Norfolk County Council

Health and safety organisation and responsibilities policy P611

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1. Introduction

The purpose of a health and safety management system is to enable an organisation to understand and control its health and safety risks in a proportionate and sensible way ensuring resources are in place to secure improvements in the areas they are needed most. It enables the organisation to assure itself it conforms with its stated policy and to demonstrate such conformance to others. The system also assists the organisation in meeting its legal obligations. The overall health and safety management approach adopted by NCC is in line with the health and safety management model described in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) guidance on managing health and safety and HSG65.

NCC's Health and Safety Policy Statement 'Our Commitments' P611a establishes the overall commitment and principles relating to health, safety and wellbeing management; it demonstrates a formal and public commitment to good health, safety and wellbeing management.

The policy statement is reviewed every two years by the Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing. Any revisions are agreed with unions before being authorised by chief officers and signed by the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council.

The Policy Statement is supported by this document which describes how NCC is organised to comply with the HSE management model.

Information and guidance documents to support the model are published on myNet and InfoSpace. Each site contains documents that set out NCC's expectations and levels of mandatory compliance, known as 'compliance codes', as well as other documents which have a guidance status, to help employees / staff comply with their responsibilities. All published documents provide advice and guidance on how to achieve safe systems of work, considering legislation, enforcement agencies / industry best practice, case law, incidents and our expectations.

The majority of these documents are owned and reviewed by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team (HSW) and they apply to all areas of NCC business. However, there are also service-owned policies and procedures that translate the NCC requirements into service specific guidance and policies. These documents are owned by identified managers within that service and it is their responsibility to ensure these are reviewed and kept up to date as appropriate.

Where this is the case, those managers are required to ensure that HSW, as the subject matter experts, are involved in review and final authorisation so that the documents meet overarching NCC requirements and expectations..

Local procedures and work instructions are also produced and owned by teams and services. These describe the local arrangements for that area of NCC for managing specific tasks or activities, in line with overall compliance codes.

2. Organisational responsibilities

NCC recognises that overall responsibility for health and safety lies with all levels of management having direct responsibility for activities, employees and commissioned and contracted services under their control. However, all employees have a legal and moral responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and for others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

NCC, through the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive, has overall responsibility for NCC's Health and Safety Policy - Our Commitments P611a.

3. Management responsibilities

Chief Executive

As the Head of paid staff the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for health, safety and wellbeing at NCC. They are responsible for ensuring:

- the Health and Safety Policy 'Our Commitments' and the health and safety management system is properly implemented and adhered to across the organisation
- the effectiveness of the health and safety organisation and arrangements
- the provision of appropriate resources to enable persons with specific responsibilities to perform their duties effectively
- an appropriate plan is in place to deal with identified risks and issues and to improve NCC's health, safety and wellbeing performance

3.1 Executive Directors and their direct reports

Executive Directors and their direct reports have responsibility for ensuring that suitable and adequate organisation and arrangements are in place for the management and control of health, safety and wellbeing within their directorates. They must ensure that:

- the Council's health and safety policy and procedures are implemented within their areas of responsibility
- effective directorate / service policies and procedures are developed and implemented for specific service-related areas of risk, in consultation with HSW and in line with the Council's overarching policies and framework
- a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture is actively demonstrated and promoted through good leadership within their areas of responsibility, including a commitment to continuous improvement
- they and their management teams understand and are competent to carry out their duties for health, safety and wellbeing, as outlined in this document

- adequate budgetary provision is made to meet the cost of fulfilling the directorate's responsibilities in relation to health, safety and wellbeing
- adequate time and resources are given to managers and employees to fulfil their roles as defined by this policy, including the reporting and investigation of incidents
- there are adequate and effective arrangements in place for consulting all employees and their representative trade unions within their areas of responsibility on matters that affect their health, safety and wellbeing
- a risk profile of service activities (including commissioned and partner-led activities) is undertaken to establish the level of management and monitoring required to ensure that:

    - health and safety risks within their areas of responsibility are appropriately managed, including setting targets for improvement and reviewing performance; and
    - where Directorates work with partner organisations, or they commission or contract the provision of services on behalf of NCC, suitable health and safety arrangements are established and monitored
    - the management of health, safety and wellbeing in their service areas considers the needs of anyone with a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act

3.2 Managers

Managers have responsibility for all employees and activities under their control and for ensuring that the requirements of relevant safety policies and procedures are complied with. They must:

- ensure that risk assessments are undertaken as appropriate by persons competent to do so and that adequate control measures are taken on a risk basis to reasonably minimise the health and safety risks to their employees and to any other persons who may be affected by the activities
- monitor and review health, safety and wellbeing performance by:

    - undertaking inspections of the relevant work area/practices under their control setting health, safety and wellbeing targets and objectives as appropriate through performance development and other supervisory reviews
    - reviewing incidents and accidents to ensure lessons are learnt and preventative action is taken where necessary
    - monitoring commissioned and contracted work under their control for compliance in accordance with the Commissioning and procurement compliance code P605

All monitoring activity must be recorded, including issues identified, actions to be taken and by whom.

