- A reasonable office temperature.
- Suitable and sufficient lighting.
- A clean working environment.
- Sufficient space.
- A suitable work area for each employee.
- Suitable and effective safeguards against accidents.
- Suitable and sufficient washing facilities, particularly in the immediate vicinity of every toilet.
- Accessible supply of drinking water.
- Suitable and sufficient seating, including a footrest where necessary.
- Suitable and sufficient facilities for people who eat meals at the workplace.

7.2 This means that:

- The office should be kept clean and tidy.
- The office temperature should be at least 16C.
- Office windows should have blinds or other shading systems in good working order.
- Outside access to the building must be safe and properly maintained.
- Stairs and corridors must be unobstructed.
- All cables, leads and wires should be properly secured so that they do not constitute a tripping hazard.
- All filing cabinets, shelves and cupboards should be stable and secure.
- Doors of cupboards and drawers of desks and filing cabinets should be kept closed when not in use.
- The drawers of a filing cabinet should only be opened one at a time.
- Any spillage must be mopped up and the floor dried.
- Aerosol containers must never be stored in direct sunlight or near heaters.
- The office should be decorated in light, matt colours.
- Food must not be left anywhere that could attract vermin or become a safety hazard.
- If canteen or rest room facilities are not provided, there must be sufficient space at workstations for employees to eat their lunch.
- The washing areas should always be equipped with soap and towels.

8. Dangerous substances

8.1 Under the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Regulations 2002 (as amended), OPC must conduct a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to health from exposure to any hazardous substance.

8.2 This list is not exhaustive, but substances used by OPC may include the following: Tippex, photocopier toner, WD40, de-icer, glass cleaning fluids and cleaning solvent.

8.3 All lids/tops must be properly secured after a substance has been used and should be stored safely and clearly labelled in a secure place.

8.4 Photocopier toner can cause eye and skin irritation. The photocopier toner cartridge should be changed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions; in addition, vinyl or rubber gloves should be worn during this operation.

8.5 All substances should only be used for operations and under circumstances for which they are suitable.

9. Manual handling

9.1 The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 (as amended) require OPC to:

- Avoid hazardous manual handling operations so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Make a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable.

9.2 The incorrect handling of loads causes large numbers of injuries and can result in pain, time off work and sometimes permanent disablement. An employee should not lift anything which s/he considers is too heavy. OPC cannot require any employee to lift, carry or move anything heavy enough to cause injury to the employee.

9.3 In general, employees should:

- Push, not pull, a load.
- Obtain assistance if they have any doubt about their ability to move or safely lift any article or substance.
- Take extra care when carrying anything upstairs or downstairs.
- Take care when carrying dangerous substances or articles (e.g. boiling water, glass, knives etc.).
- Avoid loading work equipment unsafely and/or above eye level.
- Never sit or climb on any work equipment not designed for such purpose.

In particular, when carrying a load, employees should:

- Ensure that the proposed route is clear before starting to move.
- Adopt a good lifting posture: i.e. place the feet apart, bend from the knees, and keep the back straight.
- Lift a load in easy stages: e.g. from floor to knee and then from knee to carrying position, with the sequence reversed when setting the load down.
- Hold the load close to the body, with the heaviest side of the load next to the body.
- Ensure that the load is securely gripped.
- Ensure that the load does not obstruct the view.

10. Electrical equipment

10.1 The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (as amended) aims to prevent danger or injury from unsafe electrical equipment or work practices in the workplace.

10.2 An OPC employee should not fit a plug to any electrical appliance in the office unless deemed to be competent so to do by the Executive Officer.

10.3 No work should be carried out on an electrical appliance or system until after the system has been isolated from the mains electricity supply - if this is not possible, the appropriate fuse gang should be removed from the fuse board and retained by the person undertaking the repair until it is completed. It is not sufficient merely to switch off the circuit; the equipment should be completely isolated from the electrical energy source.

10.4 Electrical equipment should not be left switched on whilst unplugged, with the exception of the server computer.

10.5 Lighting sockets must not be left empty: a suitable bulb or fluorescent tube must be in place.

10.6 Any faulty wiring, plugs, light bulbs or fluorescent tubes must be reported to the Executive Officer.

11. Smoking

OPC complies with the legislation that became law in July 2007 therefore smoking is not permitted in any part of OPC owned buildings.

12. Security

12.1 OPC must take action to protect employees against assault when handling or transporting OPC's money or valuables. It is therefore recommended that employees should vary their route/time when travelling to and from the bank/post office on behalf of OPC. Whilst awaiting banking, all OPC money and cheque books should be kept in a locked cupboard.

12.2 When leaving the OPC office unoccupied for more than a few minutes during the working day, an employee should ensure that:

- All lights are switched off.
- All electrical work equipment is switched off (unless authorised by the Executive Officer to leave some or all of such equipment switched on).
- All taps are turned off.
- All windows are shut and window security locks are in place.
- All external doors are locked.

12.3 There may be occasions when employees are lone working, either in the parish office or on site. In this situation to ensure employees are as safe as possible all members of staff must ensure they:

- Have access to a working phone; for off-site workers this shall be a mobile phone.
- Outside of the public opening hours for the office, ensure that the Bridewell door is locked.
- The front and rear parish office doors should remain locked at all times.
- All windows are shut and window security locks are in place.

13. Training

13.1 When allocating work to employees, OPC shall ensure that the demands of the job do not exceed the employees' ability to carry out the work without risk to themselves or others. OPC shall take account of the employees' capabilities and the level of their training, knowledge and experience. If additional training is needed, OPC shall determine ways in which this can be provided.

13.2 New employees shall receive basic induction training on health and safety, including arrangements for first-aid, fire and evacuation. OPC recognises that training may be required even though an employee already holds formal qualifications.

13.3 The need for further training shall also be considered when an employee:

- Takes on new responsibilities.
- When there is a change in the work activity or in the work environment.
- When there is a change in the work equipment or systems of work in use.

14. Monitoring and evaluation

14.1 It will be necessary for OPC to determine, from time to time, whether or not health and safety responsibilities are being discharged properly. Monitoring may take place through a number of mechanisms, including spot checks on employee behaviour, a full safety inspection and reports to the full council by the Executive Officer.

14.2 Reports of all accidents, near-misses and sickness linked to work shall be monitored on a regular basis. Recommendations may follow on the need for greater safeguards, more training, or the

need to change an employee's work practices. Employees shall be consulted on any proposed changes to this policy.

15. Review

The full council shall review this policy at least once every three years from the date of adoption, or because it is necessitated by one or more of the following criteria:

- Operational experience.
- Operational change.
- Organisational change.
- New legislation.
- The publication of a new code of practice or official guidance that is relevant to OPC's activities.
- It is requested by an OPC member, employee or volunteer.