



Buckingham Council
Health and Safety Policy

Town

Safety

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General Statement – Policy for Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare

Buckingham Town Council recognises and accepts its duty to comply with all Occupational Health and Safety Legislation applicable to its business activities. In addition to meeting our legal responsibilities it is committed, in a cost effective and structured manner, to continually improve our Health and Safety performance.

The Town Clerk is ultimately responsible for Occupational Health and Safety within the Council and will pay particular attention to:

1. The provision and maintenance of safe and healthy working conditions.
2. Ensuring that suitable Risk Assessments are undertaken from which are developed safe and efficient work methods.
3. Providing information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the competence of individuals.
4. Making available and maintaining all necessary safety devices and protective equipment.
5. Providing and maintaining equipment and materials that are safe and without risk to the health of our employees or others who may be affected by our business activities.
6. Maintaining a constant interest in Health and Safety matters applicable to Buckingham Town Council's activities, especially through consultation, and for its management to set an example in safe behaviour.

The Town Council recognises that the Council's business will grow and develop and for that purpose this document will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect such changes.

Employees of all positions have a role in ensuring the safety of themselves and others – this is described more fully in the Health and Safety Policy. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, regardless of status, who wilfully or deliberately disregards, or who is consistently negligent in conforming to, Buckingham Town Council's Health and Safety Policy.

Responsibilities of the Council

Both Councillors and Officers have an important role to play in the management of safety. By their actions they can have an influential effect on the development of a 'safety culture' within Buckingham Town Council.

All those with supervisory responsibilities have additional duties to ensure that work activities are undertaken with due regard for safety. A Manager who fails to intervene to address unsafe acts is, in effect, accepting the practice.

Buckingham Town Council will:

- Ensure that each employee is aware of their responsibilities as regards health and safety and support other staff on issues affecting safety. In this respect all staff read and understand the Health and Safety Policy, associated procedures and risk assessments made in support of it.
- Ensure that the aims of the policy are met through the appointment of a competent and adequately resourced person to enforce the policy and its arrangements, and are also met through the development and implementation of safe methods of work.
- Encourage appropriate training and re-training for all members of staff.
- Ensure that all service and contract providers approved or appointed by Buckingham Town Council are assessed with regard to statutory provisions and good working practices.
- Encourage the uptake of safe actions through making personal interventions in circumstances where the principles of the policy and general good practice are not being followed.
- Ensure that a system exists, and is carried out, for the recording and reporting and investigation of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR).
- Ensure that staff wear safety equipment if this has been specified by those responsible for safety, both internal and external to the Council.
- Ensure that staff take responsibility for the correct use and storage of work equipment and perform a visual inspection before using the equipment; in addition where checklists are provided they must be completed.
- Ensure that staff never use work equipment in a way which could endanger themselves or the others around them, and never use any equipment for purposes for which it is not designed to be used.
- Ensure all staff are aware that horseplay or practical jokes which may cause danger to others will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action where this is warranted.

- Encourage staff to be comfortable in making suggestions regarding any alternative methods of work which will reduce hazards, make the workplace a safer environment and benefit the welfare of its employees.

It is extremely important to note that ALL Members and Employees of the Council are individually responsible for their own actions and assessments of health and safety issues. Whilst policies and procedures can be documented, guidance, training and direction can be provided and Line Managers tasked with the delivery and monitoring of these policies and procedures, this does not negate the need for everyone at all times to adopt a safe and appropriate working ethic. It is essential that employer and employee co-operate together to achieve this goal.

Accidents – First Aid

In the event of an employee being hurt, the first responsibility is to ensure that any necessary first aid is promptly administered to the injury. Buckingham Town Council faces different problems associated with having part of the workforce working remotely within the town.

Following an assessment of First Aid needs, taking account the nature of the work, the proximity to hospitals, ambulance services and doctors, and Town Council Events, Buckingham Town Council has concluded that as a minimum there will be three fully qualified First Aiders based at the Town Council Office and two members of staff working remotely. In addition any other members of staff can undertake a one day Appointed Persons course in Emergency Aid, if they so wish.

First Aiders are only expected to administer help and assistance to a level which they feel comfortable and confident with. In respect of more serious injuries, the casualty should be protected from further harm and specialist support obtained.

A full list of the trained First Aiders and Appointed Persons with their relevant certificate expiry dates is held by the Officer Manager.

First Aid Kits and Accident Books

Buckingham Town Council will ensure that the town office, vehicles and the storage depot are provided with fully equipped First Aid kits plus an appropriate Accident Book to be compliant with the Data Protection legislation. First Aiders in each location are responsible for checking the First Aid kits and ensuring that the supplies are maintained.

All incidents must be recorded in the Accident Book or on the relevant Accident and/or Incident Forms. Details in the accident book should remain confidential at all times.

Accidents - Recording and Reporting

All injuries, no matter how small, must be recorded, including injuries to staff, sub-contractors, visitors and members of the public. Some may need to be reported to the Enforcing Authority.

An accident is defined as:

“an unplanned event with the potential to cause damage to property or injury to people.”

There is no such thing as a minor accident; the difference in levels of injury is luck!

For instance a brick falling from a scaffold that hits someone is just as much an accident as if the brick fell and missed.

Recording

It is essential that Buckingham Town Council records all accidents especially those involving injuries in order that we learn from them as well as meet our statutory obligations. Those accidents involving injuries will be recorded in an Accident Book. The Town Clerk or a designated individual will ensure that suitable investigations are undertaken and reports made, where relevant.

All staff are reminded that alteration of an accident scene without clear authorisation is a serious disciplinary offence.

The reason for investigating accidents is that by identifying the causes of all incidents we reduce the likelihood of having a similar but more serious one, perhaps even a fatality. If an injury has occurred, use the report form in the latter part of this section to investigate the causes of the accident.

Reporting

Some incidents and injuries must be reported to the Enforcing Authority under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995).

These are generally the more major incidents and a full list follows. Failure to report is in itself an offence. Further, if an injured person claims Industrial Injuries Benefit then the Benefits Agency will check with the Enforcing Authority that a RIDDOR report has been made.

An event that has been reported under RIDDOR will be kept for a minimum of 3 years.

RIDDOR Report Forms to use: F2508 – Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences
F2508A – Diseases

It is essential that RIDDOR reports are accurate and factual because they are both legal documents and also because the words used will determine which incidents warrant a Regulator’s visit. Accordingly, reports made under RIDDOR will only be

made by the Town Clerk. Reports should avoid words that indicate an absence of control (e.g. “slippery”, “dangerous”, “uneven”, “unstable”, “defective”).

