

ADOPTED JANUARY 2024

TALATON PARISH COUNCIL

HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Talaton Parish Council ('the Council') accepts its duty to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions for all its employees in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1988). It also accepts its duty of care to other persons such as volunteers (including Councillors) and contractors who work on behalf of the council.

The Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it complies with the law on Health, Safety and Welfare and any relevant Regulations, Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance. It will provide the resources to ensure the safety of its employees and others affected by its work.

The Council will seek, as and when appropriate, expert technical advice on Health and Safety to assist the Parish Council Clerk ('the Clerk') in fulfilling the Council's responsibilities for ensuring safe working conditions.

1. Aims of the Health and Safety Policy

To provide as far as is reasonably practicable:

- a. a safe place of work and a safe working environment;
- b. arrangements for considering, reporting and reviewing matters of Health and Safety at work, including regular risk assessments of working activities;
- c. systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
- d. obtaining specialist technical advice and assistance on matters of Health and Safety when necessary

e. sufficient information, instruction and training for employees, contractors and voluntary helpers to carry out their work safely;

f. care and attention to the health, safety and welfare of employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and members of the public who may be affected by the Council's activities.

2. Arrangements and Responsibilities for carrying out the Health and Safety Policy

The Council's Safety Officer, the Clerk will:

a. keep informed of relevant health and safety legislation;

b. advise the Council on the resources and arrangements necessary to fulfil the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety Policy;

c. make effective arrangements to implement the Health and Safety Policy;

d. ensure that matters of health and safety are regularly discussed at meetings of the Council;

e. ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices and facilities, with subsequent consideration and review of any necessary corrective/protective measures;

f. maintain a file of risk assessments, summarised in the minutes

g. make effective arrangements to ensure those contractors or voluntary helpers working for the Council comply with all reasonable health and safety requirements and have the required public liability insurance and/or other insurance in place prior to any works being carried out. All contractors will be required to abide by the terms of their contract with the Council and will be given a copy of the Council's Health & Safety Policy;

h. ensure that work activities by the Council do not unreasonably jeopardise the health and safety of members of the public;

i. maintain a central record of notified accidents;

j. when an accident or hazardous incident occurs, take immediate action to prevent a recurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure;

k. ensure that their work area at home is a safe environment (see Appendix A - Home Working/Lone Working Policy);

l. be responsible for COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002) assessments, ensure that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented and ensure that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased;

m. act as the contact and liaison point for the Health and Safety Executive.

All employees, contractors and voluntary helpers will:

n. comply with Codes of Practice or work instructions for health and safety:

i. Clerk: Home Working / Lone Workers' Policy (Appendix A)

ii. Contractors: Contractors' Policy (Appendix B)

iii. All: Manual Handling Policy (Appendix C);

o. take reasonable care for their own health and safety, use appropriate personal protective clothing and, where appropriate, ensure that appropriate first aid materials are available;

p. take reasonable care for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their activities;

q. not intentionally interfere with or remove safety guards, safety devices or other equipment provided for health and safety;

r. not misuse any plant, equipment tools or materials;

s. report any accidents or hazardous incidents to the Clerk.

Appendix A

HOME WORKING / LONE WORKERS' POLICY

1. Heating, Lighting and Ventilation

a. Temperature must reach a minimum of 16 degrees Celsius within one hour of the normal start of work time.

b. Office lighting. Desks should be placed to gain the maximum amount of light. Free-standing desk lights should be avoided or placed so as to minimise the danger of trailing electrical leads.

2. Electrical Equipment

- a. Mains must not be overloaded. It is important that the correct socket outlet and plug top face (where these are available) is used for each item of electrical equipment.
- b. Electrical equipment owned by the Parish Council should be tested annually.
- c. Leads from points for various desk uses should not present a hazard by trailing across areas of access. Extension leads are for temporary use only and should not exceed 3 metres in length.
- d. Defective equipment must never be used. Employees should not attempt to effect repairs to electrical equipment, unless competent to do so.

