

# **SECTION 1(1)**

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## **GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY AND ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

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**The General Statement of Policy together with other relevant parts of this Section of the Manual is issued to all employees as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974**



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## **Bracknell Forest Council Commitment to Staff Health, Safety and Welfare at Work**

1. The Council recognises that high standards of health, safety and welfare can contribute to efficient business performance while meeting responsibilities to people and the environment in a way which fulfils both the spirit and the letter of the law.
2. The Council will ensure that the health and safety risks to employees are assessed on a regular basis and adequate control measures introduced, including monitoring, review and audit procedures.
3. The Council will endeavour to demonstrate a progressive improvement in prevention of injury and ill health to employees, the goal being to avoid all accidents and causes of work-related ill health.

## **General Statement of Health and Safety at Work Policy**

1. Bracknell Forest Council recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy workplace and working environment for all of its employees and others affected by its activities. Compliance with legal requirements is considered a minimum standard upon which an effective health and safety management system is based.
2. The Council believes that health and safety is a management responsibility of equal importance to service delivery and quality. It requires managers, supervisors and employees to carry out agreed procedures as a condition of employment.
3. So far as is reasonably practicable, the Council will take all steps within its power to meet this responsibility for all of the Council's employees, sub-contractors and members of the public coming into Council activities, paying particular attention to the provision and maintenance of:
  - (a) Plant, equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health;
  - (b) Safe arrangements for the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
  - (c) Sufficient information, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards and contribute positively to their own safety and health at work and that of others;
  - (d) A safe place of work with safe access and exit;
  - (e) A healthy working environment;
  - (f) Adequate welfare facilities;
  - (g) Competent technical advice on health and safety matters where this is necessary to assist management to fulfil its responsibilities.
4. The Council requires its Directors to meet their responsibilities and duties as set out in this General Statement of Health and Safety at Work Policy as an essential part of their management duties. They will in turn specify to managers and supervisors within their Departments what is required of them as regards the safety and health of the employees who are in their charge, members of the public affected by their activities and systems of work under their control.

5. The Council will ensure that managers and supervisors know and understand their responsibilities for securing safe working conditions and practices by the provision of instruction, information and appropriate guidance on health and safety, and that suitable systems for effective safety management are provided.
6. The Council recognises the need for joint consultation and will establish with its Employee Representatives suitable arrangements for joint discussion and agreement.
7. The Council will provide, where necessary, adequate protective clothing and safety equipment for all work activities, and requires employees to use such clothing and equipment as a condition of their employment.
8. The Council requires its employees to take care of their own safety, that of other workers and that of the public affected by its activities, and to co-operate with the Council so as to enable it to carry out its own responsibilities successfully.
9. The Council will provide systems to measure and review health and safety performance to be used by managers to ensure standards of performance are met. Indicators will include accident, incident and hazard data, inspection reports and audit results. All employees will be required and encouraged to report accidents, incidents and hazards with a view to effective action being taken.
10. The Council will provide competent advice, guidance and assistance to its senior managers, maintain and develop its policy and monitor performance in matters of health, safety and welfare.
11. A copy of this statement will be issued to all employees through the Employee Handbook or other suitable means. It must be read in conjunction with the Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Manual, which gives guidance on corporate and specific health and safety issues. This General Statement of Health and Safety at Work Policy and the Manual will be reviewed on a regular basis and revised as necessary to take account of changing circumstances.

### **Statement of Occupational Health and Welfare Policy**

1. The Council recognises and accepts the need for provision of Occupational Health advice.
2. The Council will:
  - (a) Ensure medical examination/screening of all applicants for employment in the Council's service. Such pre-employment checks will be commensurate with the nature of work to be undertaken.
  - (b) Provide adequate trained personnel and equipment to ensure first aid treatment is provided in all premises and locations when required.
  - (c) Facilitate medical examination of employees where particular types of employment necessitate investigation or where sickness absence records give rise to concern, having regard to statutory provisions, the needs of the service, the Council's policy on Sickness Absence, the views of the employee and the relationship with their General Practitioner.
  - (d) Arrange the medical screening of appropriate groups of employees on a regular basis to enable them to be aware of their personal health and well-being, having

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regard to statutory provisions, the views of the employee and the relationship with their General Practitioner.

3. The Council will encourage employees to take an active part in protecting their health, safety and welfare and will organise and support health promotion activities and initiatives.
4. The Council will monitor and analyse sickness records to identify trends or particular situations which give rise to abnormal sickness or injury to employees and will take action to address the occupational health issues identified.
5. The Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that suitable counselling facilities are available to employees, having regard to the confidential nature of such a service, the type of employment, and the nature of occurrences/events during working hours and outside of the work environment.

The Chief Executive and Directors of the Council give their full support to the implementation of these Policies.



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**CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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**1 April 2019**

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**DATE**

## **Management Responsibilities**

### **Corporate Management Team**

As a group, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) recognises its overall responsibility to provide strategic leadership, direction and oversight and to set the policy on health and safety. The roles and responsibilities of the Team and its members in respect of health and safety risks arising from the Council's activities are collectively and individually outlined below.

