Health & Safety Policy

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This policy is part of the Council’s safety management system. It supports efforts to continually improve health and safety outcomes for our employees and to promote safety at work.

This policy applies to all Falkirk Council employees.
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Health and Safety Policy Statement

Falkirk Council is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees and those affected by our work. We will do this by:

- Providing safe and healthy working conditions in order to prevent work related injury and ill health.
- Fulfilling our legal responsibilities as an employer and seeking to achieve best practice in our work.
- Eliminating workplace hazards and reducing health and safety risks.
- Continually improving our safety management system.
- Engaging and consulting with our employees and their representatives on matters relevant to their health and safety.

We will ensure that good health & safety management is an integral part of our approach to delivering services to the people of Falkirk.

Council Values

We will apply our organisational values to safety management in the following ways:

Responsive – we will engage with our employees to address their health and safety concerns and involve them in decision making to manage health and safety risks.

Innovative – we will adopt new technology and ways of working to improve the health and safety of our employees.

Trusted – we will be open and honest about how we manage health and safety risks with our staff and those affected by our work.

Ambitious – we will continually improve our health and safety performance and seek ways to improve service delivery safely.
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Roles & Responsibilities

Chief Executive
The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that Falkirk Council fulfils its legal responsibilities regarding health and safety. The Chief Executive will:

- set the health and safety framework for the Council
- determine the management structure through which the Health and Safety Policy and supporting policies & procedures are to be implemented
- delegate the management and implementation of the Council’s safety management system to relevant officers
- provide adequate resources for the management and implementation of the safety management system across the Council
- ensure that health and safety is promoted as an integral part of the culture of Falkirk Council
- set performance indicators for health and safety and review these indicators

Director of Corporate & Housing Services
The Director of Corporate and Housing Services is responsible for ensuring the development and implementation of strategies to promote and develop health and safety within Falkirk Council. This Director will:

- provide support to the Chief Executive for issues relating to health & safety within the Council
- ensure Services receive sufficient and accurate advice, guidance and updates to allow them to comply with changes in legislation or changes to employee care initiatives
- ensure appropriate consultation with Trade Unions and appropriate involvement of Trade Union Health and Safety representatives.
- monitor Services’ implementation of the Council’s safety management system
- advise Corporate Management Team of significant health and safety risks to the Council
- publish an annual health and safety report

Elected Members
Elected Members, as decision and policy makers, have a key role in establishing health & safety as a priority for Falkirk Council and ensuring appropriate resources are available to implement agreed management arrangements. Elected Members have responsibility for:

- nominating an Elected Member as Health & Safety champion
- considering the health & safety implications of any decision made and policies approved
- ensuring appropriate resources are available to effectively manage health & safety matters
- reviewing the performance of the Council’s safety management system

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Service Directors, Heads of Service and Chief Officers
Service Directors, Heads of Service and Chief Officers are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of all employees and others in their respective services. Service Directors, Heads of Service and Chief Officers will:

• ensure the Council’s safety management system is implemented within their respective areas
• ensure all employees are aware of this policy and other relevant policies and procedures
• ensure that employees can undertake the functions of their jobs competently by providing appropriate training and guidance
• ensure that adequate resources are made available within their Services to enable the implementation of the Council’s safety management system
• consult with employees and Trade Unions on Service based health and safety matters
• ensure that statutory appointments required by health and safety legislation are made for their Services
• ensure that contractors carrying out work for Falkirk Council comply with their statutory duties and any Council specific requirements.
• ensure promotion of a healthy and safe working environment within their Service.
• ensure their Service is adequately represented on the Council’s safety management group.

Service Unit Managers & Head Teachers
All Head Teachers and managers who have operational responsibility for other employees or for systems and procedures of work will be responsible for ensuring that:

• relevant aspects of the Council’s safety management system are implemented within their work area
• encourage an open health and safety culture that values proactive health and safety behaviour and reporting as a part of every employees role
• all employees are aware of and understand the policies and procedures regarding health and safety
• safe working practices are implemented, appropriately documented and monitored within their areas
• relevant training is provided to all employees to enable them to carry out their duties in a competent manner
• ensuring contractors are managed appropriately within their area of control
• all incidents are reported, investigated and recorded appropriately (including notifying enforcing bodies i.e. Health & Safety Executive).
First Line Managers, Team Leaders, Supervisors & Charge-Hands
These employees will have responsibility for implementing, monitoring & reviewing systems of work to achieve the aims of the Council’s health and safety policy. These individuals will lead by example and be champions for Health and Safety within their work environment and are responsible for:

