



**Castle Cary Town Council**

The Market House

Market Place

Castle Cary

BA7 7AH

Telephone: 01963 359631

Email: [town.clerk@castle-cary.co.uk](mailto:town.clerk@castle-cary.co.uk)

Website: [www.castle-cary.co.uk](http://www.castle-cary.co.uk)

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# Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

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01963 359631

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Please note that for the purposes of this policy 'workers' includes all paid staff Councillors, volunteers and contractors undertaking work for the Council.

## **1. General statement of policy for occupational health, safety and welfare**

1.1. The Council has overall and final responsibility for health and safety within Castle Cary Town Council (CCTC) and for compliance with health and safety legislation. It will provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all workers. The Council will also ensure that the public are not adversely affected by their work and that buildings are safe for use. The Chairperson takes overall responsibility but delegates her operational duties to the Chair of the Properties and Infrastructure Committee, who will ensure that systems and policies are in place for the management of all relevant health and safety risks. The Town Clerk and in her absence, the Deputy Town Clerk, is responsible for ensuring that these systems and policies are implemented.

1.2. CCTC will pay attention to:

1.2.1. The provision and maintenance of safe and healthy working conditions.

1.2.2. Ensuring that suitable risk assessments are undertaken from which are developed safe and efficient work methods.

1.2.3. Providing information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the competence of individuals.

1.2.4. Making available and maintaining all necessary safety devices and protective equipment.

1.2.5. Providing and maintaining equipment and materials that are safe and without risk to the health of our workers or others who may be affected by our business and community activities or using our premises.

1.2.6. Maintaining a constant interest in health and safety matters applicable to CCTC's activities, especially through consultation, and by setting an example in safe behaviour.

1.3. Workers of all positions have a role in ensuring the safety of themselves and others. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, regardless of status, who wilfully or deliberately disregards, or who is consistently negligent in conforming to CCTC's health and safety policy.

## **2. Responsibilities of the Council**

2.1. Workers 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 CCTC.

2.2. All those with supervisory responsibilities, namely the Town Clerk and, in their absence, the Deputy Town Clerk, have additional duties to ensure that work activities are undertaken with due regard for safety.

2.3. CCTC will:

- 2.3.1. Ensure that the CCTC's statement for health and safety is kept up to date, signed by the Council Chairperson and Chair of Properties and Infrastructure Committee each year and is displayed in a prominent place.
  - 2.3.2. Ensure that each worker is aware of their responsibilities as regards health and safety and will provide support on issues affecting safety. In this respect all workers must read and understand the health and safety policy, the Health and Safety Handbook and associated procedures and risk assessments made in support of the policy.
  - 2.3.3. Ensure that the aims of the policy are met through the appointment of a competent person to advise on health and safety matters, be this an internal or external appointment.
  - 2.3.4. Encourage appropriate training and re-training for all workers.
  - 2.3.5. Ensure that all service and contract providers approved or appointed by CCTC are assessed with regard to statutory provisions and good working practices.
  - 2.3.6. 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.
  - 2.3.7. Ensure that a system exists, and is carried out, for the recording and reporting and investigation of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences (RIDDOR).
  - 2.3.8. Ensure, where appropriate, that those who contravene relevant statutory provisions, or the requirements of the health and safety policy are informed in writing of CCTC's position on such matters.
  - 2.3.9. Ensure workers wear safety equipment if this has been specified by those responsible for safety.
  - 2.3.10. Ensure workers 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.
  - 2.3.11. Ensure that workers 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.
  - 2.3.12. Ensure all workers 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.
  - 2.3.13. Encourage workers 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 workers and the public.
- 2.4. It is extremely important to note that all workers 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 monitoring policies and procedures, this does not deter from the fact that everyone always should adopt a safe and appropriate working ethic. It is essential that all workers co-operate together to achieve this goal.

### **3. Responsibilities of Workers**

All workers and the public must report any accident or incident in which they are involved to the Town Clerk or Deputy, for entering in the Accident Book. Reports must include near misses, threats or difficult behaviour, traffic accidents and health problems as well as injuries in the workplace.

All workers and the public should report any hazard of which they become aware to the Town Clerk or Deputy without delay.

Workers are expected to be familiar with the Council's health and safety policy, and in particular the Health and Safety Handbook. They should follow the directions in this Handbook.

Workers must work safely and in accordance with their training and instructions and should report any difficulty in doing so to the Town Clerk or her Deputy.

