

Health and Safety Policy and Handbook



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1. Health and Safety at Birchwood Town Council

At Birchwood Town Council we believe that protecting the health and safety of everyone affected by our business activities is of paramount importance.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires us to provide a safe working environment, safe equipment, adequate welfare facilities and the information, instruction and training that our employees need to keep safe at work. Compliance with the law is the minimum acceptable standard and we will always strive to exceed this.

This Policy and Handbook contains important information that you need to know about health and safety, including:

- Concise summaries of our arrangements for specific topics
- Links to our detailed health and safety policies and procedures
- Links to further reference sources provided by the Health & Safety Executive and other stakeholders.

We all have a shared responsibility to keep everyone affected by our business operations free from harm. If you have any health & safety concerns, please discuss these with your line manager in the first instance.

This Policy and Handbook is intended as a concise reference guide to how we manage health and safety. Should you require further details of each topic, advice and support is available by contacting our health and safety advisers on hello@terrainsafety.uk.

2. Health & Safety Policy Statement



Health and Safety Commitment

Birchwood Town Council regards having great standards of health and safety as a key business objective. To help us achieve this we will:

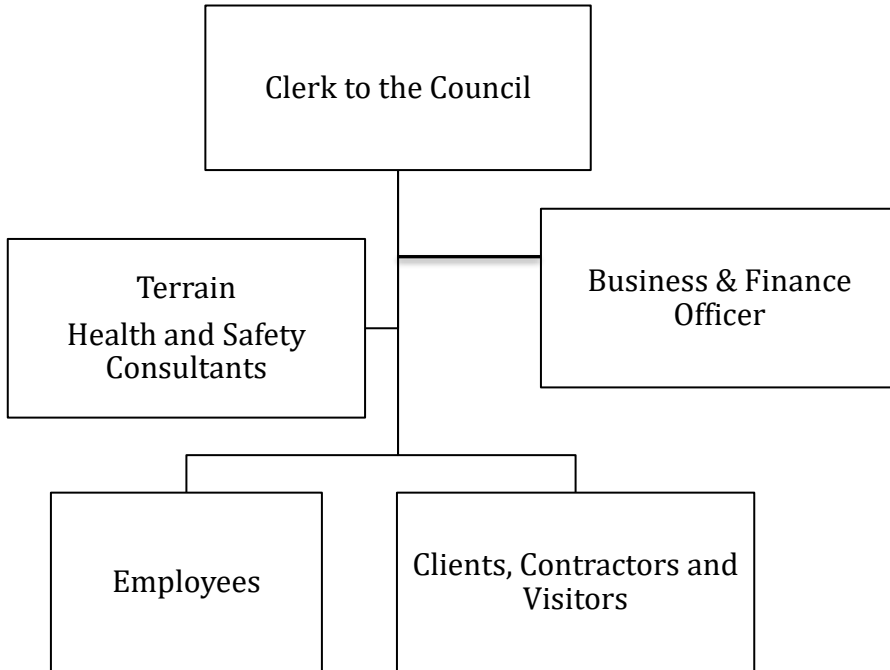
- Provide adequate control of any health and safety risks arising from our work activities;
- Consult with our employees on matters affecting their health and safety;
- Provide and maintain safe equipment;
- Ensure safe handling and use of substances;
- Provide information, instruction and supervision for employees;
- Ensure all employees are competent to do their job safely, and give them adequate training;
- Prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- Review and revise this policy as necessary at regular intervals.

Clerk to the Council:

Fiona McDonald

Date: July 2024

3. Organisation for Health and Safety



4. Responsibilities

As an employer, Birchwood Town Council has a legal responsibility to protect the health, safety and welfare of our employees and anyone else affected by our business activities (i.e. contractors, visitors, members of the public, etc.).

This means that we must:

- Provide a written health and safety policy
- Assess the risks to employees, customers and anyone else who might be affected by our business activities
- Arrange for effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of any preventative and protective measures provided for health and safety
- Ensure that we have access to competent health and safety advice
- Consult with our employees about the health and safety risks associated with their work and on any preventative and protective measures in place

The following have been allocated specific health and safety responsibilities:

4.1 The Clerk to the Council

As the most senior person in the organisation, the Clerk to the Council is ultimately responsible for health and safety.

