



Penrith Town Council

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HEALTH, SAFETY POLICY

GENERAL STATEMENT OF INTENT

Penrith Town Council is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all its users. So far as it is reasonably practicable, it will have systems and procedures in place, which will ensure that any equipment, plant and premises are safe and free from hazards. This will mean that employees, visitors and others affected by its operation are exposed to the least possible risk.

As a minimum, the Council will comply with current Health and Safety Legislation, Approved Codes of Practice, Guidance Notes, British and European Standards, and any subsequent legislation enacted under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Employees have a duty of co-operation to ensure that the policies are effective. The Council requires all its employees to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and avoid all working practices which may adversely affect the health, safety and welfare of themselves, visitors and the public in general.

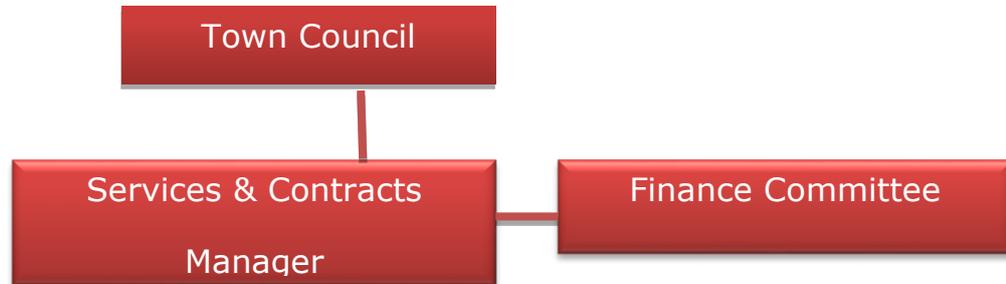
This policy is fully resolved by the Council and will be brought to the attention of all employees and other who may be affected by its policies and actions. The Council will ensure that employees and others where appropriate are kept informed of current and future legislation and that management systems are in place to ensure effective communication, information and training in health and safety matters.

The Council recognises its responsibility to communicate and co-operate with other users that share the facilities of the community centre.

The policy also requires that clearly defined standards are publicised and that monitoring, and auditing procedures are present to ensure that all the Council's activities meet the required health and safety standards

1. ORGANISATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1.1 The Town Council has ultimate accountability for health and safety and will ensure that the Health and Safety Policy is fully implemented and disseminated to its entire staff.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Council's organisational structure, the positions that have direct responsibility to the Town Council for health, safety and welfare, are as follows:



- 1.2 Responsibility for the implementation of all policies, procedures and protocols rests with the Town Clerk.
- 1.3 The Services & Contracts Manager has the responsibility for delivering, reviewing, evaluating, risk assessing and providing training for all policies, procedures and protocols.
- 1.4 Although the Town Council may delegate duties to others, it retains overall control and accountability for all health and safety matters.
- 1.5 The Council has a duty to investigate report and record any accidents, near-accidents and dangerous incidents in accordance with the Council's current instructions.
- 1.6 All employees must be familiar with and follow all relevant internal and external emergency instructions and procedures (APPENDIX A). In addition, they must ensure that they have received adequate information, instruction and training in these areas. They should also be alert to any examples of ill health, which may be attributable to working conditions, procedures and practices.
- 1.7 Where significant problems are identified, the Town Clerk should ensure that these are thoroughly investigated, reported to the relevant Council Committee and, so far as is reasonably practicable, make recommendations for the measures to be implemented to remove the cause.
- 1.8 Where specific advice is needed to help resolve health and safety issues, employees should in the first instance seek the support and assistance of the Services & Contracts Manager. Where matters are not resolved to their satisfaction they should make written representation to the appropriate Council Committee.
- 1.9 The Town Council will give full support to the staff in carrying out their duties.
- 1.10 The Town Clerk will monitor the implementation of the policies, review statistics on accidents, near misses, discuss instructions and guidance to staff and offer advice on Health and Safety issues.

2. GRIEVANCES

- 2.1 Any member of staff wishing to discuss occupational health and safety problems should firstly raise the matter with the Services & Contracts Manager, stating clearly the nature of the grievance and redress sought.
- 2.2 Both parties should seek to resolve the issue through discussion.
- 2.3 Should the matter not be resolved within a reasonable period, the matter should then follow the Council's grievance procedure.

3 REVIEW

- 3.1 The Council will review its Health and Safety policy every 12 months or earlier considering changes in legislation or other circumstance.
- 3.2 Arrangements for safety will be reviewed by the Services & Contracts Manager in conjunction with the Finance Committee annually. This will ensure its further development and continuing relevance to the structure and needs of the Council.

