



Policy

Fire Policy

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1.0 Introduction

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRO) together with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and other associated fire safety legislation, impose duties on all employers in respect of fire safety at work. These duties extend to the Council, its employees and other persons who may be affected by the Council's work activities. As the employer, the Council has formulated a Fire Safety Policy to include these duties.

2.0 Key Principles

This Fire Safety Policy aims to ensure that if possible, outbreaks of fire do not occur and that if they do, they are rapidly detected and appropriate emergency procedures implemented to preserve life and assets. This Policy describes the objectives and responsibilities for Fire Safety within the Council. It covers all relevant people.

This Policy also aims to document the management of fire safety. Post-incident response and evaluation are essential for an effective fire prevention. It is also important that we learn lessons from fire incidents and from incidents when the alarm systems have been activated. Effective incident investigation and review of risk assessments will help prevent further incidents. It is vital to the effectiveness of the Policy that the document is available to all staff; they understand its contents and are aware of their role in ensuring a fire safe environment. In general, this Fire Safety Policy requires:

- The undertaking of a 'Fire Risk Assessment' for council owned premises.
- Storing hazardous substances safely.
- Satisfactory precautions and procedures relating to evacuation and means of escape from fire.
- Effective means of detecting fire and raising the alarm.
- Provision of fire-fighting equipment.
- Suitable arrangements for maintaining and testing fire safety equipment and facilities.
- Information, instruction and training in fire safety.

3. Definitions

Responsible Person

Contained within the RRO is reference to a 'responsible person', "*responsible person*" means—
(a) in relation to a workplace, the employer, if the workplace is to any extent under his control;
(b) in relation to any premises not falling within paragraph (a)—
(i) the person who has control of the premises (as occupier or otherwise) in connection with the carrying on by him of a trade, business or other undertaking (for profit or not); or
(ii) the owner, where the person in control of the premises does not have control in connection with the carrying on by that person of a trade, business or other undertaking.

The 'responsible person' within the Council is the Chief Executive.

Competent Persons

Competent Persons will have specific duties given to them by the Responsible Person (Legislative). In all cases the Responsible Person (Legislative) will ensure that any appointed competent person is sufficiently trained, experienced and knowledgeable to undertake such assigned duties to assist them in the application of proper preventative and protective measures.

Site Log Book

Fire Safety Policy and a folder present (or online) at every premises of the Council containing records on completion of statutory checks, fire safety guidance and contractor signing in registers.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Council

The Council (corporate body), as the employer is ultimately responsible in law for:

- (a) The fire safety of Council's employees whilst at work.
- (b) The conduct of the Council's undertakings, to ensure the fire safety of the public, and other persons not in their employment.

To meet these responsibilities the Council will ensure that:

- There is an effective overall Policy (this document) for the fire safety of employees and other persons who may be affected by the Council's undertaking and that adequate funds are available to meet fire safety requirements.
- Any necessary changes are made to the Council's Fire Safety Policy and review.
- The Council is organised and has sufficient numbers of competent staff to meet its responsibility for fire safety.

4.2 The Chief Executive

As the Responsible Person for fire safety within the Council as defined in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 this person is responsible for:

- Ensuring organisational compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in relation to premises under their control.
- Ensuring a Fire Safety Management structure exists within the Council.
- Ensuring audit arrangements exist to oversee fire safety compliance.
- Ensuring the provision of appropriate resources to support fire safety management arrangements.
- In line with article 22 of the RRO *'Where two or more responsible persons share, or have duties in respect of, premises (whether on a temporary or a permanent basis) each such person must—*
 - *(a) co-operate with the other responsible person concerned so far as is necessary to enable them to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on them by or under this Order;*

- *(b)(taking into account the nature of his activities) take all reasonable steps to co-ordinate the measures he takes to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on him by or under this Order with the measures the other responsible persons are taking to comply with the requirements and prohibitions imposed on them by or under this Order; and*
- *(c) take all reasonable steps to inform the other responsible persons concerned of the risks to relevant persons arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking.*
- *(2) Where two or more responsible persons share premises (whether on a temporary or a permanent basis) where an explosive atmosphere may occur, the responsible person who has overall responsibility for the premises must co-ordinate the implementation of all the measures required by this Part to be taken to protect relevant persons from any risk from the explosive atmosphere.'*

Any third party who has to any extent control over a part or whole of a premises will be the Responsible Person for those premises or relevant part regardless of whether the Council owns, are sub-letting, leasing or in any other way handing over control of the premises to the third party, as set out in the lease agreement.