She will make sure that:

- Our health and safety standards are met.
- Adequate resources are provided to achieve our health and safety policy requirements.
- Health and safety performance is reviewed on a regular basis, areas for improvement identified and appropriate action taken.

4.2 Elected Members

The Elected Members have a responsibility to show commitment to our health and safety objectives, including, within their areas of control:

- Assigning health and safety responsibilities.
- Ensuring our health and safety standards are implemented.
- Seeking competent advice to minimise risk and design safe working practices.
- Monitoring effectiveness and making improvements as required.

4.3 Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors have a responsibility for the health and safety of employees being managed. Birchwood Town Council will ensure all managers and supervisors receive the health and safety information, instruction and training they need to enable them to carry out their duties effectively.

Managers and supervisors must take all reasonable measures to protect the health and safety of everyone in their areas of control, including the work undertaken and any equipment or facilities required for the work. They are also responsible for ensuring employees in their areas:

- Are properly trained and competent to do their job safely
- Have access to health and safety support and first aid facilities
- Report any health and safety hazards that they encounter

4.4 Employees

Employees have a responsibility to help Birchwood Town Council implement our health and safety policy, and a legal duty to look after themselves and others whilst at work. We have developed ways of working which require employees to:

- Follow health and safety procedures
- Act in a sensible manner whilst at work
- Use safety equipment properly
- Report safety hazards or problems with equipment to a manager
- Report all accidents to a manager, whether an injury happens or not
- Complete any health and safety training
- Know the emergency evacuation procedure

At Birchwood Town Council we take health and safety seriously. Employees found to have compromised their own or someone else's safety will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal.

4.5 Competent Person

Birchwood Town Council has appointed Terrain under section 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to take the role of Competent Person and advise on the requirements of health and safety legislation.

The Competent Person's duties may include:

- Providing technical input to the health and safety strategy
- Monitoring the health and safety policy and reviewing health and safety performance
- Undertaking/providing technical advice on risk assessment
- Undertaking health and safety inspections and audits
- Designing and delivering health and safety training
- Accident/incident investigation
- Advising on legal requirements as legislation changes

4.6 Visitors

All visitors to Birchwood Town Council premises have a responsibility to take care of their own and other's health and safety and must follow our health and safety policies, procedures and instructions.

Visitors will be hosted by a Birchwood Town Council employee and provided with any health and safety information they may need to keep them safe during their visit, including instructions on what to do in an emergency.

4.7 Contractors

Contractors must adhere to all Birchwood Town Council health and safety policies, procedures and instructions whilst working on our premises. In addition, contractors have a responsibility to report any issue that may affect their own or others' health and safety to Birchwood Town Council.

4.8 Members of the Public

Members of the public who may be affected by our operations have a responsibility to follow any instruction given in relation to health and safety. This includes adhering to any safety signs provided, refraining from smoking in smoke free premises and following any instruction given in the event of an emergency.

5. Arrangements for Health & Safety

This section contains details of the policies and procedures we have in place to ensure that we meet our health and safety responsibilities.

The subject areas are arranged in alphabetical order for ease of use

5.1 Accidents, Incidents and Ill Health

An *accident* is an unplanned event that causes injury to people and/or damage to property. A *near miss* is an unplanned event that could have caused injury or damage but didn't on this occasion. A *work-related illness* is a prescribed illness that the employee contracts either in the course of their work or from a non-employee (as a result of work related activities).

All accidents must be reported; those resulting in personal injury must be recorded in the Birchwood Town Council Accident Book. All employees must make sure that they know where the Accident Book is kept.

It is imperative that all accidents/incidents are reported as soon as possible after the event.

The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) require employers, and anyone else with responsibilities within a workplace, to report and keep records of work-related deaths and serious injuries, cases of diagnosed industrial disease and certain 'dangerous occurrences'.

