

Biddulph Town Council



TITLE

WRITTEN BY:

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 At the time of reviewing this policy, Biddulph Town Council has three employees. Legally, the Town Council is not required to have a Health and Safety Policy if there are less than five employees. However, it is good practice to adopt a Health and Safety Policy, which sets out the Council's approach to the effective management of health and safety within the work place.

The Chief Officer will ensure that health, safety and wellbeing are a primary consideration in the development of policy, as part of commissioning activity and on a day-to-day basis.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to emphasise Biddulph Town Council's commitment to the effective management of health, safety and wellbeing and to ensure that this is integrated into all areas of business activity.

PROVISIONS

3.1 Traditional health issues, such as noise, dust and chemical hazards, are still vitally important. However, the growing concern with good work-life balance

has also made us aware of the relationship between jobs and our mental and physical wellbeing. This policy is supported by policies in relation to stress management, lone working, flexible working and harassment and bullying.

3.2 The benefits of promoting a healthy workplace mean there is a healthy and motivated workforce, providing excellent customer service, who take fewer sick days. Healthy workplaces usually have a number of common features. These include:

- an organisation where you feel valued and involved in decisions
- flexible and well-designed jobs

managers who identify problems at an early stage and seek to resolve them quickly and efficiently.

3.3 Employers have a duty of care to their employees, which means that they should take all reasonable steps to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing.

Requirements under an employer's duty of care are wide-ranging and may manifest themselves in many different ways, such as:

- Clearly defining jobs and undertaking risk assessments
- Ensuring a safe work environment
- Providing adequate training and feedback on performance
- Ensuring that staff do not work excessive hours
- Providing areas for rest and relaxation
- Protecting staff from bullying or harassment, either from colleagues or third parties
- Protecting staff from discrimination
- Providing communication channels for employees to raise concerns
- Consulting employees on issues which concern them.

3.4 All employees are expected to ensure that they take reasonable care of their own health, safety and wellbeing and that of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

In addition, employees are entitled by law to refuse to undertake work that is not safe, without fear of disciplinary action.

3.5 The capabilities of employees as regards health and safety will be taken into account when entrusting work to them. Appropriate training will be provided to enable employees to meet the required standards of performance. The health and safety performance of individual employees will be taken into account when performance appraisals are undertaken.

3.6 As part of the assessment of health and safety, the Chief Officer will consider hazards and risks.

A hazard is something that could cause harm to people, such as chemicals, electricity and working at height.

A risk is the chance – however large or small – that a hazard could cause harm. Risk assessments will be completed on all areas of business activity and reviewed regularly.

3.7 Biddulph Town Council will make every effort to avoid accidents and incidents through the effective management of risk.

If accidents or incidents do occur, investigations will be undertaken and these investigations will identify root causes to ensure that necessary improvements are identified.

3.8 Display Screen Equipment (DSE)

Biddulph Town Council recognises that prolonged use of DSE may present risks to health. While the risks to individual users are low they can still be significant if good practice is not followed.

Work stations will be reviewed regularly, or upon request to ensure that any risks identified can be reduced to the lowest extent reasonably practicable.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

4.1 Much of the legislation in relation to health and safety is not relevant to Biddulph Town Council as the Council only has three employees. However, examples of good practice can be gathered from the main pieces of legislation.

4.2 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The Act says that employers must prepare a statement and bring it to the attention of all employees. The policy should be reviewed and revised as often as necessary.

Legally, the policy only requires employers to address the health and safety matters relating to employees, but in many organisations, it is a good idea to have a policy that considers the safety of others who might be affected by your activities, i.e. volunteers, contractors and the general public.

With or without a written policy, all employers have a duty of care to protect their employees and others from harm arising from work activities.

4.3 The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

These regulations place duties on employers to assess and manage risks to their employees and others arising from work activities.