4.3 The Corporate Director (Finance and Operations) and the Corporate Management Team (CMT)

Will provide leadership on focusing on real fire related issues and ensuring the organisation manages its significant risks. Take board level responsibility for the Council's compliance with the RRO including:

- Provide strategic direction and oversight of corporate strategies and policies relating to fire precautions
- Ensure that robust fire safety management systems, arrangements and organisation exist in each service.
- Support the Chief Executive in meeting their safety responsibilities for the Council as a whole.
- Ensure that there is an appropriate and resourced response to fire safety arrangements including fire risk assessments.

4.4 Group Manager

Is responsible for:

- Implementation of the policy in their service area.
- Ensure the responsibilities of the appointed person is carried out.

4.5 Team Leader (Lead Officers, Supervisors and others that manage staff)

Is responsible for:

- Implementing the policy in their areas of activity and to ensure that the work under their jurisdiction is undertaken with due regard to the health and safety of staff involved
- Ensuring associated maintenance and testing responsibilities are undertaken in line with statutory requirements.
- Ensure local inductions, refresher training and completion of the e-learning fire training

4.6 Corporate Health, Safety & Resilience Team

Is responsible for:

- Carry out safety audit at appropriate intervals, dependant on the risk posed by the work or working environment as approved by the SLT.
- Ensuring the monitoring of compliance with the requirements of this Policy, e.g. the completion of Fire Risk Assessment and associated actions.
- Maintain the recording of all fire related incidents.

4.7 Appointed Persons (Local)

These persons or organisations can be internal or external to the Council workforce and manage external facilities such as Old Town Hall, Cupid Green Depot. They are responsible for:

- **Site Log Book:** To ensure the Site Log Book is clearly available to contractors and staff on site. As the Appointed Person (Local) you must ensure that the records within are completed and available for inspection as required.
- **Fire Alarms:** Shall be tested on a weekly basis, with tests logged in the Site Log Book.
- **Fire Evacuation Drills:** Must be carried out at least every six months, and recorded in the Site Log Book.
- **Emergency Lighting:** To be tested by a competent person/contractor and recorded in Site Log Book. Please note that some newer or refurbished premises may have an automatic testing system which requires inspection of the control panel.
- **Fire Wardens:** Ensure that sufficient trained Fire Wardens are appointed. Those nominated as Fire Wardens should be communicated to building users and have undergone Fire Warden Training.
- **Fire Safety Inspection:** As the Appointed Person you should perform monthly Inspections to identify fire safety hazards and to take action to rectify any found. Actions from these inspections should be dealt with locally and any significant concerns reported to the Corporate Health, Safety and Resilience Team.
- Ensuring the provision of fire-fighting equipment within premises of the Council.
- Completion of a fire evacuation plan.

4.8 Employees

Are responsible for:

- Ensuring co-operation with managers/supervisors on matters of fire safety compliance.
- Ensuring they do not misuse or interfere with any equipment provided for their health and safety.
- Ensuring fire related incidents are reported in line with corporate health and safety reporting arrangements.
- Reporting any obvious defector short comings in fire safety provision arrangements or procedures.
- Ensuring completion of mandatory training in relation to fire safety, local induction training or specific roles in relation to fire safety.

- Ensuring the safety of any visitors that they might have and for informing them of the required actions in the event of emergency. This responsibility also extends to evacuating them from site in the event of an emergency.
- Ensuring appropriate response and conduct when required to evacuate any council premises under fire drill or fire incident conditions.