5.2 Communication and Consultation with Employees

Birchwood Town Council has a legal duty to consult with employees and/or their representatives on matters regarding health and safety.

We believe that open and honest; two-way communication is important, so that we can explain the rationale for our approach to health and safety, and employees are able to understand this, provide feedback and voice any opinions/concerns.

This communication and consultation may include:

- Individual conversations/discussions on health and safety matters
- Notice boards to display essential health and safety information in prominent places
- Internal publications, intranet sites, newsletters, etc.
- Staff meetings to discuss health and safety
- Dedicated Health and Safety meetings, with both senior management and employees represented

In addition, we will display the '*Health and Safety Law – What You Should Know*' poster/leaflet in a prominent position. This poster provides a basic summary of the essential responsibilities of both employers and employees in respect of health and safety.

5.3 Contractors

We have a responsibility to make sure that any contractor engaged to work on Birchwood Town Council premises is competent, and able to carry out their duties safely and without risk to themselves or others.

Birchwood Town Council expects the same high standards of health and safety from contractors as we do from employees. Any breach of these standards will be treated as a serious matter and may result in the contractor being removed.

Anyone suspecting that a contractor may be endangering safety should report this to a Birchwood Town Council manager immediately. An investigation can then be undertaken and a decision taken as to whether the work should be stopped.

5.4 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (CoSHH)

Birchwood Town Council will take all reasonable steps to make sure employees who may come into contact with hazardous substances are protected. We will work to prevent exposure wherever possible, and ensure that where exposure can't be prevented, it is controlled within statutory limits.

Employees (and others) who may come into contact with dangerous substances will receive appropriate information, instruction and training, so that they understand the dangers and know how to protect themselves.

All hazardous substances used will be subject to a suitable and sufficient risk assessment, which will record the control measures required. This will be reviewed on a regular basis. All employees using hazardous substances must comply with the identified safety measures at all times. An employee who hasn't received the appropriate information, instruction and training is strictly forbidden from using any hazardous substance.

5.5 Disabilities

Birchwood Town Council will endeavour to ensure that the health and safety of anyone with a disability (including employees, visitors, contractors and members of the public) is protected. To this effect we will:

- Ensure that specific risk assessments are undertaken to identify the particular needs of disabled people
- Implement reasonable adjustments to the premises and/or working arrangements to accommodate people with disabilities
- Encourage employees with particular needs to suggest any potential improvements to their manager
- Ensure that any employee whose mobility may be impaired in the event of an emergency evacuation has a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan in place to enable them to evacuate safely
- Ensure that suitable plans are in place so that people with disabilities (e.g. visitors, members of the public, etc.) are able to evacuate the premises safely

The Equality Act 2010 includes legislation to prevent disabled people from being treated less favourably as a result of having a disability. We are committed to ensuring that everyone associated with our business including employees, contractors, visitors and the general public is treated with dignity and respect.

Any employee who breaches these requirements may be subject to disciplinary action under the normal procedure.

5.6 Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Birchwood Town Council will take all reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of employees who regularly work with computers (DSE).

We will carry out an assessment of each user's workstation to ensure that all equipment is set up to meet the needs of the individual.

In addition, all DSE users are entitled to free, regular eye tests. Where employees require glasses specifically for use with display screen equipment, the company will provide these (subject to a maximum value).

Users with a health condition that may affect use of DSE should inform their manager. This information will be treated as medical in confidence and not disclosed without prior consent.

5.7 Driving on Company Business

Employees may be required to drive on company business, either in their own vehicle, a company vehicle or a hire vehicle. We will do all we can to reduce the risks to employees, however drivers must be aware of the risks and take steps to reduce them as much as possible. All drivers must comply with the requirements of road traffic legislation at all times (including the use of mobile phones and wearing of seat belts).

It is the responsibility of each driver to ensure that their vehicle is in a safe, well maintained condition, that they hold a valid driving licence, that they are physically fit and capable of driving, and that they plan their journey to allow sufficient time.

