Corporate Health and Safety Policy

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1	September 2024	Paul Lundy	Review and consolidation to single document
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Contents

Part 1 – Policy Statement

Part 2 – Roles and responsibilities

Part 3 – Arrangements

Part 1 - Policy Statement

The effective management of health and safety is an important factor in delivering our vision as an employer, partner, and place shaper of choice.

Our organisation is committed to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all employees, visitors, and contractors. We recognise our responsibility to provide a safe and healthy working environment and will take all necessary steps to prevent accidents, injuries, and work-related illnesses. We will comply with all relevant health and safety legislation, implement effective risk management practices, and promote a culture of safety through continuous training and awareness programs. Our goal is to achieve zero harm and foster a workplace where safety is a core value

This policy is based on the fundamental principles of Plan, Do, Check, Act from which we seek continual improvement and is fully supported by senior managers who have accountability for ensuring effective health and safety arrangements within their service areas. However, *health and safety is the responsibility of everyone* and this policy will be implemented by management and employees alike throughout the council.

To maintain effective health and safety we will:

- Comply with health and safety legislation, codes of practice and other relevant standards.
- Develop and maintain a documented and consistently applied health and safety management system that follows Health and Safety Executive guidance HSG65.
- Organise to include clear roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines.
- Appoint competent people to support us to meet our statutory duties.
- Provide sufficient resources to meet our commitment to health and safety.
- Assess and control of significant risks to all those who may be affected.
- Integrate health and safety into service delivery, management, and decision-making.
- Provide all employees with suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training, and supervision to work safely
- Consult and communicate with employees, elected members, trade union representatives and other stakeholders to ensure they are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Strive for continuous improvement in health and safety standards, from lessons learnt and undertake monitoring of our health and safety performance.
- Work with all partners and contractors to develop awareness, promote good standards of health and safety through service delivered on our behalf.
- Recognise the different demands that the council faces but work as 'one council' to deliver a consistent approach to managing health and safety.

This policy and accompanying arrangements will be reviewed regularly to take account of changing legislation, best practice and experience gained within the council.

Part 2 – Roles and Responsibilities

The principal duty holder under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 is the employer.

2.1   Elected Members

Elected members have a collective responsibility to ensure that suitable resources are available to discharge the council's H&S responsibilities. This includes ensuring that any decision made by Cabinet is in line with the council's own policies and procedures as they relate to H&S. Elected Members shall through the Audit and Governance Committee, review the measures taken by the council to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and others who may be affected by the council's activities.

2.2   Chief Executive

The Chief Executive plays a crucial role and has overall responsibility for health and safety. They provide strategic leadership and cultivate a culture that emphasizes safety at all levels. This includes developing and endorsing comprehensive health and safety policies that meet legal requirements and industry best practices. The Chief Executive will ensure that adequate resources are allocated for health and safety initiatives, such as training, equipment, and personnel. They are also responsible for regularly reviewing and assessing the organization's health and safety performance, addressing any issues promptly

2.3   Directors

Directors are accountable for the day-to-day implementation of the health and safety policy within their areas of responsibility.

They are responsible for providing effective leadership and setting the tone for a culture of safety. This includes establishing and maintaining comprehensive health and safety policies that comply with legal requirements. Directors must ensure that adequate resources are allocated for health and safety initiatives, including training, equipment, and personnel. They are also tasked with regularly reviewing and monitoring the organization's health and safety performance, ensuring that any issues are promptly addressed. Additionally, directors should foster open communication, encouraging employees to report hazards and participate in safety programs. By demonstrating a commitment to health and safety from the top, directors help to create a safe and healthy working environment for all employees.

2.4   Health and Safety Team

The County Health and Safety manager is the appointed competent person for health and safety *(Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Reg 7).*

The Health and Safety Team is crucial in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace. Their responsibilities include developing and updating health and

safety policies, procedures, and guidance to comply with legal standards and best practices.