The Team appoints the Executive Director Delivery to be the Council's Health and Safety Director. In carrying out their responsibilities, Directors are required to set out their expectations of senior managers with respect to health and safety responsibilities and the arrangements for keeping the board informed and advised of all relevant matters concerning performance. In accordance with these recommendations, CMT accepts:

- their collective role in providing health and safety leadership throughout the Council;
- their individual role in providing health and safety leadership within the Council;
- the need to ensure that all their decisions reflect its health and safety policy intentions, as contained in the Council's health and safety policy statement;
- the need to recognise their role in engaging the active participation of workers in improving health and safety;
- the need to ensure that it is kept informed of and alert to relevant health and safety risk management issues arising from or likely to impact upon how the Council conducts its business.

### **Chief Executive**

In having the overall responsibility, the Chief Executive accepts responsibility for:

- providing a safe and healthy workplace and working environment;
- ensuring that the Council's safety policy is reviewed, updated and implemented;
- advising the Council of the need for the provision of adequate resources to ensure that the obligations arising from legislation, Codes of Practice etc are met;
- receiving reports from the Executive Director Delivery and ensuring that proper action is taken in response to such reports;
- ensuring the provision of advice to Council officers to aid them in the discharge of their duties relating to health and safety, accident prevention and compliance with statutory requirements, through Resources; and
- ensuring, through the Directors, that suitable and sufficient procedures are in place for fire and bomb safety issues and that sufficient numbers of suitably trained personnel are appointed as fire and bomb wardens and to administer first-aid.

### **Strategic Risk Management Group**

The role of the Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG) acts on behalf of the Corporate Management Team in relation to health and safety in all its forms. The Group provides the opportunity to consider all matters relating to the management of health and safety. This includes

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not only the work of the Health and Safety Advisers, but also issues relating to fire risk management in property, occupational health issues, accident-related insurance matters, safety training, etc.

The Group is also responsible for the corporate management of the Safety Advisers' annual work plan on behalf of CMT. The Group will monitor delivery against the Health and Safety Advisers' work plan and the work of the Occupational Health Service insofar as it impacts on staff health and safety or welfare. The information gleaned through discussion at the SRMG is used to inform the Health and Safety Advisers' annual work plan and ensure that audits are targeted to best effect. See Appendix 3 for further details on the role of the SRMG.

### **Directors**

Each Director is individually responsible to the Chief Executive for implementation of the Council's policy on health and safety insofar as it affects their area of responsibility and control. Each Director including the Chief Executive has direct and overall responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all their staff and others not in the employment of the Council who may enter premises under their control or who may be affected by any activity carried out by their staff. In order to accomplish this, Directors are required to establish and implement systems to identify, monitor and control those health and safety aspects and issues that may occur within all areas for which the Director has responsibility.

In order to achieve the above, each Director accepts responsibility for:

- ensuring that adequate health and safety audits, inspections and monitoring are carried out in all areas under their control, taking appropriate remedial action to ensure that a healthy and safe environment is maintained and rectifying any problems identified by staff regarding public or communal areas;
- ensuring the definition and implementation of safety standards, procedures and working practices as appropriate;
- ensuring that all employees receive adequate training in current safety standards, procedures and working practices, that each employee has received a copy of the Council's General Statement of Safety Policy and that any Policy amendments are brought to the attention of staff;
- ensuring that the responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are properly assigned, understood, accepted and implemented at all levels within their department;
- nominating sufficient adequately trained first aiders and fire wardens in all areas under their control to meet the relevant statutory requirements;
- ensuring that arrangements are in place to ensure that supplies and equipment, eg: first-aid supplies, are maintained;
- ensuring that lists of the names and contact points of all first aiders and fire wardens are brought to the attention of staff by posting them on official staff notice boards and/or prominent locations;
- ensuring that in relation to all plant, equipment, processes, systems and places of work and in relation to the handling, storage transportation and use of articles or substances, that:
  - an adequate assessment of the risks presented is undertaken;

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- all of these have been designed or modified, so far as is reasonably practicable, to eliminate all safety hazards and risks to health;
- suitable equipment, information, instruction and training is provided so as to ensure that their use will be safe and without risks to health;
- they are maintained in a safe condition (this includes the provision and maintenance of means of access to and egress from the premises); and
- written warnings, printed signs, admonitory notices, and specific, written job instructions are provided as appropriate;
- ensuring, so far as reasonably practicable, that all persons (including any contractors or sub-contractors) not in Council employment, who are admitted to Council premises for the purposes of work:
  - are advised of appropriate and relevant safety standards and requirements; and
  - do not by their activities, the use of plant or machinery or any dangerous emissions therefrom, endanger any person;
- where articles or substances are manufactured or imported by the Council, ensuring that they are adequately tested and/or examined, prior to their use, to establish that they are safe for use at work;
- ensuring that, where necessary, suitable protective clothing, including safety glasses, shoes, gloves, etc are provided and worn;
- ensuring that each employee is capable and competent to perform the work for which they are engaged and has received individual safety instructions associated with their work. These instructions include details of any abnormal hazard which may occur and take place prior to the use of the machine or work process in question. The guidance in the Health, Safety and Welfare Manual is used to provide information on the minimum requirements upon which further instructions are based and any necessary amendment or shortfall in the guidance notes is drawn to the attention of the Executive Director Delivery;
- ensuring that any breaches of Council rules are dealt with according to the Council's Disciplinary Procedure, ie: any breach of the Council's Safety Policy, procedures, working practices or guidance notes which may result in the health or safety of any person being affected; and
- establishing a Departmental Safety Group(s) that reports to their Departmental Management Team and which allows for individual staff issues to be raised as an additional route to those dealt with through line management (see below for suggested Group arrangements).