4 ARRANGEMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

- 4.1 The Council's Health and Safety Policy will be communicated to all Council staff and to others who may be affected by its activities, including any temporary staff, contractors and other tenants of the community centre.
- 4.2 Detailed information and procedures will be found in the Council office. Further guidance and information will be provided where necessary through e-mail and briefings.
- 4.3 The Council will ensure the competence of its staff by providing training that is both appropriate and relevant to their roles.
- 4.4 All new staff will receive a planned induction, which includes the Council's health and safety policy, safe working practices, fire precautions and procedures, first aid arrangements, personal safety instructions and accident reporting procedures. They will also be given a familiarisation tour of their workplace and the emergency escape routes. Each new staff member will receive a staff handbook.
- 4.5 The Council's work activities will be subject to a formal risk assessment. All identified hazards which constitute a significant risk will be documented and appropriate remedial action implemented, including the introduction of safe working systems, to eliminate or reduce the risk to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.
- 4.6 All accidents, near misses and dangerous occurrences must be reported. These will be investigated to determine the cause and, where appropriate, remedial action introduced to prevent a recurrence. Reports will be completed in accordance with current instructions and to meet the requirements of the appropriate reporting legislation.

- 4.7 Information on reported accidents; near misses and dangerous occurrences will be made available to all relevant parties as appropriate and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- 4.8 First aid facilities will meet the standards required in the current First Aid Regulations. The Council aims to have sufficient trained First Aiders and the procedures will follow the Approved Code of Practice to the First Aid at Work Regulations 1981.
- 4.9 In the property where the Council's personnel are employed, the environment, welfare facilities and other related factors will meet required or recommended minimum standards. The standard will be that required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992. Attention will be paid to temperature; ventilation; purity of air and water supply; lighting; storage; sanitary conveniences; noise and overcrowding.
- 4.10 The Services & contracts Manager is required to monitor the health, safety and welfare arrangements and, periodically, carry out audits to check the effectiveness of the safety policy. The reports of the safety audits, including action taken to address problems identified, are to be made available to all interested parties. The reports will include reviews of existing risk assessments carried out under specific pieces of legislation, e.g. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment).
- 4.11 Reports on the routine checks and risk assessments will be assessed by the Finance Committee for quality assurance purposes.
- 4.12 All necessary precautions will be taken in accordance with the requirements of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002. For example, the use, storage, handling and transportation of materials and substances will be done in such a way as to minimise risks. The least hazardous type of material or substance available will be used or purchased and, furthermore, there will be regular assessments and monitoring to ensure that this is achieved.
- 4.13 The Council will make every effort to identify and use competent contractors. If there is any doubt about competence, the contractor will not be used. Before the commencement of work in any areas that is in direct control of the Council, contractors will be given clear guidance on the avoidance of risks and the working arrangements to be followed.

APPENDIX A

POLICIES, PROCEDURES & PROTOCOLS

ACCIDENT REPORTING

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy outlines the procedures that are to be adopted when any staff, visitor or contractor experiences an accident, near-miss or dangerous occurrence in areas of Council direct responsibility.
- 1.2 It is the policy of the Council to identify and investigate unplanned losses (accidents), their source and hence their underlying causes.
- 1.3 To enable this objective to be achieved it is imperative that all accidents, irrespective of the resulting injury or damage, be reported according to the laid down procedures.
- 1.4 To avoid misunderstanding, the Council deem an accident and near-miss to be defined thus:
 - a. **Accident:** "any unplanned event that results in personnel injury or damage to property, plant or equipment.
 - b. **Near-miss:** "an unplanned event which does not cause injury or damage but could have done so." Examples include: items falling near to personnel, incidents involving vehicles and electrical short-circuits.

2. SAFE SYSTEM OF WORK

- 2.1 All incidents and near-miss incidents must be reported, however minor. To achieve this, the following procedure should be adopted.
 - a. Ensure the appropriate report form is completed and forwarded to the Town Clerk.
 - b. Obtain treatment for any injury from a first-aider or the local hospital.
 - c. Ensure that the area is made safe and poses no risk to other personnel (**except where the accident results in a major injury, in which case the scene should be cordoned off and left undisturbed until advised otherwise by the enforcing authority**).
 - d. Enter details in the accident book.
 - e. Inform the injured person's manager (or a responsible person) of the incident.

3. ACCIDENT BOOK

- 3.1 All accidents must be recorded in the Council's accident book.
- 3.2 The accident book will be reviewed regularly by the Town Clerk to ascertain the nature of incidents which have occurred in the workplace. This review will be in addition to an individual investigation of the circumstances surrounding each incident.
- 3.3 All near-misses must be reported to the Town Clerk, as soon as possible so that action can be taken to investigate the causes and to prevent recurrence.

4. REPORTING PROCEDURE STAFF

- 4.1 All accidents must be entered in the Accident Book either by the injured person or, if this is not practical, someone else present at the time.
- 4.2 The Town Clerk must then:
 - a. Note that the accident has occurred.
 - b. Ensure that the Accident Book has been correctly and fully completed.
 - c. Ensure that, where applicable, the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (as amended) are met.
 - d. Ensure, so far as reasonably practical, that proper action is taken to help prevent the accident being repeated.

N.B.

