

***HEALTH,
SAFETY AND
WELFARE POLICY***

***Department for
Children and Education***

April 2004



Wiltshire
COUNTY COUNCIL



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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WILTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

1 STATUS OF POLICY

- 1.1 This statement complements the corporate policy issued by the Chief Executive.
- 1.2 Nothing in this statement should be read as any way countermanding or altering the corporate policy.
- 1.3 Breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary procedures.

2 STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 2.1 The Director for the Department Children and Education and the three Assistant Directors (for Resources and Improvement Branch, Children and Families Branch and Schools Branch) accept primary responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all employees and for non-employees to the extent that work activities affect them. However, the responsibility for the strategic co-ordination of health and safety across the department lies with the Assistant Director, Resources and Improvement.
- 2.2 All managers have a responsibility to manage the health and safety functions within their teams. This does not, however, absolve any member of staff from personal responsibility to ensure their own health and safety at work and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions, including colleagues, pupils and members of the public.
- 2.3 Joint co-operation with employees' representatives is essential to the successful implementation of this policy.

3 ORGANISATION RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 The Director is responsible for securing compliance with this policy and for producing and annual health and safety performance report to the Corporate Management Team.
- 3.2 The Assistant Directors are responsible for:
 - 3.2.1 Establishing an effective safety culture within their branch.
 - 3.2.2 Ensuring adequate information, instruction, training and supervision is provided for employees to enable them to work safely and without risk to health, and for arranging for the effectiveness of this policy to be monitored.
 - 3.2.3 The prioritising and allocating of resources to support this policy.
- 3.3 All managers and team leaders are responsible for:
 - 3.3.1 Promoting health and safety as an integral part of their role.
 - 3.3.2 Ensuring all significant risks are assessed and necessary controls are identified and implemented.
 - 3.3.3 Continually developing and monitoring safe working practices.
 - 3.3.4 Implementing all health, safety and welfare related policy.

- 3.4 Individual employees are responsible for:
 - 3.4.1 Following agreed working practices and safety procedures.
 - 3.4.2 Reporting any accident, near miss, incident of violent or verbal abuse or any hazard.
 - 3.4.3 Ensuring health and safety equipment is not misused or interfered with.
- 3.5 Nominated persons are responsible for emergency evacuation and first aid procedures.
- 3.6 The Occupational Health and Safety Manager is responsible for providing professional support and advice to all managers and employees.
- 3.7 The Departmental Health and Safety Liaison Officer is responsible to the Assistant Director, Resources and Improvement for liaising and co-ordinating with departments and schools on all non-professional matters relating to health and safety.
- 3.8 Each branch will have a nominated person to act as a Health and Safety Co-ordinator.
- 3.9 Trade Union elected Safety Representatives may carry out their duties as defined by the Safety Representatives Regulations etc.1977 but will not be accountable for health and safety purposes.

DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN AND EDUCATION
 Mr. R Wolfson

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT
 Mr. R Parker

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
 Mr. J Doyle

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, SCHOOLS
 Mrs. S Denovan

April 2004

The remainder of this document sets out the specific arrangements and rules which cover your normal work activities.

Please read them carefully.

Estimated reading time: less than 15 minutes.

4 SPECIFIC ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 Manual Handling

- 4.1.1 Wherever practicable, work methods and storage facilities will be organised so that manual handling is avoided or reduced as far as possible.
- 4.1.2 Where manual handling is necessary, consideration will be given to the provision and use of suitable mechanical aids. These must be suitable for the task and regularly maintained.
- 4.1.3 Everyone who is regularly required to manually handle loads will be given training in the appropriate techniques. A basic manual handling course is offered to all new employees as part of their induction process with Wiltshire County Council, if their line manager deems it to be necessary.
- 4.1.4 Section Managers, Office Managers and Team Leaders will conduct risk assessments on any handling tasks, occasional or foreseeable, which may pose the risk of injury, to establish the safest methods and assess the capability of the individual.
- 4.1.5 No-one should attempt to lift, support or move any load if they have any doubt about their safety.

