



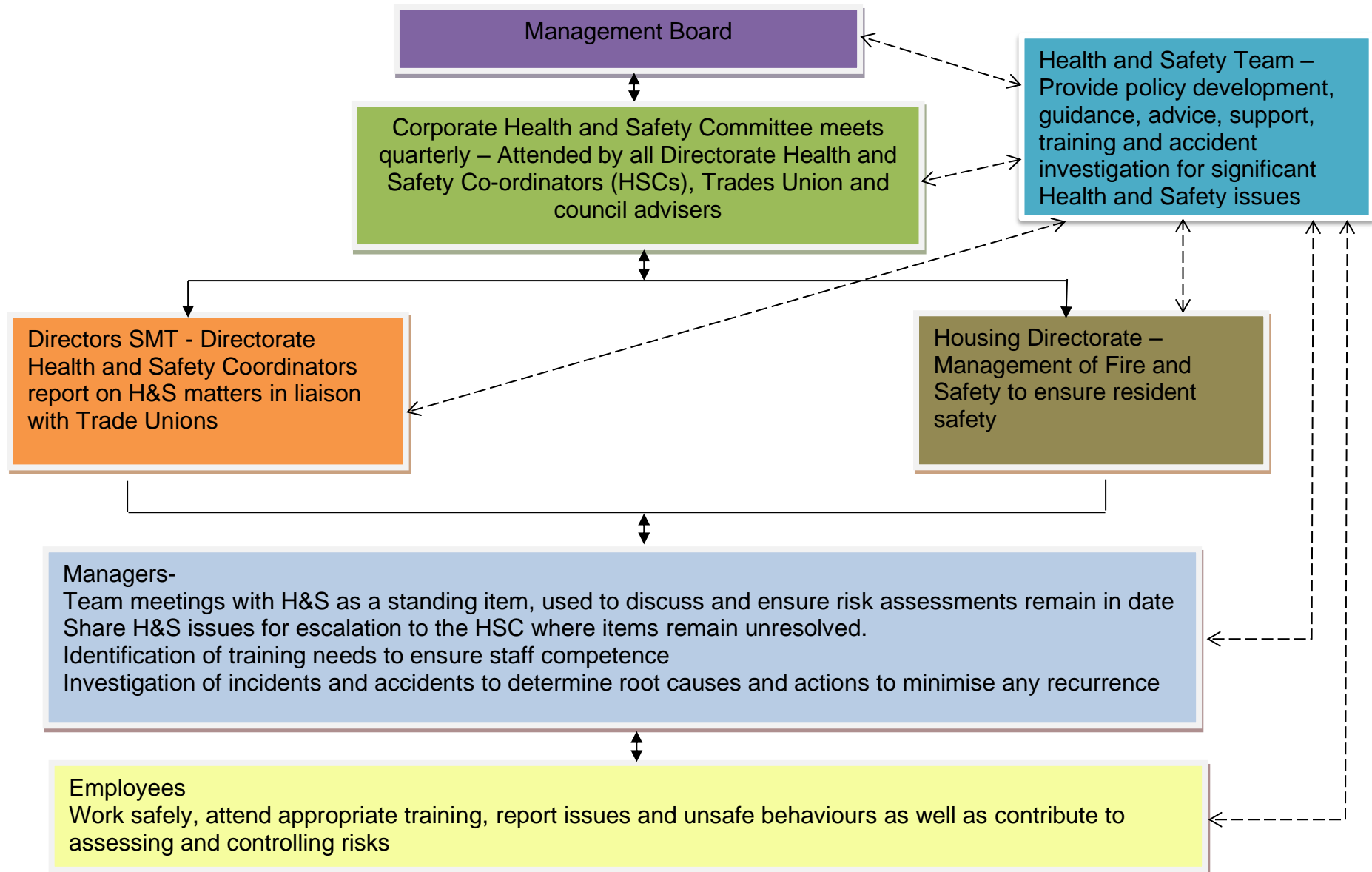
# Health & Safety Policy

Version June 2021

## Introduction

1. This policy sets out the way the London Borough of Waltham Forest (hereafter referred to as the Council) intends to:
  - manage health and safety; and
  - comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other supporting legislation, so far as is reasonably practicable.
2. The policy outlines the Council's intentions, responsibilities and arrangements to ensure a healthy and safe environment for its employees, service users and those who may be affected by its acts or omissions.
3. This policy document will be made readily available to all staff on the 'Forest Hub' Copies of this Corporate Health and Safety Policy will be made available to all new employees as part of their induction.
4. This policy will be reviewed every three years but managers must update arrangements between reviews if there are significant changes to structures. Executive Directors, Strategic Directors and Heads of Service will be advised of any resultant changes and should amend their safety arrangements accordingly.
5. The Health and Safety Management Structure is set out in the Figure 1 on page 3

