



**Somerset
Council**

HS02 Responsibilities Policy



Organisation	Somerset Council
Title	HS02 Responsibilities Policy
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Policy on a page

Somerset Council is committed to ensuring that all staff regardless of Grade are aware of their respective responsibilities.

This policy and associated guidance provide the Council's rules that must be followed, the standards to be maintained, and signposts to further guidance. It also highlights the risks to users, clients and the Council, and the potential consequences of breaching this policy.

This document and associated guidance will be available to: **All Elected Members, Somerset Council Staff, 3rd Party Contractors (on request), Secondees and Volunteers.**

Key Messages

- Every employee must take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- This means that each employee has input into this shared responsibility for health and safety. The degree of responsibility varies with the individual's position in the Council.
- The purpose of this document is to set out the different responsibilities of councillors, director's, managers, and employees, in order to achieve our objectives explained in the [Health and Safety Policy \(HS 001\)](#)

Terms of Reference

Health & Safety Champion – Currently Executive Director of Resources, Strategy & Transformation: Alyn Jones.

Delegated Senior Manager Health & Safety (DSM) – Managers representing their directorate at Health and safety Board meetings.

Corporate Health and Safety Advisor – Health & Safety Strategic Manager: Daniel Thomas.

This “policy on a page” is a summary of the detailed policy and guidance documents, please ensure you read, understand, and comply with the arrangements stated

Responsibilities

The Elected Members of the Council Will:

- Give due consideration to matters of health, safety and welfare when allocating resources, considering changes, and determining priorities.
- Publish a written health and safety policy.
- Receive regular reports about the Council's health and safety performance.
- Discuss issues relating to health and safety matters at any formal meetings within the Council when appropriate.
- Undertake H&S Training as appropriate (see HS031 Training).

The Executive Leadership Team Will:

- Ensure that adequate financial and other resources are available to meet identified health, safety, and welfare requirements.
- Review performance in meeting corporate health and safety strategic objectives and act on the findings.
- Receive regular reports and updates pertaining to the Council's health and safety performance from the H&S Champion and/or Advisor.
- Appoint a member of the team as the H&S Champion.

Directors will:

- Ensure the incorporation into service planning of measures to achieve and maintain compliance with corporate H&S policy arrangements and any specific H&S legislation relevant to the work activity of their areas of responsibility and within any partnerships/contractual relationships in which they are involved.
- Establish a framework of roles and responsibilities and apply them within their own structure.
- Take an active and visible role in the management of health, safety, and welfare within their areas of responsibility and, specifically, ensure that:
 - risk assessments are reviewed regularly.
 - performance against any H&S related targets is monitored.
 - incidents and near misses are recorded and investigated appropriately.
- Ensure appropriate management representation at the HSWSG and other relevant meetings is sustained.
- Seek to ensure that financial and other necessary resources are available to meet health, safety and welfare requirements and control H&S risks.
- Appoint Delegated Senior Managers (DSMs).

- Ensure that DSMs are aware of their role and responsibilities in the effective management of health and safety, and that they have necessary training as appropriate (see [HS 031 Health and safety training](#)).
- Ensure that any delegation of line management responsibilities to meet H&S requirements is clear, regularly monitored, and subject to an appropriate review.
- Assure themselves that the person(s) to whom they delegate are competent to undertake the roles assigned to them.
- Undertake H&S training as appropriate (see HS031 H&S Training).
- Arrange for their management teams to receive reports from their DSM as follows:
 - regularly upon any relevant matter to their respective management teams at their normal meeting frequency.
 - Following updates received quarterly from the Council's Health, Safety, Wellbeing Steering Group summarising H&S performance and the content of the H&S Update Paper.
 - Communicating H&S discussions following attendance at Health, Safety, Wellbeing Boards.
 - At an emergency meeting, if appropriate.

The H&S Champion Will:

- Consider setting targets for corporate H&S performance within SC.
- Be responsible for ensuring that a sufficient amount of monitoring, and associated reporting, around different aspects of H&S performance and risk management is undertaken.
- Sponsor an annual report on H&S matters, including performance, to SC's Audit Committee.
- Chair the Health, Safety, Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG).
- Ensure ELT appoint DSMs and Chairpersons for the Council's Health, Safety, Wellbeing Boards.
- Ensure that ELT considers H&S related matters as part of its business. This will partly be delivered by providing regular reports on corporate H&S performance to ELT.

The Corporate H&S Advisor Will:

The ELT has delegated authority to the Corporate H&S Advisor to ensure that this Health and Safety Policy Manual is fit for purpose and regularly reviewed.

- Contribute to a range of risk management processes to ensure that decision-makers are informed about relevant H&S considerations.
- Report on the implementation and performance of all or part of this policy, when appropriate, to the H&S Champion, HSWSG and H&S directorate boards.
- Co-ordinate the deployment of competent specialist H&S advice as well as inspection and audit resources.
- Propose service initiatives to improve performance in managing health and safety.
- Be responsible for liaising with external regulating authorities on behalf of the Council.