**Departmental Safety Group(s) – Suggested Arrangements**

The Group(s) (see Directors' responsibilities (above) should be appropriate for the structure of the department they serve and predominately include in its members nominated (by staff if possible) departmental staff representatives. Although not having health and safety management responsibilities in this context, these should be adequately trained (eg: Basic Health and Safety Certificate). They should also be provided with such resources or information that they may reasonably require in order to represent the interests of their colleagues and undertake any other duties as determined by the Director.

The notes from the Group meetings should be forwarded for consideration by the Departmental Management Team (DMT) either directly or indirectly through a management group. The group(s) should be represented at the DMT by an Assistant Director or nominated representative who is a member of, or reports to, the Departmental Management Team. Included as Appendix 1 is a typical example of departmental health and safety staff/management liaison arrangements.

### **Executive Director Delivery**

The Executive Director Delivery accepts responsibility for the development and review of Council policy on health, safety and welfare and for monitoring compliance with its requirements. He/she is responsible for ensuring that arrangements are in place for the provision of safety advice, systems and procedures to assist managers in fulfilling their responsibilities.

### **Competent Person**

Regulation 7 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 states that *'Every employer shall, appoint one or more competent persons to assist him in undertaking the measures he needs to take to comply with the requirements imposed upon him by the regulations'*. The Executive Director Delivery is responsible for designating a member of staff as the Council's competent person. The name of this person is to appear on the Health and Safety Law posters distributed around the Council (as required under The Health and Safety Information for Employees Regulations 1989). In addition, the competent person is assisted by Health and Safety Advisers, appointed for this purpose, who audit and monitor Council activity. They also provide advice and guidance upon request from senior managers.

In addition to his/her responsibilities as a Director, the Executive Director Delivery as the Health and Safety Director accepts responsibility for ensuring:

- advice and assistance is given to the Chief Executive and other Directors in the discharge of their responsibilities in relation to health and safety matters;
- through CMT that systems are in place for health and safety risk management issues to be addressed;
- accident reports are monitored and, where considered appropriate, investigated and recommendations made to the appropriate Director;
- adequate arrangements are in place to ensure health and safety is monitored within each department and there is liaison with staff representatives in order to identify any problems associated with the health and safety policy, procedures or practices;
- any failings of statutory responsibility are reported to the appropriate Director as and when they are identified;
- assistance is given as necessary in the provision of health and safety training;
- provision of advice and assistance on monitoring hazards in the workplace;
- provision and maintenance of a reference library, either electronically or as hard copies, on health and safety issues and making this available to other Directors;
- provision of advice and guidance on the interpretation of statutory provisions and their implications, as requested by other Directors;
- the dissemination of information to the other Directors on health and safety issues;

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- records and statistical information is collated as appropriate; and
- the appointment of a competent person to act as the Council's adviser on health and safety issues to the Strategic Risk Management Group.

**Assistant Director: Property**

The Assistant Director: Property is responsible for:

- managing the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Service, ensuring advice to managers and staff on matters relating to safety is provided and that all reported accidents, dangerous occurrences and reportable diseases are monitored to enable the Council to comply with the relevant statutory requirements;
- Ensuring building related health & safety policies (e.g. Fire, Legionella, Asbestos etc.) are reviewed, updated and implemented;
- arrangements for addressing staff welfare matters.

**Director OD, Transformation & HR**

The Director: OD, Transformation & HR is responsible for:

- arranging appropriate health and safety training for employees having due regard to requests from the Executive Director Delivery, any other Executive Director, Strategic Risk Management Group or Employment Committee;
- ensuring that all employees receive a copy of the Council's General Statement of Safety Policy during induction training,
- by means of the Employee Handbook, Intranet or other suitable means;
- training evacuation officers, first-aiders and fire wardens to enable the Council to comply with the relevant statutory requirements, maintaining a list of the names and contact points of all first-aiders and fire wardens as notified by Directors;
- managing the Council's Occupational Health Service and advising managers and staff on matters relating to employees' health - including monitoring the health of employees in 'at risk' situations and maintaining records of any exposures to substances hazardous to health as required by statute; and

**Employee Responsibilities**

All employees have a duty under Sections 7 and 8 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (the Act) while at work:

- to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work; and
- as regards any duty or requirement imposed on their employer or any other person by or under any of the relevant statutory provisions, to co-operate so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with.

The Act also requires employees not to interfere with or misuse anything provided to protect their health, safety or welfare in compliance with the Act:

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- No person shall intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety or welfare in pursuance of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

Under Regulation 14 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999:

- Every employee shall use any machinery, equipment, dangerous substance, transport equipment, means of production or safety device provided by his employer in accordance both with any training in the use of the equipment concerned which has been received by them and the instructions respecting that use which have been provided to them by the said employer in compliance with the requirements and prohibitions imposed upon that employer by or under the relevant statutory provisions.
- Every employee shall inform their employer or any other employee of that employer with specific responsibility for the health and safety of his fellow employees:
  - of any work situation which a person with the first-mentioned employee's training and instruction would reasonably consider represented a serious and immediate danger to health and safety; and
  - of any matter which a person with the first-mentioned employee's training and instruction would reasonably consider represented a shortcoming in the employer's protection arrangements for health and safety,
  - insofar as that situation or matter either affects the health and safety of that first mentioned employee or arises out of or in connection with his own activities at work, and has not previously been reported to their employer or to any other employee of that employer in accordance with this paragraph.