The above is simply the administrative procedure. Clearly it is essential for all concerned to give priority to the safety and welfare of any injured person and anyone else involved

REPORTING PROCEDURE VISITORS / CONTRACTORS

- 4.3 All injuries must be reported in the accident book, however minor. Visitors and contractors who are unable to enter their account into the book must arrange for another person to make an entry on their behalf. Visitors and contractors should also notify their own employer where applicable.
- 4.4 The Council takes the responsibility for notifying reportable accidents under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995.

POLICY AND PROCEDURE FOR THE CONTROL OF SUBSTANCES HAZARDOUS TO HEALTH (COSHH)

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy is designed to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH).

2. POLICY

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff/volunteers and contractors working with the Councils areas of responsibility.
- 2.2 The aim of this policy is to ensure that we provide adequate training, instruction and information to prevent staff and others coming into contact with hazardous substances. This will be achieved by providing safety equipment and by having a prescribed procedure to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all staff, and visitors.

3. SERVICES & CONTRACTS MANAGER

- 3.1 The Council delegates to the Services & Contracts Manager, responsibility for the implementation of this policy and procedures, who is responsible for ensuring that staff are trained where applicable and, so far as is reasonably practicable, they follow safe systems of work.
- 3.2 The main area of responsibility is:
 - a. To carry out (and review) a formal assessment of health risks to staff.
 - b. To prevent/control exposure (and monitor any exposure) of staff to health risks.
 - c. To institute proper use of controls and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
 - d. To ensure that controls are appropriate and tested and keep records as necessary.
 - e. To ensure that appropriate health surveillance for staff is provided, where necessary.
 - f. To provide information, instruction and training, as appropriate/necessary, regarding all hazardous substances.

4. TRAINING NEEDS

- 4.1 Staff that may be exposed to hazardous substances will:
- a. Be provided with suitable and sufficient information, instruction and training so that they are aware of the risks to their health created by such exposure and the precautions which should be taken to minimise the risks.
 - b. Receive training to a safe level in the handling of hazardous substances, procedures, the use of control measures and in emergency procedures.
 - c. Staff training must include accident and defect reporting procedures. Staff issued with PPE should be trained in its use, limitations, storage, cleaning and maintenance.

5. PROCEDURES

- 5.1 The CoSHH Regulations require employers to conduct risk assessments and produce control measures to minimise or eliminate the risks concerning any substance deemed hazardous to health.
- 5.2 These risk assessments must be recorded, together with the precautions taken to control or prevent exposure of staff and others to the substance(s). This procedure is carried out by the Services & Contracts Manager.
- 5.3 There are seven key elements of COSHH:
- a. Assessment
 - b. Control Measures
 - c. Maintenance of Control Measures
 - d. Monitoring of Exposure
 - e. Health Surveillance
 - f. Provision of Information
 - g. Record Keeping
- 5.4 A significant undertaking is required to determine and record the following:
- a. What substances are present?
 - b. What activities use, store or transport such substances?
 - c. What hazards are associated with these substances

6. ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The Services & Contracts Manager will ensure that no work is carried out that is liable to expose employees, or others to substances hazardous to health, unless a suitable and sufficient assessment, in writing, of those risks has been carried out.
- 6.2 Where it has been identified that a substance is classified as hazardous, the Services & Contracts Manager will obtain Safety Data Sheets and carry out the necessary risk assessment.
- 6.3 The full risk assessment will be stored together with any relevant/available Safety Data Sheets, in the Council COSHH register.
- 6.4 The Services & Contracts Manager is to ensure that the risk assessments are made available to all members of staff likely to be affected by the substance.
- 6.5 All risk assessments are to be reviewed annually.

CONTRACTORS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council has a duty to assess the risks posed to the health and safety of all its staff and to anyone else who may be affected by its activities.
- 1.2 Significant risks identified by this process must be reduced to a tolerable level. This duty extends to managing the risks associated with works undertaken for the Council by contractors.
- 1.3 This policy sets down the framework for managing all contractor activities within the Council's responsibility area.
- 1.4 The Council will ensure that all works undertaken by contractors for or on its behalf are carried out in such a manner as to avoid, reduce, or control, all foreseeable risks to health and safety to a tolerable level.
- 1.5 The objectives of this policy are to:
 - a. Safeguard staff and other users against death, injury or occupational disease resulting from contractor activities.
 - b. Minimise the risks associated with contractor undertakings to a tolerable level.
 - c. Protect property, environment and assets.
- 1.6 To achieve this, the Council will ensure that:
 - a. It only engages suitably competent, financially viable contractors to undertake works on its behalf.
 - b. All contractors are provided with the necessary information and instruction to undertake their works in accordance with the objectives of this policy.
 - c. All contractors are visibly identifiable.
 - d. Contractors are only permitted to commence works once they have properly planned their works and put appropriate measures in place to manage and deliver the works effectively with regards to health and safety, and quality of product.
 - e. Contractor performance is reviewed / audited on project completion.
 - f. This policy is monitored and reviewed at regular intervals to ensure that the policy is meeting stated aims and objectives and is consistent with legislative and best practice demands

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 It is the policy of the Council to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all its staff, including measures to protect their health, safety and wellbeing when working with Display Screen Equipment (DSE).
- 1.2 The Council will fulfil its statutory obligations by:
 - a. Carrying out assessments of work station, using a self-assessment approach.
 - b. Providing suitable work equipment.
 - c. Providing information and training where applicable.
 - d. The provision of eye and eyesight testing for those deemed as being **users**, and the provision of spectacles where these are required solely and specifically for the use of DSE work.
 - e. Making available regular breaks for employees and volunteers classed as **users**.

