

Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy 2025

Adopted 13.11.25

Signed M Pierce **Chair of Governors**

Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. This document is available in Welsh.

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Policy Statement

Denbighshire County Council recognises its moral and legal duties with regard to Health, Safety and Welfare. The council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees whilst at work. It will also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of others who may be affected by its operations and activities.

As a responsible employer, we aim to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, its subordinate regulations and approved codes of practice. We also aim to fulfil our common law duty of care.

We will:

- Assess and adequately control the risks arising from our activities
- Put in place appropriate safe systems of work
- Consult with employees, recognised unions and employee representatives on matters affecting their Health, Safety and Welfare
- Provide appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision for our employees
- Provide and maintain safe plant and equipment
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions so far as is reasonably practicable
- Endeavour to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health
- Ensure safe handling, use and storage of hazardous substances
- Ensure all employees are competent and capable of carrying out their work
- Record accidents and incidents and report them to the enforcing authority where required by legislation
- Monitor and review any systems we put in place for the purposes of Health, Safety and Welfare management
- Apply consequences for non-compliance to our agreed standards

To ensure successful implementation of this policy, we will provide strong leadership and commitment from the very top of the organisation and throughout the management chain. We expect the same commitment from all our employees irrespective of what they do.

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We will inform all employees of the expected standards and put in place a safety management system to support them.

We will strive to continuously improve our safety culture.

This policy will be reviewed periodically.



Graham Boase

Chief Executive

Denbighshire County Council

January 2025

Glossary

Below is a list of title abbreviations and definitions throughout this policy document:

- CEO – Chief Executive Officer
- CH&S – Corporate Health and Safety
- DCC – Denbighshire County Council
- EDRMS – Electronic Document Retrieval and Management System
- H&S – Health and Safety
- HSE – Health and Safety Executive
- HS&W – Health, Safety and Welfare
- Linc – DCC Intranet
- RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
- SPR – Staff Protection Register
- SSOW – Safe Systems of Work

Organisation

Below is the organisation's hierarchy of communication related to Health, Safety and Welfare:

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Management Control

- Chief Executive – Head of the paid service
- Elected Members
- Corporate Directors
- Heads of Service
- Operational (Middle) Managers
- All Employees

Health, Safety and Welfare Advice

- Corporate Health and Safety Team
- Service Health and Safety Managers
- Union Health and Safety Representatives
- Occupational Health Advisors

Each of the above groups has an open communication route to every other group.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles have specific duties and responsibilities regarding Health, Safety and Welfare (HS&W) within Denbighshire County Council (DCC).

Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), as the Senior Officer has overall responsibility for HS&W within the organisation. The CEO will:

- Aim to ensure that the organisation complies with the requirements of Health & Safety legislation and fulfils its common law duty of care
- Provide strong leadership and commitment to drive the continuous improvement of the organisation's safety culture
- Put in place a senior management structure identifying individuals with specific HS&W responsibilities
- Ensure that adequate resources are provided in respect of HS&W

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- Ensure that appropriate consultation and communication processes regarding HS&W between the employer, the employees, recognised unions and employee representatives are in place and are effective

Corporate Directors

Corporate Directors are accountable to the CEO. They will:

- Provide strong leadership and commitment to drive the continuous improvement of the organisation's safety culture
- Support the delivery and maintenance of the organisation's safety management arrangements
- Ensure that adequate resources are allocated to HS&W management
- Ensure that Directorate lead health and safety meetings take place periodically
- The Corporate Director responsible for HS&W will support their managers who have specific HS&W roles and provide a senior level focal point for HS&W issues
- Ensure that employees, recognised unions and employee representatives are consulted on matters that affect their Health Safety and Welfare in the workplace

County Councillors

County Councillors are the political representatives of the Local authority, they have a collective responsibility for providing leadership and direction, which means that all elected members have a responsibility for ensuring health and safety within the authority.

The nominated lead member with responsibility for Health and Safety acts as the 'champion' and leads in this area.

The lead member acts a point of contact for the sharing of information between officers and county councillors.