Council Chairperson

Chair of Properties and Infrastructure Committee

Date

#### 4. Consultation

Consultation with workers is done largely through the Health and Safety Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Properties and Infrastructure Committee, reporting to full Council. Representatives of staff and volunteers sit on this committee and they are required to consult in turn with their teams. Matters of health and safety management and performance are considered by this committee.

There is also a book kept in the main office in the Market House and available to all staff and volunteers. In this, staff and volunteers are encouraged to note any health and safety concerns they may have, for immediate review by the Town clerk or Deputy.

#### 5. Major Accidents and Incidents

A major accident or incident is one in which a worker is hurt whilst working for the Council, or one in which a member of the public is hurt whilst on Council property or whilst participating in a Council event not on Council property, and the injury is such as to require an ambulance to be called.

Ill health events such as a heart attack are not included, but if in doubt, apply this procedure.

- Call a first aider
- The first aider will call an ambulance if required and will liaise with paramedics.
- Barrier off the area of the accident and ensure that any equipment, substances, machinery etc are not touched
- Call the Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk
- The Town Clerk will make a report under RIDDOR if required, and will contact the Health and Safety Consultant.

#### 6 Accidents – recording and reporting

- 6.1.1 All injuries, no matter how small, must be recorded, including injuries to workers, sub- contractors, visitors and members of the public. Some may need to be reported to the HSE.
- 6.1.2 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. A brick falling from a scaffold that falls harmlessly to the ground is just as much an accident as if the brick struck a passer-by.
- 6.1.2.1 **Recording** - It is essential that CCTC records all accidents especially those involving injuries so 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 will ensure that suitable investigations are undertaken, and reports made, where relevant.
- 6.1.3 All staff are reminded that alteration of an accident scene without clear authorisation is a serious disciplinary offence.
- 6.1.4 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.

- 6.1.5 **Reporting** - Some incidents and injuries must be reported to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).
- 6.1.6 These are generally the more major incidents and a full list is available online. Failure to report is in itself an offence. An event that has been reported under RIDDOR will be kept for a minimum of 3 years. RIDDOR Reporting is via the online portal at [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/report.htm)
- 6.1.7 It is essential that RIDDOR reports are accurate and factual because they are both legal documents and 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.

## **7 Accidents – investigation**

7.1 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 to try to reduce their likelihood of recurrence.

### **7.2 General guidance**

- 7.2.1 The Town Clerk or the Deputy Town Clerk will normally investigate the accident to find out what exactly happened; why it happened, including any secondary causes, and what can be done to prevent recurrence.
- 7.2.2 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. This may, in some cases, also include the injured party.

### **7.3 Information gathering**

- 7.3.1 The Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk will start the investigation as soon as possible. The form to be completed is in Appendix A.