RIDDOR Report Centre

Incidents may be reported by any of the following routes:

- Telephone - 0845 300 99 23
- Internet - by completing the relevant form online (www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/)
- Form - by completing the relevant hard copy form and sending (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/forms/incident/index.htm>):

By fax - 0845 3009924

By post to - Incident Contact Centre
Caerphilly Business Park
Caerphilly
CF83 3GG

The Incident Contact Centre will forward details of incidents to the relevant Enforcing Authority which will be the Environmental Health Department of Aylesbury Vale District Council.

Over 3 day Injuries

The most common form of reportable incident are those that involve the injured person not being able to undertake their normal work for more than three days, including days which would not normally be worked (e.g. part-time, weekends, holidays) e.g. an incident on a Thursday leading to absence would become reportable if the injured person could not resume their normal work on the following Monday morning.

Major Injuries (edited list)

- an employee or member of the public being taken to hospital, by whatever means
- fractures other than to fingers, thumbs or toes
- dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine
- loss of sight (temporary or permanent)
- injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- any other injury leading to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or requiring admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

Dangerous Occurrences (edited list)

- electrical short circuit or overload causing fire or explosion
- explosion or fire causing suspension of normal work for over 24 hours

Prescribed Diseases

If an employee is absent from work due to a disease that is reportable under RIDDOR a written diagnosis from a doctor must be obtained and form F2508A completed and dispatched to HSE within ten days.

- certain poisonings
- some skin diseases such as occupational dermatitis, skin cancer, chrome ulcer, oil folliculitis/acne
- lung diseases including occupational asthma, farmer's lung, pneumoconiosis, asbestosis, mesothelioma
- infections such as leptospirosis; hepatitis; tuberculosis; anthrax; legionellosis and tetanus
- other conditions such as occupational cancer; certain musculo-skeletal disorders; decompression illness and hand-arm vibration syndrome

Accidents - Investigation

There is no such thing as a minor accident – the difference between the injuries associated with one incident and another is luck. Accordingly all accidents must be investigated in order to try to reduce their likelihood of recurrence.

General Guidance

The investigation process will more than likely involve employees in order that a genuine understanding of the causes are reached and that any corrective actions are understood.

The aim of the investigation is to find out what exactly happened; why it happened including any secondary causes and what can be done to prevent recurrence.

However, this does not preclude management invoking the disciplinary procedure, as a separate issue, on completion of the accident investigation for blatant or wilful disregard of Health and Safety legislation, policy or procedures should this be found to be necessary. This may, in some cases, also include the injured party.

Information Gathering

As soon as possible the relevant person will initiate the investigation, there is a specific form for use in these situations, see attached Appendix A.

Fundamentally this can be summarised as:

“Who was doing what, when, where and why?”

1. Visit scene of accident, make diagrams and/or a plan of the area. Include measurements where possible; make notes of what you see.
2. Take photographs of scene and any equipment/machinery involved if appropriate.
3. Interview all persons involved and any witnesses. Take statements and names and addresses etc.
 - Keep all persons/witnesses apart if possible.
 - Interview them separately and not together.
 - Try to put them at ease.
 - Explain object is to find out what happened and why, to try and prevent it in future not to lay blame.
 - Encourage them to tell you what they saw - not what they think happened.
 - Ask open questions, not ones that allow a yes/no answer.
 - Ask them to show you what happened on the diagram/plan you have drawn.
 - Ask them if the plan is accurate or has anything not been included that was there at the time of the incident.
 - If you receive conflicting statements, interview persons again.

- Stick to the facts; don't make assumptions.
4. Obtain any relevant documentation and photocopy for accident investigation file, such documents might include: -
- Training records
 - Work schedules
 - Work instructions
 - Risk Assessments
 - Machine or equipment service agreements
 - Relevant policies and procedures

This list is by no means complete.

Control

Do not allow any equipment involved to be repaired prior to the final completion of the investigation.

Always be prepared to adjourn the investigation and ask for help if you think you need it.