4.2 Electricity

- 4.2.1 Only competent persons may undertake any work on any part of an electrical system or equipment. Branch Managers are responsible for ensuring competence.
- 4.2.2 All portable appliances must be regularly inspected and tested by a competent person, at intervals consistent with the County Council policy.
N.B. Employees' personal appliances must not be used at work until they have been inspected and tested.
- 4.2.3 Everyone is responsible for visually inspecting the plug, cable and general condition of an appliance before use. Any equipment that is identified as being defective **must be** taken out of use immediately and reported to the relevant manager.
- 4.2.4 Overloading sockets, using extension cables or blocks and running cables under surfaces or across walkways and doors is to be avoided where possible.
- 4.2.5 Any portable equipment provided for work purposes at home will be tested before issue (unless brand new, which negates the need for initial testing), and thereafter in line with point 4.2.2. Where practicable, equipment testing will take place at the office base rather than at home.
- 4.2.6 Records of tests and inspections will be maintained.

N.B. Defective equipment must not be used until repaired by a competent person.

4.3 Housekeeping / Storage

- 4.3.1 Everyone is responsible to keep the area around his or her workplace tidy and free from obstruction or anything that is liable to cause a person to slip, trip or fall.
- 4.3.2 Trailing cables are to be avoided except in very temporary circumstances, when attention should be drawn to them.
- 4.3.3 Drawers should be closed after use and equipment and materials put back into their proper place.
- 4.3.4 Shelves, cabinets and cupboards must not be overloaded.
- 4.3.5 Spillages must be cleared up as soon as noticed. Waste materials must not be allowed to accumulate other than in the relevant receptacles that are regularly emptied. Office bins should only be used for the disposal of paper - food, wrappers and other such items should be disposed of in the designated receptacles around the building.
- 4.3.6 The use or exposure to hazardous substances should be avoided or, if this is not possible, controlled as far as is reasonable practicable. All containers of hazardous substances must be appropriately labelled and stored securely.
- 4.3.7 Any defective equipment, furniture or lighting which presents a hazard must be reported immediately to your line manager. That person should ensure that repairs are effected as soon as possible. Building and lighting maintenance issues should be referred to the property helpline in the first instance. Scrap equipment must be disposed of promptly by contacting the caretaker or site/building manager. Any temporary storage must not obstruct aisles, stairs or walkways or cause trip hazards.
- 4.3.8 Emergency equipment e.g. first aid boxes, must be kept accessible at all times.
- 4.3.9 Managers and supervisors must regularly monitor the workplace and also carry out annual office inspections.

4.4 Lone Working

- 4.4.1 The nature of our activities is such that many employees are often required to work alone and / or away from their base and / or out of normal office hours.

As a general rule, all of these are permissible, subject to guidance given in this section, except for where a task cannot be conducted safely by one person or in cases where violence towards staff is considered to be a real potential.

- 4.4.2 All lone working situations will be subject to a risk assessment. Section Managers or Team Leaders must assess the situations, either generically or individually, and ensure that reasonable practicable precautions are implemented.

N.B. Those assessed at high risk must not be allowed to continue.

- 4.4.3 Such precautions might, if the perceived risk warrants it, include:
 - cancelling the visit / appointment / meeting;
 - re-arranging the venue;
 - re-scheduling the time of the visit / appointment / meeting;
 - specific selection of staff;
 - additional staff being present;
 - providing detailed information to colleagues about your intended itinerary;
 - training in conflict diffusion techniques for staff;
 - collection of information from other sources, e.g. the Police;
 - provision of a personal alarm and/or other personal communications.

- 4.4.4 In addition to these higher-risk precautions, all lone workers must log, with an administrative officer, their intended movements throughout any lone working period during office hours. The log should include information which will allow your movements to be traced should you fail to return safely either to the office base or your home. This may take the form of a weekly timetable, submitted in advance and updated in the light of circumstance. ***Note that the carrying of a mobile phone does not abrogate this requirement as you may be unable to receive a signal or be incapacitated from using it.***
- 4.4.5 For low-risk lone working periods after normal office hours, then it is sensible to inform someone at home of your itinerary and of the action to take should you fail to arrive home. If there is no suitable person at home, then staff may, for their own reassurance, want to arrange a system whereby a colleague is primed to alert someone if confirmation of a safe return is not made.
- 4.4.6 A locally arranged escalating procedure must be in place to alert the manager if any member of staff is unaccounted for at the end of any high risk lone working period or in any other circumstances giving cause for concern.

