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# **Health and Safety Policy**

**2024**

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# Ivybridge Town Council

It is our policy to provide, so far as is reasonably practicable :-

- A safe working environment for our employees, visitors and others who may be affected by what we do.
- Safe plant, equipment and systems of work.
- Safe use, handling and storage of articles and substances.
- Instruction and training for and consultation with our employees.
- Adequate facilities and welfare arrangements.
- Sufficient resources to implement the policy and the assignment of responsibilities.

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to take reasonable steps for their health and safety and other people who may be affected and to co-operate with arrangements in all matters relating to health and safety.

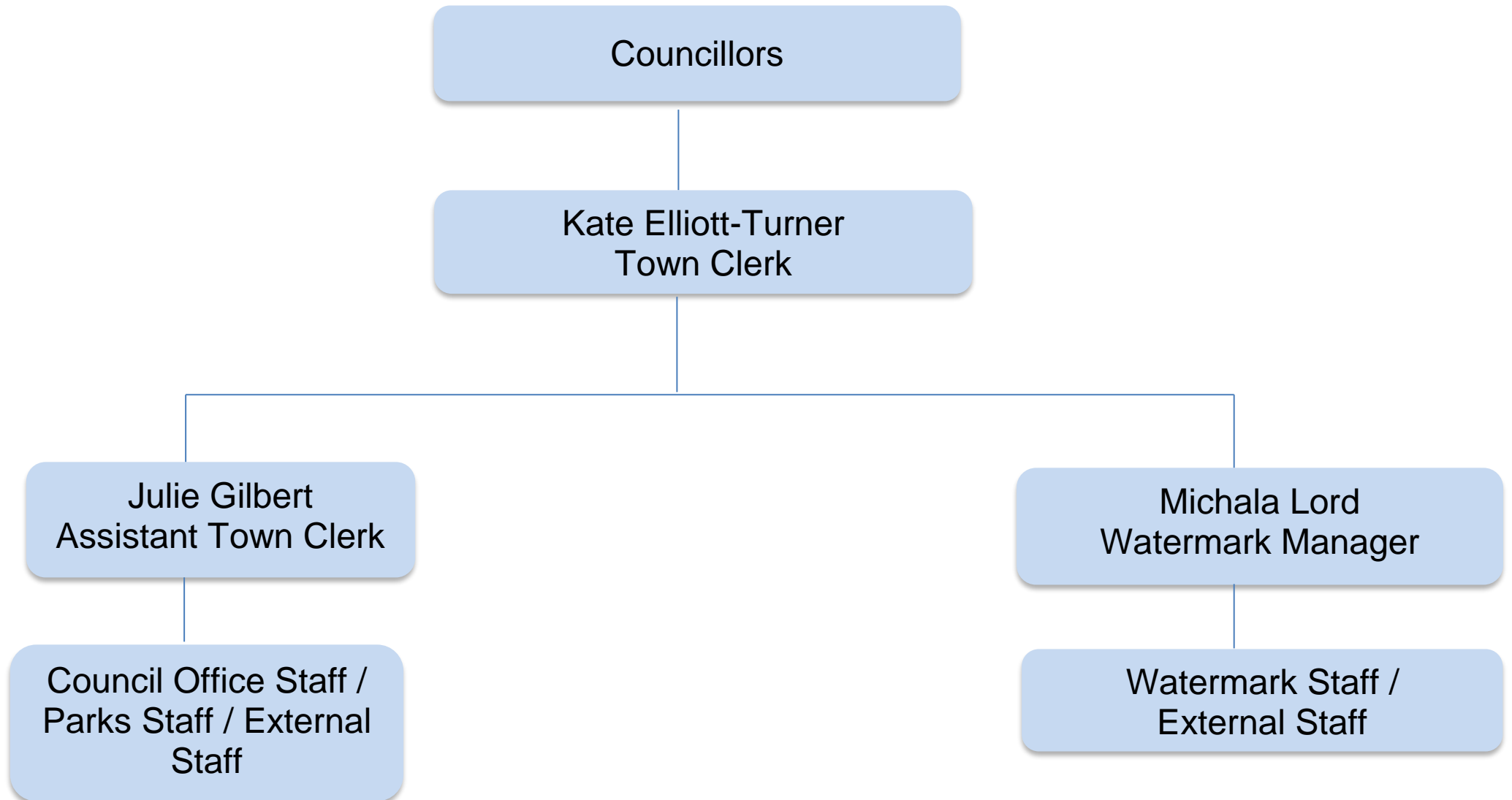
This policy will be kept up-to-date and reviewed annually.

