
INTRODUCTION TO THE MANUAL

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The Council has agreed a strategy and set of policies for health, safety and welfare of employees, clients and others affected by the work of the Unitary Authority. These are set out in full in Section 1(1).

The Manual has been developed to enable the Council, through its employees, to meet its commitment to health, safety and welfare at work which is as follows:

1. To recognise 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. To 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. To demonstrate a progressive improvement in prevention of injury and ill health to employees, the goal being to avoid all accidents and causes of ill health at work.

The status of the manual

As a part of the arrangements in place to enable the Council to discharge its responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, the Manual is an authoritative guide to the management systems in place, the standards of performance which should be met and, where appropriate, to agreed policies and procedures in respect of particular activities or areas of work.

The structure of this manual

The Manual has five distinct sections which are:

- Section 1 - The management of health, safety and welfare
- Section 2 - General procedures required in all workplaces
- Section 3 - Guidance on specific acts and regulations
- Section 4 - Local policies and procedures (hard copy only)
- Section 5 - Forms and checklists hard (hard copy only)

The contents of the sections are shown at the front of the Manual with more detailed contents being given at the front of each subject.

Departmental arrangements

Health and safety is a line management responsibility. As a consequence, it is essential that procedures and systems of work are developed at local level to ensure that all employees and others affected by their work are protected from risks to their health, safety and welfare. You should make yourself aware of all local arrangements relevant to the work you undertake. Copies of relevant local documents for reference can be incorporated at the end of Section 4 of this Manual or in a separate departmental file.

Consultative arrangements

In order to ensure that all employees are involved in the health and safety management process, a well developed consultative and committee structure is established which is based on representative groups at local/service level throughout the Council. Departmental Safety Groups

co-ordinate arrangements in respect of activities undertaken within their areas of responsibility and are attended by senior managers and employee representatives.

The Health and Safety Panel is the forum within the Authority for discussion on matters with corporate implications and items raised by Safety Groups. Council members are involved in the management and consultative process through the Committee arrangements. The Health and Safety Panel is attended by appointed trades union representatives and management representatives, and directly reports both to the Local Joint Committee and Teachers Joint Consultative Committee. The latter in turn reports to the Education Employment Sub-Committee. The Education Employment Sub-Committee and the Local Joint Committee both report to the Employment Committee of the Council. Appendix 1 to Section 1(1) contains a diagram of the consultative structure.

Environment Department

As the Council's appointed competent advisers on health, safety and welfare at work, the Department provides a range of services to assist you in meeting your responsibilities. More details on the range of help available can be found in Section 1(5).

Identifying training needs

You may be new to Bracknell, have limited experience of health and safety management or require specific information on a particular topic. Whatever your training needs, be they induction training, topic-related briefings or refresher training courses, the Personnel Section can help. To assist you to identify your training needs and the needs of those who work for you, Section 1(4) provides training information and includes a training needs analysis form.

Standard forms and checklists

A number of forms and checklists are included in Section 5 of this Manual (hard copy only) in loose-leaf form. They can be photocopied for use as required.

Updating of the manual

The Manual will be updated with new and revised sections and documents as necessary to meet legislative requirements and up-to-date guidance and practice. Directors must ensure that arrangements are in place with clearly defined responsibilities for amendments to be incorporated into the manual at the earliest opportunity following receipt (see Section 1(1)).