- develop safe systems of work and procedures and ensure that they are implemented
- set a personal example by including health, safety and wellbeing management in daily management practice and demonstrating safe personal working practices
- ensure action is taken to resolve any situations that may adversely affect the health and safety of employees or other persons. They will rectify any problem within their own resources or ensure it is raised with the appropriate Head of Service without delay where they do not have the budgetary or management control to do so.
- ensure that they personally undertake all mandatory and relevant training and all employees under their control are given adequate information, instruction, training

and supervision to carry out their duties safely, paying particular attention to new / inexperienced employees and trainees
- ensure that all plant and work equipment provided is selected through a risk assessment process, suitable, properly maintained and subject to all necessary tests and examinations
- ensure that accidents and incidents (including near misses and incidents of abusive and violent behaviour, and incidents that may relate to protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) are properly reported, processed, and investigated by competent persons and the findings acted upon without delay
- ensure that employees and their trade union representatives are consulted on matters of health and safety that affect them
- ensure information that may assist safety representatives in their role is provided to them as necessary
- work with premises managers to ensure premises issues affecting their employees are adequately managed and communicated
- when commissioning work through partners and contractors, ensure that they are selected and managed in accordance with statutory requirements and Council policy
- ensure that the management of health, safety and wellbeing in their area of control considers the needs of anyone with a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act
- ensure that they seek timely assistance and advice where required from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team

3.3 Premises managers

Premises managers are those persons who have delegated responsibility for ensuring the safety of a premises occupied by the Council, e.g., in offices, libraries or museums or in NCC schools.

Maintenance and security of premises supported by Total Facilities Management (TFM) arrangements are the responsibility of the Corporate Property Team (CPT).

In some premises there will be specific designated roles with premises management responsibilities written into the job description; in others, particularly in corporate offices, there will not. In these cases, the most senior officer based at the premises is responsible for ensuring it is appropriately managed by nominated person(s). The premises manager should be identified at each site and any delegated responsibilities clearly identified.

The exception to this is County Hall where the Corporate Property Team assumes the role of Premises Manager.

Managers will ensure that those with an identified specific responsibility attend training relevant to their role, as described in the Mandatory training policy P505 on myNet.

Note - Some premises management duties are the responsibility of CPT while others are the responsibility of the premises manager for the site. These duties may be split and more information can be found in Appendix 1 - NCC properties supported by the TFM contract.

3.4 Commissioners, project, and contract managers

All employees that have a role in managing projects or contracts must ensure they follow policies and procedures relating to this area on myNet and in particular:

- all relevant health and safety requirements are included in contracts

- the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team are consulted in a timely way regarding the development of new contracts
- appropriate levels of monitoring are established for contracts by the commissioner to ensure organisations are delivering to the agreed health and safety standards

They attend all relevant training relating to their role, as described in the Mandatory training policy P505.

3.5 General employee responsibilities

All employees have individual responsibility to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and for those other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. Employees must:

- always comply with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and procedures
- co-operate with their management in complying with relevant health and safety safe systems of work and procedure
- use all work equipment and substances in accordance with the instruction and training received
- wear, use, store, maintain and replace personal protective equipment as appropriate
- not intentionally misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety
- take part in and contribute to health and safety inspections, risk assessments etc. as appropriate
- report all accidents (personal injury and vehicle), ill-health, incidents of violence and aggression, near misses, hazardous situations, general health and safety concerns, defective equipment or premises in line with Incident reporting and investigation – compliance code P601
- attend all training relevant to their role

3.6 Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing has overall responsibility for the development, maintenance and improvement of the health and safety management system for NCC, including:

- setting the strategic direction for health, safety and wellbeing matters
- ensuring that NCC's health and safety policy document 'Our Commitments' remains valid, is reviewed every two years and is implemented effectively
- ensuring that adequate arrangements and resources are in place to:

    - develop, review, and publish health, safety and wellbeing compliance codes and associated documents to ensure they remain valid and strive for continuous improvement
    - provide focussed operational support to NCC managers and employees regarding key risk activities
    - manage and maintain the incident management system, including identifying incidents that require formal reporting (RIDDOR) or HSW investigation / intervention, undertaking this as applicable
    - provide competent advice and guidance about health, safety and wellbeing
    - monitor, benchmark and review NCC's health and safety performance against the published compliance codes and procedures, including undertaking proactive premises and activity monitoring, and reactive incident investigation
    - act as the point of liaison for the Health and Safety Executive in relation to investigations and inspections

- reporting to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Members, Directorate management teams, and any other appropriate body, on matters relating to health, safety and wellbeing, including the provision of management information to support improvement within services and across NCC
- developing and maintaining a health and safety training strategy and providing appropriate training services to deliver this

4. Employee consultation / safety representatives

Consulting employees on health, safety and wellbeing matters is important in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy working environment. It also helps in motivating staff and making them aware of health, safety, and wellbeing issues.

