NORTH HERTS COUNCIL
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This policy applies to:	
Members	Yes
Officers	Yes
Managers	Yes
Others	*All other persons visiting or working on our premises that may be affected by our operations*

You must:

- Understand your own responsibilities as defined by the policy
- Take reasonable care of your health and safety while at work and that of others who may be affected by your acts or omissions and to co-operate with management on all matters relating to health and safety
- Follow all provided training, safety rules, procedures and safe systems of work at all times and report all health and safety concerns through line management, particularly those which might present a serious or imminent danger
- Use correctly all items provided in the interests of your health and safety and not to interfere with or misuse anything provided for your health, safety or welfare

Policy author and further advice from: *Health and Safety Officer*

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1. Introduction

North Herts Council will actively promote high standards of health, safety and welfare at work across the full range of its operations.

By effectively managing health and safety risks North Herts Council can maximise the wellbeing and productivity of all its employees and preserve its reputation as a caring and committed employer.

This corporate safety policy for North Herts Council is applicable across the entirety of its undertaking, covering those aspects of health and safety which North Herts Council has a legal responsibility for.

This version supersedes all other previous policies and shall be reviewed on a periodic basis or where changes in legislation or working practices dictate. It will be revised as necessary in the light of any changes or developments.

The policy accords the same duty of care to both employees and non-employees to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all.

The policy is augmented by Corporate Health and Safety Procedures and directorate local operating procedures; method statements and safe systems of work as are deemed appropriate.

As required under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Section 2.3, this policy provides a statement of intent, the organisational structure responsible for effecting this policy and the arrangements which comprise the procedures and systems for ensuring the protection of all people who could be put at risk from North Herts Council activities.



Steve Crowley

Director: Enterprise



Anthony Roche

Chief Executive

May 2025

2. Statement of Intent

- Health and safety is recognised as a core duty to be integrated into the mainstream of the North Herts Council organisation and all that is reasonably practicable will be done to provide a safe and healthy environment for North Herts Council employees.
- North Herts Council recognises its duties to all who may be affected by its operations and will seek to minimise the risk of foreseeable injury and ill health, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- It shall ensure that all operations, as a minimum, meet with the relevant statutory requirements and associated codes of practice.
- It shall establish and maintain an effective system of communication on health and safety matters through all levels of the organisation and ensure that employees are actively consulted and involved in matters affecting health and safety in the workplace.
- All employees with specific health and safety responsibilities shall have job descriptions that reflect those duties, be adequately trained and be made fully aware of how to discharge their duties and be allowed time and resource to discharge them effectively.
- Employees having no specific health and safety responsibilities shall also be given adequate induction, information, training and supervision to ensure that they understand their role in implementing this policy,
- Clear standards shall be set down and both reactive and active monitoring undertaken to check that these standards are being met.
- Audits and reviews shall also be carried out to continuously improve health and safety performance, with improvement programmes implemented where deemed necessary.
- As far as is reasonably practicable, the impact on health and safety performance of advances in knowledge and technology shall be regularly assessed with action taken as necessary.
- Health and safety implications should always be considered when procuring or changing plant, equipment or processes. Health and safety implications must be given priority over cost issues; most especially if low-cost goods or services are being procured
- Procedures shall be established for managing serious & imminent danger and regular liaison undertaken with external services both in Hertfordshire and neighbouring counties.
- All non-employees shall be made aware of the full range of health & safety controls in force.
- Contractors shall be selected with due regard to competence and resources for health and safety and their performance monitored to ensure that all agreed health and safety standards are being met, with non-conformance being deemed a material breach of contract.

3. Organisational Structure



4 Responsibilities

a) The Council

The Council as a corporate body is responsible for discharging the organisation's duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

b) Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will help ensure that there is a clear shared responsibility for Health and Safety amongst Managers, Employees and Elected Members.

c) Elected members

Shall:

Ensure that suitable resources and strategic direction are available to discharge the Council's health and safety responsibilities.