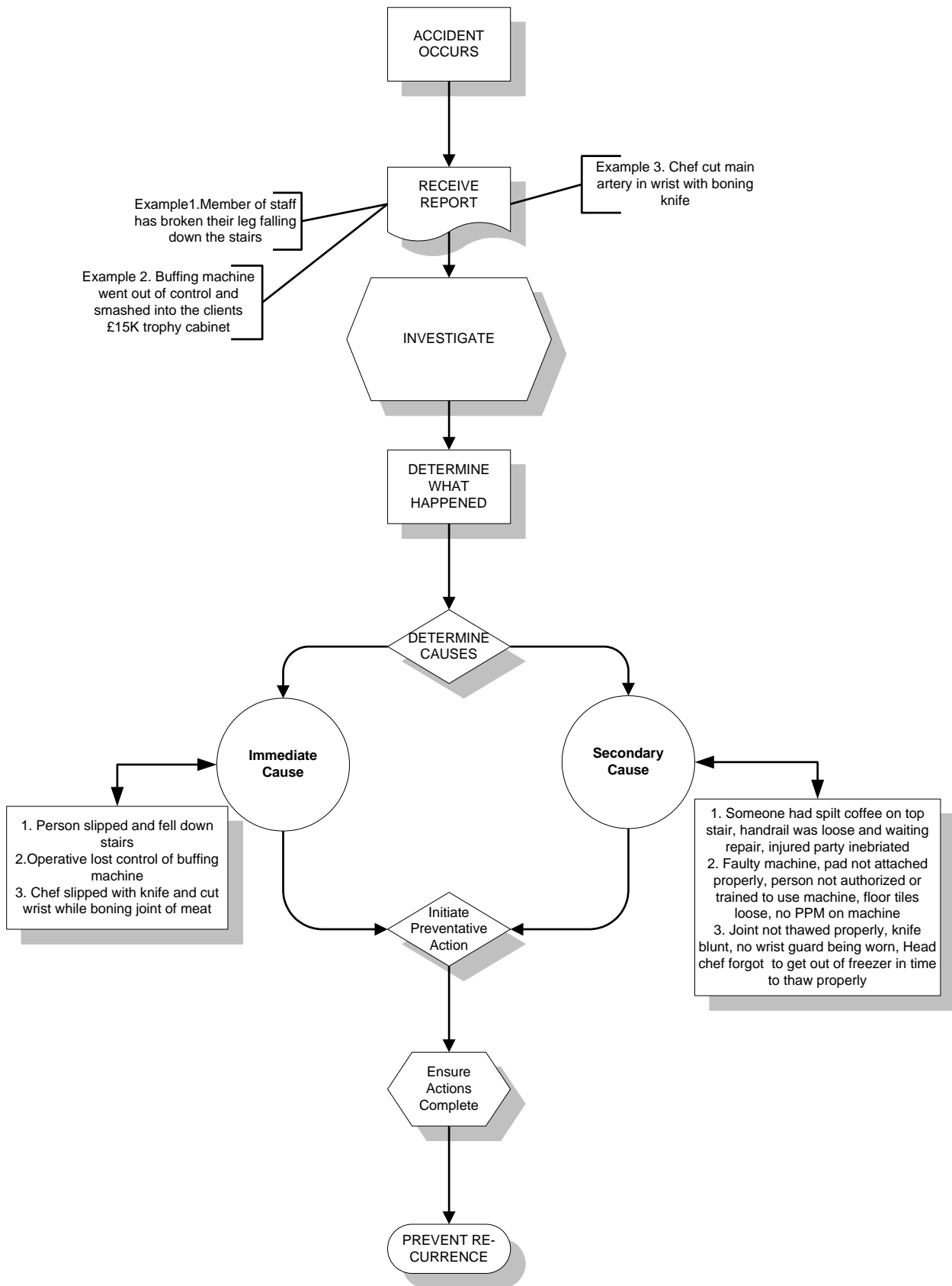
Record

Ensure if appropriate, an entry has been made in the Accident Book and/or the Incident Log and assess whether the incident is reportable under RIDDOR as mentioned previously. The completed investigation documents should be retained in the Town Office.

NEVER admit liability to any person nor hand over a copy of your investigation to client, employee, injured party, insurance company or otherwise.

Remember - do not speculate on the outcome or “gossip” about any incident.

Accident Investigation Procedure



Risk Assessment and Control

The identification, assessment, and control of risk are the cornerstones of effective Health and Safety Management and modern legislation. All activities in life involve a degree of risk; in the work context the aim is to reduce the level of risk as far as reasonably practicable. The purpose of Risk Assessment is to identify both the existing measures needed to reduce risk and assess whether there are any additional measures that could be introduced.

Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is responsible for overseeing that suitable Risk Assessments are undertaken although these tasks may be delegated to other members of staff. In line with the obligations to consult employees on matters of Health and Safety, the process of Risk Assessment will involve those who undertake the activity either individually or through representation.

Process

The process of Risk Assessment is illustrated on the next page but will involve the identification of:

- Tasks/Activities
- Hazards
- Persons Exposed
- Nature of Harm
- Existing and Additional Control Measures
- Residual Risks
- Review Period

Levels of Risk

One of the purposes of Risk Assessment is to identify those risks that are inadequately controlled. Therefore it is useful to have a means of judging the degree of risk control achieved by the control measures. Rather than use complex calculation systems the procedure employs a simple risk estimator relating the severity of harm to the likelihood of the harm. In determining the risk, regard should be made to the vulnerability of the persons at risk. Attention is also paid to the robustness of the risk control arrangements.

SEVERITY	Severe	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
	Minor	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
	Trivial	LOW	LOW	LOW
		Unlikely	Likely	Certain
	LIKELIHOOD			

Definitions

Hazard: “something with the potential to cause harm”

Risk: “the likelihood of the harm occurring together with the severity of the harm”

Consultation

Risk Assessors are encouraged to involve those who undertake the specific tasks both to ensure that the Risk Assessments relate to the work as it is undertaken and in the spirit of consultation. Such involvement is also likely to enhance acceptance of the identified risk control measures. All Risk Assessments are fully documented and retained in the Council’s offices.

Control Measures

The following list of control measures is included as an aide memoir of the types of techniques that are available.

- ELIMINATE hazardous substances/methods/materials/processes
- SUBSTITUTE less hazardous forms
- CLEAN to remove solid/liquid contaminants
- DISPOSE of hazardous materials/substances safely
- ENCLOSE hazardous substances/noise/materials/equipment
- EXCLUDE non-essential personnel from the work area
- MINIMISE generation of hazardous substances/materials/noise
- PROVIDE risk assessments, safe working practices, adequate facilities for eating, drinking and resting etc, appropriate signage
- PROHIBIT eating, drinking, smoking etc in certain work areas
- REDUCE the number of people exposed and the period of exposure

STORE	hazardous materials/substances safely
DISCIPLINE	self-discipline by management when necessary to correct wrong doings

Review

Buckingham Town Council will review Risk Assessments either annually, in the event of an incident or should there be a significant change to current working practices.

Adequate Control

All activities in life involve risk, work is no exception. The aim of these Risk Assessments is to ensure that the level of risk is reduced as far as reasonably practicable. As a result it is recognised that accidents will occur but the aim is to reduce their frequency, minimise the severity of injuries and most importantly learn from experience.

Electrical Safety

Not only can electricity kill but it is also a common cause of fires. However, as over 95% of defects of portable electrical equipment (such as damaged cables and cracked casings) can be detected by the user, employees are encouraged to identify faults before they affect the operation of the equipment.

A programme of inspection of portable electrical equipment will be initiated by Buckingham Town Council in a two-stage system as described below

Stage 1

All employees are able to visually inspect work equipment noting any hazards as described below:

- damage to the plug such as bent pins or a cracked casing;
- outer sheath of the cable is not properly secured where the cable enters the plug or equipment e.g. internal wires are visible;
- outer casing of the equipment is damaged;
- equipment has loose parts or screws;
- damage to the cable sheath;
- evidence that the equipment has overheated.

If the equipment fails on any of the above criteria it must not be used and should be removed from the workplace for repair with written details of the cause of the failure.

Stage 2

Formal visual inspection and testing by a competent person often referred to as Portable Appliance Testing (PAT). Factors such as earth continuity from loss of earth within the equipment or plug will be recorded. The results will be presented in a log or table format and the equipment will be marked at the plug top denoting the date for re-testing. Any equipment failing this test will be removed from service. This testing will be regularly carried out as advised by the competent person but this is generally either every one or two years, subject to their recommendations.

Fixed Installation

In addition to inspections of portable equipment Buckingham Town Council will also undertake checks on the fixed electrical systems, both to ensure suitability and as a part of the fire management arrangements.

Personal Electrical Items

Buckingham Town Council does not encourage employees to bring personal electrical items into the workplace. However should any personal item be required, permission should be sought prior to plugging the item in and the Council reserves the right to ask for the item to be tested before being used in the office.

Lifting and Handling

Lifting items incorrectly can potentially inflict long lasting damage to person's posture and wellbeing. Therefore it is vital that attention is paid to this simple guidance for lifting.