2. DEFINITIONS

- a. **DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT** – any alphanumeric or graphic display screen.
- b. **WORKSTATION** – this includes display screen equipment, any associated accessories including keyboard, mouse, printer, furniture etc and the immediate work environment around the display screen equipment.
- c. **USER** – HSE Guidance states: It will generally be appropriate to classify the person concerned as a “user” or “operator” if they:
 - normally use DSE for **continuous or near-continuous spells of an hour or more** at a time; and
 - use DSE in this way **daily**; and
 - must **transfer information quickly** to or from the DSE.

3. DSE minimum requirements

- 3.1 Workstations and equipment must comply with specific minimum requirements laid down in the DSE regulations.
- 3.2 There are minimum standards which apply to all elements of the workstation, including the keyboard, the mouse, the environment and the software.
- 3.3 If items such as a footrest or document holder are provided these should comply with the minimum standard; however, they need only be provided if they are necessary given the nature of the work and /or the individual.
- 3.4 Equipment which does not meet the minimum standard may be provided if it is necessary for health and safety reasons – for example, some users may benefit from using a specialist chair which does not have a seat back.
- 3.5 Laptop computers must comply with the minimum standard if they are in prolonged use.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The Council requires that all staff who use or likely to use DSE to complete an annual self-assessment using the assessment check list at APPENDIX B.

ELECTRICITY AT WORK POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The policy sets out what is required to ensure that portable electrical equipment (i.e. equipment with a plug) is maintained in a safe condition for use.
- 1.2 The aim is to reduce the risk of injury and property damage from faulty electrical equipment. If followed it will ensure compliance with the maintenance requirements of Regulation 4(2) of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EAW) and The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998.

2. SERVICES & CONTRACTS MANAGER

- 2.1 The Services & Contracts Manager is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place for the regular inspection and testing of portable electrical appliances within their areas of control.

3. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 All staff who are required to use any electrical equipment must:
 - a. Ensure that they use electrical equipment as instructed.
 - b. Check that equipment has no obvious visual damage or defects before using it.
 - c. Remove from service and report any defective or out-of-test equipment.
 - d. Only use equipment that has a valid inspection/test label.
 - e. Not use personal portable electrical equipment with in an area controlled by the company unless they are authorised to do so by the centre manager.

4. EQUIPMENT BROUGHT ON SITE FOR EVENTS

- 4.1 Equipment that is brought onto Council controlled areas for an event must be in a safe condition.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of the user to ensure equipment has been suitably inspected and if necessary tested.
- 4.3 If this cannot be proved, then a competent person must carry out an in-service inspection and test appropriate to the class of equipment.

5. LEASED EQUIPMENT

- 5.1 Equipment hire companies are legally required to ensure that equipment supplied by them is safe for use at work and is regularly inspected and tested before and after use. Therefore, equipment that is leased for use by the Council should not normally need to be tested however; appropriate routine safety testing should be an integral part of the service contract.
- 5.2 If electrical testing is not part of the service contract (as may be the case for some electrical equipment) then this equipment should be included in the in-house testing programme.

6. USER CHECKS

- 6.1 Users of portable appliances should look for the following indicators of damage or faults, before using the equipment:
- Is the user aware of any problems, does the appliance work?
 - Damage e.g. cuts, fraying, abrasion (apart from light scuffing) to the cable/lead;
 - Damage to the plug, e.g. the casing is cracked, the pins are bent, the screw holding the plug together is loose, the plug rattles;
 - Non-standard joints, including taped joints in the cable;
 - The outer covering (sheath) of the cable not being gripped where it enters the plug or the equipment. Look to see if the coloured insulation of the internal wires is showing;
 - Damage to the outer cover of the equipment or obvious loose parts or screws;
 - Signs of overheating (burn marks or staining) on the equipment or plug;
 - Equipment being used in conditions where it is not suitable, e.g. a wet or dusty workplace;
 - Equipment with signs of cracks, chemical or corrosive damage to the case, switches not working properly, protective covers missing or loose;
 - Extension leads, or adapters overloaded (too many appliances for the fuse or current rating of the lead);
 - If applicable Residual Current Devices (RCDs) failing to disconnect from the supply when the test button is pushed.
- 6.2 If any of the above is identified, do not use the equipment, remove it from service, and report it.