4.5 Using Display Screen Equipment

- 4.5.1 Designated Display Screen Equipment Users will be defined and notified in accordance with County Council Policy.
- 4.5.2 All DSE Workstations will be assessed against the Authority's criteria at least annually to ensure that they are suitable and compatible with the user. Trained assessors will cover Authority premises. Laptops used for occasional short periods of less than one hour will not be classed as DSE workstations for health and safety purposes.
- 4.5.3 All assessments will be recorded and held for inspection as required.
- 4.5.4 All Designated Users will be required to carry out annual on-line training. This should be done prior to a work station assessment.
- 4.5.5 Designated Users will receive information and instruction on the potential health risks from working with DSE and will be entitled to receive assistance towards the cost of eye tests and, if necessary, corrective lenses.
- 4.5.6 Work patterns should be organised, where possible, to avoid continual intensive use of the keyboard for periods beyond one hour and allow periods of rest or other duties. A break of 5 to 10 minutes per hour is advised during periods of intensive use.
- 4.5.7 Laptops should be used in conjunction with a docking station and separate keyboard and mouse if there is likely to be intensive use for more than one hour.
- 4.5.8 Where the guidance in 4.5.7 cannot be achieved because, for example, the User is in a workplace without docking facilities, then every effort should be made to achieve the 'best' working posture possible and breaks should be diligently taken.
- 4.5.9 DSE workstations used frequently and for prolonged periods for work purposes at home must comply with the same standard as those in the office base. A system of self-assessment will be initially used for home worker, with a full assessment available after if this is deemed necessary.
- 4.5.10 Staff must notify their line manager immediately, if they consider that they are at risk or have any symptom which may be as a result of or associated with using DSE. Such symptoms include pains in the wrist, fingers, neck or shoulder, visual discomfort and headaches. The manager will then seek advice from the Occupational Health Adviser.
- 4.5.11 Lifting and transporting of equipment, other than those items deemed to be portable such as laptops, must only be carried out by a designated person.

4.6 Use of Private Vehicles for Work Purposes

This section refers to journeys made for work purposes other than from home to an office base and back home again.

Driving a motor vehicle is probably the most dangerous activity that employees do in the course of their work. When you are driving your vehicle, it becomes your place of work and is subject to the same requirement as your office base, in terms of the need to ensure that minimum standards are being met.