### **7.4 Control**

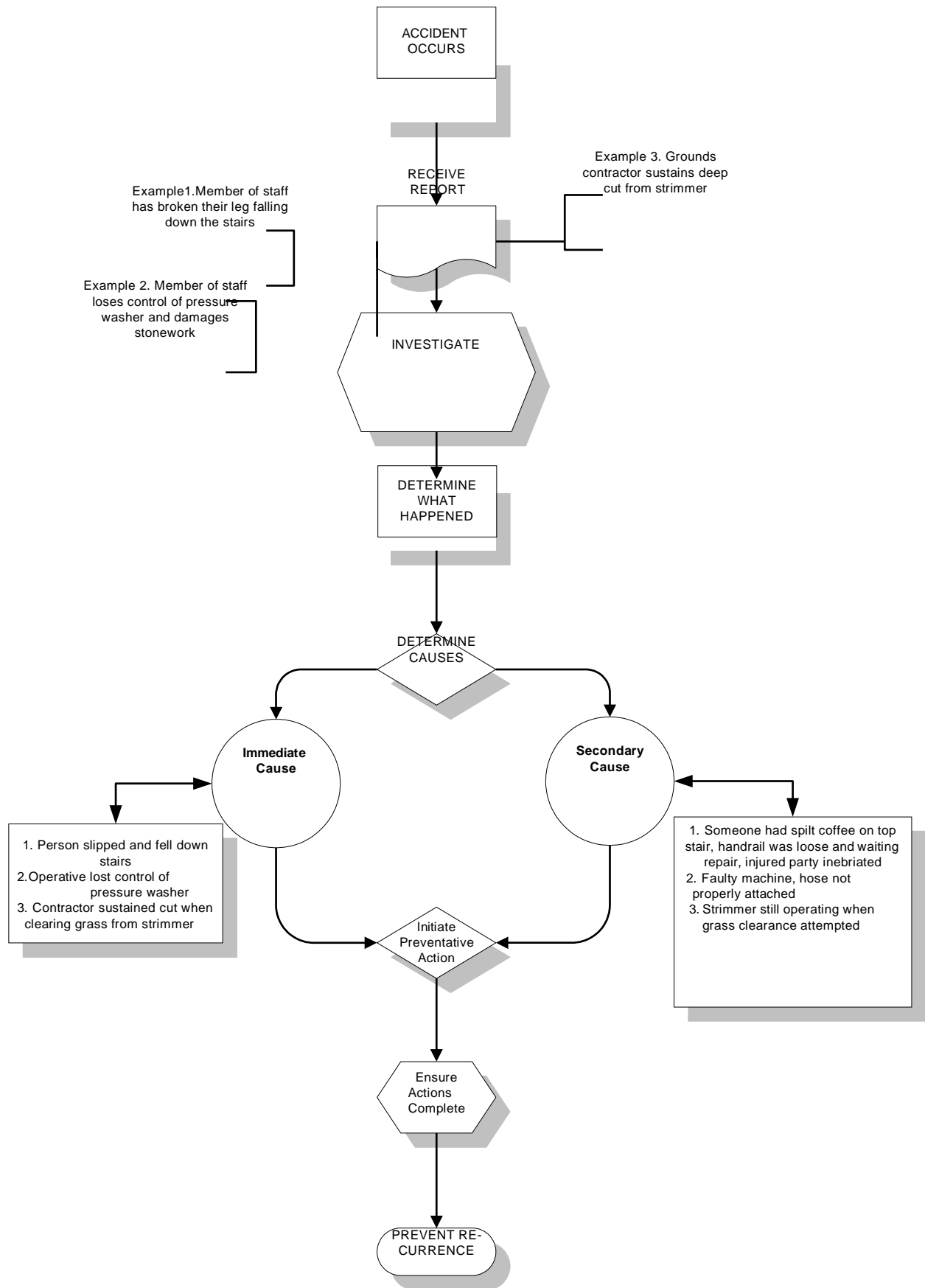
- 7.4.1 Do not allow any equipment involved to be repaired prior to the final completion of the investigation.
- 7.4.2 Always be prepared to adjourn the investigation and ask for help if you think you need it.

### **7.5 Record**

- 7.5.1 Ensure, if appropriate, an entry has been made in the accident book and assess whether the incident is reportable under RIDDOR as mentioned previously. The completed investigation documents should be retained by the Town Clerk.
- 7.5.2 Never admit liability to any person nor hand over a copy of your investigation to client, employee, injured party, insurance company or otherwise.

## **8 Accident investigation procedure**

### **Accident Investigation Procedure**





## **9. Risk assessment and control**

9.1. 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.

### **9.2. Responsibilities**

9.2.1. 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.

### **9.3. Process**

9.3.1. The process of risk assessment is illustrated on the next page but will involve the identification of:

- 9.3.1.1. Tasks/Activities
- 9.3.1.2. Hazards
- 9.3.1.3. Persons Exposed
- 9.3.1.4. Nature of Harm
- 9.3.1.5. Existing and Additional Control Measures
- 9.3.1.6. Residual Risks
- 9.3.1.7. Review Period

### **9.4. Definitions**

9.4.1. A hazard is something with the potential to cause harm

9.4.2. A risk is the likelihood of the harm occurring together with the severity of the harm.

### **9.5. Consultation**

9.5.1. 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.

### **9.6. Control measures**

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

- 9.6.1.1. ELIMINATE hazardous substances/methods/materials/processes
- 9.6.1.2. SUBSTITUTE less hazardous forms
- 9.6.1.3. CLEAN to remove solid/liquid contaminants
- 9.6.1.4. DISPOSE of hazardous materials/substances safely
- 9.6.1.5. ENCLOSE hazardous substances/noise/materials/equipment
- 9.6.1.6. EXCLUDE non-essential personnel from the work area
- 9.6.1.7. MINIMISE generation of hazardous substances/materials/noise

- 9.6.1.8. PROVIDE risk assessments, safe working practices, adequate facilities for eating, drinking and resting etc. appropriate signage
- 9.6.1.9. PROHIBIT eating, drinking, smoking etc. in certain work areas
- 9.6.1.10. REDUCE the number of people exposed and the period of exposure
- 9.6.1.11. STORE hazardous materials/substances safely
- 9.6.1.12. DISCIPLINE self-discipline by management when necessary to correct wrong doings

#### 9.7. Review

- 9.7.1. CCTC will review risk assessments either annually, in the event of an incident or should there be a significant change to current working practices.