7. INSPECTION AND TESTING

Type of business	User checks	Formal visual inspection	Combined inspection and test
Office information technology rarely moved, e.g. desktop computers, photocopiers, fax machines	No	Yes, 2–4 years	No if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
Double insulated (Class II) equipment moved occasionally (not hand-held), e.g. fans, table lamps	No	2–4 years	No
Hand-held, double insulated (Class II) equipment, e.g. some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	No
Earthed (Class I) equipment, e.g. electric kettles, some floor cleaners	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	Yes, 1–2 years
Cables, leads and plugs connected to Class I equipment, extension leads and battery charging equipment	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 4 years depending on type of equipment it is connected to	Yes, 1–5 years depending on the equipment it is connected to

FIRST AID

1.INTRODUCTION

The Council is committed to providing sufficient first aid arrangements to deal with accidents and injuries to staff and during any events under their direct control.

2. FIRST AID BOX

- A First Aid box is in the kitchen.
- Use of any first aid equipment must be reported to the Town Clerk.
- First Aid boxes are to be inspected four monthly.

OFFICE SECURITY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council recognises its responsibility to provide for staff volunteers, councillors and visitors to its office a safe environment where they and their possessions will be offered a reasonable degree of protection.
- 1.2 To ensure that the environment is kept safe everyone who accesses the office must be aware of how they can contribute towards ensuring that the office is a safe place to be.
- 1.3 The principle objective is to ensure that unwanted people who would seek to cause harm to individuals or steal property are stopped from entering the building.

2. ARRANGEMENTS FOR NORMAL PUBLIC ACCESS HOURS (Monday – Wednesday 09:00-15:00)

- 2.1 The principle access to the Office for visitors should be through the main entrance doors into the main reception.
- 2.2 No visitors should be allowed to access the building from the rear service access.
- 2.3 All visitors who are to go beyond the reception must be booked in. (this is also required for health and safety reasons).
- 2.4 Members of the public visiting the office must only be given access to the public areas unless accompanied by a member of staff.
- 2.5 No one should allow anyone who they are unfamiliar with access through any security locked doors without first checking their identity or purpose.
- 2.6 All security doors should be kept secure so that access is only via a security pin code door. No doors leading to the private areas of the office should be left unbolted, unlocked, or propped open. This also applies to emergency exit doors
- 2.7 All staff can enter and stay in the building during working hours between 07:00 and 19:00 hours.

3. ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUTSIDE HOURS NORMAL PUBLIC ACCESS HOURS BUT WHERE A COMMITTEE OR OTHER MEETING IS SCHEDULED (Monday – Wednesday 15:00 – 19.00 & Thursday – Friday -09:00 – 17:00)

- 3.1 The principle access to the Office for visitors should be through the main entrance doors into the main reception.
- 3.2 Access to the public and visitors will be open to what are recognised publicly as assessable meeting rooms - the Board Room.
- 3.3 All security doors should be kept secure so that access is only via a security key code.

- 3.4 No doors leading to the private areas of the building should be left unbolted, unlocked, or propped open. This also applies to emergency exit doors
- 3.5 If the Main entrance to the Building is unlocked staff may enter the building from 07:00 but must leave the building by 19:00 unless they are attending a Committee or other meeting, or they have sought the prior agreement of the Service & Contracts Manager.

4. WEEKENDS, OUT OF HOURS OR OTHER DAYS WHEN THE OFFICES ARE CLOSED

- 4.1 No staff may enter the office unless they have secured the prior approval of the Services & Contracts Manager.
- 4.2 Access to the main building door is by use of a swipe fob and staff must ensure that this door is shut behind them.
- 4.3 The principle access to the Office is the rear door.
- 4.4 No publicly accessible doors should be opened, and all security doors should be kept secure.
- 4.5 Locking up procedures should be followed.

5. SECURITY OF EQUIPMENT AND POSSESSIONS

- 5.1 No equipment such as laptops and projectors for example should be left unattended in meeting or Committee rooms. Staff are responsible for its security and safe return
- 5.2 Personal possessions are the responsibility of the individual and if a staff member, volunteer or visitor brings an item of value into the office, they must ensure that it is appropriately stored in a safe place.
- 5.3 The Council is not responsible for personal possessions that go missing unless there is proof of forcible entry.
- 5.4 Cash cards, records, pen drives, portable back-ups will be kept in a locked cupboard/safe within the offices, in compliance with financial regulations.
- 5.5 Any thefts or losses must be reported immediately and to the Police if appropriate.
- 5.6 Visitors must not be allowed to let anyone else into the building without the prior permission of staff.
- 5.7 On leaving the office, all filing cabinets that hold sensitive must be locked and keys stored in a secure location.
- 5.8 All internal doors should be locked, windows checked and upon departure of main building, alarm must be set. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary procedures.
- 5.9 It is advisable for personal possessions to be kept in a locked drawer or locker.