# Health and Safety Management Structure



## Policy Commitments

1. As an employer, the London Borough of Waltham Forest (The Council) recognises and accepts its responsibilities for providing a safe and healthy working environment for all its employees and contractors and for ensuring the health and safety of others who may be affected by the Council's services, or visit, or use its premises e.g. service users, members of the public, visitors and residents etc., so far as is reasonably practicable.
2. The Council regards the maintenance of a safe and healthy workplace and work practices as an important objective for all employees and contractors and considers compliance with all relevant statute and common law requirements to be the minimum level of achievement.

The Council recognises that:

3. A healthy and safe workplace can contribute to improved business performance by identifying appropriate resources for projects, employing and training staff to have appropriate competencies, as well as reducing accidents, illness, etc.
4. The overall accountability and responsibility for health and safety lies with the Chief Executive and Council's Management Board members.
5. Health and safety objectives will be integrated into the Council's business objectives in the development of corporate plans and policies.
6. The Council recognises the need to plan and manage health and safety will and ensure the necessary resources are available to do so.
7. The Council will
  - work towards achieving the standards set out in the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Principles of Sensible Risk Management and Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65); and the Institute of Directors and HSE document 'Leading Health & Safety at Work' Actions for directors, board members, business owners and organisations of all sizes;
  - cooperate with its partners to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the Council's employees, its contractors' employees and others who may be affected by shared undertakings which are the Council's responsibility;
  - ensure that its partners and/or contractors employed to deliver its services are competent to conduct their activities so as not to expose themselves, the Council's employees or members of the public to unnecessary or unplanned risks to health and safety;
  - continue to operate a quarterly corporate forum for health and safety known as the Corporate Health and Safety Committee (CHSC) to monitor health and safety performance within the organisation and to escalate to Management Board. The overall structure for Health and Safety Management is shown in Fig 1 (page 3);
  - consult and co-operate with its' recognised trade unions and employee safety representatives and provide appropriate resources and training to health and safety representatives in pursuance of their role;
  - set, implement and monitor a plan to continuously improve health and safety management

### Responsibilities

#### Chief Executive

8. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility to ensure the Council complies with health and safety legislation and has its own health and safety management system.
9. The Chief Executive will ensure significant risks are assessed and where possible eliminated or adequately controlled through the provision and/or maintenance of the following, so far as is reasonably practicable:
  - a safe and healthy place to work including safe access and egress;
  - adequate welfare facilities;
  - health and safety arrangements;
  - emergency arrangements;
  - plant, equipment and systems of work which are safe, and without risks to health;
  - safe systems of work for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances; and
  - sufficient information, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and to contribute positively to their health and safety and to that of others whilst at work.
10. The Chief Executive delegates the operational delivery of these duties through the line management structure.

#### Management Board and Directors

11. Management Board members will:
  - ensure their services comply with the health and safety legislation and the Council's health and safety management system. (see Figure 1);
  - appoint a member of the Management Board to chair the Corporate Health and Safety Committee (see paragraph 12);
  - approve Health and Safety Policies and delegate approval of policy revisions to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee;
  - appoint appropriate managers to be the Health & Safety Coordinator(s) to act as the focus for the health and safety system and arrangements across their service areas;
  - receive an Annual Health & Safety Report and for the beginning of each municipal year, with support from the Health & Safety Coordinator(s), set health and safety priorities and targets for their directorate;
  - ensure a robust organisational structure and arrangements for managing health and safety in their directorate is in place. They may do this by means of:
    - i. quarterly committee / forum(s) with managers, staff and Trade Unions to raise health and safety concerns and monitor local health and safety performance, which reports to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee; and by
    - ii. consideration of the health and safety implications in service planning and in processes, or directorate structures, or wider organisational changes.