Trade union safety representatives represent employees in day-to-day consultation with management on HSW issues. Such representatives are recognised by NCC as having an important role in achieving employee involvement and in creating and sustaining a positive HSW culture.

By mutual agreement between the Council and the appropriate Trade unions, safety representatives will represent both union and non-union employees in particular work areas. Non-union employees may also be consulted directly.

Safety representatives should be consulted in a timely fashion where possible on all matters of HSW that may materially affect employees and on the provision of HSW information and training.

Before making decisions that could have HSW consequences for employees, managers should inform safety representatives about the proposed course of action and give them an opportunity to express their views.

The functions of safety representatives and further detail regarding health and safety consultation arrangements is contained in the Safety Representatives and Committees Agreement P626.

5. Additional supporting/related documents

- Health and safety policy ‘Our Commitments’ P611a
- Mandatory training policy P505
- Accident reporting and investigation compliance code P601
- Safety Representatives and Committees Agreement P626

6. Changes since last revision

Date	Details of change	Approved by	Version number
19/7/2022	Document updated throughout to reflect organisation. Appendix added to define responsibilities in regard to TFM. Links removed for external hosting / accessibility checked.	P Downer HR Manager – Health, safety and wellbeing	104
13/12/2023	Document updated to reflect change of job title of Head of Paid Service to Chief Executive	P Downer HR Manager – Health, safety and wellbeing	105

24/9/2024	Document updated to describe responsibilities of Executive Directors and their direct reports for ensuring that directorate/service policies and procedures are developed in consultation with HSW and NCC's overarching policies and framework; and the Head of HSW's role in respect of managing and maintaining the incident management system and acting as the point of liaison for the HSE in relation to investigations and inspections.	Paul Downer – Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing	106

Appendix 1

Premises manager and Corporate Property Team responsibilities in NCC properties supported by the Total Facilities Management contract

Aspect	CPT Responsibilities	Premises Manager Responsibilities
Fire	Appoint a competent person to create fire plan, fire risk assessment and fire evacuation plan Carry out required actions or enabling works identified by the fire risk assessment or to support the fire evacuation plan Carry out fire drills in NCC hubs (County Hall, Priory House and Havenbridge House) Carry out planned preventative maintenance and statutory inspections of fire safety equipment	Provide details on premises use to the competent person carrying out the fire risk assessment Implement findings of the fire risk assessment and fire evacuation plan Liaise, as needed, with managers of staff with PEEPs in NCC hubs (County Hall, Priory House and Havenbridge House) Carry out fire drills in premises other than NCC hubs Carry out and record routine checks of the fire alarm systems, emergency lighting and fire extinguishers
Asbestos	Appoint a competent person to survey; and inspect the condition of identified asbestos materials	Develop asbestos management plan and undertake routine monitoring of condition of asbestos-containing materials Raise any concerns with Norse helpdesk
Legionella	Appoint a competent person for periodic risk assessment and routine checks	Carry out weekly flushing Raise any concerns with Norse helpdesk
Statutory testing and inspection	Appoint competent persons to carry out testing and inspection of e.g., lifts, pressure vessels, LEV	Carry out premises inspections to ensure maintenance and safety issues are monitored and identified for action Raise any concerns with Norse helpdesk
Portable Electrical appliances	CPT appoints competent person to risk assess and test appliances	Monitor condition of tested appliances
Fixed electrical installations	Appoint a competent person to carry out inspection of fixed installations	Raise any concerns/defects with Norse helpdesk
Gas/oil	Appoint a competent person to inspect/maintain gas/oil boiler and pipe work	Raise any concerns/defects with Norse helpdesk

Mature trees	Appoint a competent person to survey	Raise any damage/concerns with Norse helpdesk
First aid	Organise first aid training and provision at NCC hubs (County Hall, Priory House and Havenbridge House)	Organise first aid training and provision (unless at an NCC hub - County Hall, Priory House or Havenbridge House)
Incident management	NA	Apply Incident reporting and investigation compliance code
Contractor management	Select and monitor contractor performance	Facilitate, manage and monitor the work of contractors while on the premises
General building maintenance and repairs; and grounds maintenance incl. outdoor play equipment	Organise maintenance and repairs as needed	Raise any damage/concerns with Norse helpdesk
Smoke free premises	NA	PM applies Smoke free premises policy