The team will assist responsible managers to conduct risk assessments to identify potential hazards and implement measures to mitigate them.

The team will ensure ongoing training and education to employees, ensuring they are aware of and adhere to safety protocols.

In conjunction with managers the team may investigate accidents, incidents, and near-misses to determine causes and prevent future occurrences.

Additionally, a key function of the H&S team is to monitor compliance with safety regulations, performs regular safety audits and inspections, and maintains detailed records of all health and safety activities. By promoting a culture of continuous improvement and open communication, the H&S team helps create a safer work environment for everyone.

2.5 Managers

Managers play a crucial role in ensuring workplace safety and health. They are responsible for implementing and enforcing health and safety policies and procedures within their teams.

This includes conducting regular risk assessments to identify potential hazards and taking appropriate measures to mitigate them. Managers must ensure that all employees receive adequate training on safety practices and the proper use of equipment.

Managers are also tasked with maintaining clear communication channels for reporting safety concerns and incidents. This includes having regular and effective health and safety conversations with their staff.

Additionally, managers must monitor compliance with safety regulations, conduct regular safety audits, and investigate any accidents or near-misses to prevent future occurrences.

By fostering a culture of safety and leading by example, managers help create a safe and healthy work environment for all employees.

2.6 Employees (Everyone!)

As an employee, you have responsibilities for the health and safety of yourself:

- **Follow safety procedures**: Adhere to all health and safety guidelines and protocols established by the council.

- **Use protective equipment**: Properly use personal protective equipment (PPE) as required for specific tasks.
- **Report hazards**: Immediately report any hazards, unsafe conditions, or near-misses to supervisors or the health and safety officer.

- **Participate in training**: Attend all relevant health and safety training sessions provided by the council.

- **Maintain a safe workspace**: Keep workspaces including your workstation set-up healthy and safe to prevent accidents and ill health.

- **Comply with regulations**: Ensure compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation and council policies.

- **Promote safety culture**: Encourage a culture of safety among colleagues by promoting safe practices and behaviours.

- **Stay informed**: Keep up to date with the latest health and safety practices and procedures. Raise health and safety issues with your manager.

- **Cooperate with inspections**: Assist with health and safety inspections and audits conducted by the council.

- **Report incidents**: Promptly report any accidents, injuries, or health issues to your manager.

2.7 Working Agile

It is important you ensure maintain a healthy work style:

- **Using Display Screen Equipment (DSE):** Undertake a DSE assessment of your main place of work and discuss with your manager any reasonable adjustments needed for you to carry out your work safely.

When travelling or working in the community you can be particularly vulnerable to health and safety risks:

- **Driving for work:** Ensure you are familiar and comply with the Driving at Work Policy including you have the appropriate level of driver licence and vehicle insurance.

- **Lone working:** Follow lone working procedures and take reasonable precautions to ensure your own safety when working remotely or visiting service users at home.

2.8 Responsible Premises Managers

The Responsible Premises Manager (RPM) is the main point of contact and responsible for the safe day-to-day running of the workplace, this includes:

- **Training:** Undertake necessary health and safety training e.g., fire safety, asbestos awareness.

- **Property H&S procedures**: Implement the requirements of the council's property related health and safety policies and procedures.

- **Site H&S information:** Ensuring that site specific health and safety information or procedures e.g. emergency evacuation plans, are communicated to staff based on the site.

- **First aid:** Ensure there is adequate provision of first aid including trained first aiders and equipment.

- **Emergency arrangements:** Ensure there is an effective implantation and testing of emergency arrangements including evacuation plans.

- **Security:** Ensure there is adequate arrangements for safeguarding and security of the premises for workers, service users and visitors.

- **Contractors:** Monitor and ensure the safety of contractors working on site.

- **Report H&S incidents**: Report any accidents, incidents, and near misses) associated with the premises e.g. *visitor slipping on wet floor*, are reported, and investigated.