It is the driver's responsibility to inform their line manager of:

- Health conditions, prescription medication, etc. that could affect their ability to drive.
- Limitations, offences, bans, etc. affecting their licence.
- Problems with their vehicle that may affect safety.
- Accidents/incidents that happen whilst driving on company business.

The line manager may, at his/her discretion, ask to see the employee's driving licence before authorising them to drive on company business.

Drivers should ensure that they take regular rest breaks (i.e. every 2-3 hours or at first signs of tiredness). Mobile devices must not be used when driving unless hands free. Even where a hands free device is used, drivers shouldn't make or receive calls as this can cause distractions.

Smoking is not allowed on company vehicles and driving whilst under the influence of alcohol, drugs or prescription medication is strictly prohibited.

Drivers should pay particular attention to their personal safety when driving on company business, including:

- Not leaving valuables on display in their vehicle
- Making sure that someone is aware of their journey and their expected return
- Locking the vehicle's doors
- Planning the journey to avoid becoming lost
- Carrying a charged mobile phone to summon help if required
- Having adequate breakdown cover
- Adhering to safety regulations in the event of a breakdown (e.g. standing behind the barrier on the motorway)
- Taking care when leaving the vehicle, paying particular attention to where it is parked if the return journey will be made after dark

- Reporting any accidents/incidents that occur

5.8 Drugs and Alcohol

We operate a zero tolerance approach to the possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on our premises. Any employee found to have breached this will be subject to disciplinary action. In addition, Birchwood Town Council may report any suspicions to the police for investigation, and will co-operate fully with any police investigation.

Employees prescribed drugs that may affect ability to perform their work should advise their line manager so that adjustments can be made wherever possible. This information will be treated as medical in confidence and not disclosed without prior consent.

Drinking alcohol on Birchwood Town Council premises (or the premises of its customers or clients), without express permission from a senior manager, is strictly forbidden.

Any employee found drinking alcohol at work (without permission) and/or intoxicated whilst at work will be subject to disciplinary action.

Birchwood Town Council reserves the right to require you to undergo a medical examination/screening if there is reason to suspect impairment due to the use of drugs or alcohol. Refusal to consent to an examination /screening may result in the immediate withdrawal of any offer of employment and will normally be treated as gross misconduct for employees.

Birchwood Town Council reserves the right to search employees or their property (held on company premises) at any time if there are reasonable grounds to believe that this policy is being/ has been breached (or for any other reason). Refusal to comply with these search procedures may be subject to disciplinary action.

5.9 Electricity at Work

Birchwood Town Council will take all reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of employees who use, operate and/or maintain electrical equipment at work.

Employees must:

- Carry out a visual check electrical equipment before each use, to check for damaged wires, faults, etc.
- Never use any defective/faulty electrical equipment
- Report any defects to their line manager and/or facilities department
- Never carry out repairs to any electrical item unless qualified to do so
- Switch off non-essential equipment from the mains when left unattended for long periods and overnight
- Never bring any electrical item onto the premises without prior authorisation (e.g. heaters, etc.)
- Make sure that electrical cables aren't a tripping hazard or in danger of mechanical damage

No employee is allowed to carry out any live working unless fully competent and authorised to do so. All live electrical work will be subject to a permit to work system.

5.10 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Upon hearing the alarm:

- Vacate the premises immediately by the nearest available exit
- Close all windows and doors behind you
- Go to your designated assembly point
- Report to the person in charge of your assembly point

Never re-enter the building to collect personal belongings. When it is safe to re-enter the fire service/senior person present will let you know.

All visitors should be escorted to the assembly point by their host and shouldn't leave the area before notifying the senior person present.

The senior person present will meet and liaise with the emergency services and provide them with the information they need, such as the location and details of the emergency, the location and presence of hazardous and flammable materials, details of people present, etc.

In the event of an emergency evacuation raise the alarm, get out and stay out.

5.11 The Environment

Birchwood Town Council will take all reasonable steps to protect the environment. As such all employees will be expected to co-operate fully with all our policies and procedures, including those on recycling and minimising energy usage and waste production.

