



# **Oldham Council**

# **Health and Safety Policy**

**Updated: May 2024**



**Oldham**  
Council

# Policy Statement

It is crucial that risks to our employees' health and safety are properly controlled through an effective health and safety management system. We expect staff, visitors, contractors, Elected Members and other employers who work at the Council to share this commitment by complying with our policies and procedures and to understand that they also have a legal and moral obligation to themselves and to others.

This policy identifies the essential elements of our Health and Safety management system and details the commitment the Council has for maintaining and improving the health, safety and wellbeing of our staff, and others who may be affected by our activities. So far as is reasonably practicable, we will provide a safe and healthy work environment that meets statutory requirements.

We believe that good health and safety management is an important and integral part of any employer's social and corporate responsibility. The avoidance of significant risk to the health or safety of people is a key business priority. We fully recognise and accept our duties and responsibilities as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated legislation.

We require each service to examine their own work activities and make suitable and sufficient assessments of any health and safety risks. These assessments will determine service priorities and set objectives for eliminating hazards, reducing risks and achieving a progressive reduction in injury, work related ill-health and other types of loss.

The Council recognises the importance that strong strategic leadership and effective management control plays in establishing a positive safety culture and preventing incidents, accidents and work-related ill health. We are committed to improving health and safety performance and this policy will provide the framework for this goal to be achieved. The Council values the important contribution that staff and appointed safety representatives make in improving health and safety. A partnership approach to managing health and safety is crucial to the Council meeting its objectives for maintaining and improving health and safety performance.

Suggestions for improvement on any health and safety related issues are always welcome and should be addressed through your manager or safety representative.

Harry Catherall  
Chief Executive

May 2024

Councillor Arooj Shah  
Leader of the Council

May 2024

The Chief Executive and Leader of the Council make this statement on behalf of the council, as the employer, and take primary responsibility for the setting of standards to ensure the health and safety of all employees and others who may be affected by our activities.

# Our Commitment

We believe that good health and safety management is an important and integral part of any employer's social and corporate responsibility. Reducing risks in the workplace reduces costs and ultimately benefits the business. The avoidance of significant risk to health or safety of people is a key business priority.

We are committed to achieving and demonstrating high standards in health and safety for all staff, visitors, contractors, Elected Members and others who may be affected by our activities.

The Council accepts that the implementation of an effective Health and Safety Policy contributes to the overall performance of the Council and will ensure the following:-

- Support of staff needs and development, encompassing information, instruction, supervision, training.
- Ensure that health and safety is an important line management responsibility and require managers to incorporate health and safety in the day-to-day duties of their service.
- Support the development of a positive health and safety culture.
- Have in place systems that will allow the Council to maintain, monitor and improve health and safety performance.
- Maintain effective means for communication and consultation on health and safety matters.
- Commit to a collaborative approach which recognises the important contribution that staff and their representatives can make to improve health and safety.
- Meet our responsibilities to people and the environment by ways in which we fulfil the spirit and the letter of the law.
- Ensure that work activities undertaken by the Council are suitably managed and do not present a foreseeable risk to non-employees.

# Your Commitment

The Council expects staff, visitors, contractors and Elected Members to co-operate on health and safety matters, take care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

In particular

- Do not undertake any actions which constitutes a danger to themselves or others;
- Do not intentionally or recklessly interfere or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety;
- Cooperate with the Council and support its policies and procedures on health and safety;
- Bring to the attention of your manager / supervisor any situations or practices that may lead to injuries, work related health or damage to plant or equipment;
- Use equipment in a safe and responsible way;
- Maintain good housekeeping in areas in which you are working;
- Report all near misses, incidents, and accidents to your manager / supervisor;
- Undertake such health and safety training relevant to your work activities.

# Organisation

## Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council

The Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council are jointly responsible for the management of health and safety. They will ensure via the Management Board that health and safety responsibilities are met and adequately resourced. This responsibility includes the health and safety of Elected Members, staff and those who may be affected by the Council's work activities. Specifically, they will ensure: -

- That a specific member of the Management Board is in the role of 'Health and Safety Director' (the Executive Director for Place and Economic Growth);
- Make clear the organisation in the Council through which the policy will be implemented and delegate the responsibility for implementation of the policy within service areas to each Director, Assistant Directors, Heads of Service and Service Managers;
- Ensure that health and safety is an integral part of the overall management culture and developing a positive attitude to health and safety among employees by visibly demonstrating personal commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance;
- Have an appointed competent person/persons to assist the Council to apply the provisions of health and safety legislation;
- Ensure the establishment and maintenance of health and safety management systems across the organisation, which will ensure the assessment of risks and the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures necessary to control the risks.