Heads of Service

Heads of Service are accountable to the Corporate Directors. They will:

- Provide strong leadership and commitment to drive the continuous improvement of the safety culture within their service

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- Support the delivery and maintenance of safety management arrangements within their service
- Ensure that the HS&W responsibilities of all employees are clearly communicated
- Ensure that Service meetings take place for sharing of health and safety information that feeds into Directorate and JCC meetings
- Ensure that employees, recognised unions and employee representatives are consulted on matters that affect their Health Safety and Welfare in the workplace
- Monitor and review the effectiveness of any processes put in place

Managers and Supervisors

All Managers and Supervisors are accountable, via their line manager, to their Heads of Service for ensuring that the arrangements in place for HS&W are correctly interpreted and robustly implemented. They will:

- Provide strong leadership and commitment to the HS&W of their employees by identifying the hazards involved in their operations and workplace. Assess, evaluate and record the risks and mitigate those risks by suitable departmental procedures and safe methods of work
- Provide suitable & sufficient information, instruction, training & supervision to employees regarding hazards, risks and control measures used in the workplace
- Ensure that employees, recognised unions and employee representatives are consulted on matters that affect their Health safety and Welfare in the workplace
- Drive a cooperative environment between the employer and employees
- Ensure that all accidents and incidents are reported and recorded as soon as practicable
- Investigate all injuries and incidents and ensure remedial action is implemented where it is required
- Monitor compliance to, and review the effectiveness of any processes put in place
- Take action where non-compliance to standards are identified
- Ensure that employees, recognised unions and employee representatives are consulted on matters that affect their Health Safety and Welfare in the workplace

Head Teachers

Our schools are managed by Head Teachers who work closely with School Governors.

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Head Teachers and Governors are jointly responsible for HS&W in their work environments. Head Teachers and Governors are supported by DCC and receive HS&W support from the CH&S team. Head Teachers will:

- Manage all aspects of HS&W management in their school as described in the responsibilities of “Heads of Service” and “Managers and Supervisors”

Employees

Employees are accountable to their Line Manager and will comply with our systems of work and instructions given in the interests of HS&W. Our employees are empowered to take action to minimise HS&W risks. They will:

- Be expected to take reasonable care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions
- Cooperate with their employer with respect to them fulfilling their statutory duties and fulfilling their common law duty of care
- Report all injuries, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses to their line manager

Corporate Health & Safety (CH&S) Team

The Corporate Health & Safety Team will provide advice and guidance to the Chief Executive, County Councillors, Corporate Directors, Heads of Service, Managers, Supervisors and Employees as appropriate. They will:

- Provide a focus for HS&W leadership, advice and support for all DCC employees
- Actively promote HS&W consultation between the employer, employees, their recognised unions and employee representatives
- Develop and review a Corporate Health and Safety policy and appropriate HS&W guidance
- Develop and deliver a HS&W training programme
- Ensure that effective arrangements for accident/incident reporting and investigation are in place and that Health and Safety Executive (HSE) reporting is carried out in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
- Administer the Staff Protection Register (SPR) on behalf of the County Council

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Occupational Health

Occupational Health support is provided via a DCC Occupational Health Advisor. Their role is to provide guidance and support on Occupational Health and Welfare. When requested they will:

- Advise managers and employees regarding work related health issues and progress health concerns following management referral
- Collaborate with managers to advise on reasonable and practicable adjustments for employees with medical conditions
- Conduct health surveillance when applicable in accordance with managerial risk assessment requirements
- Signpost, when appropriate, to the EAP for counselling support
- Provide education information regarding health and wellbeing matters, e.g. alcohol, smoking, diet etc

Service Health & Safety Managers

The Service Health & Safety Managers provide competent advice within their specific competence and Service Areas. They will:

- Provide operational HS&W advice within their area of expertise
- Ensure that effective systems for HS&W are in place within their service area
- Work and communicate with the CH&S team where appropriate
- Ensure risk assessments and SSOW are developed and reviewed for their areas

Union Safety Representatives

Union Safety Representatives represent employees regarding matters of HS&W at work.