- 4.6.1 All drivers (casual or essential, leased or private vehicle) must ensure that their vehicle is roadworthy, their insurance is appropriate and that they inform their manager if they become unfit or cease to be eligible to drive.
- 4.6.2 In line with Corporate Policy, an annual check will be made of drivers' licences, insurance and, if appropriate, current MOT certificates. Managers will record the fact that these checks have been carried out.
- 4.6.3 Drivers are not expected to drive above speed limits or in a dangerous fashion to meet existing work commitments. When planning itineraries, sufficient time should be allowed for safe travel. It is expected that employees will not eat or drink whilst driving. Nor should they be under the influence of alcohol or judgement affecting drugs, whether prescribed or not.
- 4.6.4 The use of mobile phones whilst driving is not permissible. Managers must ensure that regular routines and individual journeys can be undertaken without the need to use a handheld piece of communication equipment. If this is not operationally practicable, then hands-free equipment must be provided and properly installed into all relevant vehicles. The preferred course of action in all cases is for drivers to turn their equipment off whilst on the road and to utilize a message service, finding a safe and legal place to stop to access messages when necessary. In certain circumstances, staff may be supplied with a "hands-free" kit to use in their vehicles. It should be noted, however, is that the preferred course of action is to turn off mobile phones whilst driving.
N.B. It is not illegal to carry a mobile phone whilst driving – only to use it. However, is permissible to make a 999 call whilst driving in an emergency, if it is unsafe to stop.
- 4.6.5 Driving when tired is especially dangerous. Under the Working Time Directive, employees must have a rest break of at least 20 minutes where the working day is longer than 6 hours and a rest break of 11 consecutive hours per 24 hour period. As stated in the beginning of this section, travelling on business constitutes part of the working day. It is recommended that staff arrange an overnight stay in order to avoid having to drive more than 300 miles in the course of one day, or more than 75 miles home, if to do so would extend the working day beyond 12 hours. In these circumstances, accommodation and subsistence costs will be paid in accordance with County Council policy. Other work commitments will need to be planned accordingly to facilitate the overnight stay.
- 4.6.6 To further reduce the risk posed by driving when tired, staff should, when planning travel, consider their workload and commitments on adjacent days, as well as the options of using public transport, video conferencing facilities etc.
- 4.6.7 Managers must undertake risk assessments to determine the need for restrictions in journey times and distances.
- 4.6.8 All drivers who are likely to travel more than 500 work miles per annum will be offered safer driver skills training as part of the Department's training programme.
- 4.6.9 Anyone using any other mode of transport such as a bicycle, must ensure that it is both suitable for the purpose (e.g. carrying or transporting materials) and roadworthy.
- 4.6.10 Any vehicular accident involving an employee on work business or non-employees under the Authority's control **must be** reported to the relevant manager.

4.7 Employee Well-Being

All employees should have the benefit of a working environment that creates a sense of well-being and security. The “working environment” includes the way in which workloads and the workplace are managed, as well as the physical conditions in which the work is done. To achieve this, the Council seeks, at all levels, to operate fair and effective management so that all employees can benefit and has produced a corporate policy to this effect. The aim of this is to reduce the possibility of the harmful effects of stress being experienced.

- 4.7.1 The Branch Managers, Managers and Team Leaders are to continually assess the working environment for any potential sources of stress, illness or related problems and to be aware of and alert to the causes and symptoms of stress. This awareness will be achieved through briefing sessions and written guidance, as well as through regular communication between employees and line management.
- 4.7.2 Work practices will, as far as is practicable, be arranged to avoid creating these circumstances.
- 4.7.3 Individuals will be encouraged to take responsibility for alerting a suitable person to any situation or factor that may be a source of stress, illness or related problems for themselves or others.
- 4.7.4 A “suitable person” may be the immediate Manager, the Branch Manager or any of the specialist support staff – Occupational Health Adviser, Health and Safety Adviser, Personnel Officer or Staff Counsellor.
- 4.7.5 All cases will be dealt with professionally, sensitively and confidentially as far as County Council procedures allow.

4.8 Work-Related Ill-Health

- 4.8.1 All sickness absence will be recorded and monitored.
- 4.8.2 All work-related ill-health will be investigated and frequent or prolonged absence will be referred to the corporate Occupational Health Advisers.

4.9 New and Expectant Mothers

The term “new or expectant mother” relates to a member of staff who is pregnant, has given birth within the previous six months or who is breast feeding. Particular account must be taken of the risks to new and expectant mothers when assessing risk in the workplace and assessors need to be aware of the health implications associated with pregnancy. The Occupational Health Advisers can offer advice to assessors if required and will work in conjunction with managers if this is the more appropriate course of action.

- 4.9.1 Once an employee has formerly notified her manager that she is pregnant, a risk assessment of her work activities must be undertaken. The assessment must take into account any potential adverse effects on the unborn or breast feeding child, not just for the mother herself. It should also look at how the working environment may impact upon the common health issues associated with pregnancy.
- 4.9.2 The new or expectant mother must be informed of the outcome of the risk assessment and any alterations to working practices or duties that will be required.
- 4.9.3 If the mother returns to work within six months, the original assessor should carry out a review of the work place activities. This should also apply if the returning mother is still breast feeding, irrespective of the time away.
- 4.9.4 Records of all assessments must be kept in the department to which they are relevant.