Background

Manual Handling activities are associated with a high proportion of the UK's occupational ill health. Few people do not know of someone with a 'bad back'. Surprisingly many of the injuries are not associated with lifting heavy weights but rather from light weights lifted badly.

1. NEVER try to handle anything heavy yourself unless it can be done safely.
2. ALWAYS use the correct equipment when moving heavy articles.
3. ALWAYS lift and carry goods and equipment in the correct manner.

Rules for Lifting Preparation

1. USE your common sense to know if the lift is within your capacity and can be done without undue effort and danger.
2. CHECK that your clothes and shoes will not hamper you.
3. CHECK that area is free from obstruction, the floor or ground is clear and the surface is not slippery.

Lifting From the Floor

Foot Position

Adopt a position with the load between the feet. Place the leading foot beside the load pointing in the direction the load is to be moved. The rear foot is placed behind the load so that the body is well balanced over the load.

Legs and Back

Keep the back straight. Arms close to the body, chin tucked in, bend the hips and knees.

The Grip

With elbows inside the thighs, take hold of the load with one hand at the outer upper corner over the leading foot and the other on the lower opposite corner, tilting the load a little to get the hand in position.

Putting it Down

To lower it, reverse the procedure bending the hips and knees to lower the load into its new position, but keeping it tilted enough to avoid bruising the fingers.

Lifting From a Platform or Bench

Use the same sequence of instructions, but remember to bring the load firmly in contact with the body in a comfortable position before moving off.

Remember - it's not what you lift but they way that you lift it!

Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

The human body is designed for movement. Arguably most of the issues associated with the use of Display Screen Equipment (DSE) are that it constrains muscle movement, whether these are muscles attached to the skeleton or controlling the eyes, hence the guidance that states employers should seek to encourage employees to vary working activities regularly to enable the body to 'recover' from the fatigue of holding a static position

Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Non ground staff employees' work is routinely office based, the DSE regulations must be adhered to and it is important that any DSE risks are adequately controlled. As these are largely related to posture and vary with the individual, the starting point for the management of this area is a self-assessment system.

The workstation questionnaire endeavours to adopt a holistic approach by considering not only any existing evidence of ill health but also endeavouring to identify non-work activities that may be relevant e.g. the use of a home PC for extended periods (internet surfing, games etc) where the workstation may not be to the same standard as that available at work.

Work Practices

The general guidance is that the body will cope better and suffer less fatigue if it has more, shorter breaks rather than less frequent, longer breaks. The generally accepted interval between breaks is in the region of 40 - 50 minutes.

Posture

Poor adjustment of a workstation will lead to poor posture. Poor posture results in the muscles working to maintain a static position rather than the skeleton carrying the weight of parts of the body.

As will be illustrated in the following paragraphs many problems associated with DSE can be avoided if suitable attention is given to the set-up of the personal workstation. It is therefore essential that employees understand the adjustments available on their chairs and instruction manuals should be available. Chairs should have a five-point wheel base and should be fully adjustable.

Head

The head accounts for a large proportion of the body's weight. If the screen position (a particular issue with the use of laptops) is too low this will lead to the head being held forward causing the muscles in the neck and shoulders 'working' merely to hold the static position.

The skeleton (through the backbone) will support a greater proportion of the weight of the head if the head is held erect. The ideal relaxed position for the head and eyes is

looking slightly down and the VDU should be adjusted to this position, this will help to avoid some causes of pain in the neck and shoulders.

Arms / Hands

The seat should be adjusted so that the forearms are level with the keyboard. If the seat is too high then the shoulder muscles will bear the static load of the arms as they reach to the keyboard. If the position is too low then there is the tendency for the wrists to arch leading to restriction of movement.

Some users are likely to find that the armrests will need to be removed in order to get close enough to the keyboard to avoid reaching from the shoulders.

Hands should not be bent excessively upwards at the wrist when typing or using the mouse, the best approach is to maintain a soft touch and not overstretch the fingers.

Back

The chair must be able to give support to the back, particularly the lumbar region, to help the body maintain the desired curvature of the spine.

Legs/Feet

Having adjusted the seat so that the position of the arms and head are correct it is important not to ignore the position of the legs and feet. Ideally, the thighs should be horizontal (so that there are no pressure points under the thighs) and the lower leg vertical (to help maintain the posture). Both short and long legged individuals can benefit from footrests as a means of providing additional support to maintain posture.

Screen

The screen should be adjusted and positioned so that in use it is free from reflections and glare. The focus should be on establishing the layout of the workstation rather than employing additional items such as filter screens.

Glare will include relatively bright areas behind the screen. For example, a screen in front of window blinds would be free of reflection but the brightness of sunlight on the blinds could lead to them creating glare for the user. In effect the eye would be trying to focus on the relatively dim VDU screen while simultaneously compensating for the brightness of the light behind the screen. Glare screens should be regarded as a measure of 'last resort' as they can add distortion to the image and create an additional surface that requires cleaning. Most new PCs have LCD screens which are fitted with an anti-glare filter as standard. The screen should be regularly cleaned of dust and finger-marks.

Lighting

There are two aspects of lighting associated with DSE use – glare (due to bright lights within the line of sight) and reflections on the screens. This is further complicated by the need to consider both artificial and natural light.

Workspace

The physical size of the workstation is important in order to ensure that the users are able to control their working environment and find arrangements that suit them as individuals. This will include for example the ability to create a space in front of the keyboard to provide a rest for the wrists. The employee should only have the items required to carry out their role on their desks and general good housekeeping will avoid many potential problems. There should be enough space underneath the desk to move legs freely, obstacles should be removed and cables kept tidy.

Working Environment

There are a range of environmental issues that need to be considered as part of the DSE management system other than the aforementioned.

For example, in many offices it is common to find that portable fans are used in the summer to provide a refreshing breeze. However, if the fans are fixed, rather than oscillating, then those in the stream are likely to suffer muscle stiffness.

Temperature control, noise levels, ventilation, cable management and space planning are all factors taken into account when assessing workstations, although some of these factors can be very difficult to control in certain types of office building.

Eyesight

As indicated earlier in this section the muscles of the eyes need to be given the opportunity to change their focal length. Furthermore, a small proportion of the population may require corrective lenses just to work with VDU. Consequently employees should be encouraged to have at least an initial eye and eyesight check.

Records

It is important for Buckingham Town Council to ensure that comprehensive records are maintained. If there are no records then there is no evidence that an activity occurred (e.g. training, assessment, awareness etc).