They will:

- Support employees on HS&W matters as appropriate
- Actively take part in health & safety investigations
- Consult and co-operate with managers and health & safety advisors to promote and develop measures to ensure the HS&W of their colleagues
- Will attend HS&W committees and meetings
- Participate/undertake safety tours as required

Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Policy Arrangements

The arrangements section of the policy describes what we do to achieve our HS&W objectives. We have in place a Safety Management System (SMS) as a means of managing all aspects of safety throughout the organisation.

The SMS offers a systematic, explicit and comprehensive process which is woven into the fabric of our organisation.

The elements of the SMS include:

- The Corporate H&S Policy itself
- Senior people with delegated responsibility for HS&W (Lead elected council member, nominated Director and Head of Service)
- Professional H&S advisory team
- Service Health and Safety Managers and Union Safety Representatives
- An online/Linc based accident/incident reporting and investigation process
- An online/Linc based staff protection register process
- A Corporate risk register
- Online/Linc based guidance documents supporting risk assessment and safe system of work development
- CH&S action plan and training plan
- Control of contractor commissioning and monitoring processes

Policy & Planning

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The Corporate HS&W Policy states that DCC aim to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and subordinate legislation, therefore further policy statements for individual pieces of legislation are not necessary. Emphasis is instead placed on providing information and guidance on how to keep people safe and healthy in the workplace, comply with Health and Safety legislation and fulfil our common law duty of care.

The Corporate Health and Safety Policy will be reviewed periodically by the CH&S team.

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Corporate Risk Register

A Corporate Risk Register is in place to detail business and regulatory risks that potentially affect all Services within the organisation. This register is collated from all identified Service level business risks and business plans.

Corporate Health and Safety Management

The objectives and key performance indicators for CH&S are aligned with the needs of the organisation and are included as part of the Corporate Support Service: People - annual service plan.

Corporate Emergency Planning & Resilience

Corporate level emergency planning and civil contingency preparedness for major incidents is facilitated by the regional Joint Emergency Planning Unit.

Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations

This committee is made up of representatives from Senior Management, Elected Members, Corporate Health & Safety, Recognised Unions and Employee Representatives. The Committee will consider corporate issues, examine the minutes of any submitted Director /Service level Health and Safety meetings and review any outstanding or completed actions identified.

Director Health and Safety Meetings

Each Director leads on their own Health and Safety group meeting attended by their own Heads of Service and managers, union/employee representatives and representation from the Corporate Health & Safety team. The minutes from these meetings are shared and discussed at the Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee.

Service/Departmental Health and Safety Group Meetings

Where a Head of Service and Managers identify the need for Service and/or Departmental Health and Safety meetings, those meetings will be managed within the structure of the

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local Service Health and Safety Framework. The minutes of those meetings will be recorded for the attention of the Service Group Committee and communicated to employees.

Individual Facility Health and Safety Management

Where a facility operates autonomously under local management control (e.g. a school, factory or care home), local arrangements will be in place. The Chief Executive's Policy statement would be referred to as a common aim with local management organisation and arrangements listed in an appropriate local format.

Organisational Arrangements

Corporate Health and Safety Guidance Documents

Corporate HS&W guidance documents are prepared by the CH&S team to highlight key requirements of health and safety legislation e.g. risk assessment, managing hazardous substances, driving for work and lone working etc. Corporate Guidance documents are relevant to all services and all employees.

Corporate Health and Safety Forms and Templates

Documents, forms, templates and worked examples for HS&W activities such as risk assessments, accident reporting and safety tours etc. are available electronically. Where necessary, personal support and advice is available.

Corporate Health and Safety Newsflash

Newsflashes will be prepared and communicated to relevant areas of the organisation by email, on Linc and local management routes as appropriate. The newsflash is intended as a means of rapidly communicating urgent information around the organisation.