- **Report property defects:** Report and property defects and co-operate with Facilities Management (FM) to ensure a safe place of work.

- **Share use:** Liaise with other building users where buildings are shared in respect of H&S.

Further information on specific tasks and management of properties can be found on the RPM SharePoint Site

2.9   Contractors and Service Providers

Some of our services or facilities are provided by suppliers, including:
- contractors
- subcontractors
- any other partner organisations

The council will take all reasonable steps at the procurement stage to ensure that the contractor or service provider is competent to undertake the work required in a healthy and safe manner and will be subject to an appropriate and proportionate assessment of their health and safety policy and arrangements. Health and safety requirements vary from contract to contract. This is dependent on the type of service being engaged and associated risk.

Contractors and service providers working on behalf of the council will be advised of any known hazards for them to work safely and, where relevant, for inclusion within their risk assessments/safe systems of work. In each case the council's commissioner and contract manager will be responsible for ensuring the relevant information is made available.

Contractors and service provider must comply with the council's Health and Safety policies and procedures and any relevant local rules.

Responsible officers will ensure adequate resources and arrangements are in place to monitor contractor health and safety performance throughout the life of the contract.

2.10 Schools

The council is accountable for the health and safety of school staff and pupils in local authority-controlled schools where it is the employer. The day-to-day running of the school is delegated to the headteacher and the school management team. In most cases, they are responsible for ensuring that risks are managed effectively. This includes health and safety matters.

It is the responsibility of the school governing body to adopt a detailed policy on health and safety for the school. As the management body, the governors should ensure that school management and staff comply with this health and safety policy.

Detailed information on responsibilities for schools is detailed in:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools

Education: health and safety in schools, further and higher education (hse.gov.uk)

The Schools Health and Safety Team provides a professional health and safety advisory service to schools. This traded service provides dedicated health and safety support as well as access to health and safety policies, procedures, guidance, and annual monitoring visit to measure compliance.

Part 3 - Arrangements

3.1 Introduction

This Part 3 sets out the general arrangements put in place for managing significant health and safety risks.

Some services will have additional operational health and safety information and guidance. It is important that employees working in such a service are familiar with that information.

3.2 Policy and governance

Health and safety is a corporate governance issue [1]and is an integral part of our organisation's culture, values, and performance standards. The council's health and safety management system include the key elements of the Health and Safety Executive's guidance document HSG65 Managing for Health and Safety[2]. Plan, Do, Check, Act achieves a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It also treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management, rather than a standalone system.

3.3 Service/Operational risk registers

Directors will maintain service/operational risk registers for their areas and will ensure significant health and safety risks are identified and reported as part of the risk management process and escalated to ensure mitigation is put in place.

3.4 Health and Safety Assurance Board (HSAB)

Health and safety policy and governance is developed and monitored by the Health and Safety Assurance Board (HSAB). The HSAB reports to the Council Management Team (CMT) via the CMT lead for Health and Safety.

HSAB members must assure the board that health and safety are being effectively managed and that arrangements are in place for identifying weaknesses and significant risks.

3.5 Competent health and safety advice

The Health and Safety Team provides competent advice to the council and directors in discharging their statutory health and safety duties.

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[1] What is corporate governance? | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet
[2] Managing for health and safety (HSG65) (hse.gov.uk)

3.6 Induction

Line managers must ensure all new employees and volunteers (including agency workers) are instructed in procedures for emergencies, undertake essential health and safety training and receive other necessary health and safety induction information and training that is relevant to their work. Further information can be found in the Induction pages of the intranet.

Refer to:
- *Induction | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet*

3.7 Competence and training

Directors and managers must ensure employees understand their responsibilities for health and safety and have the capability to undertake those responsibilities. Organisational Development will ensure that core training on health and safety is available as part of the Learning and Development programme.