- will ensure health and safety is a regular item on the agenda of all team meetings, including directorate management meetings. Topics are likely to include updating Risk Assessments, training requirements, inspection reports, contractor management, progress towards targets, any outstanding issues and action plan for continual improvement;
- ensure systems are in place for the adequate vetting, selecting and monitoring of contractors regarding their health and safety performance.

### **Strategic Director of Corporate Development**

12. The Strategic Director of Corporate Development will chair the Corporate Health & Safety Committee and keep the Management Board informed of the Council's health & safety performance. (see Appendix 1 for terms of reference of the Corporate H+S Committee)

### **Health & Safety Coordinators (HSC)**

13. The HSC will:
  - ensure health and safety priorities and targets for each municipal year are recorded, monitored, regularly reviewed and reported to their Board Member, along with details of good practice;
  - chair their Directorate/Service Area Health and Safety Committee and provide a quarterly report on progress to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee;
  - attend the Corporate Health and Safety Committee, or send a substitute if unable to be there, to present the quarterly report;
  - work with managers to ensure H&S management across the directorate is up to date;
  - act as the focal point for coordination of health and safety arrangements in their Directorate and report results to their senior management team;
  - act as the link between the Directorate and the Health and Safety Team (HST), holding regular meetings with their HST directorate lead;
  - work with the Building Managers and Facilities Management to address any buildings issues;
  - escalate issues brought to their attention where there are inadequate resources currently available to adequately control the risks; and
  - undertake initial and regular update H&S training to help meet the requirements of this role.

### **Managers**

14. Managers will
  - ensure their teams comply with the health and safety legislation, the Council's health and safety management system and local codes of practice or procedures designed to ensure health and safety;
  - ensure all significant risks from hazards relating to the service delivery and work activities wherever these may be carried out are assessed and are either eliminated or adequately controlled and risk assessments are shared with their team;
  - ensure that employees are competent to undertake their work activities and their responsibilities under this policy wherever these may be carried out by assessing the health and safety training needs of their staff and providing the appropriate health and safety information, instruction and training;

- ensure health and safety implications are considered when planning the service, and when processes, or directorate structures, or wider organisational changes are proposed;
- investigate accidents, incidents and near misses to identify root causes for development and share learning on how to minimise the likelihood of similar incidents occurring.

### **Facilities Management / Schools Asset Management / Housing Services (Assets)**

15. Facilities Management are responsible for ensuring the safety of the corporate premises from which Council services and staff operate.
16. Schools Asset Management are responsible for ensuring the safety of maintained school premises.
17. Housing Services (Assets) are responsible for ensuring the safety of tenants in Council residential properties.
18. Facilities Management / Schools Asset Management / Housing Services (Assets) will:
  - ensure they appoint competent contractors to undertake the servicing, maintenance and repair of their buildings' facilities;
  - monitor the contractor and reports received to develop appropriate action plans to address issues identified in a timely manner;
  - provide a quarterly report to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee on the level of compliance with statutory duties, including a summary of any outstanding actions and action plan to address these issues for:
    - i. Asbestos registers, Asbestos Management Plans;
    - ii. Fire risk assessments, fire systems and fire equipment maintenance;
    - iii. Water system risk assessments;
    - iv. Electrical installation tests;
    - v. LOLER compliance;
    - vi. Boiler maintenance and Pressure Vessels compliance;
    - vii. Security, access and egress arrangements;
    - viii. Any other relevant facilities management compliance requirements.

### **Building Managers**

19. Building Managers will work with Facilities Management and Health & Safety Coordinators to ensure there are adequate:
  - First Aid arrangements;
  - staff trained to help with fire evacuations;
  - staff trained on Evacuation Chair use;
  - managers carry out regular building inspections and collate service area H&S data, in consultation with Health and Safety Coordinators
  - have an overview of building issues supported by the Facilities Management Team

### Contract Managers

20. Managers responsible for managing contracts will
- ensure contractors selected and engaged to carry out work for the Council are competent to undertake that work by means of:
    - i. compliance with the Council's standard terms and conditions of contract and associated specification for services for the particular contract;
    - ii. where applicable, a system that assesses contractors' health and safety management systems; and
    - iii. relevant Council Polices, guidance, procedures and HSE guidance including those relating to an emergency.
  - ensure any contractor commissioned to carry out work is issued with instructions or information on any site hazards or known risks and that the contractor complies with those instructions and the appropriate safe working practices;
  - ensure effective methods of managing contractors and monitoring on-site performance are implemented;
  - ensure compliance with all relevant health and safety legislation where it applies.