Signed .....

Position .....

Date .....

# Health And Safety Organisational Chart



## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Town Councillors**

The Councillors as Members of the Council have the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Ivybridge Town Council but delegates this responsibility through the Clerk down to individual managers, supervisors and employees.

The Council will ensure that:

- it provides a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation
- all its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions
- adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety
- it will promote the active participation of employees in improving health and safety performance
- it will review the health and safety performance of the Council on an annual basis

### **Town Clerk**

The Town Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for health and safety within the Council. They will ensure that:

- the Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all health and safety requirements
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and work equipment in a safe condition
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented

- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of the planning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger
- health and safety objectives are set and their achievement is measured and reported in the annual report.

### **Assistant Town Clerk and Watermark Manager**

The Assistant Town Clerk and Watermark Manager will ensure that in their areas of control:

- they actively lead the implementation of the Health and Safety Policy
- they supervise their staff to ensure that they work safely, providing increased supervision for new and young workers
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented
- risk assessments are completed, recorded and regularly reviewed
- accidents, ill health and "near miss" incidents at work are investigated and recorded. The Assistant Town Clerk is assigned to undertake reporting of reportable incidents
- they communicate and consult with staff on health and safety issues
- they encourage staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns
- safety training for staff is identified, undertaken and recorded to ensure staff are competent to carry out their work in a safe manner
- issues concerning safety raised by anyone are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented
- premises, plant and work equipment are maintained in a safe condition
- personal protective equipment is provided, staff instructed in its use and that records are kept
- adequate arrangements for fire and first aid are established
- any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to the Town Clerk for action

- welfare facilities provided are maintained in a satisfactory state
- hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedure
- health surveillance is carried out and records are kept
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and are made aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures
- health and safety notices are displayed
- agreed safety standards are maintained particularly those relating to housekeeping
- health and safety rules are followed by all

### **Parks Officers**

The Park Officers will ensure:

- work equipment is maintained in a safe condition
- personal protective equipment is worn and maintained in good condition. Any faults are reported immediately
- any safety issues that cannot be dealt with are referred to the Assistant Town Clerk for action
- hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner according to manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures

### **Employees**

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety
- take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions
- observe the safety rules
- comply with the Health and Safety policy
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others
- dress safely for their particular working environment or occupation
- conduct themselves in responsible, professional manner at all times
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed

- avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personal safety and the safety of others
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to their supervisor
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to their supervisor or line manager
- report all accidents to their supervisor or line manager whether an injury is sustained or not
- attend as requested any health and safety training course
- observe all laid down procedures for processes, materials and substances used
- observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit routes.

## **ARRANGEMENTS**

### **Accident Investigation and Reporting**

An accident is an unplanned event that causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both.

A near miss is an unplanned event that does not cause injury or damage but had the potential to do so.

It is our policy to investigate:

- All accidents resulting in any reportable injury or losses of any assets
- Accidents, however minor
- All near-misses

A documented investigation will take place for selected incidents with witness statements and photographs taken where appropriate.

Certain accidents causing injury, diseases and dangerous occurrences are reportable to the enforcing authority under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. A list of reportable incidents can be found on [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor).

Reporting of such an incident is done on line via the <https://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm> portal.