Refer to:
- *Learning and Development | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet*

It is the responsibility of all managers to identify and provide any specific operational or tasks-based health and safety training for all their employees as part of the supervision process and continuing professional development (CPD) and to identify where any training cannot be met by the core L&D programme.

Health and safety awareness is included as part of induction and through the e-learning packages for all employees and managers. Additional training will be provided when employees are exposed to new or increased risks because of changes in responsibilities or place of work. Refresher training will be provided as appropriate.

Employees[3] are expected to complete the following **ESSENTIAL** H&S Training as a minimum:

Training Title	Who
An Introduction to Health and Safety (E-learning)	ALL Staff
Health and Safety for Line Managers (Virtual Classroom)	ALL Managers

It must be noted that training does not equate to competence. Competence is a range of developed skills, including training, which enables the safe completion of a task. Line managers are to ensure that where required, the following training, supervision and signing off a new competence is recorded.

Schools
Schools are responsible for ensuring staff receive the necessary health and safety training as identified in the local school health and safety policy.

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[3] This does not apply to school-based employees

3.8   Communication and consultation

The H&S Team deliver regular communications throughout the year to raise awareness of health and safety matters and remind managers and staff about risks and how to keep healthy and safe through different routes including intranet news headlines, managers briefings, bite-size briefings, and emails.

Directors will support and contribute to this by ensuring regular communication through their directorate and service channels.

Health and safety will be a regular item at all team meetings and 1:1/supervisions.

To maintain a positive health and safety culture, directors will ensure that all staff are consulted on health and safety matters and are given opportunities to contribute to service improvement and development as well as raise their concerns with management. Any significant changes affecting health and safety will be consulted on with the recognised trade unions.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Consultation with employees*

3.9   Incident and accident reporting and investigation

All staff must report accidents and incidents using the Health and Safety Reporting System which is monitored by the H&S Team and will be followed up where necessary i.e., serious/RIDDOR incidents.

Staff who submit reports will receive a notification and should inform their manager of the incident. **Managers are, in turn, responsible for ensuring that all accidents and incidents are investigated, recorded and remedial action taken where appropriate.**

Where an incident or accident involves a significant injury or dangerous occurrence these will need to be reported under Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) to the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) at the earliest opportunity by the Health and Safety Team

The incident investigation outcomes will include recommendations to avoid the incident happening again and, where appropriate, point out where wider lessons can be learned.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses*

3.10   Reporting serious incidents and deaths

Serious incidents are defined as those causing (or with the potential to cause) death or severe injury to service users, employees, or others. It may also include incidents relating to service premises and those that may cause reputational damage or result in legal proceedings.

Fatal, major injury accidents must be reported immediately by the manager responsible to the relevant Director and/or senior manager so further assessment can be made on response.

Refer to
- *Dealing with work-related accidents and ill health | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet.*

3.11   Risk assessment and control

As an employer, the council is required by law to protect its employees from harm. This duty extends to protect people other than those at work including volunteers and service users from risks to their health and safety arising out of, or in connection with, work activities.

Regulation 3 of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999[4] requires a 'suitable and sufficient' assessment of the risks to health and safety to be carried out unless assessments to a different standard are required by more specific legislation (e.g., COSHH Regulations and DSE Regulations). Many areas will carry out informal risk assessment on a day-to-day basis during their work. This Regulation and the others referred to above however require a systematic general examination of work activity and specify that significant findings of the assessment should be recorded.

A risk assessment should:
- identify the significant risks arising out of work,
- enable the responsible manager to identify and prioritise the measures to be taken to control risk and comply with the relevant statutory provisions,
- be appropriate to the nature of the work and such that it remains valid for a reasonable period.

It is the responsibility of directors and managers to satisfy themselves that risk assessments:
- are completed and are of a consistent and reasonable standard,
- relate to the actual work being undertaken,
- are reviewed regularly,
- are supported by adequate and properly maintained records including a hard copy signed by the manager responsible.

