# DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

# HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING POLICY

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| Policy Date: | January 2018 |
| Policy: | County Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy |
| Next Review Date: | October 2018 |

# DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL

# HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING POLICY

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| **Date:** | 1st January 2018 |
| **Replacing previous Policy dated:** | October 2016 |
| **Review Date:** | October 2018 |
| **Policy Type:** | County Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy |
| **Approval:** | Devon Health and Safety Panel |
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| **Sponsors:** | Dr Phil Norrey, Chief Executive<br>John Smith, Head of Organisational Development |
| **Associated policies:** | This policy states in broad terms Devon County Council's commitment to managing health, safety and wellbeing including, in general terms, how roles and responsibilities are delegated.<br><br>The "Arrangements", i.e. the measures to manage specific health, safety and wellbeing risks including more detailed health, safety or wellbeing policies, procedures and Arrangements to address more specific risks, are documented separately. **Appendix 2** of this document provides a list of the relevant documents. |



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# CONTENTS


1. Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy Statement of Intent page 4

2. Organisation and Accountability page 6

3. Duties and responsibilities: page 6

- The Chief Executive page 6
- The Elected Member - Health, Safety & Wellbeing page 7
- Head of Service with overall Responsibility for Health, Safety & Wellbeing page 7
- Leadership Group, Heads of Service and Senior Managers page 7
- Line Managers and Supervisors page 9
- The Devon Health & Safety Service page 10
- Health and Safety Co-ordinators page 11
- All Employees page 11
- Contractors and Partners page 12
- Service Users and Visitors page 12

4. Trade Union Health and Safety representatives page 12

5. Arrangements page 12

6. Equality Statement page 13

7. Review of Policy page 13

**Appendices**

1. Consultation and Committees Chart page 14

2. DCC Procedural Arrangements page 15

**Policy History** page 16




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# HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING POLICY

## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

1. Devon County Council (the Authority) is committed to achieving high standards of health and safety performance throughout the organisation. This commitment will be afforded to all County Council employees and those that may be affected by the Council's work activities and as such will include service users, visitors, volunteers, contractors and the general public. In addition the Authority is committed to ensuring that all reasonable measures are in place to maintain and enhance staff wellbeing so that staff can lead productive and healthy working lives.

2. The Authority recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and other relevant statutory provisions. This includes the duty to make and put into effect suitable arrangements for health and safety and staff wellbeing together with the funding and other resources necessary to carry them out. To this end, sections 2 and 3 of this policy outlines how the Authority will organise itself for health, safety and wellbeing purposes and set into effect its arrangements to identify and manage risks. This policy is supplemented by specific health, safety and wellbeing policies and arrangements which outline how Regulations, Policy and good practice etc. are applied throughout the Authority. These arrangements will include measures to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of:

a) Plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risk to health.
b) Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
c) Appropriate levels of information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that all employees are aware of any hazards to which they may be exposed and the measures used to control any significant risks arising.
d) Safe place of work together with safe access and egress to and from it.
e) A healthy work environment.
f) Effective systems for the monitoring of health and safety performance throughout the Authority together with means for reporting and responsibility for instigating any corrective measures found necessary.
g) A robust audit and review process designed to measure safety performance generally and the compliance with the Authority's policies and relevant statutory provisions.
h) Support services to benefit the wellbeing of employees.



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3. Devon County Council will strive to meet the aims and goals of national initiatives. The Leadership Group, Members, Heads of Service, managers and staff each have an important role to play in achieving the degree of performance to which this Authority aspires and to this end, their co-operation and commitment is essential. I am confident that we can rely upon all staff, service users and contractors in helping to achieve our goals.

Signed:

**Dr. P. Norrey - Chief Executive**



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## 2. ORGANISATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### GENERAL

2.1 This section of Devon County Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy establishes and allocates a range of duties and responsibilities to both managers and employees throughout the Authority.

2.2 Health, safety and wellbeing arrangements at service and establishment level supplement and add to these duties and responsibilities so as to ensure that activities and risks of a more unique or specific nature are catered for. These arrangements and management systems will be formulated in a manner compatible with other management systems and controls that may apply.