We are committed to ensuring that:

- Pollution is avoided where possible (i.e. water, land and air)
- Water and energy usage is kept to a minimum
- Waste materials will be recycled wherever possible
- Any instances of pollution are reported to the appropriate authority

All complaints of an environmental nature will be fully investigated. The results of this investigation will be recorded and the complainant will be advised of the outcome accordingly. These investigation reports will be kept on file and remedial actions implemented wherever necessary.

5.12 Fire

Whilst we will take all reasonable steps to prevent a fire from occurring, in the unlikely event of fire the main consideration must be for the preservation of life. This overrides all other considerations, such as saving property and extinguishing the fire.

As soon as the evacuation signal is given, all occupants must evacuate the premises immediately and report to their designated assembly points.

An employee should attempt to extinguish a fire only if they are confident to do so and this action doesn't jeopardise their own safety.

Re-entry of the building is strictly prohibited until authorised by the fire service or a senior person present.

Any concerns that employees may have in relation to fire safety should be reported to their line manager immediately.

Upon discovering a fire:

- Operate the nearest fire alarm call point.
- Only attack the fire with the fire fighting equipment provided if it is safe to do so, you have authorisation and have received the appropriate training
- Always ensure there is a safe exit route before attempting to extinguish any fire.
- Leave the building immediately if you can't control the fire or if your escape route is threatened

See also the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

5.13 First Aid

Birchwood Town Council will ensure that we appoint and train a sufficient number of employees to provide first aid treatment, if required.

Employees should make sure they know the name(s) of the appropriate first aider(s) and how to contact them should anyone require first aid treatment.

Any incident or accident that requires first aid treatment should be recorded using the appropriate accident reporting procedure.

First aid boxes will be provided and should be kept adequately stocked. The person responsible for the contents must replace any items that are used.

First aid arrangements will also need to be considered for any home, lone or mobile workers.

Defibrillators will be provided where deemed appropriate.

5.14 Gas Installations and Gas Appliances

Birchwood Town Council will ensure that any work carried out on any gas fittings and appliances is undertaken in accordance with UK legislative requirements. All work will only be undertaken by fully competent, appropriately authorised people.

We will ensure that any gas fitting is carried out by Gas Safe registered engineers, as required under legislation. No employee is permitted to touch/carry out any work on any gas appliance, gas fitting or pipe work, unless they are fully qualified and have been authorised to do so.

5.15 Health, Safety and Welfare Facilities

All employers must provide health, safety and welfare facilities for employees. Birchwood Town Council will have suitable:

- Emergency, fire and evacuation equipment and procedures
- First aid provision
- Premises, including entrances and exits
- Workstations and work equipment
- Ventilation, temperature control and lighting
- Standards of cleanliness and housekeeping
- Toilet and washing facilities
- Facilities for changing, rest breaks, eating and drinking
- Accommodation for clothing

5.16 Home Working

Home workers are subject to the same health and safety requirements as workers based on Birchwood Town Council premises, and their health and safety must be managed accordingly. This includes both employees who are contracted to work from home and those who work from home on an ad hoc, occasional basis.

The employee's line manager must ensure that the home worker is aware of all health and safety requirements, policies and procedures and that all appropriate risk assessments are completed. The areas to be addressed include (but are not restricted to):

- The use of Display Screen Equipment
- The safety of electrical equipment
- Fire hazards
- First aid provision
- Accident reporting procedures

Whilst there should be no additional risks associated with working from home, when employees do work from home we are dependent upon them to co-operate with any measures put in place to protect their health, safety and welfare. As such, homeworkers are expected to comply with all policies, procedures and requests in respect of their health, safety and welfare.

All home workers need to complete an annual assessment to ensure that the facilities, workstation, environment, equipment, etc. in their home are suitable for the type of work undertaken.

5.17 Infection Control

There may be occasions when employees are at risk of contacting or spreading infection, and in these circumstances we will take all possible precautions to protect employees.

Employees must follow any procedures set out and comply with good hygiene practices and wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as directed

Employees at risk of infection will be offered free vaccinations wherever possible.

All employees who may be at risk of contracting infection will receive the appropriate information, instruction and training to enable them to protect their health and safety.