- Be authorised to issue an internal Safety Action Notice (see [HS 006](#) for more information) to any employee (including managers and directors) or department of the Council.
- Arrange to review this policy document regularly and propose any changes.
- Maintain a list of safety representatives appointed by recognised Trades Unions.
- Commission specialist support from internal and external agencies to support the H&S Management system.

The Health & Safety Service Will:

- Provide competent assistance to agreed areas of the Council.
- Monitor implementation of the safety policy and safety management systems through a variety of methods.
- Ensure accident/incident investigations are undertaken as required.
- Provide advice in the design, development and production of management systems, guidance documents, safe systems of work.
- Provide training and information services to support Council operations.
- Ensure that Directors are made aware of the implications of specific health and safety legislation and associated codes of practice relevant to their work area.
- Provide a professional capability to respond to requests for technical or general advice from Services in relation to incidents involving Council premises or activities and which may have serious implications for the health and safety of the workforce or the community. This includes matters relating to fire safety.
- Maintain links with outside organisations on health safety and welfare related matters.
- Update and publish, the corporate F02 document on a quarterly basis, providing detail on named responsibilities within the high-level council structure.

Authorised CHSU officers are permitted free and uninhibited access to any Council owned or occupied workplace (except inside the inner cordon at an emergency under the control of the Emergency Services) with or without the permission or knowledge of management at any time which they consider is necessary for the purposes of carrying out their duties.

In this capacity, they are authorised to stop any activity, or use of any equipment, which they deem to be very likely to give rise to serious injury, as set out in the arrangements in [HS 006 Safety Action Notices](#).

Delegated Senior Manager H&S (DSM) Will:

Directors and others may delegate authority to one or more members of their senior management team as DSM, to assist them in meeting their H&S management responsibilities

- Retain operational accountability for overall health and safety management arrangements as agreed with the responsible manager/director.

- Organise delegation of responsibilities where appropriate to line managers, local managers, supervisors, employees.
- Provide an operational conduit for dealing with:
 - Queries on health and safety–related issues raised within the Service Groups.
 - Routine communications involving safety management.
 - Relevant communications from external bodies on health and safety-related matters.
 - Consultation with trade union safety representatives.
- Represent their designated functional area(s) at H&S meetings as required.
- Provide information or reports for the following forums if requested:
 - Service H&S meetings (or equivalent).
 - Health, Safety, Wellbeing Steering Group.
 - Health, Safety, Wellbeing Boards.

Managers with Premise Management related Duties Will:

Ensure that the “Premises Manager” duties listed in the following policies are carried out:

- [HS 020 - A healthy and safe workplace](#). Duties include:
 - Monitoring housekeeping, cleaning, and storage arrangements, including ensuring that access routes and corridors are kept clear for wheelchair users.
 - Compiling risk assessments applying specifically to the building and associated safe working procedures.
 - Ensure that any maintenance tasks undertaken are conducted by competent people.
- [HS 021 - Asbestos](#). Duties include:
 - Ensuring that the Asbestos Register for the premises is kept up to date, implemented, kept readily available and that the relevant contents are communicated to staff and contractors.
 - Ensuring that the condition of visible asbestos-containing materials is regularly monitored, and any defects reported to the Asbestos team.
- [HS10 - Fire](#). Duties include:
 - Maintaining and (at least) annually reviewing the fire risk assessment for the premises. Ensuring that this document is readily available.
 - Appointing fire wardens and make arrangements for their training.
 - Ensuring that the regular tests and drills in [HS F10](#) take place, and keep associated records.
- Either test or arrange for the testing of the following: and keep associated records:
 - Portable electrical appliances.

- Water quality against legionella risks, as dictated by the legionella risk assessment. (see [HS 019 Legionella](#))
- Ensure servicing of other equipment as required, with particular regard to those requiring regular statutory examinations, e.g. lifting equipment under the LOLER and ventilation equipment under the COSHH 2002 regulations.
- Attend PM Training/refresher training as appropriate (see HS031 H&S Training).
- Retain appropriate records of all planned and other maintenance of plant and building fabric for their valid period.
- **Either:** ensure that a placard copy of the “Health and Safety Law – What you should know” poster is completed and displayed and, **or** ensure that all employees are provided with the HSE leaflet “Health and Safety law: what you should know (available from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/law.pdf>).
- Carry out any other duties in relation to the premises for which they are responsible, as required locally by any relevant H&S policy published by the Council.