Guidance on the principles and practice of risk assessment is available on the health and safety intranet and Health and Safety SharePoint site as well as the risk assessment form to assist individuals in undertaking risk assessment.

Where a risk assessment pertains to work equipment line managers are to ensure that they liaise with a competent person prior to undertaking a risk assessment. Risk assessments for work equipment have specific hazards that must be identified to ensure that the risk assessment is suitable and sufficient (legally compliant).

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[4] The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (legislation.gov.uk)

'Work equipment' means any machine, appliance, apparatus, or tool used at work by an employee to carry out their assigned tasks. It includes any second-hand, leased or hired equipment as well as that which is supplied new. *'Use'* has a wide definition and includes any activity involving work equipment such as starting, stopping, programming, and setting equipment, repair, modification, maintenance, servicing, cleaning, and transporting.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Risk Assessment*

3.12 Operational monitoring by managers

Managers are responsible for monitoring health and safety as part of their day-to-day operational management responsibilities. Key areas for managers to check include:

1. Risk Assessments have been completed and safe systems of work are being followed.
2. Staff have received the necessary health and safety training and understand their responsibilities.
3. Accidents and Incidents are being properly reported and followed up.

3.13 Monitoring by Health and Safety Team

The health and safety team will carry out spot checks and undertake sample health and safety audits/inspections of service areas and will work with Managers to ensure that they comply with the necessary legislation. The outcomes and actions from incident investigations and monitoring results will feed into the continuous improvement cycle.

Refer to:
- H&S Policy/Procedure: Corporate and School Health and Safety Audits and Inspections

3.14 Review of health and safety performance

Overall performance will be reviewed by the Health and Safety Assurance Board (HSAB) and reported to the Council Management Team (CMT) and Audit and Governance Committee.

Refer to:
- H&S Annual Report

3.15 Corporate health and safety procedures and guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with separate risk specific corporate health and safety procedures and guidance is available on the intranet and can be found on the Health and Safety SharePoint site.

3.16 Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

The council will take steps to make it reasonable to keep employees healthy and safe when working agile, including working in the office and at home.

It is recognised that many of us spend a substantial proportion of our time using display screen equipment (DSE). It is essential that each person has their workstation set up in such a way as to avoid unnecessary risks to their health. All staff who regularly use DSE must complete a DSE self-assessment . It is recommended this is reviewed on an annual basis or when their needs change i.e., they are diagnosed with a health condition or experience pain and discomfort.

All Council office workstations will be set-up to be DSE compliant i.e., adjustable chairs, separate screens, keyboards etc.

Where employees work from home, they are responsible for ensuring that their workstation and chair set up is suitable. Employees may require additional equipment such as a laptop stand and separate keyboard.

Where users are experiencing problems including pain or discomfort then further advice may be sought from the Health and Safety Team or Occupational Health.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Display Screen Equipment DSE*
- *Agile working | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet*

3.17 Personal safety and lone working

The nature of our work often results in employees working in unpredictable and sometimes unsafe environments. Employees can be the target of verbal and physical abuse and the nature of some of the work i.e., legal proceedings, service user mental health, can increase the risk of violence and aggression.

The council promotes as far as is reasonably practicable safe working conditions and takes a zero-tolerance approach to violence and abuse of our employees. Employees are encouraged to report concerns regarding their personal safety to their managers / supervisors so that assistance can be given to protect them during their work.

All employees should routinely follow good safety practices in their work. This should include ensuring risk assessments are carried out and there is a thorough understanding of the specific factors (individual, clinical, environmental, and historical) which can lead to an increased risk of violence.

Managers must ensure safe systems of work are in place to monitor lone workers along with emergency procedures. For higher risk lone working the council has provided employees with a personal safety app to monitor their work activity and provide emergency assistance.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: ZERO TOLERANCE: Violence, abusive or threatening behaviour towards Council employees*
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Lone Working*

3.18 Driving for work

Driving for work purposes is common practice across many service activities both using council fleet vehicles and private/employee own (grey fleet). All employees must ensure compliance with the driving at work policy and undertake a risk assessment relating to their travel activity.