2.3 In recognition of the size and diversity of this Authority, the following information is provided to assist in reaching an understanding of how the County Council organises itself for health, safety and wellbeing purposes:

- Appendix 1: Communication and Consultation arrangements
- Appendix 2: Corporate Health and safety documents that confirm Devon County Council's arrangements that support this policy document

## 3. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### The Chief Executive

3.1 The Chief Executive holds the overall responsibility to make and give effect to such arrangements and management systems as necessary for the health, safety and wellbeing of County Council employees and others affected by its activities. Such arrangements and management systems will apply to all work activities and be so designed and implemented as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of all employees and that of the County Council's service users, contractors, volunteers and members of the public. To achieve these goals, the Chief Executive will:

- Set objectives and monitor management performance to verify that reporting directors and senior managers are meeting their health and safety accountabilities
- Ensure that the necessary financial and other resources are provided to meet the County Council's objectives for health and safety and staff wellbeing
- Ensure that adequate competent health and safety advice and assistance is available to undertake the measures needed to comply with statutory requirements



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**The Elected Member - Health, Safety & Wellbeing**

3.2 An elected member is appointed to serve on the Devon Health and Safety Panel. The Health, Safety & Wellbeing Lead Member will actively monitor and promote health, safety and wellbeing across the Council raising matters with Senior Management and relevant Committees as necessary.

**Head of Service with Overall Responsibility for Health, Safety & Wellbeing**

3.3 The Head of Organisational Development is the senior manager with overall responsibility for Health, Safety and Wellbeing across the authority and is advised by the Health and Safety Manager and by other specialists as may be appropriate. To meet these responsibilities the Head of Services for Communities is required to:

- Have sufficient knowledge and understanding of health and safety law and good practice to effectively champion health and safety at board level and to promote high standards of performance throughout the Authority
- Inform the Leadership Group of the level of health and safety performance achieved by the Authority as a whole as verified by management systems for monitoring, auditing and reviewing health and safety arrangements
- Identify relevant key performance indicators for health, safety and wellbeing, co-ordinate the collection of relevant data and facilitate its use within the County Council for benchmarking purposes
- Advise the Leadership Group of new developments in health and safety legislation and approved Codes of Practice together with proposals for new or amended management systems necessary to ensure legal compliance
- Assist the Chief Executive and the Leadership Group in setting the Council's health, safety and wellbeing objectives and in the establishment of appropriate means of performance measurement
- Co-ordinate measures for joint consultation with safety and employee representatives. This includes the allocation of specific research and development tasks and to continuously monitor the effectiveness of this forum

**Chief Officers**, **Heads of Service and Senior Managers**

3.4 To meet the duties and responsibilities delegated by the Chief Executive, each Chief Officer, Head of Service and Senior Managers / Headteachers are required to:

- Ensure they have sufficient understanding of the County Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy and bring it to the attention of all employees in their service, including those Devon County Council employees who work from home and at establishments run by other organisations
- Have sufficient knowledge of health and safety laws to enable them to discharge their duties and responsibilities



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- Provide positive leadership and a visible commitment to the County Council's declared performance standards and management systems as outlined within the corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Provide and have in place, the Service/Unit/Establishment Health and Safety arrangements and procedures that add to County Council Arrangements, that are specifically tailored to meet the hazards and risks arising from the business functions and work activities of that part of the organisation
- Ensure that the necessary financial and other resources are provided so as to facilitate and meet the heath, safety and wellbeing objectives of the County Council
- Monitor health, safety and wellbeing performance within the organisation through planning and setting objectives, establishing systems of inspection, audit and review
- Take all reasonable precautions to provide a healthy and safe working environment
- Ensure that health, safety and wellbeing issues are given equal priority with other management issues at regular management or quality review meetings
- Ensure that all accidents, incidents, near misses, dangerous occurrences and cases of occupational disease or ill-health are recorded, reported, appropriately investigated and acted upon according to County Council policy and legal requirements
- Introduce and participate in appropriate means of consultation and communication with employees and their health and safety representatives. The means of such communication can include the service, unit or establishment Health, Safety and Wellbeing Groups
- Collaborate with the Devon Health & Safety Service in health and safety performance monitoring for internal/external audit and subsequent reporting on health and safety performance on a regular basis
- Ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken, recorded and reviewed as appropriate. To achieve this requirement, allocate and train sufficient numbers of key personnel having regard to the diversity, size and complexity of the organisation's activities and the degree of risk to which employees are exposed
- Ensure that all contractors, commissioned to undertake work on behalf of the Council, are appropriately selected in terms of competence for health and safety and managed accordingly. Management systems will include those for monitoring and reporting on contractor performance and their suitability for further commissions or appointments
- Have in place current, suitable and sufficient written emergency procedures for each site or workplace
- Where the service, unit or establishment shares facilities with other employing organisations (either internal or external), ensure that there are suitable and sufficient arrangements for communicating and co-ordinating effective arrangements for health and safety
- Demonstrate commitment and support to the County Council's holistic approach to health and wellbeing at work for employees, service users and customers by taking into full account all health and wellbeing factors when planning and undertaking work.



