

# Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

## Policy statement

The council recognises that managing occupational health, safety, and wellbeing (OHS&W) is an essential aspect of its mission to make a positive difference every day to people's lives.

This is also consistent with its primary goal of being a fair city, where people are safe and national levels of health and wellbeing are achieved for all.

The council is committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all employees and will ensure that its work does not adversely affect the health and safety of others, including service users, visitors, contractors, and members of the public.

To achieve this, the council will:

- ensure compliance with relevant legislation and effective management of the significant health and safety risks associated with its activities, workplaces, equipment, and facilities
- recognise that the management of health, safety and wellbeing is a core management function, ensuring appropriate arrangements and governance are in place to secure its effective leadership and a positive culture
- ensure that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, communicated, and monitored within its performance management framework
- provide adequate resources to ensure the effective delivery of this policy and management of risk
- ensure that employees are competent to carry out their work without risk to themselves or others, by providing adequate information, training instruction and supervision
- consult and support the role of employees' representatives with regards to the management of health, safety and wellbeing and promote effective employee involvement
- ensure that its partners, suppliers, and contractors are competent and that they conduct their activities so as not to expose themselves, our staff, service users, or members of the public to unnecessary risks to health and safety.

Organisational responsibilities are further outlined within the policy manual (appended to this statement and) which can be located on the intranet.

Signed



**Rebecca Hellard**  
Director of Council Management  
May 2022

# Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Manual

## Organisation and responsibilities

### The leader, cabinet, and elected members

The leader, members of the cabinet and other elected members will:

- give due regard to and support the implementation of this policy when exercising their functions, ensuring that decision making is consistent with the promotion of the occupational health, safety and wellbeing policy and management of risk
- ensure that adequate resources are available to enable the council to discharge its responsibilities
- monitor the occupational health, safety, and wellbeing performance of the council
- act as role models in promoting the management of occupational health, safety, and wellbeing

### Cabinet member for finance and resources

The cabinet member for finance and resources has accountability for strategic workforce issues and is responsible for holding officers to account on the delivery of the council's overarching workforce strategy including the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff.

The cabinet member for finance and resources will:

- ensure that performance is reviewed and that any significant issues are brought to their attention through regular review
- ensure elected members are kept informed of strategic occupational health, safety, and wellbeing issues
- direct actions, where appropriate, including referring decisions to council business management or cabinet
- support and promote the implementation and application of this policy amongst elected members and officers

### Chief executive

The chief executive has ultimate responsibility for the occupational health, safety and wellbeing performance of the council and is responsible, through the council leadership team and managers, for ensuring that adequate organisation and arrangements exist for effective implementation of this policy.

The chief executive will:

- promote a positive culture by demonstrating clear commitment to achieving high standards of occupational health, safety, and wellbeing management
- ensure adequate resources are made available for the effective implementation of this policy
- ensure that the management of occupational health, safety and wellbeing is an integral part of the council's plans and strategies

- ensure that key metrics are reviewed and reported on at least annually

### **People services director**

The people services director has responsibility for strategic occupational health, safety, and wellbeing management within Birmingham City Council.

The people services director will:

- act as an advocate for occupational health, safety and wellbeing management within the council and council leadership team and will support the chief executive in meeting the responsibilities set out in this policy
- ensure adequate governance arrangements exist at council wide and directorate levels for the effective leadership of occupational health, safety and wellbeing including ensuring the cabinet member for finance and resources is informed of performance
- promote the adequate provision and allocation of resources for this policy to be effectively implemented
- ensure the appointment of sufficient competent persons to assist the council in the effective delivery of its responsibilities for occupational health, safety, and wellbeing
- ensure occupational health, safety and wellbeing matters are given due consideration when developing any policies and strategies, and when allocating associated responsibilities and resources.

### **Extended leadership team - directors and assistant directors**

The extended leadership team have overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and associated management arrangements within their directorate.

In addition, where appropriate for their directorate, policies containing specific information and arrangements pertinent to the work activities undertaken considering associated risks, will be developed, and communicated locally.

