

Stowe by Chartley Parish Council

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

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HEALTH AND SAFETY STATEMENT

It is Stowe by Chartley Parish Council's (SbCPC) policy to meet all statutory requirements relating to Health, Safety and Welfare (HS&W) of its officials, and also to ensure the HS&W of its Councillors, contractors, visitors and members of the public who may be affected by its activities.

SbCPC will endeavour to prevent injury and ill health to its officials, Councillors, contractors, visitors and members of the public and therefore has written and communicated this policy together with its HS&W management procedures to those concerned.

SbCPC bears the legal responsibility for all matters of HS&W for the Council and will ensure that statutory requirements are met through the management applied by Clerks, Councillors and officials. The Council will set the aims and objectives for the HS&W of the Council.

Performance of HS&W will be reviewed through regular reviews as an agenda item on the SbCPC's Employment Committee, where actions will be agreed and timescales set.

SbCPC will manage HS&W by:

- Controlling HS&W risks at work through proportionate Safe Systems of Work such as Risk Assessments and Method Statements.
- Involving officials and Councillors on HS&W issues that affect them.
- Making sure that where officials work, and any equipment they use, is safe and fit for purpose.
- Providing appropriate protective clothing as needed to carry out tasks
- Making sure that dangerous substances are stored and used safely.
- Making sure officials, (especially new and young officials), have relevant information and training on HS&W and understand their own responsibilities towards their own H&S as well as that of others.
- Making sure officials can do their jobs, and are properly trained.
- Preventing accidents and work-related health problems.
- Regularly checking that working conditions are safe and healthy.
- Regularly reviewing this policy and making changes if necessary

The management of Health, Safety and Welfare is an integral part of the continual improvement and best practise process, which is adopted throughout the Council's activities and includes the provision of:

1 CIVIL LAW AND THE DUTY OF CARE

1.1 The main criminal law controlling health and safety at work in the UK is the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (<http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>).

1.2 The HSW Act 1974 sets out the general duties that employers have towards their

officials and anyone else who may be harmed by the employers' work activities of workplace. This requires them to do what is reasonably practicable by balancing the level of risk against measures needed to control the real risk in terms of money, time or trouble. However, employers do not need to take action if it would be grossly disproportionate to the level of risk.

1.3 Under the HSW Act 1974, an organisation with 5 or more employees, must have a written health and safety policy, and make it available to officials and to review it regularly. SbCPC has resolved to maintain a H&S Policy regardless of employee numbers as this demonstrates good practice.

2 RESPONSIBILITY FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.1 Overall responsibility for Health, Safety & Welfare (HS&W) belongs to the Parish Councillors sitting in Full Council:

2.2 Daily responsibility for managing this policy is given to the Parish Clerk.

2.3 Officials are responsible for

2.3.1 Co-operating with people who are responsible for HS&W.

2.3.2 Using safety / protective equipment when it is necessary

2.3.3 Taking care of their own health and safety

2.3.4 Reporting HS&W concerns to the right person as written in this policy

2.3.5 Not undertaking tasks for which they have not received appropriate training

3 CONTROLLING THE H&S RISKS AT WORK

3.1 , The Clerk will undertake the Health and Safety Risk Assessments and produce Method Statements for unusual high-risk activities. Risk Assessments (generic and bespoke) should be proportionate and appropriate.

3.2 Officials will be expected to sign Risk Assessments and Method Statements to indicate that they have read them and agree to work to them.

3.3 Contractors will be expected to undertake and provide copies of Risk Assessments for agreed works where appropriate.

3.4 The results of the generic risk assessments will be presented to the Employment Committee and will be added to the website as appropriate.

3.5 The Full Council, advised by the Employment Committee, should agree any action needed to manage the risks that have been found.

3.6 The Clerk will carry out the agreed action points within an agreed timescale.

3.7 The Employment Committee will check that the actions taken have reduced the risks as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP).

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3.8 Assessments will be reviewed with a minimum of 12 months intervals, or when there is a change to the way the Council works, or a non-generic high-risk item of work.

3.9 On an annual basis and following any changes, all officials will sign to confirm that they have read and understood the H&S at work policy document ,which must be amended as duties alter as linked to their individual job descriptions.

4 RISK ASSESSMENTS

4.1 A risk assessment is, as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) describes is:

"A careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people...the aim is to make sure that no one gets hurt or becomes ill."