4.10 Home Working

This section refers to work activities regularly conducted in the home environment. In such circumstances, all relevant health and safety rules, procedures and policies apply.

- 4.10.1 Most commonly applicable will be the use of DSE covered in section 4.5 of this document.
- 4.10.2 Managers will carry out a sufficient risk assessment of the activity before authorizing home working. This should be recorded.
- 4.10.3 Managers should ensure that there is regular contact with the home worker and that opportunities for face to face consultations exist.

4.11 Violence to Staff (Including Verbal Abuse)

Violence to staff is defined as any incident in which an employee is deliberately abused, threatened or assaulted by another person in circumstances arising out of the course of his or her employment.

- 4.11.1 This policy states that violence to staff is unacceptable, whether the perpetrator is a colleague, child or any other person.
- 4.11.2 No member of staff is expected to put personal safety at risk in order to carry out his or her work and staff have the right to use reasonable force in self-defence.
- 4.11.3 All work activities which may give rise to a significant potential for violence to staff, must be subject to a thorough risk assessment.
- 4.11.4 Where risk assessments identify violence as a foreseeable occurrence, managers will be expected to respond by implementing appropriate preventative measures prior to the event taking place and by ensuring that staff are adequately trained to recognize potentially violent situations and act accordingly.
- 4.11.5 All incidents of violence to staff must be recorded. Managers are responsible for providing a means of doing this and for regularly monitoring reports. Manager will be aware that staff may be reluctant to report incidents for fear of being criticized for the way in which they handled the situation, of being derided by colleagues or of having their competence questioned. The reporting system will therefore offer confidentiality and an assurance of a professional response.
- 4.11.6 Verbal abuse, which is not taken as threatening or harmful by the recipient (such as banter between colleagues), is not reportable.
- 4.11.7 Any major injury, or any absence from work of more than 3 days as a result of injuries, physical or otherwise, sustained through violence at work must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the arrangements in section 4.15 in this document.
- 4.11.8 All staff who face a significant and foreseeable risk of violence will be trained to an appropriate level in the skills to identify and respond to an incident. Refresher training will also be maintained.
- 4.11.9 The County Council operates policies to cover any incidents of racial or sexual harassment. If such an incident occurs, it should be reported in the first instance to the relevant Manager, who will then take it forward with Corporate Personnel. Outlines of the policies relating to this can be found on the Wizard. For more in depth information, contact Corporate Personnel.

4.12 First Aid

- 4.12.1 The Occupational Health and Safety Manager will assess the need for First Aid and for trained First Aiders at County Hall. The local manager should make this assessment at all other locations. Training provision will be made as required and notices giving names of qualified First Aiders and the location of First Aid containers will be posted throughout the premises.
- 4.12.2 All administration of First Aid, no matter how minor, must be recorded. First Aid containers will not contain medication of any sort or anything else that could cause further harm to the patient.
- 4.12.3 Peripatetic staff who may visit premises without first aid provision will be issued with a traveling first aid kit.
- 4.12.4 All first aid materials must be maintained and replenished by a nominated person and locations should establish procedures for contacting emergency assistance.

4.13 Risk Assessment

- 4.13.1 All relevant Managers and Team Leaders will be offered training so that, by means of a systematic examination of work activities, they can make an assessment of the significant risks to the health and safety of employees and of those affected by work activities.
- 4.13.2 The assessment will establish suitable control measures by identifying the hazards present, evaluating the extent of the risks, the likelihood of the events occurring, the number and nature of the people that may be affected and the severity of the foreseeable outcome. The assessment must be recorded and available for inspection. Any information coming to light as a result of the risk assessment should be disseminated to staff if appropriate.
- 4.13.3 An assessment must be reviewed at least annually, but sooner if an incident occurs or if there is any reason to suggest that it is no longer valid.
- 4.13.4 Any planned accommodation moves must be subject to a risk assessment prior to them taking place.
- 4.13.5 Generic guidelines for the areas to be covered by risk assessments are available to all relevant staff.