Corporate Health and Safety Consultation Documents

The Corporate H&S Policy will be reviewed and revised periodically. The revised policy will be made available to all members of the Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations, Members of the Council, Senior Leadership, Union Representatives and employees for consultation prior to formal Council ratification and general issue. All other documents prepared by the CH&S team will be made available to relevant committees and interested parties for consultation prior to general issue.

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Corporate Health and Safety Documents (Network Server and Intranet)

CH&S documents that make up the health and safety management system will be stored centrally on a common departmental drive. All document content and revisions will be suitably controlled and made available bilingually and, where possible, in accessible format on the CH&S page on Linc. Forms and templates will be made available in an uncontrolled, editable electronic format which can be downloaded for immediate use.

CIVICA EDRMS System

The CIVICA EDRMS System is used to record all health and safety processes relating to accident/incident reporting.

Health and Safety Law Poster and Notice Boards

Health and safety law posters will be prominently displayed at Denbighshire facilities. At facilities where employees do not have routine access to computers and where practicable at other facilities, health and safety notice boards will be installed to display hard copies of health and safety information.

Competence

Competence requirements for individual job roles will be defined in job descriptions as part of the Human Resources (HR) recruitment process.

Corporate Training Matrix

To ensure the training element of competence, a Health and Safety training matrix has been developed listing job roles (from Chief Executive to Volunteers). Recommended training for each role group is indicated on the matrix. H&S related training courses are delivered or organised by the CH&S team. Training needs are agreed between Line Managers and employees as part of 1:1 discussions or identified by risk assessment and booked with the CH&S team.

Corporate Training Course Program

An annual health and safety training program has been developed to satisfy the demand generated by the Training Matrix. The program includes both internal and external courses

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and is managed by CH&S. Additional specific and bespoke training courses or toolbox talks will be developed and delivered, depending on demand.

Training Provider Competence

The competence of external training providers and individual trainers will be confirmed prior to any training courses. All internal health and safety training will be provided by competent Health and Safety Practitioners.

Health and Safety Training Records

iTrent is the Corporate HR system for recording an individual's personal information.

Records of health and safety training events attended by employees will be recorded using the iTrent database system.

H&S Union Representatives

Employees, Recognised Unions and Employee Representatives will be consulted on matters that impact on their health safety and welfare.

Risk Assessment

In line with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, all Service and Operational Managers will ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken for the risks to the HS&W of employees and others not employed by DCC. The risk assessments will be recorded and reviewed at appropriate intervals. The risk assessments are a line management responsibility, but the task may be delegated to a competent person(s) who has relevant knowledge, training and experience of the work activity.

Fire Risk Assessments

The Property Health and Safety team is tasked with undertaking specialist assessments for fire risk in all County owned premises and other premises that Council Employees or Service Users may use. These fire risk assessments are required under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order.

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Control Measures

Risk assessments will invariably identify additional actions to further reduce risk. All such control measures and actions will be recorded, be assigned to an action owner and be given an expected completion date. Identification of hazards, risk and control measures are used to facilitate the development of safe systems of work.

Safe Systems of Work (Safe working procedures)

Where more formal risk control measures are required, safe systems of work (SSoW) will be developed, implemented, monitored and revised as necessary. The line manager will ensure that any SSoW are shared with employees and the instructions followed. SSoW are prepared by competent persons.

Permit to Work Procedures and Systems

A permit-to-work system is a formal, written system used as part of a SSOW to control certain types of work that are potentially hazardous. CH&S have a template permit to work for identified high risk work (e.g. work in confined spaces, roof access), this can be found on Linc. CH&S will support operational managers to implement adequate systems of control as and when requested.

Lone Working Systems

A lone worker is someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision for brief or extended periods of time. DCC through the line management chain at operational level will ensure that the risks involved with lone working are assessed and will take appropriate steps to manage the risks.

Agile Working

Agile working is the combination of working in the office and working remotely. The split will be different for each service area, but some employees are expected to work from more than one location during the week, with appropriate steps taken to manage the risks. Bilingual guidance documents and templates covering Agile working can be found on the CH&S page on Linc.