In addition to their responsibilities as line managers, the extended leadership team will:

- demonstrate clear leadership and commitment to occupational health, safety, and wellbeing management
- where relevant, identify appropriate staff to undertake the role of Responsible Person to manage and co-ordinate building safety issues including asbestos, Legionella, fire safety and statutory testing
- identify appropriate staff to carry out occupational health needs assessments and health surveillance to meet statutory occupational health requirements
- identify appropriate staff as safety support with responsibility for health and safety within the directorate
- ensure that suitable resources, in terms of time, finance and personnel, proportionate to the level of risk, are available to implement health and safety policies and arrangements within their directorate and that managers and staff are competent to fulfil their responsibilities
- establish and maintain a directorate health and safety consultative committee to promote health and safety and ensure that employees are consulted related matters

- ensure that health and safety performance is reviewed and managed within directorate management teams.

### **Heads of service, managers, and supervisors**

Heads of service, managers and supervisors are responsible for the identification and management of risk within their areas of responsibility and the effective implementation of health and safety policies and management arrangements.

Heads of service, managers and supervisors will:

- ensure all work-related hazards associated with the workplaces and activities for which they are responsible are identified and through a documented risk assessment process to ensure that risks are managed to an acceptable level
- develop local working arrangements, safe work practices, guidance etc. as required, to support the management of health and safety and control of risk
- ensure that health and safety training needs are identified and that employees within their control are provided with adequate information, training, instruction, and supervision to allow them to work safely
- identify and train appropriate employees to act as first aiders, fire marshals and evacuation chair operators as may be necessary to support the management of health and safety at the locations in which they are situated
- ensure that any occupational health and wellbeing risks are identified, and control measures are in place, to include pre-employment health checks, health surveillance and health screening, according to job role
- ensure that all employees are informed of the free and confidential employee assistance programme (EAP) and the provision of information, advice, emotional support, and tools available to assist in maintaining and enhancing their overall health and wellbeing both at home and at work
- foster a culture of cooperation and engagement by signposting employees to internal and external resources, enabling them to take ownership of their own health, safety, and wellbeing
- report and investigate, in accordance with the accident, incident and near-miss reporting guidance, all accidents, periods of occupational ill health, incidents and near misses
- in liaison with occupational health, safety, and wellbeing, co-operate fully with enforcing authorities and their inspectors in relation to any enquiries and investigations
- engage and support safety representatives in the delivery of their functions
- encourage employees to discuss and raise issues proactively at one to ones, appraisals, and team meetings.

### **School governors**

In foundation and voluntary-aided (VA) schools the governing body, as the employer, has overall responsibility for health and safety matters. In community and controlled schools, the local authority has overall responsibility and is therefore the governing body.

The governing body will play a key part in helping to ensure that the school adopts the principals of sensible risk management. The governing body will take a largely strategic role in the running of the school. This will include setting a strategic framework, agreeing the

overall aims and objectives, school policies and ensuring that progress against targets are reviewed regularly.

The governing body will ensure that:

- suitable resources, proportionate to the level of risk, are made available to support the implementation of occupational health, safety and wellbeing policies and arrangements within their school and that the head teacher, senior management team and staff are competent to fulfil their responsibilities
- a school health and safety management plan is agreed and implemented to ensure risks are identified and managed
- a school health and safety policy has been produced reflecting the health and safety management arrangements specific to their individual school
- a sensible approach to health and safety is promoted, making use of competent health and safety advice when required
- they work in close partnership with the head teacher and senior management team to support sensible health and safety management and to challenge as appropriate
- all health and safety matters within the school, including pupil safety are effectively managed
- meetings include a review of health and safety performance.

### **Head teachers**

Head teachers along with the school management team, under the direction of the governing body, have considerable autonomy in the day-to-day running of a school. They are responsible for implementing this policy and the school's site-specific health and safety policy as adopted by the governing body.

Head teachers must:

- produce and report progress on the school's health and safety plan to the board of governors
- produce and maintain a school specific health and safety policy and supporting safety procedures and guidelines
- undertake the role of responsible person to manage and co-ordinate building safety issues including asbestos, Legionella, fire safety and statutory testing
- ensure that occupational health needs assessment and health surveillance to meet statutory occupational health requirements are undertaken as may be necessary
- develop local working arrangements, safe work practices, guidance etc. as required to support the management of health and safety and control of risk
- ensure that health and safety training needs are identified and that employees within their control are provided with adequate information, instruction, training, and supervision to allow them to work safely
- maintain effective communication with employers, governors, and the school workforce and give clear information to pupils and visitors, including contractors, regarding significant risks on site
- consult and work with recognised trade union (TU) safety representatives/employee representatives and safety committees
- report and investigate in accordance with the accident, incident and near miss reporting guidance, all accidents, occupational ill health, incidents and near misses

- cooperate fully with the council as the employer, enforcing authorities and their inspectors in relation to any enquiries and investigations
- make sure that staff understand their responsibilities and know how to access support and advice to help them manage risks responsibly

## **Employees**

All employees must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and co-operate fully with management on health and safety matters.