LONE WORKER POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council accepts it has responsibilities as an employer for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and of those affected by its work activities e.g. service users, visitors, contractors and self-employed people who may be appointed to carry out work on its behalf.
- 1.2 The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff are not unnecessarily exposed to risks associated with lone working because of their work and that the Town Council meets its statutory duties.
- 1.3 This policy does not set out to identify all the situations where employees may be at risk from working alone but concentrates on describing the arrangements that must be in place to eliminate or manage the associated risks.
- 1.4 Lone working itself is not necessarily high risk but the activity that is performed may well be. It is important that these individuals are made aware of the outcome of the risk assessment and informed of all necessary control measures.
- 1.5 The Council recognises that a member of staff is working alone if they are; working without close or direct supervision, working when no other workers are present, where no other workers have knowledge of the work or workplace or where no other worker can respond in an emergency. Penrith Town Council recognises that lone working is carried out across the departments by a range of staff e.g. receptionists, caretakers, key holders, home-workers and grounds maintenance staff and acknowledge lone workers are employees that work full-time or part-time including temporary and agency/contract staff.

2. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees.
- 2.2 The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on the employer to consider all reasonably foreseeable hazards and to take the appropriate action to reduce the possible risk of injury to the lowest level that is practicable to achieve.

3. SCOPE

3.1 These arrangements apply to any one working in the following situations:

- a. Only one person is working on the premises.
- b. People work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations.
- c. People working outside normal office hours.
- d. People on site visits or meetings off the premises.

3.2 Hazards that lone workers may encounter include:

- accidents or emergencies arising out of the work, including inadequate provision of first aid
- sudden illnesses
- inadequate provision of rest, hygiene and welfare facilities
- physical violence from members of the public and/or intruders

4. AIM

4.1 These arrangements aim to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 Council are responsible for:

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working.
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice; and
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed

5.2 The Services & Contracts Manager is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of lone working.
- Taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees.
- Identify situations where people work alone and decide whether systems can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own.
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly.
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone.
- Ensuring that staff, identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- Providing means of communication, and other personal safety equipment, where this is felt to be desirable.

5.3 Staff are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following an external commitment rather than returning to their base.
- Signing in and out of building registers.
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy.
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.
- Ensuring that if a colleague does not report in as expected, an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate using emergency contact information if necessary.

5.4 Security of Buildings

Staff must ensure that:

- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible.
- Personal alarm systems if provided are tested regularly.

- Key codes for access should be changed from time to time and when a member of staff or sub-contractor that knows the code leaves and as a matter of course if a breach of security is suspected
- When working alone they are familiar with exits and alarms.
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering
- External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors if working alone.

6. INCIDENT REPORTING

6.1 An incident can be defined as an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage.

6.2 All incidents must be reported to the Services & Contracts Manager.

7. Employees should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

8. TRAINING

To ensure that lone workers are made aware of dangers and follow safe working arrangements, the Council will ensure that adequate training is provided to lone workers to ensure they have a knowledge and understanding of:

- How to use a portable security alarm.
- The hazards and risks associated with the activity.
- The steps that have been taken to reduce the risks to the lowest practical level.
- Any written procedure and safe working arrangements, including any contingency arrangements for foreseeable problems and their own responsibilities.
- The appropriate steps to take to minimise the risk of violence.
- Emergency arrangements for illness or injury, including first aid provision.
- They are aware of their own responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

9. SAFE ENVIRONMENT

9.1 The Council is responsible for providing a safe environment for staff.

a. Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?

- Lone workers should not be at more risk than other employees. This may require extra risk control measures.
- Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, e.g. fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents.

b. Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?

- Is there a safe way in and a way out for one person?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Are young workers especially at risk if they work alone?

c. Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?

- Check that lone workers have no medical conditions which may make them unsuitable for working alone.
- Seek medical advice if necessary.
- Consider both routine work and foreseeable emergencies, which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the individual.

d. What training is required to ensure competency in safety matters?

- Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty.
- Training may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations. Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced and to understand the risks and precautions fully.
- The Council will set the limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone and will ensure employees are competent to deal with circumstances that are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training, e.g. when to stop work and seek advice from a supervisor and how to handle aggression.

e. How will the person be supervised?

- Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still the Council's duty to ensure their safety and health at work.
- Supervision can help to ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and that the necessary safety precautions are carried out.
- Supervision of safety and health can often be carried out when checking the progress and quality of the work; it may take the form of periodic site visits combined with discussions in which health and safety issues are raised.

- The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle safety and health issues.
- Employees new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks, or dealing with new situations may need to be accompanied at first.
- The level of supervision required is a management decision, which should be based on the findings of risk assessment, i.e. the higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to individuals to decide whether they require assistance.

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

To provide a safe working environment for lone workers, managers will ensure that proper risk assessments are carried out on all work activities involving lone working.

This will include:

- Identifying those members of staff who are likely to work alone at some point.
- Identifying the hazards that could possibly arise and assessing what the possible risk could be to determine if the risks can be adequately controlled by one person, or what other support measures are needed.
- Devising and implementing safe working arrangements so that risks are eliminated or adequately controlled.
- Having a lone working procedure in place, specific to the working arrangements of the type of service provision and in line with the lone working policy and guidance.
- Ensuring the risk assessment is monitored and reviewed as and when appropriate.