## **Alcohol and Drug Abuse**

No alcohol can be consumed by employees during work time unless under the permission of the Town Clerk.

Anyone found taking illegal drugs, or alcohol without permission, during work time is guilty of gross misconduct, and will be disciplined accordingly.

The Council reserves the right to require employees to undertake a professional medical test from a suitable provider if it considers there to be a safety implication.

## **Asbestos**

The Policy of Ivybridge Town Council is to:

- Produce and maintain an Asbestos Register that is available to all staff, contractors and property users
- Promote awareness of the hazards associated with asbestos
- Produce a Management Policy and Procedures Plan
- Periodically review the plan to ensure that any areas of asbestos requiring it, are sealed, encapsulated, inspected, monitored, labelled or removed
- Ensure the Council's Policy conforms to Regulation 4 of the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012

## **Consultation and Training**

The Council is committed to providing employees with adequate information, instruction and training. Staff meetings will be held regularly with feedback and suggestions welcomed from all staff members.

A mixture of both internal and external training will be provided and;

- We will ensure that all newly appointed or promoted staff receive an efficient induction into their jobs
- We will provide training to increase the productivity and performance of existing staff, ensuring that they are updated in line with new legislative requirements, techniques and technology
- Training needs will be reviewed at least once a year
- Records of training will be kept for all employees

## **Contractors**

All contractors working on our premises and land are required to comply with relevant rules and regulations governing their work activities.



All contractors to be used for Council work are required to prove their competence by completing a questionnaire and providing evidence.

Before any work is undertaken a risk assessment and method statement are requested and reviewed by The Watermark Manager/Assistant Town Clerk/Town Clerk before work commences.

## **COSHH**

We recognise that some substances have the potential to cause ill health and we will introduce measures to identify any such substances our employees use or are exposed to in the course of their work.

Where practical alternatives exist, we will not use harmful substances.

Substances that we must use will be assessed and control measures introduced to prevent risk.

Employees will be advised of the risks, provided with the appropriate protective equipment and trained accordingly.

## **Display Screen Equipment**

All reasonable steps will be taken by the Council to secure the health and safety of employees who work with display screen equipment.

To achieve this objective the Council will:

- carry out an assessment of each user's workstation
- implement necessary measures to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment
- provide adequate information and training to persons working with display screen equipment
- endeavour to incorporate changes of task within the working day, to prevent intensive periods of on-screen activity
- review software to ensure that it is suitable for the task and is not unnecessarily complicated
- arrange for the provision of free eye tests when requested, at regular intervals thereafter and where a visual problem is experienced
- arrange for the supply, free of charge, of any corrective appliances (glasses or contact lenses) where these are required specifically for working with display screen equipment
- advise existing employees, and all persons applying for work with display screen equipment, of the risks to health and how these are to be avoided
- investigate any discomfort or ill-health believed to be associated with the use of display screen equipment and take appropriate remedial action

- make special arrangements for individuals with health conditions that could be adversely affected by working with display screen equipment

Employees must:

- comply with the instructions and training given regarding safe workstation set-up and use, including the need for regular changes of activity or breaks and the use of the equipment provided
- inform their line manager of any disability or health condition which may affect their ability to work using display screen equipment or be affected by working with DSE (this information will be treated confidentially)
- report to their line manager any discomfort or health concern believed to be associated with the use of DSE (this information will be treated confidentially)

### **Driving At Work**

Driving is an integral part to some roles within the Council and has inherent risks associated with it which drivers should be made aware of.

