NORTH HERTS COUNCIL
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

This policy applies to:	
Members	Yes
Officers	Yes
Managers	Yes
Staff	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: Buildings & Facilities Manager
Advisor: Health and Safety Officer (HCC)

Contents

1. Statement of Intent
2. Scope
3. Policy Objectives
4. Roles and Responsibilities
5. Service Level Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council
6. Risk Assessment and Safe Systems of Work
7. Incident, Hazard and Near-Miss Reporting
8. Fire Safety and Emergency Arrangements
9. Training, Competence and Communication
10. Consultation
11. Monitoring, Assurance and Review
12. Implication of Non-Compliance

1. Statement of Intent

North Herts District Council is committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and to protecting others who may be affected by its activities, including contractors, visitors, service users, tenants, partners and members of the public.

The Council recognises its duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and other relevant legislation. This policy sets out the Council's approach to managing health and safety, including how responsibilities are allocated between the Council and Hertfordshire County Council under the Service Level Agreement for corporate health and safety advice.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Council employees, elected Members, agency workers, volunteers, contractors and others working on behalf of the Council. It applies to all Council workplaces, services, activities, events, premises and work-related travel where the Council has responsibility or management control.

3. Policy Objectives

- Provide clear leadership, accountability and governance for health and safety.
- Maintain suitable arrangements for identifying, assessing and controlling health and safety risks.
- Ensure health and safety responsibilities are understood by managers, employees and partner organisations.
- Use competent corporate health and safety advice provided through the Service Level Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council.
- Maintain effective systems for incident reporting, investigation, escalation, training, communication, monitoring and review.
- Promote a positive health and safety culture where risks are reported, acted upon and learned from.
- Consult with staff and union representatives.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

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.

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.

Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that the Council has effective arrangements for managing health and safety and that adequate resources, governance and assurance processes are in place.

Directors are responsible for providing strategic leadership, ensuring health and safety risks are considered in decision-making, reviewing performance information and ensuring significant matters are escalated appropriately.

Service Managers are responsible for ensuring that health and safety arrangements are implemented within their service areas, that managers understand their responsibilities for day-to day implementation of this policy within their areas and that service risks are identified, assessed, controlled and monitored. . This includes ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed and reviewed, safe systems of work are followed, staff receive appropriate training and instruction, incidents and hazards are reported, and corrective actions are completed.

Building and Facilities Manager acts as the Council's operational lead for corporate health and safety coordination, including liaison with Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Safety Team, oversight of relevant premises-related compliance activity, coordination of the corporate health and safety inbox and maintenance of central records where required.

Hertfordshire County Council – Health and Safety Team

Hertfordshire County Council will act as the principal advisor for North Herts Council on all corporate health and safety matters and have authorisation to intervene and stop any activity which is considered to present an unacceptable risk to health and safety.

Employees must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their work, follow Council procedures, complete required training, use equipment safely, report hazards, incidents and near misses promptly, and cooperate with managers and advisers on health and safety matters.

Contractors and partners must comply with relevant legislation, Council procedures and contractual requirements, and must cooperate with the Council to ensure that risks arising from their activities are properly managed.

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.

5. Service Level Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council

North Herts District Council has entered into a Service Level Agreement with Hertfordshire County Council for the provision of competent corporate health and safety advice. The purpose of this arrangement is to support the Council in meeting its statutory duties while retaining clear internal accountability for managing health and safety risks arising from Council services and activities.

Under the Service Level Agreement, Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Safety Team provides professional advice, guidance and support on corporate health and safety matters. This may include advice on policies, procedures, risk management, incident reporting and investigation, training requirements, compliance monitoring and other health and safety matters agreed within the scope of the Service Level Agreement.

The Council remains responsible for implementing health and safety arrangements, allocating resources, making management decisions, ensuring actions are completed, maintaining appropriate records and providing assurance through its governance arrangements. The Service Level Agreement does not remove the Council's legal duties as an employer, premises controller or service provider.

6. Risk Assessment and Safe Systems of Work

Managers must ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are completed for work activities, premises, equipment and services under their control. Risk assessments must identify hazards, assess who may be harmed and how, define proportionate control measures, assign responsible officers and specify review dates.

Risk assessments must be reviewed at appropriate intervals and when there is a significant change, incident, near miss, new activity, change in legislation, change in premises or evidence that existing controls may no longer be effective. Service Managers must ensure completed risk assessments are retained locally and submitted or recorded through the agreed corporate process to enable central oversight.

7. Incident, Accidents, Hazards and Near-Miss Reporting

All accidents, incidents, near misses, hazards and dangerous occurrences must be reported promptly using the Council's agreed reporting arrangements. Managers must ensure that incidents are investigated proportionately, corrective actions are recorded and completed, and any trends and learning is shared where appropriate.

Significant incidents, major risks, enforcement contact, reportable events, serious injuries, diseases, dangerous occurrences, repeated incidents or matters with potential

corporate, legal, financial or reputational impact must be escalated to the relevant Director and Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Safety Team in line with agreed escalation arrangements.

8. Fire Safety and Emergency Arrangements

The Council will maintain suitable fire safety and emergency arrangements for premises under its control. This includes fire risk assessments, fire evacuation procedures, trained fire marshals where required, inspection and maintenance of fire safety systems, and scheduled fire drills.

Fire drills must be completed at least annually for relevant Council premises, or more frequently where risk assessment, occupancy, building use or best practice indicates this is necessary. Fire drills must be documented and retained to provide evidence of completion, outcomes, learning and follow-up actions.

9. Training, Competence and Communication

The Council will provide employees, managers and other relevant persons with appropriate health and safety information, instruction, training and supervision. Mandatory training requirements will be defined, monitored and reviewed, including refresher periods where appropriate.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that employees complete required training and are competent to carry out their duties safely. Health and safety information will be communicated through induction, team briefings, intranet guidance, training, manager communications and other appropriate channels.

10. Consultation

The Council will consult with staff and trade union members via the Corporate Health and Safety Group.

11. Monitoring, Assurance and Review

The Council will monitor health and safety performance through appropriate reporting, review of incidents and actions, risk assessment completion, premises compliance information, audit activity, inspections, training records and other assurance sources, Reporting to the Corporate Health and Safety Group

Periodic operational meetings will be held between the Building and Facilities Manager and Hertfordshire County Council's Health and Safety Team to review service delivery, the Health and Safety Tracker, incidents, actions, emerging risks, advice requirements and any matters requiring escalation to leadership and/or Risk Management Group.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or sooner where there are significant organisational changes, legislative changes, audit findings, changes to the

Service Level Agreement, serious incidents or evidence that the policy is no longer effective.

12. Implication of non-compliance

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

Approval and Signatures

Anthony Roche Chief Executive Signature: _____ Date: _____	**Steve Crowley** Director Enterprise Signature: _____ Date: _____

Last reviewed:
07/09/2026_