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**Line Managers and Supervisors**

3.5 Every manager and supervisor, so far as is reasonably practicable, is responsible at all times and in varying degrees, for the health and safety of all persons (including employees, service users, learners, visitors, volunteers, contractors and the general public) within their area of responsibility or control, including those Devon County Council employees who work from home and at establishments run by other organisations. As appropriate, this applies to every manager or supervisor beginning with the Chief Executive. Each must be aware of and comply with relevant County Council health, safety and wellbeing policies as well as the specific statutory provisions, guidance and Approved Codes of Practice applying to their specific work activities. They must ensure that:

- Regular hazard identification and risk assessment, including workplace, fire and work activity risk assessments are carried out and necessary actions completed
- Relevant records, including hazardous substance registers, risk assessments etc are held, reviewed annually and kept up to date to reflect significant changes
- All equipment is safe and checked on a regular basis by competent persons
- Hazardous substances are controlled according to legal and County Council requirements
- Health and safety information and training needs are assessed and duly provided
- All necessary activity or job instructions, warning notices and signs are provided
- No person works alone unless a risk assessment has been completed and appropriate arrangements put in place
- Appropriate protective clothing, equipment, devices and aids are selected and made available to those who need them and properly used, maintained or replaced as necessary
- All health and safety incidents are reported and investigated as appropriate to determine the cause and to expedite any corrective action required
- Health and safety objectives and targets are set to improve health and safety performance and monitor their attainment
- Health and safety topics are included on the agenda of management and team meetings
- All relevant health and safety considerations are applied to all employees both working in and away from their normal County Council workplace
- All contractors under their control have been appropriately selected and are competent in terms of health and safety and that their safety performance is appropriately monitored
- A good example is set for all employees, service users, learners, visitors, volunteers, contractors and the general public by always following Devon County Council's policy procedures and wearing appropriate protective clothing and equipment as required
- All relevant information regarding those health and safety policies which have a Health at Work focus must be monitored and audited regularly especially those which have identified health surveillance needs at risk assessment



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- Commitment must be given to health surveillance monitoring needs and rigorous data must be kept by managers where health surveillance needs have been identified

**The Devon Health & Safety Service**

3.6 The County Council employs a number of specialist Health and Safety Advisers and commissions an Occupational Health provision externally. The Health & Safety Manager, accountable to The Head of Organisational Development as the Head of Service with overall responsibility for Health and Safety, acts as the Competent Person for the Council and leads and co-ordinates the development of the Authority's health and safety policies and strategies.

3.7 In relation to Health and Safety, this service is required to:

- Provide health and safety advice and assistance to managers and staff within their remit. Assist managers and staff in the application of policy and relevant health and safety legislation, guidance and Approved Codes of Practice (ACoP) as may apply to the business and service delivery needs
- Produce Corporate H&S Arrangements under this Policy and keep them updated and communicated to Services
- Provide and update the service or unit on new legislation, guidance and ACoP's to enable it to respond cost effectively
- Be proactive in applying health and safety and risk management techniques within planning and review processes
- Assist senior managers in monitoring health and safety performance
- Initiate health and safety audits of the Service/Unit/establishment activities personally or by external/internal arrangements to ensure that the various health and safety policies are implemented and recommendations made for improvements where necessary
- Investigate selected accidents, incidents and cases of ill health, making recommendations on appropriate action
- Analyse and provide a statistical interpretation and commentary on health and safety incidents, accidents, ill health and dangerous occurrences
- Provide advice as requested on litigation from injuries, cases of ill health and the Council's response to enforcement actions
- Assist in the identification of health and safety training needs and the design and delivery of appropriate training
- Co-ordinate the service's approach to the safe placement and management of hazardous materials and processes
- Respond to and influence national policymaking
- Liaise with officers of the Health and Safety Executive, Fire Authority, other enforcing authorities and relevant agencies