### **Practical Obligations of Employees**

In recognition of the legal duties imposed upon them, all employees are required to:

- take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;
- ensure that they do not do anything or neglect to carry out a duty which might constitute a danger to themselves or others;
- not intentionally or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for the purposes of ensuring the health safety or welfare of other persons;
- co-operate with their supervisor or manager and comply with any instructions issued to enable the Council to comply with the relevant statutory duties, approved Codes of Practice or other requirements placed upon it;
- give every assistance to members of the public or visitors to Council premises to help ensure their safety;
- pay attention to their personal health and hygiene in order not to transmit contagious diseases;
- not undertake any activity that may involve a risk of injury until a suitable and sufficient risk assessment has been conducted by a competent person, and the results communicated to them and others who may be affected by the activity;

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- not undertake any activity or use any machinery, equipment or materials with which they are not fully conversant until they have received appropriate training, are competent and are authorised to do so;
- use and maintain in a serviceable condition all work equipment for which they are responsible in accordance with the information and training provided;
- obtain and use the correct tools and equipment for the job and use the correct safety equipment and safety clothing etc;
- maintain and check all personal protective equipment issued to them in accordance with the instructions and training provided;
- immediately report any defects in vehicles, plant, machinery, tools and equipment to their supervisor;
- immediately report any unsafe work method with which they are involved to their supervisor;
- immediately report all accidents, dangerous occurrences, near misses, unsafe or unhealthy conditions or other hazards to their line manager and/or the responsible person on site according to their Departmental and the Council's arrangements and ensure that any accident is properly recorded to ensure that an appropriate investigation can be undertaken;
- study and be conversant with the fire and escape procedures and the relevant information displayed on notice boards etc; and
- make themselves aware of those who are appointed to administer first-aid and the first aid procedures as displayed on notice boards etc.

## **Policy Framework**

The Council's health and safety policy is designed with regard to the protection of both employees and the public affected by the activities of the Council, including visitors to leisure centres, pupils in schools and clients in social services establishments. The policy is in three main parts.

### **Part One (The General Statement)**

The first part consists of a general 'statement of intent' that includes the "Bracknell Forest Council Commitment to Health, Safety and Welfare at Work", the "General Statement of Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Policy" and the "Statement of Occupational Health and Welfare Policy". These are signed by the Chief Executive. They declare the Council's intent to provide for the welfare of employees and to seek to provide safe and healthy conditions for employees, for clients, and for members of the public who use or visit the Council's premises or who may be affected by its activities.

Arrangements are in place to ensure all new employees receive a copy of the statement of intent, and/or are made aware of where they can access it. This is done by way of the Employee Handbook issued by the Human Resources Section or by other suitable means.

### **Part Two (The Organisation)**

The second part of the policy contains details of the organisational arrangements and responsibilities in place that give effect to the 'statement of intent', including detailed specific responsibilities for Directors etc.

### **Part Three (The Arrangements)**

The third, and largest, part of the policy is mainly in the form of practical guidance for managers.

#### **Statement of Policy Documents**

The three parts of the policy documentation described above form the Council's 'Statement of Policy' as required by the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. Copies of the documents making up the Council's 'Statement of Policy' are made available to all employees in the Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Manual of Guidance (the Manual).

As a body corporate, the Council meets its obligations through its officers and employees. The policy statements clearly state that the Council requires its Directors to carry out its requirements as an essential part of their management duties. They in turn specify to managers and supervisors within their Departments what is required of them as regards the safety and health of the employees who are in their charge, and systems of work under their control.

#### **Policy Implementation**

The devolving of management responsibilities to schools, trading units or other service providers does not diminish the accountabilities of Directors for ensuring that adequate arrangements are in place for the management of health, safety and welfare in the workplace. In all cases, a framework is agreed which assigns responsibilities and duties at appropriate levels in the organisation.

The extent to which responsibilities rest with Directors varies with departmental arrangements. References in the policy to Director should therefore be interpreted as appropriate to local circumstances.

Where an Executive Director considers that the Council's adopted policy and/or safety arrangements require amendment, recommended changes are made to, or usually by, the Executive Director Delivery.

#### **Departmental Policy Statements**

Directors consider how the principles of the Council's Statement of Policy are to be affected in their department and, where relevant, acknowledge the special responsibilities attributable to school governors. The use of Departmental Safety Statements co-ordinated at Director level is an effective way for work under their direct management control. Schemes of Management which assign responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are in place where direct control is exercised by others on their behalf.

Directors therefore are encouraged to prepare, produce and sign a Departmental Safety Statement or equivalent which sets out the organisation and arrangements necessary to ensure compliance with the Council's Policy Statement and statutory duties at a local level. In large departments further statements covering specific sections or activities may be necessary. Such safety statements are available to all employees.

#### **Codes of Safe Working**

Codes of safe working practice are prepared in those departments/sections where unusual or hazardous activities take place.

## **Line Management**

Directors are accountable to the Chief Executive for policy, organisation and arrangements within their areas of control. In addition they agree schemes of management to ensure management action on matters which remain the responsibility of the Council.