MANUAL HANDLING

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council recognises that manual handling activities may pose a hazard for staff if not adequately controlled. These arrangements have been produced in accordance with The Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, as amended in 2002 ('the Regulations') which apply to a wide range of manual handling activities, including lifting, lowering, pushing, pulling or carrying.

2. DEFINITION(S)

- 2.1 "Manual handling operations" means any transporting or supporting of a load (including the lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force.
- 2.2 "The load" may be either animate, such as a person or an animal, or inanimate, such as a box or a trolley.
- 2.3 The term "reasonably practicable" means to consider the amount of time, effort and cost which would be required to avoid or reduce the risk, in this instance, from manual handling activities, in comparison to the long-term health & safety benefits.

3. SERVICES & CONTRACTS MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Services & Contracts Manager will ensure that these arrangements are applied consistently, ensuring that:
- Manual handling is avoided where possible.
 - All manual handling activities are properly planned and assessed the assessment is recorded in writing using the Council risk assessment form. The assessment must be communicated with all staff.
 - When risk assessments indicate that staff may be lifting loads above the recommended safe lifting levels, suitable control measures should be put into place which reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
 - Information, instruction and training will be provided to staff on the health risks associated with manual handling where applicable.
 - Staff are not expected to carry out manual handling operations which are unsafe or beyond their individual capabilities (account must be taken of employees concerns with regards to manual handling, reviewing the risk assessment if necessary)
 - Any equipment provided to eliminate manual handling are inspected as per the manufacturers recommendations where applicable.

4. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Staff have a duty of care for their own and others safety and should ensure that they;

- Follow safe systems of work designed to promote safety during the handling of loads, including wearing suitable clothing and footwear where applicable.
- Use equipment provided to them as they have been trained to, this includes machinery and other aids provided for safe handling of loads.
- Report any faults, defects, and deficiencies of either equipment or systems of work to the town clerk.
- Report any manual handling accidents and near misses
- Tell the town clerk of any physical condition likely to affect their ability to undertake moving and handling tasks safely.
- Take care to ensure their activities do not put others at risk.
- Attend training and refresher training when required.

5. GOOD HANDLING TECHNIQUES

As it is not possible to eliminate manual handling altogether, correct handling techniques must be followed to minimize the risks of injury.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Risk assessment is an analysis of the **hazards** present through work activities, equipment and other situations within the working environment and the **likelihood** that they may cause harm to staff and others.

Definitions

- "Hazard" Something that has the potential to cause harm.
- "Risk (Likelihood)" The realisation of harm being caused by a hazard and its severity.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1 The Council is responsible for ensuring that adequate risk assessments are carried out where applicable and ensuring that identified risks are managed appropriately.
- 2.2 The Services & Contracts Manager is responsible for the completion of risk assessments in accordance with these guidelines and ensuring that appropriate control measures are implemented and communicated to all staff where applicable.
- 2.3 Staff have a responsibility to comply with safe systems of work and other safety control measures highlighted by risk assessments and or other safe working arrangements communicated to them.
- 2.4 Staff have a responsibility to report to the Services & Contracts manager any hazard or unsafe condition which they may encounter during their work.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

- 3.1 Risk assessments should not be carried out in isolation and as such staff within the workplace should be involved in the process.
- 3.2 The following protocols should be followed when completing a risk assessment.
 - a. Identify the Hazard
 - b. Decide who could be harmed
 - c. Evaluate the risk from the hazards and decide what should be done to control the risk.
 - d. Record the findings
 - e. Review the assessment and revise if necessary.

4. RECORDING

- 4.1 All risk assessments are to be recorded on the Council risk proforma.
- 4.2 Staff are to be made aware of the risk assessments and the control measure that are in place to control the risks.
- 4.3 Risk assessments are to be signed by the responsible person conducting the assessment and once completed signed off by the Services & Contracts Manager.

5. REVIEW

- 5.1 All risk assessments are to be reviewed annually or when circumstance such as a change in working practice impact on specific assessments.
- 5.2 All assessments are to be reviewed annually by the Finance Committee.



Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist



This is a web-friendly version of *Display screen equipment (DSE) workstation checklist* published 05/13

Workstation location and number (if applicable):

User:

Checklist completed by:

Assessment checked by:

Any further action needed: Yes/No

Follow-up action completed on:

The following checklist can be used to help you complete a risk assessment and comply with the Schedule to the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.

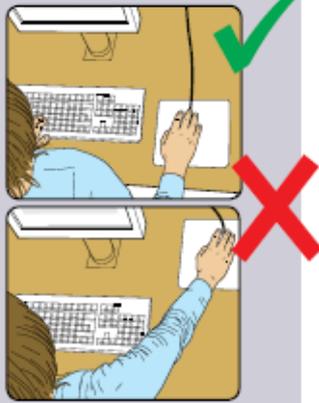
The questions and 'Things to consider' in the checklist cover the requirements of the Schedule. If you can answer 'Yes' in the second column against all the questions, having taken account of the 'Things to consider', you are complying. You will not be able to address some of the questions and 'Things to consider', eg on reflections on the screen, or the user's comfort, until the workstation has been installed. These will be covered in the risk assessment you do once the workstation is installed.