A hazard is anything that may cause harm to a person(s) or property, eg chemicals, electricity, working from ladders, noise etc. A risk assessment may require an assessment of how severe that harm may be.

A hazard needs to be considered alongside its likelihood of occurrence.
By factoring the hazard, its severity and its likelihood, the risk can be quantified.

4.2 Identifying the Hazards

4.2.1 First walk around the workplace identifying anything that could be potentially hazardous and making a written list.

4.2.2 Include everything you can think of; not just things that are currently obviously dangerous; but anything with a potential risk. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk will undertake the risk assessment separately and will compare lists afterwards, in case either has missed anything out.

4.2.3 Consider invisible hazards e.g. stress (often related to working long hours, under pressure, to tight deadlines) or physical assault. Invisible hazards may also include fumes e.g. photocopiers and laser printers emit ozone when in use.

4.2.4 Consider whether things that might not normally be hazardous might be in relation to specific people e.g. pregnant women or workers with disabilities.

4.2.5 Be realistic in considering the likelihood of the hazard occurring.

4.3 Identify who is at risk

4.3.1 Once you have identified and listed all hazards, you need to identify what the specific risk is, and who is particularly at risk.

4.3.2 Some people will be more at risk from particular hazards or due to circumstances e.g. working alone, or due to a disability.

4.4 Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

4.4.1 Think about what you can do to remove the risk. Compare what you currently do with what is accepted as good practice. The main purpose of doing a risk assessment is to be aware of the risks, so that you can take action to eliminate or at least reduce the risks.

4.5 Record your findings

4.5.1 If you employ five or more people the law requires you to record your findings.

4.5.2 You must ensure the written record of your findings is made available to all officials and that they co-operate with the carrying out of the recommendations made as a result of the assessment including any training required.

4.6 Review your assessment

Few workplaces remain the same indefinitely. Assessments must be periodically reviewed when there are major changes in the workplace, such as the introduction of new tools or machinery, or new ways of working. This will be simple provided the original assessment was undertaken and recorded clearly.

5 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

5.1 Substances hazardous to health can take many forms for example chemicals; fumes; dusts; vapours; mists or biological agents (germs). Once identified in the workplace the employer needs to undertake a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Assessment.

5.2 Like a standard risk assessment, the employer needs to ask the following:

5.2.1 What do we do that involves hazardous substances?

5.2.2 How can these cause harm?

5.2.3 How can we reduce the risk of harm occurring?

5.3 Stowe by Chartley Parish Council will endeavour to prevent exposure at source using the following criteria:

5.3.1 Can we avoid using a hazardous substance or use a safer process?

5.3.2 Can we substitute it for something safer?

5.3.3 Can we use a safer form?

5.4 Stowe by Chartley Parish Council will apply the principles of Good Control Practice

5.4.1 Minimise emission, release and spread

5.4.2 Consider routes of exposure

5.4.3 Choose control measures proportionate to risk

5.4.4 Choose effective control options

5.4.5 Personal Protective Equipment

5.4.6 Review effectiveness of controls

5.4.7 Provide information and training

5.4.8 .Where new measures are introduced, consideration should be given to whether this introduces any additional risks.

6 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

6.1 Stowe by Chartley Parish Council has specific duties concerning the provision and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) at work.

6.2 PPE is equipment that will protect the user against health and safety risks at work. It can include items such as safety helmets; gloves; eye protection; ear protection; high-visibility clothing; safety footwear and safety harnesses. It also includes respiratory protective equipment (RPE).

6.3 Making the workplace safe includes providing instructions; procedures; training and supervision to encourage people to work safely and responsibly.

6.4 Even where engineering controls and safe systems of work have been applied, some hazards might remain. PPE is needed in these cases to reduce the risk of injuries to:

6.4.1 The lungs, e.g. from breathing in contaminated air

6.4.2 The head and feet, e.g. from falling materials

6.4.3 The eyes, e.g. from flying particles or splashes of corrosive liquids

6.4.4 The skin, e.g. from contact with corrosive materials

6.4.5 The body, e.g. from extremes of heat and cold.

6.5 PPE should only be used as a last resort as a method of risk management. If it is still needed after implementing other controls then Stowe by Chartley Parish Council will provide this for officials free of charge. The Council will choose the PPE carefully, taking specialist advice if required, and will ensure that officials are trained to use it properly and that they know how to detect and report any faults.

6.6 Failure by an employee to wear the provided PPE may result in disciplinary measures being taken against that employee up to and including summary dismissal.