In all cases if an employee drives for work purposes, even occasionally, they must have:
- a valid driving licence.

If an employee ever uses their own vehicle for work purposes beyond their commute to their designated workplace, they must have:

- Current MOT certificate for the vehicle (if the vehicle is over three years old)
- Motor insurance policy that states 'For Personal Business Use' and covers the employee where transporting service users (if in doubt check the employee should check with their insurer).

For council fleet vehicles consult with the councils Vehicle Management Service (VMS) and Insurance Team for specific vehicle and insurance requirements.

Refer to:
H&S Policy/Procedure: Driving for Work
H&S Procedure: Minibus Handbook
OCC (Oxfordshire County Council) Insurance Policies (Fleet Vehicles Only)

3.19 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Risk control measures should follow the required hierarchy, from most preferable to least: avoid hazard; substitute the hazardous with the less hazardous; apply engineering controls; apply a safe system of work; use personal protective equipment (PPE) as a 'last resort.'

Where use of PPE is unavoidable, it must be correctly specified in the risk assessment, be provided free of charge, be fitted as necessary, be correctly used, stored, maintained, be compatible with the task and other equipment, and conform to the relevant standards.

For example, employees working on highways must conform to industry standards regarding the wearing of high-visibility clothing complying with EN

ISO 20471 and those working with chainsaws must have clothing as per Risk Assessment. Where third party site rules exceed the minimum set out below then third-party rules must be adhered to.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure for Personal Protective Equipment PPE*

3.20 Manual handling

Sometimes some employees must manually handle loads, in such cases the health risks from this type of work must be assessed.

Where possible, controls should aim to eliminate the need for manual handling, by providing mechanical handling equipment or by introducing alternative measures. Where manual handling cannot be avoided employees will be provided with work-related training and instruction in manual handling techniques and instructed not to attempt to lift items beyond their capabilities.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure for Manual Handling*

3.21 Equipment

Managers must ensure all equipment used in the course of work activity is maintained in good condition, serviced to the manufacturer's schedules and is safe to use. Employees must be provided with suitable and sufficient information and training to enable them to use work equipment safely. They must not use equipment unless they have been trained in its use, including any safety related devices, and guarding.

Employees have been given responsibility for ensuring that equipment issued to or used by them is maintained in good order. They have been told to report any defects or problems to their manager. Any identified defective equipment will be withdrawn from use until repaired or replaced.

Equipment, such as pressure vessels and lifting equipment, will undergo statutory examination at specified frequencies.

All equipment used must be logged and copies of inspections and maintenance records are held locally.

All operators of equipment must be competent in its use and any training records retained.

When purchasing or hiring new work equipment and materials, the health and safety implications of its use must be considered. Purchasers mut look to obtain the safest available equipment and always obtain technical data and instructions for its use and maintenance.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Work Equipment Safety*

3.22 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

During our operational activity, the Council may use potentially hazardous substances. Some are used in such small quantities that they present a low risk to health unless deliberately misused, others can be dangerous to health and the environment and present a significant risk unless appropriately controlled.

Managers are required to list and assess all the chemicals and substances that are used. Where there are potential risks, managers must implement suitable control measures (storage and use) and provide clear instruction and information to employees or others who come into contact with them.

Employees must familiarize themselves with the COSHH assessments and adhere to any safety instructions. Where required all necessary personal protective equipment must be provided.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: COSHH Chemical Safety*

3.23 Noise at work

Where there is a likelihood of employees being exposed to high levels of noise, the manager must contact the Health and Safety Team to arrange a noise assessment by a competent person. An assessment will also be required where noise becomes intrusive, and employees must raise their voices to hold a normal conversation within 2m of each other.