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Control of Contractor Procedures

All Contractors, Consultants and Suppliers undertaking work for DCC will have their competence assessed by the commissioning officers. A pre-qualification questionnaire is used as part of the Proactis procurement process. Commissioning officers, project managers and their teams will be responsible for ensuring contractor competence and monitoring contractor performance throughout their term of engagement. Contractors will be required to risk assess their activities and provide agreed safe systems of work. Contractor's work will be defined and limited by a schedule.

Emergency Preparedness

Corporate level emergency procedures for major incidents and civil contingency are facilitated by the regional Joint Emergency Planning Unit. The Organisation will prepare emergency procedures and guidance.

For local emergency plans, a generic template is provided on Linc. Service and Departmental areas prepare local emergency procedures for their operations based on their individual identified risks. Building Managers will prepare emergency procedures based on the local risks identified at their facilities.

Measurement & Review

The arrangements put in place for health and safety will be actively reviewed by a combination of proactive and reactive monitoring to ensure that they are effective and enable the objectives of the health and safety policy to be met.

Accident/Incident Reporting

DCC uses an online based accident/incident reporting process, via the CH&S page on Linc.

All accidents and incidents will be recorded and reported to the CH&S team using the online reporting system. Where it is not practicable to directly access the online reporting system, a paper format form is available as an interim measure until access to the online system is available. Incidents will be reported as soon as reasonably practicable after the event.

Incidents that are reportable under the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) will be reported to the HSE by the CH&S team.

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Statistical information regarding all accident/incidents and RIDDOR reports will be collated and reported to the safety committees. The data will also be used to identify trends and other information that will be used as a means of targeting, eliminating and reducing the likelihood of reoccurring problems.

Accident Investigation

All accidents and incidents will initially be proportionately investigated by the Operational line manager/supervisor. Recognised union health & safety representatives have the right to examine the causes of workplace accidents and therefore may be part of the investigation. The level of any investigation and reporting will be proportional to the severity, or potential severity, of the particular event. Incidents where a fuller investigation is deemed necessary and all RIDDOR incidents will be further investigated by the CH&S team.

Where a HSE visit, investigation or initiative, results in a requirement for some action, the CH&S team will provide a suitable and sufficiently resourced response or co-ordinate a Service Level response to the HSE as appropriate. Any lessons learned from incidents and investigations will be used to support corrective action to prevent recurrences. Where HSE do investigate accidents, it is common practice for them to involve recognised union representatives or employee representatives.

Staff Protection Register (SPR)

The SPR is a provision for warnings about individuals, addresses and situations that potentially put staff at risk. DCC's process is that any information about risks to staff, whether from potentially violent or dangerous individual or environmental hazards, should be considered by health and safety staff. A proportionate approach will be adopted, ensuring that information is not circulated for health and safety purposes unless it is accurate, objective and designed specifically to protect staff.

DCC uses an online based reporting system, via the CH&S page on Linc.

Complaints

Any complaints received regarding HS&W provisions or practices will be investigated and appropriate action taken.

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Safety Tours

Safety tours form a part of the proactive monitoring process. Safety tours will be carried out at the operational level and involve management, union representatives and employees as appropriate. The CH&S team will also participate in safety tours as part of monitoring programs. Safety tours will be recorded and will result in an action plan, safety advice and if necessary, a formal report with time limited actions.

Work Related Health

Occupational health risks will be assessed. Where a significant risk to health is identified, action will be taken to prevent, reduce or control the risks to an acceptable level. Where the need for health surveillance is identified by risk assessment or highlighted in a new starter health declaration form, appropriate health surveillance will be implemented by the Occupational Health provider. The results of the Health Surveillance will be reported to the employee and their line manager with recommended actions. Results will be recorded on the employee's case notes using the EDRMS data base and the employee will be further monitored at an agreed frequency.

Audit

Formal audits of HS&W management systems and processes will be undertaken by the Internal Audit Team as part of their continuous auditing process. An audit plan will be developed and implemented to monitor activities and compliance within departments.

The revised, dated and signed Policy is available on Linc.