Buckingham Town Council provides regular DSE training, the assessments and responses are held with the Office Manager. Buckingham Town Council has a duty to address any risks highlighted as a result of the self assessment questionnaires.

Driving at Work

Driving can be a hazardous occupation, every year over 1,000 workers are killed in work-related road accidents and an additional 7,500 suffer serious injury. In the event of an RTA involving people at work, the HSE may consider whether there have been any breaches of Health and Safety legislation by the employer. These could include issues such as driver hours, visit/delivery schedules, vehicle maintenance, instruction and supervision.

Buckingham Town Council will take all reasonable steps to manage the health and safety of those staff who need to drive as part of their role, in the main this will be the Outside Services employees.

To comply with our legal duties as an employer, set out below are the Council's procedures on work-related driving and what is expected from employees. These procedures cover a variety of areas including documentation required from drivers as well as basic guidelines on driver health.

Perhaps the newest organisational risk is that associated with the relative ease with which a licence can be lost through the totting-up procedure. If a driver at work involved in an accident is found not to have a valid licence then the insurance will be invalid and full liability for damages and injuries could rest with the employer even if the vehicle belongs to the driver.

Definition

The definition of "driving at work" is as follows:

Any journey where Buckingham Town Council picks up the cost, for example by way of mileage expenses, in a Council owned vehicle or through a car allowance, is deemed as driving for work purposes. To be clear, this does not include travelling to and from work but does include external meetings, site visits, outside services, functions etc.

Procedures

These should be followed by all drivers at all times:

- Where a Council owned vehicle is being used, staff must report any suspected mechanical defects and not drive the vehicle until this has been investigated.
- If an employee uses their own vehicle for business use they are required to maintain it in a roadworthy condition.
- Before embarking on journeys, basic checks on the vehicle should always be carried out e.g. oil levels, water levels, tyre pressure, wipers etc.
- On long journeys, staff should ensure sufficient breaks are built in to prevent fatigue.
- It is an offence to use hand held mobiles and PDAs whilst driving.
- Staff should always drive within speed limits and according to the prevailing weather conditions.

- Staff should also drive in a courteous manner with due care and attention respecting the needs of other road users.
- Staff must never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Before driving staff should familiarise themselves with the procedure to follow in the event of a breakdown or accident.
- Any accidents whilst on travelling on business must be reported to the Town Clerk of Buckingham Town Council.
- Due care and attention must be taken to the security and safekeeping of any Council documents or equipment whilst in the vehicle.
- Employees must ensure the correct class of insurance is held for the business use of any private vehicles.
- In the case of the Council's vehicles, Buckingham Town Council will provide arrangements for the routine maintenance of these vehicles, and ensure they are appropriately taxed, tested and insured.

Documentation

In order for us to comply with our legal duties, Buckingham Town Council will also require sight of the following documentation annually of those staff driving on Council business:

- Driving Licence
- Insurance certificate indicating the vehicle is appropriately insured for business use
- A current MOT certificate (if the car is more than 3 years old)

Health

Staff must ensure they are physically fit to drive and should be mindful that some prescription drugs can cause drowsiness. If drugs are prescribed, checks should be made with a GP or pharmacist before driving.

Buckingham Town Council encourages employees driving on business to have regular eye tests and ensure that any necessary corrective glasses or contact lenses for driving are always worn.

Road Traffic Accidents

1	Stop!	If you are involved in an accident you <u>must</u> stop if it involves any other person, dog, horse, sheep, cattle, pig, mule or goat not in your vehicle being hurt or if any vehicle or roadside property apart from your own has been damaged (you do not have to stop if you run over a cat, bird or pheasant).
2	Keep calm	Do not admit liability and try to avoid getting into arguments over the cause of the accident.
3	Provide information	You should be prepared to provide the name and address of your vehicle's owner, your own name and address, and the vehicle registration number to the police or any other party having reasonable grounds for requiring them. If you choose not to do this, the accident must be reported to the police within 24 hours. You must also produce your insurance certificate either immediately or within 24 hours at the nearest police station.
4	Record information	Gather names and addresses of independent witnesses where possible. Sketch the details of the accident including your own and other vehicles. Gather the names of drivers and others involved in the accident. There is a Vehicle Accident Form for this purpose, see attached Appendix B.
5	Telephone	Contact the Town Clerk as soon as practical.

Fire Risk Assessments

Historically the focus of UK fire legislation has been on ensuring that people can escape in the event of fire. In recent years this focus has changed in that the prevention of fire has been placed on a par with the response to fire. New legislation came into force in October 2006 requiring all businesses to have appropriate Fire Risk Assessments.

FIRE

For a fire to develop three components are required - oxygen, fuel and an ignition source - so the key to preventing fire is to control flammable materials and minimise ignition sources.

There are two key phases to reducing the risk of fire – controlling ignition and controlling its development.

Fuels:	Solid – paper (including waste)
	Liquid – petrol
	Gas - aerosols
Ignition Sources:	Naked flames
	Smoking materials
	Electrical faults
	Static electricity
	Over-heating equipment – faulty or obstructed ventilation

FIRE PREVENTION

Eliminate fuel or ignition and the fire is eliminated. Some common control measures are:

- Ensure container lids of flammable liquids are kept tightly closed.
- Put waste paper in the bin.
- Observe No Smoking signs and notices.
- Keep fire doors closed.
- Switch off and unplug electrical appliances after use.
- Do not overload circuits with multiple plugs and extension leads.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Fire Risk Assessment Form endeavours to identify:

- Sources of ignition
- Sources of fuel
- The means of fighting fire
- The means of escape
- Fire prevention and protection methods
- Whether the arrangements are satisfactory and the actions that need to be undertaken.

Fire Risk Assessments are the responsibility of the Town Clerk and will be regularly reviewed. The assessments are recorded centrally and held with the Town Clerk.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN ON DISCOVERING A FIRE

- Do not put yourself at risk.
- Do not stop to collect your personal belongings.
- Contain the fire by closing the door as you leave the room.
- Raise the alarm.
- Leave the building by the quickest route.
- Go to the Assembly Point (as detailed in your fire evacuation notice).
- Inform the Fire Marshal of the details of the fire.

If you have a visitor on site it is your responsibility to ensure they are aware of the fire procedures, where to congregate and inform the Fire Marshal when you know they are safe or if you cannot account for them. When possible, it is advisable to escort the visitor with you from the building.

Important:

If smoke is building up in the room get down and crawl - the toxic smoke will kill you far more quickly than fire.