### Employees

21. Employees are responsible for their own health and safety and that of those who may be affected by their work activities. Employees will:
- cooperate with the requirements of this policy in order to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others;
  - implement the requirements of the Council's health and safety management system by:
    - i. taking immediate action to eliminate hazards where practicable;
    - ii. reporting on any dangerous conditions to prevent accident or injury to themselves or others;
    - iii. participating in risk assessments and implementing control measures;
    - iv. following safety procedures, instructions and safe systems of work;
    - v. ensuring equipment provided for the purpose of safety is properly used;
    - vi. undertaking training to ensure health and safety at work.

### Health & Safety Team

22. The Health and Safety Team will
- support all managers and employees in achieving legal compliance through the provision of competent health and safety advice and guidance;
  - check legal compliance by auditing the implementation of the health and safety management systems in directorates, services and schools, reporting on performance and recommending corrective action;
  - report on the health and safety performance of the Council via an Annual Report and by quarterly performance reports to the CHSC;
  - review the corporate policy, terms of reference of the CHSC and other relevant management documents to ensure they reflect the current organisation for managing health and safety;
  - act as the 'Competent person' for all health and safety matters for the council



### Head teachers and Governing bodies

23. Heads teachers along with Governing bodies for community schools are responsible for ensuring their schools comply with the health and safety legislation, the Council's health and safety management system and they have appointed a competent health and safety adviser.
24. Heads teachers and Governing bodies for community schools are responsible for preparing, planning, developing, implementing and reviewing the policy, organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety in their schools. These arrangements should reflect the commitments set out in this corporate health and safety policy.
25. For Foundation schools, Voluntary-Aided schools and Academies the governing body have complete responsibility for health and safety management and are not bound by this policy but may use it as guidance if they wish.

### Arrangements for managing health & safety

26. The arrangements for managing the health, safety and welfare of employees are contained within the following areas:
  - Employee Experience
    - i. Health and Safety Team for the development and continual improvement of the Health and Safety Management System;
    - ii. Occupational Health & Safety – guidance for all staff on managing and complying with legal requirements relating to occupational health and safety;
    - iii. Employee Experience – guidance for managers and staff on sickness absence, work life balance, stress management and occupational health and employee assistance services.
  - Facilities Management / Schools Asset Management / Housing Services (Assets) – procedures for property related issues such as Asbestos, Fire, Water, Gas and Electricity
  - Health and Safety Coordinators and Building Managers for local health & safety procedures, risk assessments, incident/accident investigation and performance data.
  - Corporate Health & Safety Committee and Directorate/Service Area Health and Safety Committees to provide appropriate oversight of good practice and significant risks.
27. The above arrangements will be reviewed in line with significant changes in structure, legislation, or every three years, whichever is the sooner.

## Signatories

As the Chief Executive I hold ultimate responsibility for health and safety throughout the Council. Through a planned approach to health and safety and the provision of adequate resources, I will ensure that corporate health and safety objectives are set and that meeting those objectives is closely monitored.

**The requirements of the Corporate Health and Safety policy cannot be met without the support of employees. Therefore this policy requires the support and cooperation of all employees.**

Signed:   
Martin Esom, Chief Executive


**Date: June 2021**

I am fully committed to supporting all the measures required to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and for ensuring the health and safety of those who may be affected by the Council's undertakings.

Signed:   
Councillor Clyde Loakes, Deputy Leader

**Date: June 2021**

As representative of the Trade Unions we support and endorse this policy.  
Signed on behalf of the councils recognised Trade Unions

Signed:   
Annabelle Stanford, Trade Union Health and Safety Convenor

**Date: June 2021**

## Document Version Control

<b>Title</b>	Corporate Health & Safety Policy
<b>Policy Content</b>	This document outlines the policy, organisation and arrangements for managing health and safety in Waltham Forest The Council.
<b>Policy Author</b>	Head of Health and Safety