#### 9.8. Adequate control

- 9.8.1. All activities in life involve risk and 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.

### **10. Fire risk assessments**

- 10.1. 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. Revised regulations came into force in June 2014 requiring all businesses to have appropriate fire risk assessments.

#### 10.2. Fire

- 10.2.1. 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.

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

##### 10.2.3. Fuels:

- 10.2.3.1. Solid – paper (including waste)
- 10.2.3.2. Liquid – petrol
- 10.2.3.3. Gas – aerosols

##### 10.2.4. Ignition sources:

- 10.2.4.1. Naked flames
- 10.2.4.2. Smoking materials
- 10.2.4.3. Electrical faults
- 10.2.4.4. Static electricity
- 10.2.4.5. Over-heating equipment – faulty or obstructed ventilation

### 10.3 Fire prevention

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

10.3.2 Ensure container lids of flammable liquids are kept tightly closed.

10.3.3 Put wastepaper in the bin.

10.3.4 Observe no smoking signs and notices.

10.3.5 Keep fire doors closed.

10.3.6 Switch off and unplug electrical appliances after use.

10.3.7 Do not overload circuits with multiple plugs and extension leads.

### 10.4 Fire risk assessments

10.4.1 The fire risk assessment form endeavours to identify:

10.4.1.1 Sources of ignition

10.4.1.2 Sources of fuel

10.4.1.3 The means of fighting fire

10.4.1.4 The means of escape

10.4.1.5 Fire prevention and protection methods

10.4.1.6 Whether the arrangements are satisfactory and the actions that need to be undertaken.

10.4.1.7 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.

### 10.5 Action to be taken on discovering a fire

10.5.1 Do not put yourself at risk.

10.5.2 Do not stop to collect your personal belongings.

10.5.3 Contain the fire by closing the door as you leave the room.

10.5.4 Raise the alarm.

10.5.5 Leave the building by the quickest route.

10.5.6 Go to the assembly point (as detailed in your fire evacuation notice).

10.5.7 Inform the fire marshal of the details of the fire.

10.5.8 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.

## 10.6 Fighting fires

- 10.6.1 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.
- 10.6.2 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
- 10.6.3 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.
- 10.6.4 If in doubt just get out and call for help from someone with training.
- 10.6.5 Remember - your life is more important than the building – don't put your life at risk.

## 11. Property management

For each separate premises, a premises risk assessment will be completed, normally by or instructed by the Town Clerk. This premises risk assessment will identify each of the premises related risks applicable, and the necessary management system.

The Town Clerk will hold a property safety file for each premises, in which is kept all the evidence required by the premises risk assessment eg hard wiring certificate, gas safety notice etc.

The premises risk assessment will be updated annually and the evidence required by it at the intervals specified.

## 12. Fire and Property responsibilities

### Fire responsibilities

- 12.1. There are a range of responsibilities in respect of the prevention of and protection against fire. Whilst the likelihood of fire occurring is low in an environment such as an office, workers should always be aware of their responsibilities and the relevant procedures.
- 12.2. The Town Clerk is ultimately responsible and will oversee that fire requirements are adhered to across CCTC. 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.
- 12.3. 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
- Developing a plan in respect of the protection of vulnerable people in the event of fire
- Displaying the appropriate fire signage

12.4. 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

12.5. The Caretaker will

- Undertake and record the required fire safety checks

12.6. 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

Property Responsibilities

12.7. The Town Clerk will

- Undertake the premises risk assessments or arrange to have these done
- Keep the premises risk assessments up to date
- Arrange for the inspections etc required by the premises risk assessment for individual risks eg electricity – hard wiring check
- Hold and keep up to date a property safety file for each premises

12.8. The Caretaker will

- Carry out the regular checks of premises safety systems required by the premises risk assessment or the property safety file ie. water temperatures

### **13. Contractors**

The Council uses contractors for the delivery of work such as maintenance and repairs. Although the Council can outsource such work, it remains liable for the risks

of such work, and can discharge this liability by ensuring that the contractors used are competent and appropriately resourced and motivated to work safely.