4.14 Accommodation and Equipment

- 4.14.1 Workplaces will be organized to allow easy movement throughout and unhindered exit in the case of an emergency.
- 4.14.2 All furniture will be suitable and in a safe condition.
- 4.14.3 A competent person must regularly service all equipment such as photocopiers and fax machines.
- 4.14.4 Photocopiers should, as far as is practicable, be situated in well-ventilated areas. Persons with respiratory conditions should avoid handling photocopier toner as a precautionary measure.
- 4.14.5 All electrical equipment is subject to section 4.2 of this policy.
- 4.14.6 Staff using kettles and portable heaters must ensure that they are safely located to avoid spills or fires. Fridges must be kept in a clean condition.
- 4.14.7 A reasonable temperature in offices must be maintained as far as weather conditions permit. The room temperature should not fall below 16°C and, where possible, regular excessive temperatures above 29°C will be reduced by blinds, fans or other suitable means. If designed to do so, windows must be openable.
- 4.14.8 Equipment and materials should be stored to minimise the risks from slipping, tripping, falling and manual handling.
- 4.14.9 All access equipment used as a means of gaining height must be suitable for that particular purpose. The use of unsuitable equipment such as chairs, boxes, defective steps etc. is **strictly** prohibited.
- 4.14.10 Managers will carry out a safety inspection of workplaces under their control at least on an annual basis, by using the checklist that is supplied. Any reports that indicate something needs to be done must be actioned within a suitable timescale. Records of the inspections must be forwarded to the Departmental Health and Safety Liaison Officer, who will maintain a central database and use the reports for monitoring purposes. Records of each inspection should be held locally for at least 3 years.

4.15 Training

- 4.15.1 On their first day, all staff, including temporary and agency staff, will receive instruction about emergency arrangements and general health and safety procedures from their supervisor. The minimum requirement is to cover procedures relating to Fire, First Aid and Incident Reporting.
- 4.15.2 Managers and Team Leaders are responsible for identifying any initial work-based training needs and for ensuring that provision is made for training to take place.
- 4.15.3 Training and refresher training needs for each employee will be reviewed by Managers and Team Leaders on a regular basis, as well as being identified through the annual appraisal process. Training records will be kept by the Health and Safety Co-ordinators within each Branch, and a database used to monitor and highlight training requirements, the details of which will then be passed onto the Health and Safety Liaison Officer for information.

4.16 **Hazardous Substances**

- 4.16.1 Very few hazardous substances are likely to be encountered in the course of a normal working day. Anyone who is asked to use or is likely to be exposed to a hazardous substance and is in doubt, should seek advice from a Health and Safety Adviser.
- 4.16.2 All staff must observe any control measure that is put into place following an assessment of the risk of exposure.
- 4.16.3 All containers of hazardous substances must be appropriately labelled and stored securely. Employees should not bring in household chemicals such as cleaners etc to use in kitchen areas, as this may result in dangerous chemicals being mixed together.

4.17 **Incident Reporting**

An incident can be any of three scenarios:

- **An accident which is due to an unforeseen sequence of events, leading to injury or damage;**
- **A near miss – i.e. an accident with no resultant injury or damage;**
- **An act or threat of violence or aggression against an individual.**

- 4.17.1 All incidents ***must*** be reported.
- 4.17.2 All premises will have a book of Incident Report and Investigation Forms available to record the details of any injury sustained in the workplace and these books should be readily accessible to everyone. Managers should make all new employees aware of where the books are and what to do in the event of an incident. For C&E Department in County Hall, the book is held in the Co-ordination Section on the second floor.
- 4.17.3 If an incident or accident occurs, the line manager of the person injured will complete an Incident Report and Investigation Form, in line with County Council procedures and following the guidelines in the front of the book.
- 4.17.4 Completed forms will be copied and the originals sent to the Occupational Health and Safety Team for their comments. Under the Data Protection Act, the copies are to be retained in a locked cabinet and will be held in the department in which the incident occurred.
- 4.17.5 The manager of the person(s) involved in the incident will investigate to try to establish all of the contributory causes and make recommendations as to what action should be taken to reduce the likelihood of any re-occurrence.
- 4.17.6 Incidents of violence or verbal abuse must also be recorded in line with departmental procedures.
- 4.17.7 Where any of the above resulted in a specific notifiable injury as indicated under List E at the front of the book, the Health and Safety Executive must be informed immediately on 0845 300 9923 or by accessing www.riddor.gov.uk. *N.B. If in doubt, the Occupational Health and Safety Team will advise on how and when to report an incident.*