The Council is committed to reducing the risks its staff face or create when driving at work and therefore will:

- Ensure those driving for business are competent and require a declaration that their private vehicle is suitable, appropriately maintained and insured
- ensure risk assessments are completed and that journeys are planned
- not put unreasonable time constraints on travel
- provide any additional training that may be deemed necessary to reduce driving related occupational risks

Where providing Council vehicles:

- Ensure those driving for business are competent and require drivers to annually complete a drivers declaration confirming they are physically fit to drive and request a DVLA check code to allow their driving licence details to be checked
- maintain them to the required legal standard and ensure suitable for their purpose
- provide and maintain additional tools and equipment necessary for the purposes of the journey
- provide them with regard to safety and the environment i.e. higher ENCAP ratings, lower emissions, better fuel consumption

- provide access to breakdown support and recovery

### **Drivers**

Drivers will remain responsible for their safety and that of others. They must comply with the Highway Code and Road Traffic Act.

It is the responsibility of drivers to inform the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk:

- Anything that could affect their driving, e.g. health conditions or injuries, use of prescribed medication
- Changes to licence such as; limitations, offences recorded, period bans
- Defects in Council vehicles that affect ability/safety to drive
- Any accidents/incidents that occurred whilst driving on behalf of the Council

While driving, drivers must:

- Be fit and have a level of alcohol below the maximum level allowed (ideally zero) and not under influence of any drugs that may affect the ability to drive. Any medications that may affect ability to drive should be discussed with the Town Clerk/Assistant Town Clerk
- Adjust their driving position, head restraints and mirrors to ensure maximum comfort and safety
- Drive in accordance with the applicable law and with consideration for the safety of passengers and other road users
- Only use electronic devices, e.g. mobile phones, satellite navigation, mp3 player, when set up to do so, i.e. using a hands-free device

### **Office based staff should:**

- Not expect staff to answer calls when they are driving. Leave a short message and await the return call

## **Electricity At Work**

All electrical systems on our premises will be inspected to ensure there is no danger.

All portable appliances will be given a thorough electrical test by a competent person at fixed intervals, which reflect the potential risks associated with the class of appliance.

The fixed wiring installation supplying electrical sockets, lighting or other wired in equipment will be inspected by a competent electrician at least every five years.

Any hirer of the premises will be required to produce evidence that electrical equipment being brought on to the premises is PAT tested.

## **Fire Safety**

The Council put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified. These measures will include the following arrangements, procedures and controls.

- Regular inspection of the premises for fire safety.
- Adequate means of detecting and warning of a fire
- Fire extinguishers will be placed at clearly signed fire points.
- Emergency exit routes will be kept clear at all times.
- We will train in the use of extinguishers, procedures for fire drills and evacuation.
- Records of training and drills will be kept.
- Undertake an annual fire risk assessment
- Regular inspection of the premises for fire safety.

## **First Aid**

We recognise our legal duty to make sufficient provision for first aid to employees.

We will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that there are an adequate number of trained first aiders.

Lone workers will also have their needs considered in respect of first aid.

In the event of anything other than minor injuries, medical assistance must be sought.

## **Lone Working**

Ivybridge Town Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety.

Ivybridge Town Council will determine, by risk assessment, those activities where work can actually be done safely by one unaccompanied person. This will include the identification of hazards from means of access and/or egress, machinery, goods, substances, etc.

Particular consideration will be given to:

- the remoteness or isolation of workplaces
- any problems of communication
- the possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons
- the nature of injury or damage to health

## **Information and Training**

Employees will be given all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.

Employees will be required to follow the safe working procedures devised including:

- when working alone, e.g. in an isolated area a member of the Council is aware of your location and expected time frame necessary to complete the task
- check that work being done has been subject to risk assessment and check the assessment yourself – some work may have been identified as requiring the assistance of a second person or simply prohibited from being a lone working activity
- if possible and arranged beforehand, keep in regular contact with someone else, e.g. use a mobile phone to call into the office every couple of hours indicating your movements
- If there is no mobile phone connectivity then ensure you arrange for an alternative method of checking in i.e. visiting the office, walkie talkie, other
- do not put yourself at risk; if you do not feel safe discuss the situation with the Town Clerk

Certain tasks will not be carried out whilst working alone and these include working at height i.e. from ladders, heavy lifting activities. Further arrangements will be put in place for these activities.