There needs to be a clear understanding at all levels of what is required of employees. In carrying out Council policy and in preparing their Departmental Health and Safety Statements, Directors consider what accountabilities for health, safety and welfare should apply at departmental level, area level, establishment level and at individual levels within their department.

## **Responsibility for Safety**

The Chief Executive acting through the Corporate Management Team is responsible to the Council for ensuring the proper discharge of all statutory obligations in relation to health and safety.

The Employment Committee is responsible for the overall implementation of this policy under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 in respect of employees or members of the public affected or likely to be affected by the Council's activities as a local authority. The Council's Health, Safety and Welfare Consultative Structure is shown in Appendix 2.

## **Safety Liaison**

Directors are required to designate an officer with specific safety liaison responsibilities and to co-ordinate with the Health and Safety Advisers. The appointed person is the focal point within their Department for the dissemination of health and safety information and the administrative contact point for health, safety and welfare matters, including updates to the safety manuals.

## **Multi-User Establishments**

Every Council building has an appointed building manager who plays a leading role in multi-user establishments where clear arrangements and responsibilities for health, safety and welfare (eg: fire safety, first aid, maintenance, etc) are agreed between the occupying parties.

## **Training**

Line managers identify needs and arrange training in health and safety. These often relate to specific activities and departmental resources are allocated accordingly to meet these identified needs.

Induction training includes basic health, safety and welfare information and must be carried out before employees are put at any risk. Where needed, this is supplemented by detailed technical information and training on safety issues where the work to be done warrants this.

Health & Safety training is delivered via eLearning or classroom courses, depending on the particular subject. Please consult your Line Manager in the first instance for any other training requests.

## **Occupational Health and Welfare**

The health of people at work has a significant effect on their ability to perform well. The Human Resources Section has arrangements in place to ensure the provision of medical advice and referral, when required, by providing suitable health advice to employees through the Occupational Health Service and appropriate counselling facilities via staff support.

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The services of an occupational health adviser and/or an occupational health physician are available at Time Square three days per week. These advise on work-related health matters and ways in which the long-term health care of staff might be improved to maximise their physical and mental well-being. This service also provides employee health programmes and organises corporate initiatives in support of agreed programmes.

**Purchasing Arrangements**

Purchasing arrangements take account of health, safety and welfare factors. It is always cheaper and easier to buy a safe item than to have to modify an unsafe one. Purchasing managers are responsible for ensuring adequate checks are made to ensure health and safety in the use of goods and services which they procure.

**Consultation**

The Council has a comprehensive structure of safety committees which are responsible for co-ordinating activity at local level. The Executive Director Delivery provides professional advice to local committees on request. All managers are responsible for ensuring adequate consultation with employee representatives as required under the various statutes.

Each department develops and reviews health and safety consultation arrangements with employees that reflect the structure of the department. The Executive Director Delivery is responsible for the development and review of arrangements at corporate level within the Council.

**Trade Union Safety Representatives**

Trade union safety representatives will be given the right to attend the Departmental Safety Groups and Teacher & Support Staff Association meetings to raise issues of concern in a timely manner.

Any health and safety issues which are not resolved at departmental levels can be referred to the Local Joint Committee and if necessary to Employment Committee.

**Safety Representatives**

The Council recognises that Safety Representatives have an important role to play in the effective implementation of safety within the workplace. With this in mind, the Council encourages the appointment of recognised Safety Representatives who are consulted on matters affecting the group or groups of employees they represent in accordance with the following legal requirements:

**Legal Requirements****Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (SRSC)**

Under these Regulations, if an employer recognises a trade union and that trade union has appointed, or is about to appoint, safety representatives, then the employer must consult those safety representatives on matters affecting the group or groups of employees they represent. Members of these groups of employees may include people who are not members of that trade union and in the Council Unison have agreed with management to represent staff who are not members of a trade union for this purpose.

**Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996**

Under these Regulations, any employees not in groups covered by trade union safety representatives must be consulted either directly or through elected representatives. The

employer can decide whether to consult employees through elected representatives or individually or both. Where the employer determines that this shall be through elected representatives, then employees have to elect one or more people to represent them.

#### Terms of Reference of Safety Representatives

Without prejudice to the provisions of the SRSC Regulations, the general terms of reference of any Union Safety Representative are:

- to investigate the potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace whether or not they are drawn to their attention by the employees he/she represents and to examine the causes of accidents at the workplace;
- to investigate complaints by any employee they represent relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work;
- to make representations to the employer on matters arising out of sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above;
- to make representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the employees at the workplace;
- to carry out an inspection of each designated workplace area at not more frequently than 3-monthly intervals and to make additional inspections if work practices have changed or new information has come to light;
- to represent the employees they were appointed to represent in consultation at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority;
- to receive information from inspectors in accordance with Section 28(8) of the 1974 Act; and any information and documents (with certain exemptions relating to confidentiality, legal proceedings, etc that are specified in Regulation 7 of the SRSC Regulations) within the employer's knowledge necessary to enable them to fulfil their functions;
- to attend meetings of safety committees where they attend in their capacity as a safety representative in connection with any of the above functions.

The Council agrees to provide such facilities and assistance as safety representatives may reasonably require for the purpose of carrying out their functions, including taking such time off with pay during the employee's working hours as is necessary for the purposes of:

- performing their functions under Section 2(4) of the 1974 Act;
- undergoing such training in aspects of those functions as may be reasonable in all the circumstances having regard to any relevant provisions of a code of practice relating to time off for training approved for the time being by the Health & Safety Commission under Section 16 of the 1974 Act.