Remember:

If any person cannot be accounted for fire officers will have to search the building until they are accounted for - putting themselves at great risk - **ALWAYS** know where your visitors are and which areas are clear.

FIGHTING FIRES

Fire extinguishers are provided to aid escape in the event of fire. No employee is expected to put himself or herself at risk to fight a fire.

Fire extinguishers have a small capacity suitable for tackling a small fire that is easily extinguishable or for helping you reach your exit route. If one extinguisher doesn't work then a second is not likely to either. Those individuals who have been trained in the use of extinguishers may use them to tackle a small fire but again only if they do not put their own safety at risk

Never allow the fire to come between you and the nearest point of exit or if the fire continues to grow despite your efforts **LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.**

If in doubt just get out and call for help from someone with training.

Remember - your life is more important than the building – don't put your life at risk.

Use of Fire Extinguishers

There are a number of types of Fire Extinguisher available each suitable for specific forms of fire. Using the wrong extinguisher can make matters worse

The Council has only Carbon Dioxide and Water extinguishers in situ. The following is included for information purposes; however it's too late to find out how to use an extinguisher when there's a fire in front of you.

Type	Indicator Colour	Use For
Water	Red	Paper Wood Textiles
Carbon Dioxide	Black	Electrical Liquid spills
Foam	Cream	Liquid spills
Powder	Blue	Flammable and Flowing Liquids Electrical
Blanket	Red	Small contained fires

WATER EXTINGUISHERS

Not to be used on electrical or flammable liquid fires

Activate the extinguisher and aim the water jet at the base of the fire whilst keeping it moving across the whole area of the fire. Should the fire be spreading vertically then it should be attacked from its lowest point to prevent lower flames re-igniting extinguished areas. Follow the flames upwards until the whole fire is extinguished. A crouching position will help you to avoid the heat and smoke building up at ceiling height, it is vital that you do not breath the smoke generated by the fire. After the fire appears to be extinguished approach it and douse any hot spots with more water as appropriate.

Remember - do not place these extinguishers outside as they may freeze and be damaged, also be aware that once used (even partially) the extinguisher must be replaced.

FOAM EXTINGUISHERS

Not to be used on electrical fires

If the flammable liquid is contained direct the jet at the rear of the container just above the surface of the liquid allowing the foam to build up from the back smothering the fire. If the fire is not contained try to float the foam on top of the liquid using a gentle angle of

attack and working backwards from the front edge until the whole fire is covered in a blanket of foam.

Remember - if the jet is directed straight at the liquid the foam may pass underneath the surface of the fire rendering it ineffective. If the fire has attained a high enough temperature the water content of the foam may boil instantaneously causing spectacular but very dangerous results.

POWDER EXTINGUISHERS

Useable on all types of fire

Flammable liquids:

Attack the fire by aiming the jet at the front edge and slowly working back using a side to side motion. Be prepared for the possibility of the fire re-igniting in certain areas and re-douse them. Where possible you should be upwind of the fire and should keep extinguishing the fire until you are sure it is truly out.

Flowing liquids:

Attack the fire from its lowest point starting at the leading edge and working back following the fire back to the source of the leakage.

Remember - If the extinguisher has been part used it must never be returned to service, it should be fully recharged by a competent person and the part used powder discarded.

CARBON DIOXIDE EXTINGUISHERS

Particularly suitable for fires involving electrical equipment

Direct the jet directly into any aperture in the electrical equipment such as air vents or inspection holes. Be aware that the extinguisher will make a loud howling noise which may be disturbing if you are unacquainted with it. If tackling a flammable liquid fire use a similar technique to that described for dry powder above, attack at the leading edge and work backwards slowly fanning from side to side. Try to avoid the possibility of spreading the burning liquid by maintaining a reasonable distance between the nozzle and the fire.

Remember - carbon dioxide is a gas, if it is used in confined spaces it may replace the available oxygen with non toxic (but unbreathable) CO₂. Ventilate the workroom quickly following a discharge to prevent this hazard occurring. Once the extinguisher has been partly discharged it must be recharged before being put back into service. Also be aware that the nozzle will become very cold during use and may freeze to your hand so always hold the extinguisher by the handle and body when in use.

FIRE BLANKETS

These are often present in kitchen areas and are predominantly of a glass fibre construction packaged in either cylindrical holders or satchels. They are usually wall

hung with tabs protruding from the base intended to be pulled sharply to release the blanket.

They should be calmly placed over chip pan fires and similar by holding the blanket by the tabs. The effect of the device is to form a barrier between the fire and the outside air so extinguishing the fire.

Fire Responsibilities

There are a range of responsibilities in respect of the prevention of and protection against fire. Whilst the likelihood of fire occurrence is low in an environment such as an office, employees should always be aware of their responsibilities and the relevant procedures.

The Town Clerk is ultimately responsible and will oversee that fire requirements are adhered to across Buckingham Town Council. This will be done in conjunction with nominated Fire Marshals. Fire Marshals will be given appropriate training to understand their roles from a recognised body.

General fire responsibilities for the Council include:

- carrying out fire drills
- testing the fire alarms and smoke detectors
- the annual servicing of extinguishers
- annually reviewing the Fire Risk Assessments
- ensuring all employees are aware of the action to take in the event of a fire
- the appointment and training of Fire Marshals
- fire instruction for new starters (included in induction training)
- maintaining all relevant records as required under the fire regulations
- displaying the appropriate fire signage

All staff are expected to:

- assess risks on a day to day basis and carry out housekeeping checks to identify the development of any fire hazards
- understand what action to take in the event of a fire
- ensure that new starters are aware of the fire procedures as soon as possible
- give assistance to disabled, injured and/or distressed persons in an emergency
- understand the basic usage of fire extinguishers

The nominated Fire Marshal will:

- ensure that all staff leave the building directly and immediately in an evacuation check the building is empty
- ensure that staff congregate at the designated assembly point
- account for all personnel
- liaise with the Fire Service in the event of a fire and a genuine evacuation

Work Equipment

By ensuring that we use the 'right tool for the job', checking its specification and maintaining it in good condition, we significantly reduce the risks of work-related injuries.

All relevant standards will be taken into account when hiring or purchasing new equipment. As a result all work equipment will be suitable for the purpose for which it is used or provided and will be maintained in a proper state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

All work equipment will be maintained to prevent danger. Work equipment does not only cover the equipment used by the Outside Services but also covers computers, printers, copiers, etc. in the offices. Work equipment should only ever be used for the purpose that it is designed for.

Where any machinery has a maintenance log, the log must be kept up to date. Inspection sheets and logs are available for checking public premises, Council equipment and property. These checks are to be completed within their designated timescales which may be daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, six monthly or annually. The completed check sheets are stored at the Town Council Office.