## **Manual Handling**

Manual handling risks are present in most aspects of work.

We will undertake risk assessments in respect of all manual handling operations identified as having a significant risk and will strive to reduce these risks as far as possible.

Training in lifting techniques will be provided for staff involved in all operations identified as having a significant risk.

## **Noise**

Certain activities generate noise such as the use of equipment and machinery however it is the exposure over a long period of time that is most likely to cause harm.

The Council will assess the level of exposure and put the appropriate level of control in place which may include replacing the noisy equipment or it may be a simple of providing ear protection for individuals.

All employees affected by noise will be provided with information, instruction and training.

## **Occupational Ill Health**

We will take all reasonably practicable measures to protect our employees from suffering any adverse health risks. Early identification of health risks associated with our activities allows the council to implement adequate controls measures.

If it is decided that the advice of an Occupational Health Advisor is required, and it is considered necessary to provide reasonable adjustment or health supervision to support employees, the employee must adhere to the advice and adjustments provided.

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

PPE will be provided where our risk assessments show that a risk cannot otherwise be avoided.

It will only be used where it is not reasonably practicable to modify the activity, the process, or the method of work to prevent risk.

PPE will be maintained and replaced as necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Employees must report loss or obvious defects in PPE as soon as practicable.

## **Pregnancy**

Pregnant or nursing employees should review work activities with their line manager and the Assistant Town Clerk regularly to ensure health, wellbeing and safety.

Employees should inform the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk at the latest 15 weeks before the baby is due. However, if the employee informs

the Town Clerk or Assistant Town Clerk earlier than this, reasonable adjustments and time off for antenatal appointments will be provided.

### **Risk Assessment**

We will carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of our employees and to others who might be affected by our work activities.

### **Safety Inspections**

Safety inspections will be arranged at appropriate intervals. All safety equipment such as interlocking guards, emergency stops and pressure mats will be regularly tested to ensure effectiveness.

### **Smoking at Work**

Smoking during work time is not allowed, even if outside of work vehicles and enclosed spaces covered by legislation.

For the purpose of this Policy e-cigarettes or “Vaping” is classed as smoking and is subject to the same restrictions.

### **Stress Management**

The definition of stress is “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other demands placed upon them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

We recognise that stress is an increasing factor in our daily lives. The Council’s Stress Policy is attached under Appendix 2.

### **The Indoor Environment**

It is our policy to provide a working environment that is safe and comfortable.

### **The Outdoor Environment**

#### **Trees**

The Council are responsible for numerous trees situated around the town and acknowledge its responsibility to ensure they are well maintained.

Trees are of great benefit to the Town and the overall risk to human safety is extremely low, however the Council does have a duty of care and will undertake a balanced and proportionate approach to tree safety.

- Independent Inspection – The Council on a regular basis will arrange for all trees under their control to be assessed by a suitably qualified person with expertise in tree management. The Council will react accordingly to the recommendations with regards to tree maintenance.

- Visual Inspection – Depending on the recommendations of the expert report the Council will undertake regular visual inspections at appropriate intervals. The interval will be dependent on condition, location and size of the tree.

All inspections will be documented.

### **Play Areas**

The Council recognises the need to keep the play areas and equipment safe for the users and as such will continue to do the following:

- Weekly inspection by Parks Officers
- Quarterly inspection by District Council
- Annual Independent Inspection

### **Visitors**

Our policy regarding the control of visitors on our premises is that:

- We must be aware that the visitor is on the premises
- Visitors are the responsibility of the Council whilst on the premises
- All visitors must comply with any instructions given to them

### **Work Equipment**

We will, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure that all work equipment is safe and without risk.