Managers purchasing equipment will take into consideration the noise levels so that they are kept as low as reasonably practicable. Where it is not possible to keep the levels down the manager will look at other methods of reducing noise exposure, before determining the PPE, health surveillance and training required for staff likely to be affected.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Noise at Work*

3.24 Vibration

Where people regularly work for prolonged periods with tools that create vibration (e.g., chainsaws, brush cutters, strimmer's etc.) it can lead to ill health and injury.

Where employees are at risk from hazardous vibration, managers must ensure suitable risk assessments and safe systems of work are put in place. This may include ensuring where equipment is purchased the lowest vibration impact is considered and maintained according to manufacturer's recommendations.

Managers must ensure employees are provided with training and information in the correct use of the equipment including vibration control and issued with the necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) to help maintain blood circulation.

Employees must ensure they do not exceed recommended exposure limits and report any symptoms of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) for appropriate Occupational Health intervention and surveillance.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Vibration*

3.25 Working at height

Working at height will be avoided where it is reasonably practicable to do so.

Where working from height is required, managers must ensure suitable risk assessments and safe systems of work are put in place using appropriately trained and competent persons using equipment that has been thoroughly inspected and maintained, including ladders and step ladders, fall restraint and arrest systems, mobile elevated working platforms etc.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Working at Height*
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Ladder and Stepladder Safety*

3.26 Infection Prevention Control (IPC)

Everyone working in health and social care or those providing personal care must follow Infection Prevention Control Procedures.

Where required employees working in care settings or at risk of infection should complete training on Infection Prevention Control (IPC).

Personal protective equipment (PPE) will be provided free of charge for use on appropriate occasions or circumstances as detailed by risk assessment. All staff are to wear safety equipment provided for their work. All work equipment/clothing must be assessed for suitability both for the task and the individual for whom it is provided. Adequate storage facilities must be provided which are clean and properly protect the equipment.

Before undertaking any procedure, staff should assess any exposure to blood and/or other body fluids, non-intact skin or mucous membranes and wear PPE that protects against the risks associated with the work activity.

Reference to PPE may mean:
- fluid-resistant surgical face masks
- disposable gloves
- disposable plastic aprons
- eye protection (for example a face visor or goggles)

When PPE is used, it is essential it is used properly. This includes scrupulous hand hygiene and following guidance on how to put PPE on and take it off safely to reduce self-contamination.

Refer to:

- *Infection Prevention Control Procedures (IPC)*

- *H&S Procedure for Blood Borne Viruses*
- *H&S Procedure for Needle Stick Injuries*

3.27 Stress management

Well designed, organised, and managed work is good for everyone, but when a person is unable to cope with the demands being placed on them at work it can be a significant cause of illness and is known to be linked to high levels of sickness absence, staff turnover and other issues such as increase error rates and reduction in output and productivity. The council has guidance for managers and employees to manage stress, which uses the HSE's Management Standards to assess the risk and act on the findings to provide managers with the tools to manage stress in the workplace.

Additionally, managers and employees have access to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which overs various self-help tools and information resources and counselling.

Refer to:
- *Combat stress | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet*
- *Employee assistance programme | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet*

3.28 New and expectant mothers

Should any employees become a new or expectant mother the council will take steps to ensure their continued health and safety at work. Managers and expectant mothers should use the risk assessment checklist as part of 'one to one' discussion to assess and guide the measures we need to reduce their exposure to work related hazards.

Refer to:
- H&S Policy/Procedure: New and expectant mothers work procedure and risk-assessment

3.29 Managing temporary or migrant employees and volunteers

Temporary and migrant employees or volunteers are only taken on if they have the specific skills and qualifications appropriate for their job. Managers are responsible for ensuring they receive induction training including health and safety information and instructions and details of emergency and first aid procedures. It is important to check that employees who do not have English as their first language understand what managers tell them and our procedures. If they are involved in safety critical tasks, their abilities should be assessed to ensure they have the competence and understanding to perform in their role and communicate clearly with colleagues

Refer to:
- *Managing volunteers | Oxfordshire County Council Intranet*

3.30   Council buildings and premises

It is essential to provide safe and compliant buildings and premises for staff to work from and deliver services. Services operate in a wide variety of locations both in council managed buildings and those controlled by third parties.