The Council holds an Approved List of contractors and selects for a particular job only from the Approved List. Contractors on the Approved List have been checked and found competent in health and safety matters.

To gain approval and admission to the List, the contractor must complete a brief questionnaire, which will be checked by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk. The questions require current and adequate insurance, membership of one of the SSIP schemes, appropriate trade and technical accreditations and references. There are also some questions which relate particularly to health and safety at CCTC.

Following work for the Council, any worker for the Council may note on the Approved List any comments as to the work of the contractor and their safety or lack of it. Such comments may lead to contractors being removed from the Approved List.

#### **14. Monitoring**

The Town Clerk commissions a health and safety audit of the Council every two years, for the purpose of assurance that health and safety performance is satisfactory and this policy is properly implemented. The audit is normally carried out by an external consultant.

Regular health, safety and fire checks of all buildings and public areas, including playgrounds, are carried out weekly by the caretaker and recorded on a checklist. The Town Clerk or Deputy will go through these checklists to make sure all matters identified are being properly addressed.

For each building, opening and closing checks are carried out by the employee or volunteer first or last respectively on the premises. These are not recorded in detail.

#### **15. Public Events**

The organiser of each public event to be held must carry out a risk assessment for the event, and produce an event plan. This plan must thoroughly address such issues as fire, emergency access, accidents and health problems, structural integrity and separation of any structures, traffic and parking, welfare, stewarding and communication.

The risk assessment and plan must go to the Town Clerk for approval and may also need to go to Committee. These documents may also be sought by the County Council for the bigger events. The Town Clerk will support the organiser in producing appropriate documents.

## **16. Emergencies**

There must be constant preparedness for any foreseeable emergency. Fire is always possible, as are accidents and health problems, but depending on location, other possible threats are flooding, bomb or bomb threat, terrorist incident, gas escape, power cut and weather events.

Emergency procedures must be drawn up for foreseeable emergencies. These may be based on the fire procedure and utilise the same systems for warning and marshalling people. It is essential that all staff and volunteers are familiar with the emergency procedures, and have practised them. In the event of an emergency at the Market House, for instance, the public will be completely reliant on staff and volunteers to guide them to safety.

The emergency procedures must be in writing, with brief versions on display in the buildings concerned. The purpose of the emergency procedures is to preserve life, not to save buildings or contents.

## **17. Asbestos**

Asbestos surveys have been carried out for all the buildings managed by CCTC. The Market House has only one possible occurrence of asbestos, in a low risk situation. All that is necessary is to check this possibly asbestos containing material annually to ensure it has not deteriorated.

The Market House, and all the Council buildings, has an asbestos register. These are held by the Town Clerk and made available to any contractor booked to do work on the structure of the building. The contractor must sign to say he has seen the register, and the Town Clerk will keep these records.

## **18. Training**

18.1. All staff will be required to attend training in order to become or remain up to date with legislation and best practice.

18.2. Induction – staff

All staff will receive a health and safety briefing as part of their induction during their first week of employment with CCTC. Other health and safety training will be provided as appropriate/relevant to the role being undertaken.

18.3. Induction – volunteers

All volunteers will receive a health and safety briefing as part of their induction and as appropriate to the volunteer role being undertaken.

18.4. Induction – Town Councillors

All Town Councillors will receive an appropriate health and safety briefing as part of their induction.





**Appendix A – Report of an incident/accident**

Name of person to whom incident/accident happened	
Member of public/contractor/volunteer	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Date and time of incident	
Precise location	
<p>Description of incident/accident (State what happened before, during and after the incident. Describe how it happened)</p>	
<p>Description of any action taken (by whom? Including medical/other assistance sought, involvement of other agencies, e.g. Police)</p>	

Reason for cause of incident/accident (if known, do not speculate)	
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
Name of person making report	
Job title	
Address (if not an employee)	
Telephone	
Email	
To the best of my knowledge, the above information is true and correct.	
Signed	Date
This form is to be given to the Town Clerk at CCTC as soon as possible	

For office use only – notes of follow up actions including remedial action, recommendations, counselling, advice etc.

## Appendix B – Report of an incident to property

Date and time of incident	
Details of property involved including location	
Owner details (name, address, contact information)	
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	Dated
This form is to be given to the Town Clerk at CCTC as soon as possible.	

For office use only – notes of follow up including remedial action, recommendations, repairs, advice etc.