4.18 **Security**

- 4.18.1 All staff are issued with an Employee Identity Card and these ***must*** be worn while on duty. The photo on the badge must be a recent and recognisable likeness of the wearer.
- 4.18.2 All visitors to County Hall should report to Reception on arrival and must be accompanied from there to the person they have come to see. At the conclusion of their visit, they must be accompanied back to Reception, where they are required to sign out.
- 4.18.3 Other venues must adopt suitable measures to avoid intruders being able to access the premises.
- 4.18.4 All staff should remain vigilant of suspicious persons and packages. Any member of staff has the right to challenge and question any person(s) on the premises if they are not wearing appropriate identification.
- 4.18.5 Valuables should not be left at work overnight and should be kept secure and out of sight during the day.
- 4.18.6 Confidential information should be locked away at the end of each working day. Some sections may choose to operate a "clear desk" policy.
- 4.18.7 Laptops and other valuable equipment should be stored safely in cars and not left where they can be seen.

4.19 **Contractors**

N.B. A contractor is someone not employed by the Council but being paid to provide a service to or on behalf of the Council.

- 4.19.1 Professional advice ***should*** be sought before selecting a contractor, either from Strategic Property Services in County Hall or Mouchel Parkman.
- 4.19.2 A risk assessment ***must*** be carried out before any major works commence and all relevant safety information transferred between parties to ensure that all risks are assessed and adequately controlled.
- 4.19.3 Contractors will be expected to work in a manner that does not put the health and safety of themselves or others at risk.
- 4.19.4 Arrangements must be in place to ensure that contractors receive adequate information concerning site safety e.g. emergency evacuation procedures, always wearing an identity badge etc.

4.20 **Fire / Bomb Alerts**

- 4.20.1 The risk of fire will be assessed at all County Council premises. Instructions for evacuation procedures are issued and posted in all premises.
- 4.20.2 For those employees in non-council premises, managers should ensure that staff are made aware of the evacuation procedures that are in operation for that particular premise.
- 4.20.3 All staff are responsible for making themselves aware of exit routes and the positions of fire extinguishers and alarm points.
- 4.20.4 Staff are responsible for ensuring that fire escape routes are kept clear at all times and also that designated fire doors are kept closed at all times.
- 4.20.5 A fire evacuation drill will be carried out at least once a year at each premise.
- 4.20.6 All staff, irrespective of status, ***must*** have an annual fire briefing relevant to their place of work to ensure that they are made aware of the fire and evacuation procedures.

4.21 **Asbestos**

- 4.21.1 All premises managers will be notified by the Environmental Services Department of the presence, location and condition of any suspected asbestos in their premises.
- 4.21.2 Managers must make sure that staff are aware of the location of any asbestos containing material and understand the importance of not disturbing it and of reporting any accidental disturbance.
- 4.21.3 If any asbestos containing material is accidentally disturbed, the manager must immediately ensure that the area is evacuated and kept sealed off while the incident is immediately reported to the property helpline.
- 4.21.4 Any plans to carry out repairs, installations or any other type of work which might involve disturbing asbestos surfaces must be submitted to the Director of Environmental Services at least 3 weeks **before** the work is due to commence.

IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ANY ISSUE RELATING TO HEALTH, SAFETY OR WELFARE, SPEAK IN THE FIRST INSTANCE TO YOUR LINE MANAGER, YOUR BRANCH HEALTH AND SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR OR CONTACT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY LIAISON OFFICER ON 01225 713268.

IF YOU REQUIRE PROFESSIONAL ADVICE ABOUT ANY HEALTH, SAFETY OR WELFARE ISSUE, CONTACT THE CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVISERS ON 01225 713119 / 713567 / 713154 / 713149.