Any employee who contracts an infectious disease that may affect either them or other people around them must notify their line manager as soon as possible.

Infectious diseases include, but are not restricted to:

- Skin infections or exposed areas of infestation
- Severe respiratory infection (e.g. pneumonia, TB)
- Severe diarrhoea
- Jaundice
- Hepatitis
- Chicken pox, measles, mumps, rubella
- HIV
- Norovirus
- Coronavirus

In some cases, employees may need to be referred to an Occupational Doctor or their GP for advice. If in doubt, the employee should inform their line manager and seek further advice.

In the event of a pandemic (e.g. the Covid 19 pandemic of 2019/2020), we will ensure that any guidance issued by Government/HSE/NHS is followed (e.g. handwashing recommendations, social distancing, use of PPE).

Employees should also report any illness or disease that has been contracted through work. In some circumstances diseases contracted at work are reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations). Certain diseases (including Leptospirosis, Hepatitis, TB, and Tetanus) are specifically required to be reported.

We will ensure that any information on an employee who has any infectious disease will be treated as 'medical in confidence' and no information will be disclosed without the prior consent of the employee concerned.

5.18 Lone Working

Birchwood Town Council will endeavour to avoid lone working wherever possible. However, where lone working can't be avoided, we will ensure, as far as possible, that we protect the health and safety of any employee, contractor, etc. who is required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time.

We will make sure that lone workers are given all the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to remain safe when working alone.

Employees will be required to follow safe working procedures, including:

- Making sure that someone is aware of their location/work pattern and that they “check in” with a colleague on a regular basis and when their work is completed
- Making sure that the tasks have been risk assessed and are suitable for lone working
- Following their instincts and not putting themselves at risk; the employee should contact their supervisor/manager if they have any doubts about their working situation

Before any lone working is undertaken, the employee and line manager must consider and address:

- How the employee will keep in touch with the line manager
- The required working pattern
- The arrangements for first aid and accident reporting

5.19 Maintenance Operations

Birchwood Town Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of all employees involved in maintenance operations, as well as the safety of those affected by the maintenance work.

Birchwood Town Council will establish an appropriate maintenance programme, so that safe maintenance procedures can be developed and implemented.

All maintenance staff/others affected by the maintenance work will receive suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training to ensure their health and safety during any maintenance operations.

Only fully trained, competent and authorised employees are permitted to undertake any form of maintenance work.

5.20 Manual Handling

Wherever possible, Birchwood Town Council will endeavour to avoid employees being required to manually handle loads, so that the injuries and long-term health effects associated with manual handling can be avoided. However, where manual handling can't be avoided, Birchwood Town Council will carry out a risk assessment to identify the control measures required to reduce the risks to an appropriate level.

Adequate information and training will be provided to all employees who are required to carry out manual handling activities. This will include details of safe lifting techniques

No employee will be required to lift any item if they don't feel comfortable in doing so without risking personal injury. Likewise, the employee should notify their line manager of any medical condition that could prevent them from lifting.

5.21 New and Expectant Mothers

Birchwood Town Council recognise that during pregnancy and in the first six months after the birth of a baby, an employee may require different and/or additional measures in order to protect her health and safety.

When an employee advises us that she is pregnant, a New and Expectant Mothers' Risk Assessment should be undertaken, to help ensure the health and safety of both mother and unborn baby. Any additional safety control measures will be implemented and the assessment should be reviewed regularly as the pregnancy progresses, if there is a change in medical condition, etc.

A further Risk Assessment should be undertaken when the employee returns to work following the birth of her baby.

Where risks cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level, consideration will be given to adjusting working conditions and/or hours, providing suitable alternative work or, if work conditions/alternative work cannot be accommodated, absence from work with full pay.

5.22 Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is concerned with looking at the hazards associated with work activities (i.e. anything with the potential to cause harm), then judging the likelihood of that hazard causing harm and the severity of any harm if it does.

The risk assessment process takes account of any measures that are already in place to control the risks, then identifies any additional measures required to reduce risks to an acceptable level.