In particular, employees will:

- take reasonable care of their own health, safety, and wellbeing and of those people with whom they come into contact during their working day
- alert their line manager to any health, safety or wellbeing issues that may affect their work
- assist with the assessment and control of risks
- not interfere with or misuse, anything provided in the interests of health and safety
- use equipment, machinery, or substances in accordance with instructions and training
- familiarise themselves and comply with relevant occupational health, safety, and wellbeing arrangements in place
- notify their line manager of any occupational health, safety and wellbeing training needs and undertake safety training as and when directed to do so
- report any accidents, incidents or near misses to their manager
- co-operate with any workplace health and safety investigation
- report any medical condition which makes them unfit for or at increased risk from, any particular work activity, whether temporarily or permanently
- be aware of the confidential and free employee assistance programme (EAP) made available to support them in owning, maintaining, and enhancing their overall health and wellbeing both at home and at work
- report to their supervisor or manager, any perceived dangerous situations or shortcomings in health and safety arrangements.

## **Access to competent advice**

The Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team will advise the Council on matters related to the health, safety and welfare of employees and others upon whom it may impact and in addition will arrange for additional or specialised resources as required. In addition, will support the council with its mission to create an environment that protects and improves the health and safety of employees and the many visitors and citizens using council facilities.

In particular, the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing team will:

- provide competent, objective, and professional advice and make recommendations on the development of occupational health, safety and wellbeing strategies and arrangements to reduce accidents and ill health within the organisation
- provide information, instruction and support (referred to generally as the 'arrangements') in order to enable senior management, managers, employees and safety committees to ensure that risks are identified and assessed and that proportionate control measures are implemented as necessary in order to mitigate those risks

- assist with the development of the council's strategic risk register and annual assurance process
- advise on changes in legislation and developments within occupational health, safety, and wellbeing and on the implications of business change, providing support to the council in adapting and implementing revised policy and arrangements as may be required
- monitor and investigate major accidents, incidents and near misses, analyse statistics to establish underlying causes, identify trends and recommend action where necessary
- liaise with the relevant enforcement agencies where necessary
- produce safety metric reports for safety committees
- support the availability and provision of general occupational health, safety and wellbeing training and instruction
- support directorate health, safety and wellbeing groups and committees as appropriate
- ensure that monitoring is undertaken to ensure that sufficient levels of compliance are being achieved and advise of any necessary remedial actions where standards are not found to be suitable or sufficient
- work with partners to maintain safety for any outsourced services.
- perform pre-employment health screening and medicals to determine medical fitness of prospective employees
- offer advice regarding the effects of health on work and work on health via email and helplines
- provide an occupational health wellbeing service which gives objective health advice following a referral so allowing the manager to act on the best information regarding an employee's health
- provide appropriate advice where either medical re-deployment or ill health retirement is being considered
- undertake health surveillance, screening, DVLA medicals and reports
- perform physiotherapy to aid a timely recovery or maintain fitness
- where appropriate, to deliver psychological therapies (CBT, EMDR, counselling etc) to aid a timely recovery or maintain fitness.

Trade unions will:

- trade union health and safety representatives will incorporate health, safety, and wellbeing into their role
- actively consult with managers on actions and activities designed to improve the health, safety, and wellbeing of staff
- encourage staff to take part in related surveys and assessments
- signpost members to available health, safety and wellbeing support and resources.

## **Employee consultation**

Employee consultation and engagement is essential to good health and safety management and the wellbeing of the workforce. Employees, or their representatives, will be consulted on matters of occupational health, safety, and wellbeing. This will take place both informally by managers and supervisors in the workplace at a local level and formally via monthly Directorate Health and Safety Committee Meetings. Where there is a need to escalate issues that have not been resolved at directorate level, such matters are taken to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee Meetings.