5. Arrangements for carrying out this Policy

The Council recognises its obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and implements the following practical arrangements in order to meet these obligations.

5.1 Fire Risk Assessments

Responsible Person

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 the responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions they need to take to comply with the requirements prohibitions imposed on them by or under this Order.

Enforcing Authority

The local authority Fire and Rescue Officers have a duty to enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. They have various rights, including the right to enter and inspect the premises, to make enquiries, to request the production of information, records and documents and to take samples.

Group Manager

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring a competent fire risk assessor is appointed to deliver fire risk assessments for the Councils' premises. The fire risk assessment must encompass all aspects of premises fire safety.
- Ensuring the requirement for a fire risk assessment is communicated to all 'occupied' buildings
- Ensuring an additional fire risk assessment is undertaken if there is any change in the Circumstances of the workplace, including but not limited to:
 - A modification or extension which is likely to affect the means of escape, fire risk/hazard and associated fire precautions.
 - A significant number of employees increases, decreases, or otherwise provides a material change
 - There is some reason to suppose the original assessment is out of date, e.g. with regard to regulation.
 - Ensuring the Fire Risk Assessor clearly identifies who is to action any required tasks and within what specified timescales.
 - Ensuring any tasks to be actioned are communicated to those responsible for rectification.
 - Ensuring any Fire Risk Assessment actions allocated to you are undertaken or mitigated in an appropriate manner and that the Fire Risk Assessment action plan is updated to identify the actions taken.

- Ensuring the Fire Risk Assessment and related action plan is made accessible to all competent persons and those required to action.

Appointed competent Persons

Are responsible for:

- Ensuring any Fire Risk Assessment actions allocated to them are undertaken or mitigated in an appropriate manner and that the Fire Risk Assessment action plan is updated to identify the actions taken.

Corporate Health, Safety & Resilience Team

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring that non-compliance in relation to Fire Risk Assessment completion is reported to the Council's Health, safety and resilience committee.

5.2 Fire Precautions

The Council will implement fire preventative measures, and will make and give effect to such fire safety arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the size of the undertaking and the nature of activities. These fire safety arrangements are more specifically referred to in the following sections.

5.3 Flammable Substances

Where flammable substances are present in or on Council premises, the Council will ensure that the risk to relevant persons related to the presence of the substance is either eliminated or reduced so far as is reasonably practicable. The Council will so far as is reasonably practicable, replace a dangerous substance (or the use of a dangerous substance), with a substance or process which either eliminates or reduces the risk to relevant persons. The Council will arrange for the safe handling, storage & transport of flammable substances & waste containing flammable substances.

5.4 Fire Detection & Fire Fighting

Where appropriate premises will be equipped with fire detectors, alarms & appropriate fire-fighting equipment. Means will be provided for fire-fighting in Council premises & competent persons (fire wardens) nominated to implement those measures. Competent people will ensure that the number of such persons, their training & the equipment available to them are adequate, taking into account the size of, and the specific hazards involved in, the premises concerned.

5.5 Emergency Routes & Exits

Emergency exits from premises & the exits themselves will be kept clear at all times.

Emergency routes & exits will lead as directly as possible to a place of safety. The number, distribution & dimensions of emergency routes & exits will be adequate having regard to the use, equipment & dimensions of the premises and the maximum number of persons who may be present there at any one time.

Emergency doors will not be so locked or fastened that they cannot be easily and immediately opened by any person who may require to use them in an emergency. Emergency routes and exits will be indicated by signs. Emergency routes and exits requiring illumination will be provided with emergency lighting of adequate intensity in case of failure of normal lighting.

5.6 Procedures for Serious & Imminent Danger

Competent persons will establish & where necessary, implement appropriate procedures, including fire drills, to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to relevant persons. The Council will ensure that persons will be prevented from resuming work in any situation where there is still a serious and imminent danger. The Council will nominate a sufficient number of competent persons to implement those procedures in so far as they relate to the evacuation of persons from premises. The competent persons nominated to implement procedures for the evacuation of persons from premises will have complete authority with respect to and during this evacuation.