3. Furniture, Fittings and Equipment

- a. Heavy equipment and furniture must not be moved by an individual.
- b. Office equipment whether manually or electrically operated, must not be used by unauthorised, untrained personnel.
- c. Filing cabinets should always have sufficient weight in the bottom drawer to prevent the cabinet from tipping when a full top drawer is opened.

Filing cabinet and desk drawers must always be closed immediately after use. Drawer filing cabinets should be inspected at least every six months to ensure correct loading and smoothness of operation, with particular regard to the effectiveness of the drawer stops. Damaged or defective cabinets must not be used.

- d. High shelves should only be reached through the use of steps. It is dangerous to stand on desks and chairs, particularly those fitted with castors and this should be avoided at all times.

4. Display Screen Equipment (to conform to the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992)

- a. The information booklet provided by the Health and Safety Executive is available on line at www.hse.gov.uk/msd/dse/.
- b. Equipment such as adjustable and safely balanced chairs and appropriate desks should be used together with good lighting.

- c. The need for breaks depends on the nature and intensity of the work.
 - d. Eye tests for Parish Council staff will be paid for by the Council.
 - e. The equipment should be adjusted to suit individual physical requirements:
 - i. the chair and VDU should be adjusted so that, as a broad guide, forearms should be horizontal and eyes at the same height as the top of the VDU.
- There should be adequate space for documents to be managed on the top of the desk. A document holder can help the position of the head relative to the VDU and prevent neck discomfort.
- f. Sunlight or artificial light should not be allowed to bounce off the screen and there should be adequate space beneath the desk to allow free movement of legs. Excess pressure on the back of the knees and legs should be avoided and a footrest used where necessary.
 - g. Adjust the keyboard and mouse to suit hand movements. A wrist rest in front of the keyboard may help alleviate strain.
 - h. Do not sit in the same position for long periods. The general principle to be followed is short frequent breaks are better than longer, less frequent ones.
 - i. Defective equipment must never be used.

5. Personal Safety

- a. The Clerk should make arrangements to meet contractors or members of the public at a suitable venue open to the public. If the meeting is arranged outside, in the village, the Clerk may wish to ask for a Councillor to accompany them. The Clerk should not make arrangements to meet contractors, residents, or representatives from local authorities etc. at their home

Appendix B

CONTRACTORS' POLICY

For the Council to comply with Health and Safety Legislation, all outside contractors employed to do work on behalf of the Council are to be made aware of the expected requirements related to health and safety. A contractor accepting a contract from the Council shall be deemed to have agreed to comply with the following requirements:

1. You and your employees will conform, in all respects, to your legal duties and responsibilities as laid down by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and all relevant statutory provisions.
2. As a contractor you will provide a copy of your public liability insurance certificate to the Clerk prior to any works commencing and at any other time as requested by the Clerk
3. As a contractor, you will supply and ensure that you and your employees wear and use protective equipment or anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare of any of the relevant statutory provisions.
4. You and your employees will ensure that all equipment, plant machinery and apparatus brought onto or used on the Council premises are safe and without risk to health, and are maintained to a standard that will not constitute an offence under the Act or any of the relevant statutory provisions.
5. The Council will retain the right to stop any operation, plant or equipment, or the action of any of your employees if it is considered that there is a hazard to the safety and health of employees or others. The Council will not accept any responsibility for any increased costs arising out of such action.
6. In the event of the Council taking this action, you or your site representative will be notified verbally and will have confirmation in writing by the Council's representative to order such a stoppage.
7. The Council will be indemnified by you or your insurers in respect of any claims, costs or expenses arising out of any incidents on Council premises involving you or your employees.
8. The Council may notify an inspector, appointed under the Authority of the Act, of any breach of the Regulations.

Appendix C

MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

Good techniques for Manual Handling

1. Keep feet apart, bending the knees and keeping the back as straight as possible.

2. Test the weight of the load before lifting. If it is too heavy to lift then ask for help.
3. Keep the load as close to the body as possible.
4. Keep twisting of the torso to a minimum if turning to one side. Move feet instead.
5. Lift or carry goods in small amounts where possible.
6. Wrap the load or use gloves if it has sharp edges.
7. Use a table or bench as a half way resting point.

All employees, contractors and Councillors will be issued with a copy of this document.