The Code of Practice states that safety representatives should attend a basic union-approved training course as soon as possible after appointment and further training should be undertaken to meet changes in the workplace, legislation or in regard of any special responsibilities. The High Court has decided that what can be regarded as "reasonable" training does not have to be necessary, provided that it is of use, although most will be.

Clearly representatives should give the employer sufficient notice of the time of a course and its content so that arrangements can be made to maintain a reasonable level of service.

### **Consultation with Safety Representatives**

The SRSC Regulations require that every employer shall consult safety representatives in good time with regard to:

- the introduction of any measure at the workplace which may substantially affect the health and safety of employees;
- the arrangements for appointing or nominating competent persons in accordance with regulations 7(1) and 8(1)(b) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 or the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005;
- any health and safety information required to be provided to the employees the safety representatives represent by or under the relevant statutory provisions;
- the planning and organisation of any health and safety training required to be provided to the employees the safety representatives represent by or under the relevant statutory provisions; and
- the health and safety consequences for the employees the safety representatives concerned represent of the introduction (including the planning thereof) of new technologies into the workplace.

### **Monitoring, Inspecting and Auditing**

#### **Performance Monitoring**

Health and safety is an integral part of the management arrangements within Departments and it is essential that periodic auditing, inspections and ongoing monitoring of health and safety within the workplace is undertaken in order to ensure that a safe working environment is maintained.

Directors ensure that sufficient and appropriate safety audits, inspections, monitoring and reviews of procedures, etc are carried out in those areas of work for which they have responsibility.

Each Director affords every assistance to union health and safety representatives so as to ensure that all health and safety regulations, Codes of Practice and instructions are being complied with. A record of all audits, inspections and reviews and their findings is kept in a departmental register(s) provided solely for that purpose.

#### **Monitoring and Auditing**

It is necessary for CMT to be satisfied that there are adequate health, safety and welfare standards in all service areas. Inspections, monitoring reports and validated audits of performance are measures by which this can be achieved.

Where Schemes of Management are in place, there is also a need to monitor and review the performance of managing agents.

The Executive Director Delivery has responsibility for monitoring and auditing overall compliance with the Council's General Statement of Policy and for promulgating any revisions to that policy.

#### **Periodic Inspection of Workplaces**

Regular inspection of workplaces and sites is a key element in a successful management system which enables preventative action to be initiated. Suitable schemes of inspection are therefore

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developed and undertaken by managers and supervisors who may choose to involve trade union/staff representatives.

Regard should be paid to the following during inspection and monitoring activities:

- examining offices, equipment, furniture, electrical apparatus and cables, etc to ensure that no hazard exists;
- checking that any damaged or worn equipment, furniture, floor coverings, etc are replaced or repaired and, if necessary, taking out of use the damaged or worn equipment;
- ensuring that all lighting is in order and adequate for the work involved;
- ensuring that any protective clothing, guards or other safety measures are available, properly maintained and are used;
- ensuring that appropriate staff are aware of the use of fire-fighting equipment and means of escape in an emergency;
- ensuring that regard is given to the implications of, for example, the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations, the Noise at Work Regulations and other statutory provisions when hazardous substances, processes or equipment are purchased and/or used; and
- keeping a watch on the health of employees under their control and ensuring that employees do not take unnecessary risks.

### **Examination of Equipment**

There are statutory requirements regarding the periodic examination of certain equipment. Examples of such equipment are: lifts, cranes, hoists and other lifting tackle; boilers, air receivers and other pressure vessels, exhaust ventilation systems; and electrical installations; equipment and appliances. If the site manager and the building manager are different persons, the responsibilities of each are agreed by the Director(s) concerned and clearly defined so that arrangements are in place to ensure that all such tests and examinations are carried out in every case.

### **Contractors**

In accordance with the Council's regulations, a clause is to be inserted covering health and safety in every written contract. Particular care is needed when engaging contractors, with a decision required in each case as to what pre-contract investigation is necessary and the level of contract compliance monitoring to be undertaken. Responsibility for adequate vetting and monitoring rests with the supervisory officer for the contract.

### **Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation**

There are detailed statutory requirements covering the recording of accidents and the reporting of certain accidents and dangerous occurrences to the Health and Safety Executive. Additionally, there are important Council procedures in support of these requirements to enable appropriate action to be taken.

### **Support and Advice**

The Executive Director Delivery has produced the Health, Safety and Welfare Manual of Guidance which contains the Council's health and safety policy and forms part of the Council's arrangements

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to discharge its policy on health, safety and welfare. The corporate Manual is available on the Council's Intranet.

Directors and head teachers are also encouraged to have in place their own subsidiary supporting policies.

The Executive Director Delivery updates the Manual with new and revised sections and documents as necessary to meet legislative requirements and provides up-to-date guidance and practice. Amendments are circulated to departmental officers with liaison responsibilities (see section on Safety Liaison above) who have the responsibility for ensuring the information is cascaded throughout their department at the earliest opportunity following receipt.

The Employment Committee of the Council is responsible for the health and safety policy. Most updates are made without reference to the Committee as it is enshrined in legislation, Codes of Practice or promoted by the Health and Safety Executive as best practice. Some local arrangements are however brought to the attention of the Strategic Risk Management Group for comment before being placed in the Manual. The Committee may formally adopt some of this local guidance as supplementary policy.