5.7 Maintenance

The Council will ensure that its premises and any facilities, equipment and devices provided in respect of the premises are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair. Where the premises form part of a building, the Council will make arrangements with the occupier of any other premises forming part of the building for the purpose of ensuring that the requirements of the above paragraph are met.

5.8 Safety Assistance

The Council will appoint competent persons to assist in undertaking the preventative and protective measures. The Council will ensure that the persons appointed have adequate time available and the means at their disposal to fulfil their functions.

5.9 Provision of Information to Employees

The Council will provide all employees with comprehensible and relevant fire safety information on:

- The risks to them identified by the risk assessments
- The preventative & protective measures
- The procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger
- The identities of the appointed fire wardens.

5.10 Training

The Council will ensure that all employees are provided with adequate fire safety training:

- At the time when they are first employed.
- Periodically repeated thereafter as the date set by the risk assessment.

The training will include suitable & sufficient instruction and training on the precautions and actions to be taken by employees in order to safeguard themselves & other relevant persons on the premises. The training will be provided in a manner appropriate to the risks identified by the fire risk assessments. Specific fire safety training will be provided at regular intervals to the

Council's appointed fire wardens and evacuation chair nominated people. Particular attention is to be paid to young and inexperienced employees to ensure that they are properly supervised.

5.11 Fire Evacuation Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) are provided for staff where assisted emergency evacuation is required.
- Ensuring those assigned responsibilities for assisting persons to which a PEEP applies are aware and receive appropriate training in the use of equipment required for evacuation e.g. Evac Chair training.
- Ensuring Fire Wardens for the building area are aware of the presence and content of the PEEP and for whom it is provided.

5.12 Hot Works

Hot works involve the undertaking of works by contractors which may involve a naked flame or hot welding. This is common for works involving:

- Flat roof felts works or other coverings – bitumen/tar boilers.
- Plumbing – welding of copper pipes – blowlamps/blowtorches.
- Grinding wheels and cutting discs.

'Hot Work Procedure' to which proposed works will comply. They are responsible for ensuring all contractor hot works are undertaken are planned and controlled. Responsible Persons (Local) are responsible for ensuring that contractors are to undertake hot work are planned and controlled. They must not permit a contractor to undertake hot work in or outside of their building without seeking the approval of the Team Leader in the first instance.

5.13 Records

The Council will ensure that there are suitable & sufficient arrangements for keeping of statutory records. The statutory records will include risk assessments, safe systems of work, fire evacuation procedures, completed fire safety log books, fire safety training records etc. (Appendix 1).

5.14 Monitoring

Monitoring of Fire Safety performance will be achieved through local fire safety inspections and study of fire safety documentation. In the event of a fire safety incident the performance of individuals or groups will be measured against the extent of compliance with the Fire Safety Policy.

6.0 Department for Communities and Local Government

The Guidance documents listed below are available on the Internet.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fire-safety-law-and-guidance-documents-for-business>

There are 13 guides as well as a document on making your premises safe and 5 steps check sheet

Fire safety: guidance for the hospitality Industry
Fire safety risk assessment: animal premises and stables
Fire safety risk assessment: means of escape for disabled people
Fire safety risk assessment: open-air events and venues
Fire safety risk assessment: transport premises and facilities
Fire safety risk assessment: healthcare premises
Fire safety risk assessment: residential care premises
Fire safety risk assessment: theatres, cinemas and similar premises
Making your premises safe from fire
Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist
Fire safety risk assessment: factories and warehouses
Fire safety risk assessment: Large places of assembly
Fire safety risk assessment: small and medium places of assembly
Fire safety risk assessment: educational premises
Fire safety risk assessment: sleeping accommodation
Fire safety risk assessment: offices and shops

Dated:

Signed:
(Chief Executive)