Any damage to property or equipment must be recorded, see attached Appendix C for this purpose.

All those who use work equipment, will have available to them adequate health and safety information and, where appropriate, written instructions and / or specific training pertaining to the safe use of the equipment.

Where required, the correct Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be made available to all users of work equipment. The PPE supplied should be worn at all times.

Buckingham Town Council does not encourage employees to bring personal electrical items, equipment or tools into the workplace. However should any personal item be required, permission should be sought prior to plugging the item in and the Council reserves the right to ask for the item to be tested and checked before being used.

All hired machinery must satisfy the requirements of relevant health, safety and welfare legislation and the hirer should provide a written statement to assure the Town Council that this is the case.

The following paragraph may be used in correspondence for the supply or purchasing of an article or substance.

"In accordance with section 6 of the Health and Safety at Work etc... Act 1974, we would be pleased to receive your confirmation that the article or substance which you will be supplying to us is safe and without risk to health during its use and maintenance, so far as is reasonably practicable."

COSHH

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) requires employers to control substances that can harm workers' health. Using chemicals or other hazardous substances at work can put people's health at risk causing diseases including asthma, dermatitis or cancer.

COSHH is the law that requires employers to control substances that are hazardous to health. COSHH covers chemicals, products containing chemicals, fumes, dusts, vapours, mists, gases and biological agents (germs). If the packaging has any of the hazard symbols then it is classed as a hazardous substance. COSHH also covers asphyxiating gases, and covers germs that cause diseases such as leptospirosis or legionnaire's disease. However COSHH doesn't cover lead, asbestos or radioactive substances as these have their own specific regulations.

Buckingham Town Council will prevent or reduce workers exposure to hazardous substances by:

- finding out what the health hazards are
- deciding how to prevent harm to health via risk assessments
- providing control measures to reduce harm to health
- keeping all control measures in good working order
- providing information, instruction and training
- ensuring these measures are used by monitoring and health surveillance
- planning for emergencies

The Council will try to prevent exposure at source, for example by looking at whether a safer alternative product can be substituted to avoid using a hazardous substance, or whether an alternative process could be used. In addition the Council will provide the necessary Personal Protective Equipment such as respirators, protective gloves, clothing and footwear, and eye protection. It is mandatory for employees to wear the appropriate PPE.

COSHH check sheets are to be completed and retained for all products used and employees should familiarise themselves with any hazards. In the main this affects the Outside Services staff more directly, as there may be hazardous substances in the store facility, but also consideration should be given to the cleaning products used at the Council Chamber; also certain stationery products may also come with safety data sheets highlighting hazards which staff need to be made aware of. The COSHH Assessment forms are kept at the Town Council office.

As the office cleaning is contracted out, the cleaner takes all responsibility for supplying products and materials. Therefore it has been agreed that the responsibility of COSHH in this respect lies with the cleaning company.

Contractors and Visitors

Visitors and Contractors are deemed to be people who do not ordinarily work in that particular place of work.

Visitors

The definition of a visitor is someone temporarily coming to either the Council Office or the Chamber in an unpaid capacity, for example to attend a meeting with a member of staff.

All visitors to any of Buckingham Town Council's offices must be accompanied at all times and at the time of arrival visitors should be made aware of fire evacuation procedures.

Contractors

The definition of a contractor is a person or firm that supplies materials and/or labour or performs services for other companies, normally at a specified price.

If they are undertaking work for the Council, they should be questioned as to whether the work they are to undertake will create any Health and Safety risks, asked to provide a copy of their current Public and Employers Liability Certificates, and asked to submit their work method statements, risk assessments and evidence of competency.

Work will only be undertaken after the appropriate discussions have been had and consent given from the Green Spaces Manager or Town Clerk.

Lone Working

Whilst Buckingham Town Council will take all reasonable steps to avoid staff working on their own, there may be occasions when an employee will be working in isolation.

It is inevitable that this will happen on occasions and whilst the matter cannot be completely avoided, good practice and common sense can help mitigate the risks of any harm coming to that individual.

It is therefore suggested that a colleague, family member, associate or personal friend outside of work is aware of the lone working circumstances and the expected departure /return time of that person. It is also prudent for that person to have an out of hours contact number for a Line Manager or a colleague in the event of an emergency.

If there is only one person present in a location it is particularly important that any hazardous or risky activities are not undertaken that have the potential to cause harm to the employee or damage to the property. If you are in the office alone, then keep doors locked and secure. Think about whether you feel safe and whether you are in any imminent danger.

If an external visit may pose a threat to someone's safety, the visit should be rearranged to take place on Council premises or alternatively more than one employee should attend the appointment.

Stress Management

All of us may suffer from differing levels of stress at any time, the key is to be able to identify the symptoms at an early stage, manage the consequences and put preventative controls in place. Quality of life and responsibility for one's own wellbeing also plays an important part.

Definition of Stress

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on 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.

Stress takes on many forms and there are clear benefits to preventing work-related stress:

- Improved quality of life
- Good staff relations
- Reduced sick leave and better attendance levels
- Enhanced work performance
- Decreased staff turnover

Stress Management

What is Stress?

Stress is the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them. There is a clear distinction between pressure which can create a 'buzz' and be a motivating factor, and stress which can occur when this pressure becomes excessive.

Why do we need to tackle stress?

About 1 in 5 people say that they find their work either very or extremely stressful. Over half a million people report experiencing work-related stress at a level they believe has actually made them ill.

The Management Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. In other words, the six Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work. These are:

Demands – such as workload, work patterns and the work environment.

Control - such as how much say the person has in the way they do their work.

Support – such as the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organisation, line management and colleagues.

Relationships – such as promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.

Role – such as whether people understand their role within the organisation and whether the organisation ensures they do not have conflicting roles.

Change – such as how organisational change (large or small) is managed and communicated.

Employers have a duty to ensure that risks arising from work activity are properly controlled. The Management Standards approach helps employers work with their employees and representatives to undertake risk assessments for stress.

Smoke Free Policy

Exposure to second-hand smoke, also known as passive smoking, increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers from non-smokers within the same airspace does not stop potentially dangerous exposure. The aim of the Government's ban on smoking is to protect non-smokers from inhaling secondary smoke.

Legislation

From the 1st July 2007 in England, new smoke free legislation came into force affecting all businesses and workplaces.

Premises

The legislation means that staff, customers and visitors are not permitted to smoke in any enclosed or substantially enclosed areas of our premises, and all employees have a right to work in a smoke free environment.