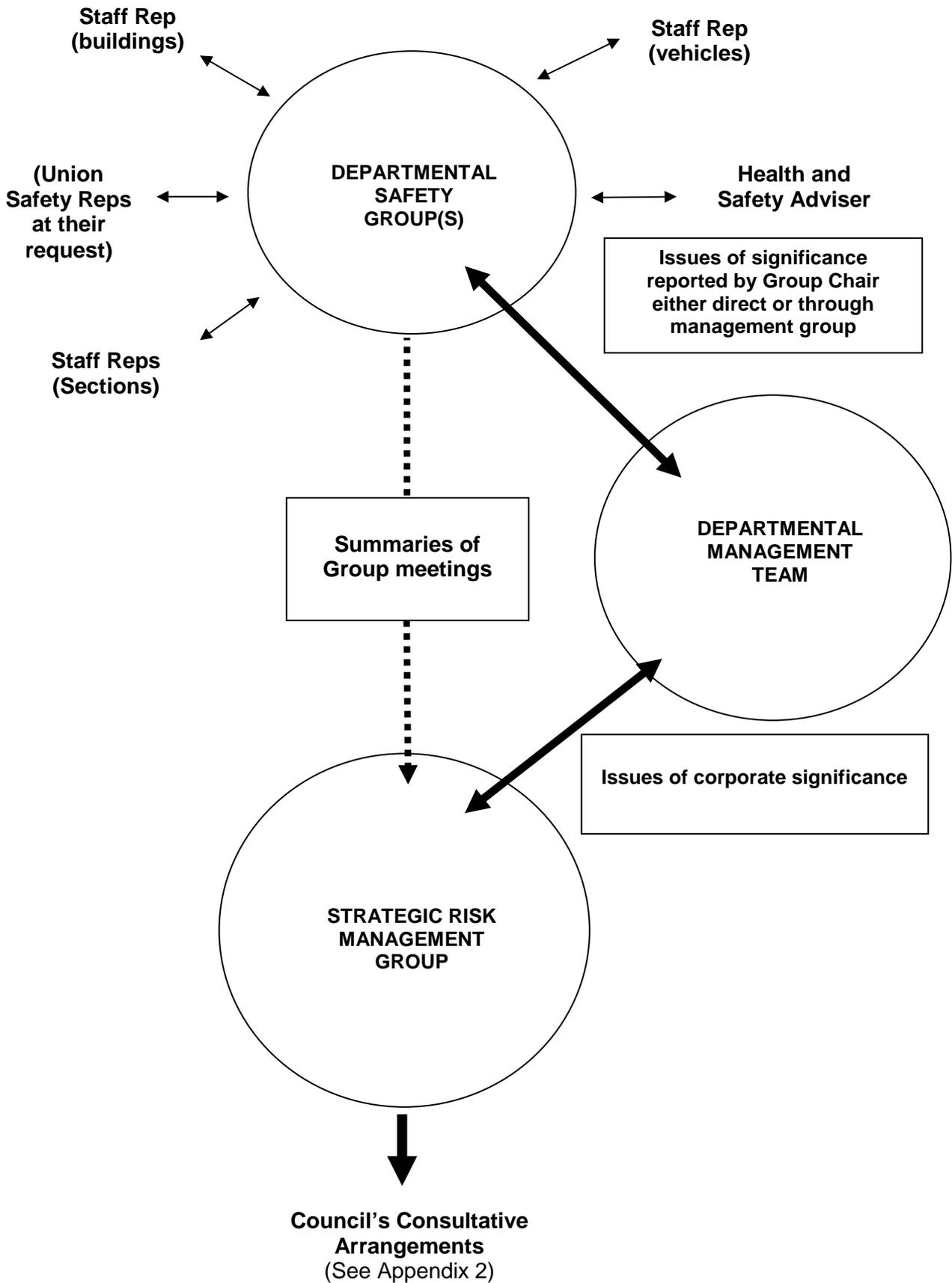
**Information**

Information is provided to managers and employees through the Intranet, newsletters, memoranda and other appropriate means. These are used to communicate health, safety and welfare information to all Council departments/workplaces and supplement the Manual.