3.8 In relation to Occupational Health, the external service providers are responsible for providing a range of information, services and advice to the Council on workplace health and wellbeing needs by:



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- Providing advice and information relevant to health and wellbeing needs at work
- Advising and assisting managers in managing sickness absence
- Assisting in identifying training needs in areas relating to health and wellbeing at work
- Responding to changing health needs within the organisation
- Having a robust commitment to compliance with the protection of employee confidentiality

**Health and Safety Co-ordinators**

3.9 Health and Safety Co-ordinators will provide the first point of contact on matters of health and safety within their unit, section or establishment including the provision of guidance and assistance on low risk issues. Co-ordinators will ensure the dissemination and regular flow of health and safety advice and information to and from managers throughout their unit, section or establishment.

3.10 Each Health and Safety Co-ordinator will receive sufficient instruction, training and resources as commensurate with the level of risk prevailing and will be assisted by the relevant service or corporate advisors.

**All Employees**

3.11 All persons employed by Devon County Council, including official volunteers, have a duty to themselves, their colleagues, the Council, and the community they serve, to work in a safe and responsible manner. To that end they must, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Assist the County Council in achieving its health and safety objectives
- Take action to prevent work related accidents and ill health
- Report unsafe processes, practices and equipment to supervisors or managers
- Raise health and safety concerns with supervisors or managers
- Report all health and safety incidents however minor to supervisors or managers
- Follow the appropriate safety rules and procedures relating to each work activity
- Use the control measures, protective clothing, equipment and devices where provided
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse anything provided in the interest of health, safety and wellbeing
- Co-operate in screening and health surveillance procedures as required
- Always set a good example to others and always behave in a responsible manner and never instigate or participate in any form of reckless behaviour

**Contractors and Partners**

3.12 To ensure that the Council meets requirements, it is expected that contractors and partners working with us for the people of Devon, will:

- Co-operate with the Council on all relevant matters



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- Meet all health and safety standards and requirements in the performance of their work activities undertaken with or on behalf of the Council

**Service Users and Visitors**

3.13 Service users and visitors are encouraged to co-operate with the health and safety arrangements put into place by Devon County Council to protect them and the people who are providing a service to them.

## 4. TRADE UNION HEALTH AND SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

4.1 The Authority has made arrangements with the recognised trade unions for the appointment, training and provision of facilities for safety representatives. Health and Safety issues are dealt with as and when. Formal consultation is also raised via a Corporate Forum**.** Reports, recommendations and issues raised from this or any H&S committees are fed into the Devon Health & Safety Panel which is concerned with the wider aspects of health, safety and wellbeing.

4.2 Trade union safety representatives within Devon County Council have agreed to represent all employees' health and safety interests (be they union or non-union members) to meet the requirements of the Health & Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations.

## 5. ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Due to the size and diversity of the Council it is not possible, in one document, to identify all health, safety, wellbeing and risk management arrangements (policies, procedures, Arrangements). Arrangements for the management of risks that are currently assessed as risks applicable to all services are produced by the Devon Health & Safety Service and published on the Council's Health & Safety pages of Inside Devon and they are also available on OSHENS, the DCC Health and Safety Management online system.

5.2 **Appendix 2** provides a list of the relevant documents containing procedural arrangements.

## 6. EQUALITY STATEMENT

6.1 'The Council will only commit to policies and practices which will eradicate discrimination and promote equality for all, regardless of age, gender, disability, religion and belief, race and ethnicity and sexual orientation'.



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6.2 This policy and related guidance has been the subject of an Equality Impact and Needs Assessment. This assessment will be integral to all future policy and arrangement reviews.

## 7. REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

7.1 The Devon Health and Safety Panel will review this policy every year or sooner if changes are made to current legislation or Council Structure.