To minimise the risk of injury from work equipment we will:

- Carry out risk assessments of all equipment in use and all new or second hand equipment purchases
- Carry out inspections to ensure all safety critical features remain fully effective
- Ensure that all maintenance procedures are kept up-to-date
- Provide suitable training

### **Young Persons (aged under 18)**

We will pay special regard to the needs of any young persons by risk assessing:

- the tasks we are asking them to do
- Statutory time limits
- Safeguarding risks
- Their level of experience



**APPENDIX 1**  
**ARRANGEMENTS**

- Final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Council and its Councillors
- Management responsibility is that of the Town Clerk
- Day to day responsibility for ensuring the policy is put into practice is delegated to the Assistant Town Clerk
- Our nominated Competent Person is contracted to “James Hallam Insurance Brokers”
- The following employees are responsible for health and safety in their areas:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Area</b>
Michala Lord (Watermark Manager)	The Watermark
Julie Gilbert (Assistant Town Clerk)	Council Offices/Parks and Open Spaces

- Employees should report any health and safety concerns to Julie Gilbert or Michala Lord depending on area, or supervisor if an urgent situation.
- Julie Gilbert and Michala Lord will be responsible for ensuring any risk assessments required are undertaken in their area.
- Action required to reduce or control the risks will be approved by the Assistant Town Clerk.
- Julie Gilbert and Michala Lord will be responsible for ensuring that employees are made aware of the findings of the risk assessments and any control measures identified in their area.
- Any defects in plant, equipment, buildings or systems should be reported to Julie Gilbert or Michala Lord depending on area.
- The Health and Safety Law Poster is displayed in both buildings.

- Induction training for new employees is the responsibility of the Line Manager.
- Job training will be co-ordinated by the Line Manager.
- The training plan will be reviewed at least annually.
- Training records are kept in the Town Hall.
- The first aid box is kept in the Reception area at the Town Hall, in the kitchens at The Watermark and a first aid kit in the Park Ranger's van.
- The Accident Book is kept in the safe at the Town Hall and in the office at The Watermark.
- All accidents should be reported to the supervisor or line manager, who will then report to the Assistant Town Clerk who will report to the Town Clerk.
- The Assistant Town Clerk will conduct the accident investigation.
- Where appropriate, if escalation is required, it will be referred to council's insurers and/or solicitor.
- Emergency escape routes are checked regularly as part of opening up and closing down buildings each day.
- Emergency lighting and fire safety checks are carried out monthly by allocated employees.
- Fire extinguishers are maintained by Devon and Cornwall Fire Protection for the Town Hall and Universal Fire and Security for The Watermark.
- The fire alarm is tested weekly by the Admin Officer at the Town Hall and the Duty Manager at The Watermark.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **STRESS POLICY**

1. Life and work have become much busier in recent times. There seems to be too much to do and too little time to do it in. As a consequence, more employees are experiencing stress at work.
2. Stress at work can come about for a variety of reasons. It may be stress carrying over from an employee's personal life, excessive workload, unreasonable expectations, or overly-demanding work colleagues. As a reasonable employer, we try to ensure that you are in a pleasant working environment and that you are as free from stress as possible.
3. If you experience unreasonable stress which you think may be caused by work you should raise your concerns with your line manager or the Town Clerk to help resolve the situation. If appropriate, the Council's grievance procedure, Section 6.5 of the Council's Employee Handbook, should be followed.
4. Managers, when considering activities of their department, will pay special attention to potential risks from stress and signs of stress at work.
5. If possible the Council will offer confidential and individual support or counselling to employees either from a professional provider or by considering reasonable adjustments or other flexibility at work to enable an employee to carry out their role in the organisation.
6. If an employee feels they have a clear work stress-related problem, a consultation with an Occupational Health consultant will be arranged by the Council. Any advice will be reviewed by the Council and any appropriate counselling from a suitable provider will be provided. However, this is not an alternative to looking at the cause of the stress and, if work-related, considering what adjustments, if any, can be made to minimise stress at work.
7. Following advice from OH, and implementation of any advice, the situation shall be reassessed. If the stress remains unacceptable by the employee concerned, further advice from OH will be sought.