## Elected Members

All Elected Members are deemed to share a collective responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of Council employees and others who may be affected by the Council's undertakings.

One Elected Member, appointed by the Council, must hold a specific responsibility for health and safety, and must be suitably trained in relevant aspects of health and safety at work.

## Senior Managers

Senior Managers ([detailed here](#)) are responsible for ensuring the health and safety at work of all employees within their Directorate and those undertaking activities that fall under the responsibility of the Directorate. It is the responsibility of all Directors to ensure that their services have arrangements in place to meet the aims and requirements of this policy. In particular, to:

- Ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable the implementation and support of the policy;
- Champion health and safety and ensure that it is considered in all key decisions of the Management Team and within their own Directorate;
- Visibly demonstrate commitment to achieving a high standard of health and safety performance within their own Directorate and develop a positive attitude to health and safety among employees;

- Ensure the assessment of risks and the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventative and protective measures necessary to control the risks that fall within the remit of their Directorate.
- Report on safety performance to the Council when required.
- Appoint a 'Building Custodian' to all Directorate buildings.
- Ensure managers and staff are trained appropriately

## **Heads of Service**

Heads of Service have the prime responsibility within each of their Services, to ensure that the safety policy is properly implemented.

They must ensure that:

- They arrange for effective delegation of individual health and safety duties within their own areas.
- Any specific arrangements for safe working practices and the maintenance of these are clearly defined and communicated to all employees.
- Action plans or recommendations from risk assessment, audits, inspections or investigations are monitored for progress at senior level.
- Monitor the health and safety performance of their Service on a regular basis and report back to Management Board on such performance as required.
- Set a good example in their own working behaviours.

## **Service Managers**

Service Managers must make sure that health and safety instructions and information is given to each member of staff, and that the work they do is safe and without risks to safety or health. They should:

- Know and understand good practice and ensure that significant risks associated with any work activity are assessed prior to the work taking place: i.e. have all necessary risk assessments in place;
- Promote personal leadership and high health and safety standards;
- Delegate authority for health and safety issues where appropriate, ensuring there are clear instructions regarding individual responsibilities;
- Ensure that staff have appropriate training, information, instruction and supervision;
- Carry out periodic workplace health and safety inspections as necessary;
- Ensure that all accidents / incidents are reported, investigated and follow-up action is identified and taken;
- Action as appropriate or forward any health and safety improvements or suggestions through management arrangements;
- Ensure induction training is carried out and includes relevant health and safety information.

## **Corporate Landlord**

The Corporate Landlord holds responsibility for all statutory maintenance, inspection, servicing and testing across the Council estate.

## **Building Custodians**

Building Custodians have a range of specific responsibilities and must ensure that they carry out identified health and safety related duties.

(For Building Custodian Responsibilities please see Building Custodians Responsibilities Guide)

## **Head Teachers (Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools)**

Head Teachers are responsible for the statutory and policy requirements enshrined in this document, being implemented, monitored and managed within their school. This is by way of the schools own Health and Safety Policy and relevant supporting arrangements.

These responsibilities include those outlined under the Managers and Building Custodians sections within this document.

Note - Governors / Management Boards have full employer responsibilities in Voluntary Aided, Foundation, Trust and Free Schools and Academies and as such have a legal responsibility to comply with appropriate health and safety legislation. They are strongly advised to follow Local Authority guidance on health and safety matters.

## **Other Employees with specific health and safety duties**

These employees would include Fire Marshalls, Fire Wardens, Evacuation Chair Operators, 'buddies' for people needing assistance to evacuate, First Aiders and those acting as CDM Principal Designers/Advisers. The particular duties for these roles are to be set out locally by the relevant service and communicated clearly to relevant persons.

