

**Westbourne Parish Council
Health and Safety at Work Policy
Adopted: 9 March 2017**

1.0 General statement

Westbourne Parish Council recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for providing a safe and healthy environment for all its employees, contractors, voluntary helpers and others who may be affected by the activities of the Council.

The Council will meet its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (as well as the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999) and will provide, as far as is reasonably practicable, the resources necessary to fulfil this commitment.

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

1.1 Aims of the Health and Safety at Work Policy

To provide as far as is reasonably practicable:

- A safe place of work and a safe working environment.
- Arrangements for considering, reporting and reviewing matters of health and safety at work, including regular risk assessments of working activities.
- Systems of work that are safe without risks to health.
- Obtaining specialist technical advice and assistance on matters of health and safety when necessary.
- Sufficient information, instruction and training for employees, contractors and voluntary helpers to carry out their work safely.
- Care and attention to health, safety and welfare of employees, voluntary helpers and members of the public who may be affected by the Council's activities.

2.0 Arrangements and responsibilities for carrying out health and safety at work

As the Council's Health and Safety Officer, the Clerk will:

- Keep informed of relevant health and safety policy legislation.
- Advise the Council on the resources and arrangements necessary to fulfil the Council's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Policy.
- Make effective arrangements to implement the Health and Safety at Work Policy
- Ensure that matters of health and safety are regularly discussed at meetings of the Parish Council.
- Ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out of working practices and facilities, with subsequent consideration and review of any necessary

corrective/protective measures, and maintain a file of risk assessments, summarised in the minutes.

- Make effective arrangements to ensure that contractors or voluntary helpers working for the Council comply with all reasonable health and safety at work requirements. All contractors will be required to abide by the terms of the contractors' service level agreement and specified scope of work, and will be given a copy of the Council's Health and Safety at Work Policy.
- Ensure that work activities by the Council do not unreasonably jeopardise the health and safety of members of the public.
- Maintain a central record of notified accidents, and report a record of accidents at the next Parish Council meeting.
- When an accident or hazardous incident occurs, take immediate action to prevent a reoccurrence or further accident and to complete the necessary accident reporting procedure.
- Act as the contact and liaison point for the Health and Safety Executive.

All employees, contractors and voluntary helpers will:

- Comply with the Codes of Practice or work instructions for health and safety.
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety, use appropriate personal protective clothing/equipment and, where appropriate, ensure that the appropriate First Aid materials are available.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of other people who may be affected by their activities.
- Not intentionally interfere with or remove safety guards, safety devices or other equipment provided for health and safety.
- Not misuse any plant, equipment, tools or materials.
- Report accidents or hazardous incidents to the Clerk.

2.1. Risk assessments

A risk assessment has been described in the 1999 Regulations as 'nothing more than a careful examination of what, in your work, could cause harm to people. Risk assessment should be a practical exercise, aimed at getting the right controls in place'. The Health and Safety Executive recommend the following five steps:

1. Identify the hazards.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.
4. Record the findings and implement them.
5. Review the risk assessment and update if necessary.

Please refer to the Council's risk assessment template.

2.2. Insurance

Westbourne Parish Council ensures that its insurance includes cover for liability for injury or disease to their employees arising out of their employment, as required under the provisions of the Employers' Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

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3.0 Notice to contractors

Westbourne Parish Council requires all employed contractors to be made aware of the expected requirements related to health and safety at work. 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 legal duties and responsibilities as laid down by the Health and Safety at Work act 1974, and relevant statutory provisions.
2. The Council will remain the right to stop any operation and or use of 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. In the event of the Council taking this action, your site representative will be notified verbally and will have confirmation in writing by the Council's representative to order such a stoppage.
3. The Council will be indemnified by you or your insurers in respect of any claims, costs or expenses arising out of any incidents involving you or your employees.
4. The Council may notify an inspector, appointed under the Authority of the Act, of any breach of the Regulations.