Legislation requires that the significant findings of any risk assessment must be recorded in writing and communicated to all employees, so that everyone is aware of the precautions they need to take to protect their health and safety.

Risk assessments must also be reviewed on a regular basis, or whenever there is a change to processes, procedures, work activities or legislation.

Any employee who wishes to see Birchwood Town Council's risk assessments should ask their line manager in the first instance.

5.23 Smoking

Birchwood Town Council operates a smoke free workplace policy, in accordance with the requirements of the Health Act 2006. This legislation prohibits smoking in any enclosed or substantially enclosed public places and includes all public places and workplaces.

The smoke free legislation extends to vehicles used for work by more than one person and/or for transporting the general public (private vehicles are exempt, unless someone under the age of 18 is present).

Employers are required to:

- Put up no smoking signs in the workplace
- Prevent smoking on their premises

and can be prosecuted for failing to prevent smoking in a smoke free place or for not displaying no smoking signs.

Birchwood Town Council has designated all its vehicles as no smoking vehicles.

Our smoke free workplace policy will be strictly enforced and anyone found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy also covers the use of electronic cigarettes.

5.24 Slips, Trips and Falls at Work

Over a third of all major injuries reported each year are caused as a result of a slip or trip (the single most common cause of injuries at work). Slips and trips also account for over half of all reported injuries to members of the public.

Birchwood Town Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that slips, trips and falls are avoided where possible. This includes:

- Ensuring that spillages are cleaned up immediately
- Making sure that 'wet floor' signs are used where necessary
- Making sure that floor coverings and floor surfaces are in good condition
- Avoiding trailing cables that can be a trip hazard
- Encouraging employees to wear appropriate footwear
- Making sure that lighting levels are adequate
- Keeping all walkways clear from rubbish and other obstructions

Any potential slip and trip hazards should be reported and dealt with immediately.

5.25 Stress and Resilience at Work

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. Peoples’ reactions to pressure can be very different. Whilst some seem to be able to cope with whatever life throws at them, others are unable to cope with relatively minor setbacks.

Some pressure can be motivating, for example to meet a deadline, but when this pressure is prolonged or excessive then behaviours can start to change and impact both work and home lives.

Birchwood Town Council recognises that stress can be an issue for employees and has therefore implemented a stress risk assessment process, to identify potential stressors so that remedial action can be taken.

The stress risk assessment looks at areas such as:

- The demands of the role
- The amount of control the employee has over their work
- The level of support available to employees
- Relationships at work, with colleagues, managers, customers, etc.
- The role being undertaken
- How changes within the workplace are managed

Any remedial actions taken to help reduce stress will be documented and monitored, in order to measure their effectiveness

Employees who feel that they are experiencing increased levels of stress or are concerned about their mental health should speak to their line manager as soon as possible. Birchwood Town Council will support employees wherever possible, and do everything reasonably practicable to address any issues in the workplace and help the employee to get the help they need (e.g. from a GP, counsellor, etc.)

5.26 Temporary Employees

Temporary employees are entitled to the same health and safety protection as all other employees. Birchwood Town Council will take the necessary measures to make sure that they are kept safe at work.

All temporary employees will receive the necessary information, instruction and training to undertake their role safely and without any risks to their health and wellbeing.

All temporary employees will be monitored and supervised to ensure that they are competent to work without risk to the health and safety of themselves and others.

5.27 Training in Health and Safety

Birchwood Town Council will ensure that all employees receive adequate information, instruction and training to work safely and without risks to health.

In addition to induction training at the start of their employment, employees will also receive additional training as required (e.g. when roles change, new activities are introduced, following an accident, etc.).

Induction training will include information on emergency procedures, first aid arrangements, safe use of equipment, and other relevant topics. Birchwood Town Council will keep a record of the training undertaken by each employee.

Employees have a legal responsibility to participate in any training they are asked to attend, to work according to the training they have received and to ensure they are trained and competent before undertaking work tasks.