Each duty holder must ensure that they have received sufficient information, instruction and training in order to competently undertake their duties.

## **Safety Representatives**

Safety representatives appointed by recognised trade unions will:

- Work in partnership with the Council to ensure positive outcomes when dealing with potential health and safety issues.
- Educate their members to ensure they recognise both hidden and obvious health and safety issues, and keep them at the top of workplace and branch agendas.
- Attend meetings of the Safety Committee(s) / Directorate Consultative Groups (DCGs).
- Enable effective cooperation in promoting and developing a healthy and safe workplace.

## **Health and Safety Committees / Directorate Consultative Groups (DCGs)**

Health and Safety Committees / Directorate Consultative Groups (DCGs) set up across the Authority provide a regular and meaningful method of communication and consultation between managers and recognised trade unions about items which affect the workplace and which impact on its workforce. Health and Safety is an agenda item at these meetings and both trade unions and managers will be expected to bring health and safety matters to each other's attention to share information and seek to jointly resolve any issues.

## **Corporate Health and Safety Group**

The Corporate Health and Safety Group provides the organisational control of Health and Safety across the Council and ensures a consistent approach across the various Committees / Directorate Consultative Groups (DCGs).

## **Council Employees**

Each of us as employees have duties under health and safety legislation and specific responsibilities as outlined in this policy.

Staff must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of other people who may be affected by their actions. They must also co-operate with management. Individuals must not interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety, fire or first aid. Staff should report any defects that affect health and safety to managers or their safety representative. Any deliberate disregard for health and safety may result in disciplinary action.

## **Health and Safety Service**

In order to apply the provisions of health and safety legislation the Council has appointed the Health and Safety Service to act as 'competent advisers'

The Environmental Health Manager is responsible for the provision and maintenance of adequate levels of health and safety competency within the Health and Safety Service to suit the activities and risk levels of the Council.

## **HR Services**

HR Services work closely with the Health and Safety Service, service managers and leadership to support in compliance with health and safety legislation, in matters such as training and development, occupational health contracts, the management of stress at work and also supporting with the management of disciplinary action where there have been breaches of health and safety policies and rules.

## **Arrangements**

Detailed arrangements and further guidance, protocols and procedures for Health and Safety can be found on the Health and Safety area of the Intranet and Oldham Connect

## **Monitoring**

Monitoring health and safety standards is a key part of every level of management. It is not enough to simply expect that things will be done safely – it must be confirmed by positive safety management.

Every Head of Service must ensure health and safety monitoring is carried out within their service.

Council wide monitoring is undertaken by Senior / Health and Safety Advisers, using a variety of methods including incident investigations, sample site / workplace inspections, audits of premises and high-risk service areas. The Corporate Health and Safety Group also has a monitoring role.

Incident statistics for the whole of the Council workforce are reported through Health and Safety Committees / Directorate Consultative Groups (DCGs).

The Health and Safety Service provide a health and safety status report to Management Board and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis.

## Policy Review

The Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed annually, or when any significant changes occur. The review provides an opportunity to look at the implications of impending, new, or revised legislation and standards. The review will also consider any anticipated organisational or operational changes.

**Review Date: May 2024**  
**Corporate Health and Safety Policy**

Version	Date	Amended By
1	June 2010	JW
2	June 2011	JW
3	May 2012	JW
4	June 2012	JW
5	January 2014	JW
6	December 2014	KK
7	January 2015	KK
8	March 2016	KK
9	April 2017	LW No changes required other than dates
10	May 2018 (signed off July 18)	LS. Yourbit/outbit/result added. Dates changed. Minor formatting and titles reworked.
11	May 2019	LS No changes other than dates
12	July 2021	LS- Amended health and safety director to 'deputy chief exec or other nominated director'  Health and safety service now listed as competent advisers as opposed to 'health and safety manager'
13	June 2022	LS – updated for new CEO / Leader / Structure. Minor amends to job titles. Reference to first class removed-replaced with Oldham Connect Management Board status report changed from 6 monthly to annual Reference to Unity removed Our bit, your bit, result removed HR section included



<b>14</b>	<b>Dec 2022</b>	<b>Updated Leader of the Council</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>May 2024</b>	<b>Updated Leader of the Council Minor amend to job title</b>