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## APPENDIX 1 – HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING CONSULTATION AND COMMITTEES CHART

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## APPENDIX 2 – HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES AND ARRANGEMENTS

## DCC HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | DCC Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy | 11. | Lone Working Policy |
| 2. | Accident Policy | 12. | Moving and Handling Policy |
| 3. | Asbestos Management Policy | 13. | Noise Policy |
| 4. | The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) Policy | 14. | Radon Gas Policy |
| 5. | Display Screen Equipment Policy | 15. | Risk Assessment Policy |
| 6. | Drug and Alcohol Misuse Policy | 16. | Stress Management Policy |
| 7. | Fire Safety Policy | 17. | Tree Safety Management Policy and Procedures |
| 8. | First Aid Policy | 18. | Violence & Aggression Policy |
| 9. | Hand Arm Vibration Policy | 19. | Working at Height Policy |
| 10. | Infection Control Policy | 20. | Outdoor Education, Visits and Off-Site Activities Health & Safety Policy |

## DCC HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| HS01 | Accident Information | | HS22 | Hand Arm Vibration | | HS43 | Playground Safety |
| HS02 | Agency and Temp Workers | | HS23 | Health Issues for Young Service Users | | HS44 | Premises Management |
| HS03 | Art and Pottery Safety | | HS24 | Health Issues for Staff | | HS45 | Pressure Systems |
| HS04 | Asbestos | | HS25 | ICT Safety | | HS46 | Primary Curriculum Activities |
| HS05 | Auditing and Monitoring | | HS26 | Infection Control | | HS47 | Risk Assessment |
| HS06 | Caretaking and Cleaning Safety | | HS27 | Kitchen Safety | | HS48 | Safety Signs |
| HS07 | Construction, Design & Management | | HS28 | Legionella | | HS49 | Science Safety |
| HS08 | Consultation and Communication | | HS29 | Library Safety | | HS50 | Security |
| HS09 | Contractors – selection and control of | | HS30 | Lifting Equipment | | HS51 | Slips and Trips |
| HS10 | COSHH | | HS31 | Lone Working | | HS52 | Stress |
| HS11 | Design and Technology | | HS32 | Medication Arrangements | | HS53 | Swimming Pool Safety |
| HS12 | Display Screen Equipment | | HS33 | Mobile Phones | | HS54 | Teleworking |
| HS13 | Drama Safety | | HS34 | Moving and Handling – Objects | | HS55 | Training |
| HS14 | Drugs and Alcohol | | HS35 | Moving and Handling – People | | HS56 | Transport |
| HS15 | Educational Visits | | HS36 | Music Safety | | HS57 | Volunteer Safety |
| HS16 | Electrical Safety | | HS37 | Noise | | HS58 | Work Equipment |
| HS17 | Emergencies | | HS38 | Office Safety | | HS59 | Work Experience |
| HS18 | Fire Safety | | HS39 | Organising Major Events | | HS60 | Working at Height |
| HS19 | First Aid | | HS40 | Personal Protective Equipment | | HS61 | Pandemic Flu |
| HS20 | Gas Safety | | HS41 | Personal Safety | | HS62 | Early Years |
| HS21 | Grounds Maintenance Safety | | HS42 | Physical Education | | | |



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## POLICY HISTORY

| Policy Date | Summary of change | Contact | Implementation Date | Review Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| September 2008 | Annual review and updated to reflect DCC current structures | M Bullock | September 2008 | September 2009 |
| July 2009 | Updated to reflect DCC current structures and changes to the consultation arrangements and the Central Health, Safety & Wellbeing Committee | M Bullock | July 2009 | July 2010 |
| July 2010 | Annual review and updated to include Contractors, Partners & Service Users and updated Committee and Consultation Structure | M Bullock | July 2010 | July 2011 |
| September 2011 | Annual review and updated to reflect structural changes within DCC and to the overall senior manager responsibility allocated to the Head of Human Resources | M Bullock | September 2011 | September 2012 |
| December 2012 | Annual Review – minor typographical amendments to group names, no structural changes | M Bullock | December 2012 | December 2013 |
| September 2013 | Annual Review – minor typographical amendments to group names, no structural changes | M Bullock | September 2013 | September 2014 |
| January 2015 | Annual Review – replacing 'Head of Human Resources' with 'Head of Services to Communities' | M Bullock | January 2015 | January 2016 |
| September 2015 | Wording amended to comply with DCC policy | M Bullock | September 2015 | September 2016 |
| April 2016 | References to the Wellbeing@Work Service removed | S Bates 381863 | September 2015 | September 2016 |
| October 2016 | Annual Review – minor typographical amendments to titles and meeting groups following 2016 new structure | S Bates 381863 | October 2016 | September 2017 |
| January 2018 | Changed to reference to Leadership Group and Arrangement documents | S Bates 381863 | January 2018 | October 2018 |



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