Vehicles

The legislation also affects staff driving on Council business. In the main smoking is banned if, for example, the vehicle is a bus or taxi transporting members of the public or used by more than one person, such as a contractor's van or pool car.

A company car used solely by one person is not covered under the rules except when carrying other passengers on business. The same law applies to privately owned vehicles when being used on Council business AND carrying other passengers.

In summary, driving alone in a car solely dedicated for your use is excluded from the policy. However if colleagues, clients or anyone else also travel in the vehicle whilst on business, then the car must become a smoke free zone.

For the purpose of this policy, "on Council business" is deemed as travelling during working hours i.e. travel where expenses for mileage are claimed. Commuting to and from your normal place of work is not included.

Enforcement

Buckingham Town Council does not adopt a moral stance or view regarding smoking however all staff are obliged to adhere to the legislation. Failure to comply with the law is a criminal offence and can result in a court appearance, fines and penalties of between £50 and £2,500 for either the offending smoker or the company. Buckingham Town Council's standard internal disciplinary procedures may be invoked for any breach of Buckingham Town Council's policy or code of conduct.

'No Smoking' signs will be clearly displayed near entrances to all Buckingham Town Council's premises, where appropriate. The Council owned vehicles will also display 'No Smoking' stickers.

The following sources of support are available for smokers who want to quit:

NHS Stop Smoking Helpline – 0800 169 0 169 www.gosmokefree.co.uk

QUIT - UK Charity – 0800 00 22 00 www.quit.org.uk

Training

All staff will be required to spend a small amount of time undertaking general Health and Safety training. It will include the following topics and on some aspects, the completion of questionnaires may be required:

- The Legislation and Regulations and Law Enforcement
- Buckingham Town Council's Legal Obligations
- Fire Safety
- Accidents and First Aid
- General Good Housekeeping
- Electrical Safety
- Manual Handling
- Stress Management and Wellbeing
- Lone Working

Specialist training for specific types of jobs will also be provided where necessary and as required for certain individuals, this may include the following:

- Working at Height
- Hot Work
- Pole Saw Operation
- DSE / Workstation Assessments
- ATV Operation
- Safe use of chemicals and knapsack spraying –PA1/PA6a.

Information Sources

Buckingham Town Council, Buckingham Centre, Verney Close, Buckingham, MK18 1JP – 01280 816426

Christopher Wayman
Town Clerk
townclerk@buckingham-tc.gov.uk

Health & Safety Executive

Main telephone on 0845 345 0055 or www.hse.gov.uk

Enforcing Authority

The local Inspectors are located within the Environmental Health Departments of the relevant Local Authorities, in Buckingham's case this is Aylesbury Vale District Council.

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL REPORT OF AN INCIDENT/ACCIDENT TO A PERSON

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

NAME OF PERSON to whom incident/accident happened: _____

MEMBER OF PUBLIC/CONTRACTOR: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ TELEPHONE: _____

DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT: _____

PRECISE LOCATION: _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT/ACCIDENT

(State what happened before, during and after the incident. Describe how it happened)

DESCRIPTION OF ANY ACTION TAKEN

(By whom? Including medical/other assistance sought, involvement of other agencies e.g. police)

REASON FOR CAUSE OF INCIDENT/ACCIDENT

(If unknown, do not speculate)

- by witnesses

- by the named person above

DETAILS OF WITNESSES

(Names and addresses and/or telephone numbers)

DETAILS OF ANY EQUIPMENT INVOLVED

(In relation to the incident/accident only)

EQUIPMENT / APPLIANCE RETAINED FOR INSPECTION

YES/NO

FULL NAME OF PERSON MAKING REPORT: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

ADDRESS (if not an employee): _____

_____ **TELEPHONE:** _____

To the best of my knowledge the above information is true and correct

Signed _____ Date _____

THIS FORM IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE GREEN SPACES MANAGER AT BTC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

For Office Use Only - NOTES OF FOLLOW UP ACTIONS including remedial action, recommendations, counselling, advice etc

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL REPORT OF A VEHICLE INCIDENT/ACCIDENT

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY - DO NOT ADMIT LIABILITY

DATE OF ACCIDENT / INCIDENT: _____

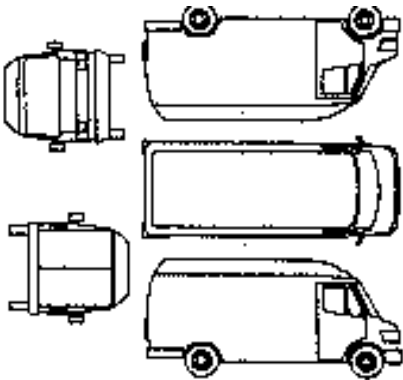
LOCATION OF ACCIDENT / INCIDENT: _____

DETAILS OF WHAT HAPPENED:

(State what happened before, during and after, describe how it happened and stick to facts, do not speculate)

DETAIL ANY DAMAGE TO VAN:

(use the pictures to assist)



SKETCH DETAILS INCIDENT / ACCIDENT:

DETAIL ANY DAMAGE TO OTHER VEHICLES OR PROPERTY:

DETAILS OF ANY INJURIES:

DETAILS OF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED:

(Names and addresses and/or telephone numbers, insurance details if known)

FULL NAME OF PERSON MAKING REPORT: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

To the best of my knowledge the above information is true and correct

Signed _____ Date _____

THIS FORM IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE GREEN SPACES MANAGER AT BTC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

For Office Use Only - NOTES OF FOLLOW UP ACTIONS including remedial action, recommendations, repairs, advice etc

Appendix C

BUCKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL REPORT OF AN INCIDENT TO PROPERTY

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

DETAILS OF THE PROPERTY INVOLVED INCLUDING LOCATION AND OWNER DETAILS:

DATE AND TIME OF INCIDENT:

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT:

(State what happened before, during and after the incident. Describe how it happened)

DETAILS OF WITNESSES:

(Names and addresses and/or telephone numbers)

PROPERTY / EQUIPMENT / APPLIANCE RETAINED FOR INSPECTION

YES/NO

FULL NAME OF PERSON MAKING REPORT: _____

JOB TITLE: _____

ADDRESS (if not an employee): _____

_____ **TELEPHONE:** _____

To the best of my knowledge the above information is true and correct

Signed _____ Date _____

THIS FORM IS TO BE GIVEN TO THE GREEN SPACES MANAGER AT BTC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

For Office Use Only - NOTES OF FOLLOW UP ACTIONS including remedial action, recommendations, repairs, advice etc