4.0 Lifting and handling

The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 applies to lifting, pushing, carrying and moving by hand or by bodily force. More work injuries are caused through 'handling goods' than any other single action.

The Regulations require employers to:

- Avoid the need for hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Assess the risk of injury from any hazardous manual handling that cannot be avoided.
- Reduce the risk of injury from hazardous manual handling, so far as is reasonably practicable.

The following basic rules are produced to help reduce lifting and handling accidents. See also the Health and Safety Executive leaflet called 'Getting to Grips with Manual Handling'.

If an object is to be lifted manually

- Bend the knees and crouch to the object.
- Get a firm grip using the whole hand and not the finger tips.

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- Keep the back straight.
- Tuck the chin in.
- Position the feet so that one is behind the other alongside the object, pointing in the direction of movement after lifting.
- Push off with the rear foot, straighten the legs and raise the object, move off in the required direction in one smooth movement
- Avoid pinching the fingers when releasing the object.

5.0 Lone working

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, it is the duty of Westbourne Parish Council to assess risks to lone workers/volunteers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary.

Employees of the Council have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work, and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

5.1. Lone working/lone workers

These are people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision:

- At a fixed base (office or other) – only one person working on the premises, working separately from others, working outside of normal hours.
- Away from their fixed base – staff member who is required to travel along to and from a fixed base to another base or to attend meetings etc.

5.2 Potential risks to lone workers

- Open access and unlocked doors – accessible to the public, contractors etc.
- Being taken ill whilst at work.
- Lack of training regarding health and safety procedures.
- Hazards in the workplace.
- Remote areas.
- Parking arrangements – poorly lit and isolated areas.

5.3 Assessing the risk

Before drawing up and recording the assessment of risk, it must be established:

- Whether the work can be done by a lone worker.
- The arrangements that will be in place to ensure an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk.

When recording an assessment of risk, the following should be taken into the consideration:

- Environment – location, security, access/egress.

- Context – nature of the task.
- History – have there been any accidents/incidents in the past.

All available information should be taken into account and updated as and when necessary. If there is reason for doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, then consideration should be given for making other arrangements to complete the task.

5.4. Safety guidelines

- Familiarise the layout of the building, including fire exits and escape routes.
- Keep doors locked that allow direct access to the building/office you are working in.
- Do not open the door to unexpected visitors. In the case of contractors, ask for identification. If still unsure, check with the contractor's employer/head office.
- Have contact numbers at hand to be able to contact relevant persons immediately (should they fall ill, they suspect an intruder in the building).
- Park as near as they can to the building.
- A risk assessment to be put in place to assess the potential risks.
- Staff should inform the Chairman of the Council of their movements, including the time they estimate they will be away from their base and when they will return, along with relevant information regarding where and at what time, visits will be made and to whom. Leave details of venues, including contact numbers.
- Take a mobile phone with them when working away from a fixed base.
- Avoid meetings in isolated places. If this cannot be avoided, ask someone to accompany them or make sure they always notify someone when they arrive and leave.
- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of him/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts at work.
- Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the Council to identify and minimise risks.
- When appropriate, inform someone as to when they leave the fixed base to perform Council tasks and inform them when returning to a fixed base after relevant task completed.
- Always report an accident/incident that may occur.
- Employees are encouraged to walk away from situations where conflict may put them in danger and to report the incident as soon as possible.
- First aid boxes are available at all buildings where employees are based and there is an opportunity for staff to attend basic first aid training.

6.0 Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) advises that using a computer or other kinds of display screen equipment (visual display units) can give rise to back problems, repetitive strain injury, or other musculoskeletal disorders. Work with a screen does not cause eye damage, but many users experience temporary eye strain or stress. The HSE has published a guide called 'Working with VDUs).

7.0 Other regulations

There are a number of other Regulations which may be relevant to Westbourne Parish Council, including:

- The Work at Height Regulations 2005
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998
- The Confined Spaces Regulations 1997
- The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.