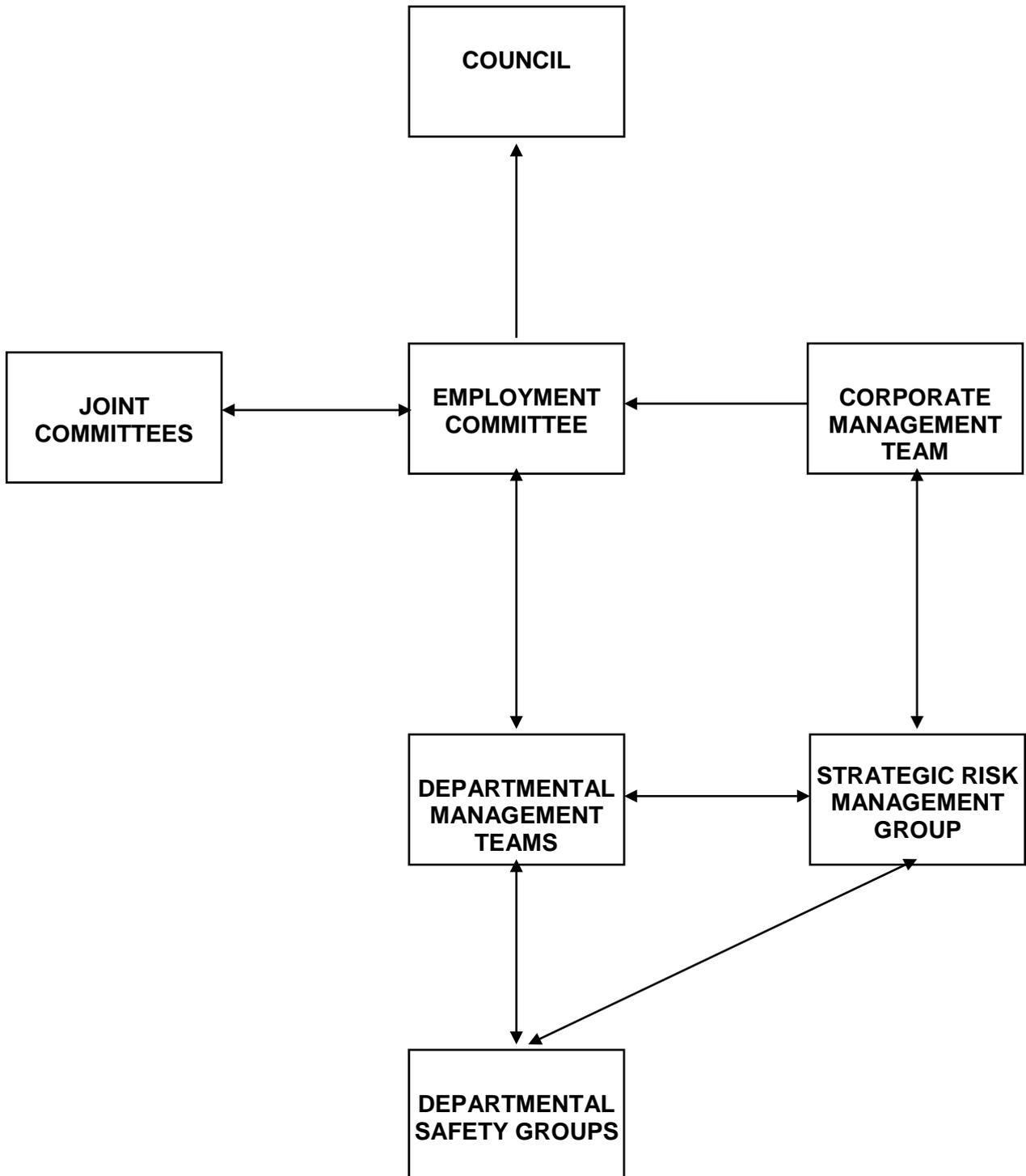
**Advice**

Health and safety advice is available to managers from the Council's competent person, named in the Health and Safety Law posters distributed throughout Council buildings, and from the Health and Safety Advisers in Property Services.

Typical Example of Departmental Health and Safety Staff/Management Liaison Arrangements



Organisation Health,  
Safety and Welfare  
Consultative Arrangements



**Strategic Risk Management Group**

Introduction

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager will provide a written report to the group on a six monthly basis. Also provided will be the Annual Health and Safety Work Plan for approval by the group. The Terms of Reference are as follows:

Terms of Reference are as follows:

**1. Object and Functions**

The Strategic Risk Management Group shall make recommendations to CMT, the Governance and Audit Committee or any other committee of the Council on matters affecting or likely to affect the organisation's exposure to significant risk. The Strategic Risk Management Group shall:

- I. Be responsible for risk assessment matters that relate to Bracknell Forest Council's services, programmes, projects and/or to employees and all other people who may be affected by the Council's activities;
- II. Receive reports in respect of Health and Safety and Emergency and Business Continuity Planning,
- III. Receive and review updates of the Strategic Risk Register, receive reports on risk management and monitor the effectiveness of risk management policies and procedures;
- IV. Ensure that risk management becomes embedded across the Council; and
- V. Report to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) as required.

**2. Membership**

The membership of the Strategic Risk Management Group shall be determined by CMT and shall include

- I. The Director Finance;
- II. Representatives from each Directorate's DMT;
- III. The Council's Emergency Planning Officer;
- IV. The Corporate Health and Safety Manager;
- V. The Head of Audit and Risk Management;
- VI. Assistant Director: Information Services; and
- VII. The Information Management & Security Officer.

**3. Chairman**

The Group shall be chaired by the Director Finance.

**4. Meetings**

The Group shall meet at least four times a year but a special meeting may be called if 24 hours notice is given in the case of emergency. All meetings shall be convened during normal working hours. Additional meetings shall be arranged if necessary as agreed by the Chairman.

## **5. Agendas**

- I. All items should be submitted to the Secretary of the Group at least ten working days before the meeting for inclusion on the agenda.
- II. Each Member of the Group shall receive a copy of the agenda and papers at least three working days before the meeting.

## **6. Reporting**

- I. Minutes of the meetings of the Group shall be documented as soon as possible after the meeting.
- II. Copies of minutes shall be circulated to all members of the Group
- III. The Director Finance will ensure that the Strategic Risk Register considered by SRMG is reviewed by CMT at least twice a year.
- IV. The Director Finance will ensure that regular updates on risk management are provided to the Executive and the Governance and Audit Committee.