The council's policy requires every council building to have an up-to-date procedure which details the locally agreed arrangements relating to health and safety. A copy of the procedure can be found on the Responsible Premises Manager (RPM) SharePoint site and should be completed by the person responsible for health and safety at the building/location. Property and Assets will maintain a list of Responsible Premises Managers (RPM) for each building the council owns.

Refer to:
- *RPM SharePoint Site*

Property and Assets will maintain a list of Responsible Premises Managers (RPM) for each building the Council owns.

3.31   School building and premises

The day-to-day running of the school is delegated to the headteacher and the school management team. They are responsible for ensuring that risks are managed effectively. This includes property compliance. In situations where budgets for building management are delegated to schools by the local authority, the duty to manage property compliance will be shared between schools and the local authority. The authority's written scheme for the financing of maintained schools will set out the categories of work that will either be financed from the delegated school budget share (revenue repairs and maintenance) or remain the responsibility of the local authority (capital expenditure). Both parties will therefore have 'duty-holder' responsibilities for the repair and maintenance of the premises.

3.32   Shared premises

It will be the responsibility of Service Managers and the Estates Team (responsible for the landlord/tenant arrangements) to ensure that effective arrangements exist for the co-operation and co-ordination of health and safety with other employers and building owners. Such arrangements must be stated in a formal agreement and the extent of health and safety responsibility clearly defined

3.33   Traffic management on council sites

Responsible Premises Managers (RPM's) need to assess the risk from vehicle movements on their premises and manage those risks in line with current workplace transport guidance e.g., segregation, marking and lighting. RPMs should consider in their risk assessment vehicle movements occurring immediately outside the council premises which may be associated with service activities, such as staff arriving and leaving work, visitors, and delivery vehicles.

3.34 Fire safety

Managers will ensure employees and visitors they are responsible for are provided with information on emergency and evacuation procedures and ensure the responsible person is notified of any specific requirements e.g., Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) etc. Managers will assist the responsible person by nominating persons to be Fire Marshals where required.

Property and Assets will ensure a Fire Risk Assessment for the building is completed by a competent person. The Responsible Premises Manager, with support from FM, will ensure there is a suitable Emergency Evacuation Plan in place and enough Fire Marshalls.

Planned evacuation drills will be done at least twice yearly to test the fire safety systems' effectiveness. They offer the opportunity to identify gaps in fire safety training and ensure compliance with fire safety requirements.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Fire Safety*

3.35 Asbestos

Many council buildings will have asbestos containing materials in the building fabric. Property and Assets are responsible for managing asbestos by ensuring Asbestos Management Plans are in place and updated following any remedial or removal works. Asbestos Management Plans and relevant information will be made available to all responsible premises managers and contractors including surveys, asbestos register, and drawings.

Property and Assets will arrange periodic reinspection of known asbestos containing materials by a competent contractor to assess the condition.

All work with asbestos will be carried out by competent contractors (e.g., licensed contractors) in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Asbestos Management*

3.36 Legionella and scalding

Property and Assets are responsible for the control and management of legionella and scalding in hot and cold-water systems. Competent advice will be obtained by a competent person to undertake risk assessment and assist in the implementation of a risk minimization programme and scheme of control.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: Water Hygiene (Legionella and Scalding)*

3.37 first Aid

The level of first aid cover is determined locally through an assessment which will consider level of risk, activities, number of users etc. The responsible person for the premises should carry out the assessment and ensure the appropriate level of first aid provision is in place including ensuring there are enough trained first aiders.

Refer to:
- *H&S Policy/Procedure: First Aid*