- implementing relevant aspects of the Council’s safety management system are implemented within their work area
- ensuring that employees within their area of control are aware of the Council’s Health & Safety Policy, and specific health and safety information relevant to their role
- ensuring that employees follow safe working practices
- ensuring that incidents are reported and managed appropriately. This includes the reporting and investigation of incidents, and that remedial action is taken, where appropriate
- ensuring that health and safety risks within the area of control are managed appropriately
- assisting in developing appropriate Health and Safety policies & procedures through the consultation process
- ensuring health and safety information is communicated to employees on a regular basis and that issues causing concern are reported to the appropriate line manager and remedial action taken
- ensuring that all new members of staff receive relevant health and safety training as part of their induction process
- gathering, co-ordinating and providing local management teams and the Health, Safety & Care Team with information as required regarding performance/areas of concern and attending Health, Safety & Care Working Groups as required
- determining staff training requirements and ensuring training is provided to all employees to enable them to carry out their duties in a competent manner
- ensuring contractors are managed appropriately within their area of control

Premises Managers
In addition to their role, some employees may also have responsibility for the management of premises. To assist these officers in this role, a Premises Managers Handbook has been developed that provides a toolkit to ensure all areas of responsibility are defined and that record sheets are available for recording of relevant data within the Handbook. The areas the managers are also responsible for include:

- premises risk assessments and implementing appropriate control measures
- management of fire risks for the protection of employees, visitors and premises
- arrangements for the general safety of employees, volunteers, contractors, visitors and premises
- arrangements for security of employees, visitors and premises
- management of Legionella risks through regular checks of the water systems
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- monitoring the condition of the premises and any grounds to ensure appropriate standards are being maintained and any faults or failures rectified
- liaising with other building occupants to ensure responsibilities for health and safety are clearly defined

Corporate Risk Management Group
Members of the Corporate Risk Management group have a key role to play in ensuring a co-ordinated approach to risk management. They have collective corporate responsibility for:

- reviewing roles and remits of health and safety sub-groups as required;
- co-ordinating a consistent approach to risk management, including health & safety;
- monitoring compliance with the Corporate Risk register and regularly reporting on such to Corporate Management Team (CMT);
- checking that individual Services' Risk Management and Business Continuity Plans are fit for purpose;
- review significant health and safety risks referred by health and safety sub-groups.

Safety Management Group
This group will have the responsibility for assisting with the implementation and monitoring of the Council’s safety management system. The membership of this group will be determined by Services in discussion with the Health, Safety & Wellbeing team. They will do this by:

- monitoring the implementation of the Council’s safety management system
- monitoring and reviewing Services’ safety performance
- communicating information relevant to the Council’s statutory responsibilities and safety management system to Services
- monitoring the Council’s statement of assurance process for the Premises Managers’ Handbook
- assisting the Health, Safety & Wellbeing team in the development of the Council’s safety management system

Trade Union Representatives
Trade Union representatives will have responsibility for assisting with the development, implementation and monitoring of health and safety policies and procedures.

They will do this by:

- liaising with the Chief Executive, Service Directors, Managers and employees on health and safety issues at national and local level
- representing employees at Partnership Forum meetings
- attending service based meetings as required, to discuss health and safety matters

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• undertaking the responsibilities as listed below for employees

Employees
In order to create a positive and effective culture in regard to health & safety it is vital that all employees of Falkirk Council contribute positively to the successful management of health & safety. Employees will:

• take reasonable care for their own safety and the safety of others affected by their work
• work in accordance with instruction, safe working methods and training received
• alert line managers to unsafe practices, conditions or incidents of concern
• seek advice and clarification from Line Managers when unsure of any health and safety requirement relevant to their working environment
• co-operate with Falkirk Council in its endeavours to create and promote a positive health and safety culture
• not intentionally or recklessly interfere with, or misuse, anything which may result in harm to themselves or others
• report accidents/incidents to their line manager as soon as possible
• attend relevant training on health and safety matters as instructed by their manager.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Team
The Health, Safety & Wellbeing team is responsible for maintaining the Council’s safety management system. They will:

• develop and monitor the Council’s safety management system
• provide advice, guidance and information to Services regarding health & safety
• support the monitoring and management of the occupational health contract and occupational health arrangements and occupational health surveillance for Falkirk Council
• monitor the Council’s performance against health & safety criteria
• maintain records of all HSE contacts
• promote effective lines of communication with stakeholders, including external agencies such as the HSE and professional bodies.

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