The Housing Service Director Will:

In relation to the management of Council-owned residential buildings, ensure that the responsibilities and duties outlined in the housing procedures documents are assigned, monitored and met:

- [Asbestos Procedures V3.pdf](#) – Implementing and overseeing procedures for the safe management and removal of asbestos in Council-owned residential properties, ensuring compliance with health and safety regulations.
- [Electrical Safety Procedures V3.pdf](#) – Establishing and maintaining protocols for electrical safety, including regular inspections, maintenance, and repairs of electrical systems in Council-owned residential properties.
- [Fire Safety Procedure January 2024.pdf](#) – Developing and enforcing fire safety measures, conducting regular fire risk assessments, and ensuring that fire safety equipment and evacuation plans are up-to-date and effective in Council-owned residential properties.
- [Gas Safety Procedures V5.pdf](#) - Managing gas safety through routine inspections, servicing, and repairs of gas appliances and installations, ensuring adherence to safety standards in Council-owned residential properties.
- [Lift and Lifting Equipment Procedures V5.pdf](#) – Overseeing the safe operation and maintenance of lifts and lifting equipment, including regular inspections and servicing, to ensure they meet safety regulations in Council-owned residential properties.
- [Radon Safety Procedures V3.pdf](#) – Implementing radon management strategies, including testing and mitigation measures, to protect residents from radon exposure in Council-owned residential properties.
- [Water Safety Management Procedures V4.pdf](#) - Ensuring the safety and quality of water through regular testing, maintenance of water systems, and implementation of measures to prevent contamination in Council-owned residential properties.

(These documents are managed, updated and maintained by the Council’s Housing service).

Those with line-management responsibility (all layers of management)

Will:

- At all times take reasonable care for the health and safety of their employees and of any other person likely to be affected by their work activities.
- Co-operate with their managers or other responsible persons to assist them in carrying out their duties on behalf of the Council.
- Ensure H&S appears as a standing agenda item at team meetings.
- Refer to their superior any matter for which they are inadequately resourced to be able to complete satisfactorily or competently.
- Undertake H&S training/refresher training as necessary (see HS031 H&S Training).
- View health and safety as a key element in meeting service-related objectives when engaged in Line Management and Annual Review discussions.
- Allow employees to attend appointments for Health Surveillance/Protection during work hours and reimburse reasonable travel expenses to attend.
- Acknowledge the rights of trade union safety representatives to carry out their safety related functions, and provide them with an agreed level of facilities and support based on [HS16a Safety Reps & Committees](#).
- Identify H&S policies which apply to the Service and ensure adherence to those policies as required.
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken as appropriate (see HS04 Risk Assessment Policy).
- Identify training requirements for employees and ensure provision is allocated for any training requirements.
- Ensure the timely reporting and investigation of hazards, near misses, incidents and accidents, ensuring sufficient resource is allocated.

Employees Will:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others (including clients, visitors, pupils, contractors, and members of the public) who may be affected by their actions or omissions at work.
- Co-operate with supervisors, managers and directors on health and safety matters.
- Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything that has been provided to meet to protect health or safety.
- Use machinery, equipment, and substances, in accordance with health and safety information, instruction and training they have been provided with or seek appropriate guidance.
- Ensure they use equipment provided for their safety.
- Immediately report all health and safety concerns (including accidents, significant near misses, defects, and unsafe situations) to their line manager.

- Report any medical or physical condition which adversely affects their ability to conduct their work in a safe and healthy manner.
- Inform an appropriate person of any shortcomings in the Council's measures designed to protect people from harm.
- Attend H&S training/refresher training as appropriate (See HS031 H&S training).

Any employee following any of the final three bullet points in a responsible manner will be supported by management for making such a report, even if the concerns raised prove unfounded upon further investigation or influence service provision or resources.

References

The following Somerset Council policy documents are directly relevant to this policy, and are referenced within this document:

- [HS F02](#) Form for recording specific Corporate health and safety responsibilities.
- [HS031 H&S Training Policy and Training Matrix](#)

Governance Arrangements

Policy Compliance

If any employee is found to have breached this policy, they may be subject to Somerset Council's [disciplinary procedure](#).

Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within Somerset Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and publishing the policy.
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy.
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation.
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation.

Responsible	The Health and Safety Service
Accountable	Chief Executive
Consulted	LGR JNF Union Group, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group (HSWSG), HR Committee
Informed	All members, employees, contractors (on request), volunteers & 3rd parties (on request)

Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, for instance when there is a change in statutory requirements and/or HSE guidance is revised, but no less frequently than every 36 months. Policy review will be undertaken by rolling programme established by the Health and Safety Service and agreed by the Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Steering Group.

Version History

Revision Date	Author	Version	Description of Revision
April 2017	Graham Holmes	V3	Update to include reference to HS0-31 H&S Training.
June 2021	Graham Holmes	V4	Revision of logo and updating of titles/functions.
	Benjamin Smith	V5	Scheduled review

Document Notification

Approval	Name	Date
Corporate H&S Advisor	Daniel Thomas	
Executive Director of Resources, Strategy & Transformation and chair of HSWSG	Alyn Jones	
HR Committee	Committee	

Issued by: The Health and Safety Service

Issued Date: For consultation