Monitor, via reports, the overall performance of the Council's health and safety management systems.

d) Chief Executive / Directors

Shall:

- afford health and safety an equal status with other primary organisational duties and ensure that all Leadership Team decisions reflect the intent of this policy.
- advise members of the Council of the health and safety responsibilities of North Herts Council in matters of staffing, finance and materials considered necessary to meet its obligations under statutory law.
- accept formally and publicly their individual and collective role in providing health and safety leadership in the organisation and recognise their role in engaging the active participation of employees in improving health and safety.
- ensure that management systems provide for effective monitoring and reporting of the organisation's health and safety performance.
- ensure that North Herts Council policy, procedures and notices, relating to health and safety are observed and implemented within their areas of responsibility and ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for health, safety and welfare.
- ensure the availability of professional expertise on health and safety to provide adequate awareness of legislative requirements and good safety management practices.
- ensure the existence of adequate consultative arrangements involving management and employee representation.
- establish and maintain a safe place of work and safe systems of work by ensuring that the requirements of any health and safety arrangements in place are met in activities under their control.
- appoint key staff responsible for health, safety and welfare, allocate sufficient resources and ensure that health and safety training needs are identified and acted upon.
- ensure that staff and contractors responsible to them are aware of, understand and implement this policy.
- ensure that all hazardous work situations are identified, risk assessed, and appropriate control measures are implemented.

e) Director for Enterprise

- In addition to the above duties for Directors the Director for Enterprise will be responsible for setting the Council's corporate health and safety policy and ensuring the provision of relevant advice and systems, in accordance with legislation.

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f) Managers & Team Leaders

Managers & Team Leaders shall:

- ensure that all health and safety rules and procedures are applied in activities under their control and that sufficient time is allowed for staff to conduct all tasks in a safe manner.

- as necessary, implement and maintain method statements and local operating procedures concerning work activities not covered by Corporate Health and Safety Procedures.
- identify hazards and carry out regular risk assessments of their areas of responsibility, recording their findings as appropriate and implement control measures which, as far as is reasonably practicable, minimise the risk of injury or ill health to all those who may be affected.
- monitor work related ill health and accident statistics to identify where control measures are failing to adequately control risk and conduct preliminary accident investigations and initiate any remedial action.
- ensure that all employees under their control receive adequate information, instruction, training and supervision appropriate to the nature of the work, giving particular attention to new employees and young persons.
- consider employees' capabilities with regard to health and safety before allocation of tasks and pay particular regard to young persons and new or expectant mothers.
- ensure that all non-employees who may be affected by work under their control are given adequate information to ensure their health and safety.
- put in place effective measures to communicate and co-operate with third parties working on behalf of the organisation.
- encourage staff participation in all matters relating to their health and safety at work and ensure that all defects in the management of health and safety brought to their attention are investigated and acted upon in a timely manner.
- keep and make available records of health and safety activities as may be required by law.

g) Health and Safety Officer

shall:

- act as the principal advisor for North Herts Council on all corporate health and safety issues and provide specialist advice, guidance and support to North Herts Council to ensure that all statutory obligations are met and best practice applied.
- develop, review and draft corporate health and safety policies & procedures in consultation with appropriate employee and management representatives.
- ensure a consistent and definitive approach to health and safety matters across North Herts Council by the implementation of a corporate safety management system against which performance standards can be set with specific and measurable targets.
- monitor and audit compliance with the requirements of policies and procedures and assist this process through the development and implementation of health and safety training.

- report as required to Leadership Team and the Risk Management Group on health and safety performance and bring to their attention any particular areas of risk and report on injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences to external authorities.
- investigate accidents and occurrences as appropriate, report on findings and recommend actions to prevent a recurrence.
- Stop any activity which is considered to present an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of employees & others.
- seek specialist advice as necessary.

h) Health and Safety Group

The Health and Safety Group shall review and make recommendations on all preventative and protective measures employed by North Herts Council to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees at work and others who may be affected by its operations. It shall also assist and advise in the development, implementation and review of this policy and any associated arrangements.

i) Employees

shall:

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety while at work and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and co-operate with management on all matters relating to health and safety.
- follow all provided training, safety rules, procedures and safe systems of work at all times and report all health and safety concerns through line management, particularly those which might present a serious or imminent danger.
- use correctly all items provided in the interests of their own health and safety and not interfere with or misuse anything provided for their health, safety or welfare.

5 Arrangements

The arrangements comprise the procedures and systems in place to ensure the protection of all people who could be put at risk from North Herts Council activities.

The full details of these arrangements are not contained within this policy document. The Corporate Health and Safety Procedures are accessible via the health and safety pages on SharePoint, departmental managers or from the Safety officer. The procedures are augmented by Directorate Local Operating Procedures, risk assessments, method statements, safe systems of work etc, held locally in each directorate.

6 Implications of non-compliance

North Herts Council shall regard all breaches of this policy by an employee as a potential disciplinary offence.