## Version History

Version Number	Summary of changes
April 2009	Replaces 2007 policy for The Council and includes schools
January 2011	Replaces April 2009 policy for The Council and reflects new senior management structure
July 2012	Replaces January 2011 policy for The Council and reflects new senior management structure
October 2014	Replaces July 2012 policy for The Council and reflects new senior management structure.
October 2016	Replaces October 2014 policy for The Council and reflects new senior management structure.
September 2018	Replaces October 2016 policy for the Council and reflects the new structure
October 2020	Replaces September 2018 policy with a change of organisational structure, deletion of roles and removal of the need for Directorate Policies Changes to compliance management for corporate buildings Updating the CHSC terms of reference

## Consultation

This document was subject to consultation at:

Name	Consultation Date	Version Number
Corporate Health & Safety Committee	21 April 2009	April 2009
Corporate Health & Safety Committee	25 January 2011	January 2011
Corporate Health & Safety Committee	26 July 2012	September 2012
Corporate Health & Safety Board	31 July 2014	31 July 2014
Corporate Health & Safety Committee	July 2016	July 2016
Corporate Health & Safety Committee	July 2018	July 2018
Corporate Health & Safety Committee	September 2020	October 2020

## Distribution

This document is open to:

Name	Location
All staff	All locations and is available from the Forest Hub and Schools Hub

### Appendix 1. Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference.

#### Objectives

**To be a high-level strategic forum for all health, safety and welfare issues. To fulfil the Council's main responsibilities as an employer to consult with its employees on health and safety matters and to adhere so far as reasonably practicable with the Safety Committees and Safety Representatives Regulations 1977**

To promote the communication and mitigation of Health and Safety issues within buildings and directorates from employees through the tiers of management, to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of employees, service users and visitors to Council premises. Enable it to highlight Health and Safety good practice and issues within their directorates and service areas. To ensure only essential Health and Safety issues are escalated to the Management Board.

The Corporate Health & Safety Committee will receive reports from the Directorate Health and Safety Coordinator(s), the Facilities Management Compliance team, the Schools Asset Management Team, the Housing Services (Assets) Management and the Health and Safety Team. The Corporate Health & Safety Committee will monitor the issues raised within their logs and action notes to ensure they are resolved.

To own a Health and Safety log which will contain the Health and Safety issues mitigations and escalations to the Management Board.

#### Accountability

The Corporate Health & Safety Committee is responsible for receiving, logging, discussing and arranging the quarterly meetings to determine the most suitable action(s) for staff, premises and equipment Health and Safety issues. Where decisions are made these will be documented in the action notes.

Health and Safety Issues to be escalated to the Management Board will be documented in the action notes of the Corporate Health & Safety Committee. Each Corporate Health & Safety Committee meeting will follow the Corporate Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference when presenting to Management Board.

#### Members (Quorum)

The Health and Safety Committee will be deemed quorate with:

- The chair (or deputy chair)

- A minimum of three directorate Health and Safety Coordinators, or substitutes

- At least one from either Facilities Management / Schools Asset Management / Housing Management

- A staff side (union) representative

- A member of the Safety Team (ex-officio)

### **Meetings**

Meetings will be held quarterly and last a maximum of 2 hours.

A Management Board Member will chair, ensure action notes are taken, organise the next meeting and ensure the Corporate Health & Safety Committee log is maintained.

Action notes of the Corporate Health & Safety Committee will be sent to the Management Board within two weeks of the meeting.

Items must be submitted to the Health and Safety Team at least 1 week prior to the meeting to be considered for inclusion to the agenda.

### **Voting**

Should any issue need to be put a formal vote, the five directorate members and staff side will vote. If the vote is split the Chair will have the casting vote. Ex-Officio members do not have the right to cast a vote.

### **Standing Agenda items**

Directorate H&S Reports using standard template

Building Compliance Reports (Facilities Management / Schools Asset Management / Housing Management)

Training and Inspections Reports (Health and Safety Team)

Corporate incidents and accidents summary and H&S Report (Health and Safety Team)

Safety related claims and legal action (Insurance Team)

Safety related sickness and absence and Occupational Health Referrals (HR Team)

Union Representatives summary (Unions Convenor)

Previous Action notes

Actions from previous action notes

### **Confidentiality**

Issues raised by Individual employees will be reported as plural Health and Safety issues rather than as a named person's individual issue.

### **Review**

The Corporate Health & Safety Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed in line with the Health and Safety Policy reviews.