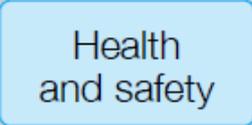
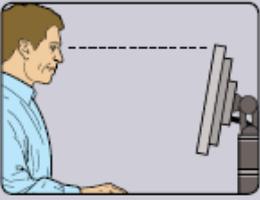
Work through the checklist, ticking either the 'Yes' or 'No' column against each risk factor:

- 'Yes' answers require no further action.
- 'No' answers will require investigation and/or remedial action by the workstation assessor. They should record their decisions in the 'Action to take' column. Assessors should check later that actions have been taken and have resolved the problem.

Remember, the checklist only covers the workstation and work environment. You also need to make sure that risks from other aspects of the work are avoided, eg by giving users health and safety training, and providing for breaks or changes of activity. For more advice on these see *Working with display screen equipment (DSE): A brief guide*.

Risk factors	Tick answer		Things to consider	Action to take
	Yes	No		
1 Keyboards				
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?			This is a requirement, unless the task makes it impracticable (eg where there is a need to use a portable).	
Does the keyboard tilt?			Tilt need not be built in.	
Is it possible to find a comfortable keying position? 			Try pushing the display screen further back to create more room for the keyboard, hands and wrists. Users of thick, raised keyboards may need a wrist rest.	
Does the user have good keyboard technique?			Training can be used to prevent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ hands bent up at the wrist; ■ hitting the keys too hard; ■ overstretching the fingers. 	
Are the characters clear and readable?			Keyboards should be kept clean. If characters still can't be read, the keyboard may need modifying or replacing. Use a keyboard with a matt finish to reduce glare and/or reflection.	

Risk factors	Tick answer		Things to consider	Action to take
	Yes	No		
2 Mouse, trackball etc				
Is the device suitable for the tasks it is used for?			If the user is having problems, try a different device. The mouse and trackball are general-purpose devices suitable for many tasks, and available in a variety of shapes and sizes. Alternative devices such as touch screens may be better for some tasks (but can be worse for others).	
Is the device positioned close to the user? 			Most devices are best placed as close as possible, eg right beside the keyboard. Training may be needed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ prevent arm overreaching; ■ encourage users not to leave their hand on the device when it is not being used; ■ encourage a relaxed arm and straight wrist. 	
Is there support for the device user's wrist and forearm?			Support can be gained from, for example, the desk surface or arm of a chair. If not, a separate supporting device may help. The user should be able to find a comfortable working position with the device.	
Does the device work smoothly at a speed that suits the user?			See if cleaning is required (eg of mouse ball and rollers). Check the work surface is suitable. A mouse mat may be needed.	
Can the user easily adjust software settings for speed and accuracy of pointer?			Users may need training in how to adjust device settings.	

Risk factors	Tick answer		Things to consider	Action to take
	Yes	No		
3 Display screens				
Are the characters clear and readable?  			Make sure the screen is clean and cleaning materials are available. Check that the text and background colours work well together.	
Is the text size comfortable to read?			Software settings may need adjusting to change text size.	
Is the image stable, ie free of flicker and jitter?			Try using different screen colours to reduce flicker, eg darker background and lighter text. If there are still problems, get the set-up checked, eg by the equipment supplier.	
Is the screen's specification suitable for its intended use?			For example, intensive graphic work or work requiring fine attention to small details may require large display screens.	
Are the brightness and/or contrast adjustable?			Separate adjustment controls are not essential, provided the user can read the screen easily at all times.	
Does the screen swivel and tilt? 			Swivel and tilt need not be built in; you can add a swivel and tilt mechanism. However, you may need to replace the screen if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ swivel/tilt is absent or unsatisfactory; ■ work is intensive; and/or ■ the user has problems getting the screen to a comfortable position. 	

Risk factors	Tick answer		Things to consider	Action to take
	Yes	No		
<p>Is the screen free from glare and reflections?</p> 			<p>Use a mirror placed in front of the screen to check where reflections are coming from.</p> <p>You might need to move the screen or even the desk and/or shield the screen from the source of the reflections.</p> <p>Screens that use dark characters on a light background are less prone to glare and reflections.</p>	
<p>Are adjustable window coverings provided and in adequate condition?</p>			<p>Check that blinds work. Blinds with vertical slats can be more suitable than horizontal ones.</p> <p>If these measures do not work, consider anti-glare screen filters as a last resort and seek specialist help.</p>	
4 Software				
<p>Is the software suitable for the task?</p>			<p>Software should help the user carry out the task, minimise stress and be user-friendly.</p> <p>Check users have had appropriate training in using the software.</p> <p>Software should respond quickly and clearly to user input, with adequate feedback, such as clear help messages.</p>	