Employees should discuss individual training requirements with their line manager

5.28 Violent and Aggressive Behaviour

Some employees may be at risk of violent or aggressive behaviour whilst at work. As an employer, Birchwood Town Council recognise our duty to protect the health and safety of all employees and will take all reasonable steps to protect them from such unacceptable behaviour, whatever the source.

Violence and aggression can take many forms, including:

- Physical assaults
- Threats
- Verbal abuse
- Psychological abuse

Birchwood Town Council operates a zero tolerance approach to violent and aggressive behaviour towards employees and as such any incident must be reported as soon as possible. Birchwood Town Council will undertake an investigation and provide support to the employee(s) involved. This may include occupational health support, counselling and supporting the employee in legal action against the perpetrator(s).

Employees who have any concerns regarding violent and aggressive behaviour at work should report them to their line manager.

5.29 Visitors

Visitors may not be familiar with our working environment. Birchwood Town Council will work to ensure that the health and safety of visitors, and that of everyone else in the workplace, is protected.

Employees who are expecting a visitor must make sure that:

- All visitors are escorted at all times whilst on Birchwood Town Council premises
- Visitors are given any required health and safety instructions, etc.
- The visitor's particular requirements are considered (e.g. a disabled visitor may need assistance in an evacuation)
- Any accidents/incidents involving visitors are reported using the appropriate procedure

In an emergency, the employee hosting the visitor should escort them to the appropriate assembly point and remain with them until the emergency situation has been resolved.

Any employee who suspects that a visitor may be unauthorised should report this to the appropriate manager immediately.

5.30 Welfare Facilities

All employers must provide adequate health, safety and welfare facilities for employees and Birchwood Town Council will ensure that we comply with these requirements.

We will make sure that toilet and washing facilities are adequate, well maintained and kept clean. In addition, all facilities for changing, rest breaks, eating and drinking will contain the required facilities (e.g. seating accommodation) and will be kept in a clean and tidy condition.

See also the section on Health, Safety and Welfare Facilities

5.31 Work Equipment

Birchwood Town Council will do everything reasonably practicable to ensure that any work equipment provided is safe and appropriate for its intended use. All employees will receive the appropriate information and training to be able to use work equipment safely.

Employees must:

- Only use work equipment that they are fully trained and competent to use
- Not undertake any maintenance work unless competent and authorised to do so
- Not interfere with or remove anything that has been provided for safety reasons (e.g. guards, etc.)
- Report any faults/problems to their line manager immediately

5.32 Working Time Regulations

The Working Time Regulations set out the maximum number of hours that employees can normally work. Birchwood Town Council recognise that in addition to complying with this legislation, we have a duty to ensure that the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees isn't jeopardised by working excessive hours.

Employers cannot compel adults to work more than 48 hours a week on average (normally averaged out over 17 weeks). However, there are some exceptions to the 48 hour week rule (e.g. the armed forces & emergency services, where 24-hour staffing is required, etc.).

Workers aged 18 or over who wish to work more than 48 hours a week can choose to opt out of the 48-hour limit. This can be for a fixed period or indefinitely, but it must be voluntary and confirmed in writing. An employee can cancel their opt-out agreement whenever they want provided that they give their employer the appropriate notice.

Employees who are 16 and 17 years old can't normally work more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week, and they can't opt out.

Birchwood Town Council will ensure that all employees adhere to the requirements of the working time regulations.

5.33 Young Persons at Work

A 'young person' is defined as somebody who is under the age of 18. Birchwood Town Council recognise that young people may face additional risks to their health and safety because of their lack of knowledge and experience in the workplace. We will make sure that the risks to young people are assessed and that any additional control measures required are identified and implemented. We will also ensure that the young person is properly trained and supervised to enable them to carry out their work activities safely.

To make sure that young persons in our workplace are protected we will:

- Carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments to cover the work activities of young people
- Implement the control measures identified by the risk assessment
- Make sure that young people are fully aware of any risks associated with their work and the control measures needed to protect them
- Provide a copy of the risk assessment to the parent/guardian of any young person below the school leaving age
- Provide the appropriate information, instruction, supervision and training

I confirm that I have read and understood the contents of the Health and Safety Policy:

Name:

Date: