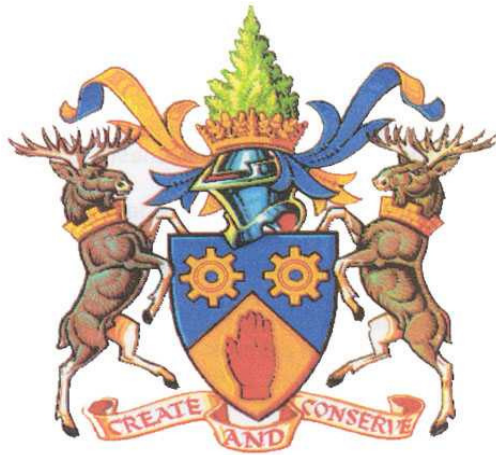


Castlereagh Borough Council



HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

June 2005

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Castlereagh Borough Council

Part 1 – General Statement of Intent

Castlereagh Borough Council, as employers, accepts its legal responsibilities to employees and other persons as set out in the Health & Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and associated relevant statutory provisions. To this end they will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees during the course of their working activities.

The council also accepts the responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of all persons contracted to carry out work on the company's premises and, authorised visitors or any others so far as they may be affected by the councils activities.

To ensure the above, it is the policy of the council: -

- a) To provide and maintain plant and systems of work that are, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risks to health.
- b) To ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and absence of risk to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances.
- c) To provide such information, instruction, training and adequate supervision, as is necessary, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of staff.
- d) To ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the provision of a safe place of work, with safe access and egress.
- e) To provide and maintain a healthy working environment including adequate welfare facilities.

It should be noted that the Order places, upon employees, the duty to take reasonable care for the Health and Safety at Work of themselves, as well as of others, who may be affected by their acts or omissions, and to co-operate with their employer, so far as is necessary, to enable any duty or requirement imposed on the employer by any relevant statutory provisions to be performed or complied with. They must not interfere recklessly with or misuse anything that is required by law to be provided for Health and Safety.

The allocation of duties, with regard to Health and Safety, and the particular Arrangements laid down by the council, as employer, to implement the policy, are set out in the following parts of the policy.

The policy will be kept up-to-date. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed annually, or sooner, if necessary, to keep abreast of changing legislation and the councils requirements.

Signed

Date

Chief Executive – Castlereagh B C

Part 2 Organisation

Mayor and Elected Council Members are responsible for: -

- Accountability to the electorate to ensure that the Council complies with the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order, 1978, and relevant statutory provisions.
- Overall responsibility for ensuring sufficient resources and funds are available to permit the Chief Executive and his Directors to comply with the council's legal and moral duties.
- Liase with the Chief Executive to establish a strategy to integrate the Health and Safety Management function fully within the Councils Management process.
- Delegating the day-to-day responsibility for Health and Safety matters to the Chief Executive.

Chief Executive is responsible for: -

- Accountability to the Council for the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order, 1978, and relevant statutory provisions.
- Overall responsibility for the formulation, implementation and development of the Health and Safety policy and its proper interpretation by the Directors and Line Managers, etc.
- Liase with each Director to establish a strategy to integrate the Health and Safety Management function fully within the Council Management process.
- Delegating responsibility for Health and Safety matters in particular departments to the appropriate Directors.
- Make provision to appoint a competent person or persons to assist and advise the Council on Health and Safety matters.
- Ensure that through consultation with the elected members that adequate resources are made available to implement the policy and the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order, 1978, and relevant statutory provisions.
- Ensure that adequate arrangements for consultation and communication on Health and Safety matters are provided, at all levels throughout the Council's organisation.
- Assess reports from the Directors and competent persons on the planning, monitoring, review, implementation and development of the policy and make recommendations accordingly.

Directors are responsible for: -

- Being accountable to the Chief Executive for the detailed aspects of the Council Policy particularly in respect of the organisation and arrangements for Health and Safety within their respective departments.
- Ensuring that the Council's Health and Safety policy is effectively monitored in their departments and that any proposed amendments are notified to the Chief Executive.
- Ensuring that the policy is enacted within their departments and that their managers and supervisors accept ownership with regards to their appropriate responsibilities in Health and Safety.
- Ensuring that proper account is taken of Health and Safety factors in all forward planning, i.e.
 - New buildings and projects,
 - Planned improvements and maintenance of premises,
 - Purchase of equipment and substances,
 - Employment of staff.

- Setting out adequate arrangements for consultation and communication with competent persons on matters of Health and Safety.
- Ensuring that adequate arrangements for consultation and communication of Health and Safety information are maintained throughout their areas of responsibility.
- Assessing and taking appropriate action on reports from their officers and competent persons on matters of Health and Safety.
- Making adequate arrangements for and ensure that health and safety training needs are identified to enable staff to perform their duties competently.
- Ensuring that procedures include the protection of visitors or the public in general and that all safety considerations are observed by contractors employed by their departments.
- Maintaining a positive culture towards Health and Safety in order that it can be engendered at all levels of the workforce.
- Ensuring that risk assessments of their respective areas are completed and reviewed to the appropriate timescales and that employees under their control are informed of any subsequent procedure changes.

Managers and Those Responsible for Capital Projects are responsible for: -

- Understanding the aims of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and observing the responsibilities they have been assigned.
- Liaising with other Managers in order to establish written instructions with regard to safe working methods.
- Conducting, or ensuring that they are conducted, risk assessments of their respective areas and informing employees under their control of any subsequent procedure changes.
- Outlining potential hazards and indicating the appropriate control measures that need to be taken.
- Ensuring that plant, equipment and systems of work within their areas are safe and without risk to health.
- Ensuring that contractors carrying out works on Council property, or on behalf of the Council, are made aware, and comply with, the Council's Health and Safety Policy.
- Ensuring that contractors are competent and the working methods do not give rise to danger to Council employees and other persons who may be affected by their working activities.
- Maintaining a positive culture towards Health and Safety and striving to promote Health and Safety among the workforce.
- Ensuring that the Health and Safety Officer is informed of all impending changes in methods, processes, substances and equipment, and to carry out prior consultation with the Health and Safety Officer as necessary.
- Setting out arrangements to ensure that safety representatives and safety committees appointed under statutory regulations can carry out their functions.
- Ensuring that all accidents, incidents and deviations from the Council Health and Safety Policy are recorded and reported to the Health and Safety Officer.
- Ensuring that the policy is enacted within their respective areas of responsibility and that their supervisors accept the day-to-day ownership with regards to their appropriate responsibilities in Health and Safety.
- Assessing and taking appropriate action on any health and safety reports from their supervisors and competent persons on matters of Health and Safety.
- Making adequate arrangements for, and ensuring, that health and safety training needs are identified which will enable their staff to perform their duties competently.

Supervisors are responsible for: -

- The effective implementation of the Health and Safety Policy and procedures within their area of control.
- Recording and reporting to the Health and Safety Officer all accidents and incidents within their respective areas, in line with the Council Health and Safety policy.
- Conducting the initial investigation of accidents and incidents in their area and where necessary assist the Health and Safety Officer and others in any investigations of more serious incidents.
- Formally inspecting (at a minimum bi-monthly) the areas and activities under their control to ascertain whether safety measures are being maintained and safe working practices followed.
- Initiating corrective action deemed to be necessary as a result of their investigations into accidents or incidents or as a result of their regular formal inspections.
- Ensuring that clear and precise Health and Safety instructions are given to those under their control with regards to themselves and others.
- Ensuring that persons under their control have received an adequate level of health and safety training to allow them to operate any necessary plant or equipment.
- Informing their Manager and the Health and Safety Officer of any necessary health and safety training needs for those employees under their control.
- Monitoring housekeeping in the area under their control and ensuring that it remains clean and tidy at all times.
- Ensuring that any necessary personal protective equipment is issued as required and full documented records are maintained.
- Ensuring that personal protective equipment is issued and properly used, maintained and stored.
- Maintaining a positive culture towards Health and Safety and promoting Health and Safety among the workforce.

Employees are responsible for: -

- Observing all safe working practices that are contained within this policy or otherwise advised and instructed.
- Notifying their immediate superior of any accident or incident at work (whether or not injury has occurred) and ensuring that it has been recorded.
- To be aware of any hazards in their workplace and to take the appropriate precautions including the use of any personal protective equipment that has been issued.
- Ensuring that they wear and correctly use all personal protective equipment and other safety devices that are set out in the safe operating procedures or risk assessments for their task
- To conduct all work in accordance with safe operating procedures, instructions and arrangements.
- Notifying their immediate superior, or any other affected employee, of any situation, which they consider to represent any serious and or immediate danger to health and safety.
- Notifying anyone who may be affected by their work of any potential hazards, i.e. the general public (special attention must be given to children), other employees and contractors.
- Immediately informing management, on becoming aware of, of any special medical or other conditions which might affect their work, e.g. asthma, heart condition, skin condition, epilepsy, etc.

- Using any equipment, machinery, dangerous substance, transport equipment or safety device in accordance with training and instruction received.
- NOT using any equipment for which they have not been trained and are not authorised to use.
- NOT wilfully damaging, tampering with, or abusing any equipment or clothing provided.
- Making a visual check (or other checks that they are authorised to do) on all equipment before use.
- Setting aside and labelling any faulty equipment and informing their immediate supervisor.
- NOT bringing to work any personal equipment. i.e. including tools, radios, personal stereos, kettles, etc.
- Acquainting themselves with the escape routes and evacuation procedures relevant to each place in which they work.
- Acquainting themselves with the location of first aid facilities and the identity of the local qualified first aider.
- Ensuring that working areas remain clean and tidy and assisting to maintain a good standard of hygiene and housekeeping in their workplace.
- NOT indulging in horseplay or other activities, which could endanger the safety of others.

FAILING TO COMPLY WITH ANY PART OF THIS SAFETY POLICY MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION, WHICH MAY ULTIMATELY LEAD TO SUMMARY DISMISSAL.

Health & Safety Officer is responsible for: -

- Providing advice and assistance to the Management Team on all health & safety matters, including current and forthcoming legislation, and concerning requirements of contractors.
- Co-ordinating risk assessments within the Council and developing a planned review process concerning Council buildings, activities and practices with a view to establishing health and safety standards and rules in order to analysing risk exposure and developing risk control mechanisms.
- Providing advice to Council staff on satisfying their responsibilities relating to health & safety.
- Assisting with the identification of training needs as they relate to health & safety and to co-ordinate appropriate training programmes in consultation with Human Resources. Conducting direct training as and when required.
- Liaising with external enforcing agencies as necessary.
- To act as Secretary and Officer to the Council's Health & Safety Committee.
- Liaising with the Council's Insurance Brokers to ensure that adequate cover is in place in order to protect the Council in respect of Health & Safety matters.
- Assisting the Chief Executive with the Council's Emergency Incident Response Plan and major incident planning.
- Complying with and actively promoting the Council's policies and procedures as directed.
- Any other duties as may be allocated from time to time in accordance with the general nature of the post.

Safety Representatives

Safety representatives will basically follow the functions laid down in the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977, or within the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996, whichever is applicable to the representatives. Summarising, they shall: -

- Liase with management on Health and Safety matters raised by the workforce.
- Represent the workforce in any liaison with the Health and Safety Executive or other enforcing Authorities.
- Receive information from inspectors in accordance with the relevant section of the Health and Safety at Work NI Order 1978.
- Investigate complaints by any employee relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work.
- Assist in the investigation of accidents/incidents that occur in the workplace.

Safety representatives are required to give adequate notice (so far as is reasonably practicable) to their direct supervisor before leaving their contracted work to carry out their health and safety related functions. This will ensure co-operation and co-ordination between all parties.

Health and Safety Committees

The remit of the Health and Safety Committees is to liase between local management and staff on all matters pertaining towards Health and Safety. The Committees will meet 2-4 times per year and will include nominated safety representatives, the safety officer and representation from management. The main objectives of the Safety Committee will be to look at: -

- Accident trends and statistics
- Proposed legislation
- Procedures to implement same
- Inspection programs

Part 3 Arrangements

3.1 Incident Recording and Reporting CBC-HSP-002

3.2 Risk Assessment CBC-HSP-003

3.3 First Aid CBC-HSP-004

3.4 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) CBC-HSP-005

3.5 Display Screen Equipment (DSE) CBC-HSP-006

3.6 Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) CBC-HSP-007

3.7 Work Related Stress CBC-HSP-008

3.8 Smoking

The Council operates a Non Smoking Policy. Smoking is prohibited in all Council property including buildings and Council owned vehicles". Staff are only permitted to smoke outside council buildings and during normal work breaks

3.9 Noise

The Council recognises that some operations and areas within their control may fall within the scope of the Noise at Work Regulations.

3.9.1 To this end, the Council will regularly undertake full competent noise assessments of appropriate work areas and operations, to identify any areas of concern.

3.9.2 The Council will endeavour to reduce the levels of noise in the workplace and operations, other than by the provision of ear protection, wherever reasonably practicable. If noise levels cannot be sufficiently reduced by control methods, suitable effective ear protection will be made available.

3.9.3 All employees must wear any supplied ear protection within designated areas or using designated machinery, stated by the most current noise assessment of the Council's operations.

3.10 Provision and Use of Work Equipment (PUWER)

All existing work equipment shall conform to the associated legislative requirements and to relative codes of practice. All new work equipment shall bear a CE mark and copies of the EC Declaration of Conformity shall be obtained by the Council as required by the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations and any amendment regulations.

3.10.1 All new work equipment must be risk assessed regarding its impact on the working environment before purchase.

3.10.2 Employees must make full and proper use of all guarding

3.10.3 Supervisors must check guards and interlocks are in place and operable as part of their pro-forma inspection checklist

3.10.4 Employees must not make any repairs or carry out any maintenance work of any description unless authorised to do so

3.10.5 Employees must not clean any machinery, plant or equipment when it is in motion unless authorised to do so and then only if safe to do so and by fully adopting the control procedure laid down

3.10.6 Employees must not clean any machinery, plant or equipment when it is in motion unless authorised to do so and then only if safe to do so and by fully adopting the control procedure laid down

- 3.10.7 Employees must not leave any unattended machinery, plant or equipment in motion. (unless said machinery is capable and safe to run unsupervised)
- 3.10.8 Employees under the age of 18 years must not operate any "prescribed dangerous machinery" without specific authorisation. Training on such equipment must be under adequate supervision

3.11 Employee Consultation

The Council actively encourages Employee involvement in matters relating to Health, Safety and Welfare. Within the terms of reference laid down by the Safety Representatives and Safety Committee (NI) Regulations, or within the Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) (NI) Regulations, Management will instigate formal Health and Safety Committees. This will allow for a free flow of informal communication on Health and Safety related issues

3.12 Safe Systems of Work

3.12.1 Electrical Installations/Appliances

Only qualified and competent operatives trained in the most current IEE Wiring Regulations and the Electricity at Work (NI) Regulations shall be permitted to work on electric wiring. Whenever possible 'live' work is to be avoided. Persons permitted to carryout 'live' work must also be trained in the safe working practices contained in appropriate HSE Guidance documents i.e. HS (G) 85. All portable electrical appliances will be identified individually and subject to being tested annually. Portable electrical appliances are to be checked daily by operators prior to usage and defective appliances removed from service and reported.

3.12.2 Abrasive Wheels

Only those specifically trained will be permitted to address and change abrasive wheels, as required under the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations and operatives shall also ensure that all guards are in the correct position prior to and during use.

3.12.3 Excavations

All excavations over 1.2 metres must be securely supported. Excavations must be planned in advance. Management must ensure that there is an adequate supply of shoring materials prior to commencement of the work. Excavations which are liable to be open for more than seven days, shall be weekly recorded in the (NI) 91 (Part 1) Inspection Register and shall have the necessary edge protection preventing persons falling into excavations.

3.12.4 Ladders

Management/Supervisors shall ensure that all ladders: -

- (a) Are of a proper construction,
- (b) Are properly footed,
- (c) Are secured at the top and/or bottom points of rest,
- (d) Rise at least 1.07m above the landing place.

Operatives shall also inspect ladders for visual defects and ensure they are properly positioned prior to and during use.

3.12.5 Hoists and Hydraulic Lifting Platforms

Supervisor's shall ensure that any hoist or lift being used in their area has the following valid documentation, and also to organise and arrange for any necessary

repairs, renewals or alterations required to enable the hoist or lift to continue to be used with safety: -

- (a) Insurers certificate of examination and test,
- (b) Insurers engineers' report of examination and test,
- (c) Record of retesting and examination following repairs/alterations.

The Safe Working Load (SWL) must be clearly displayed and under no circumstances must overloading take place. In relation to platforms for lifting people hard hats and appropriate harnesses must be worn at all times and all operators should be adequately trained to operate the equipment involved.

3.12.6 Confined Spaces

A confined space is any place, including any chamber tank, vat silo, pit, trench, pipe, sewer, flue, well, room, tunnel, machine or other similar area which by virtue of its enclosed nature there arises a reasonably foreseeable specified risk.

No one shall enter or carry out work in a confined space unless written the appropriate local Manager has given authorisation. The use of any substances, which may involve vapours or gases, are to be avoided in confined spaces. If such substances have to be used the Supervisor must contact the Health and Safety Officer and obtain his approval prior to the commencement of work. All entry into confined spaces is subject to a permit-to-work system controlled by the local Manager. All operatives who have occasion to enter confined spaces will be given adequate training and instruction on precautions to be taken and emergency procedures to be adopted.

3.12.7 Fire/Emergency Procedures

All Council premises, which are subject to Fire Services (NI) Order, shall have: -

- (a) A fire risk assessment.
- (b) All portable fire extinguishers and hose reels tested and examined at least once annually by competent persons.
- (c) A Log Book recording details of tests, examination and fire drill instruction, which shall be readily available for inspection.
- (d) Fire alarms shall be tested and maintained on a weekly basis, using a different call point each week, and the results entered into the Log Book.
- (e) Emergency Lighting shall be tested and maintained on a six monthly basis and the results entered into the Log Book.

3.12.8 Lone Working

Lone work includes any activity, which is intended to be carried out while unaccompanied. It does not include occasions in which someone finds himself or herself alone i.e. entering an empty room. All activities falling within this definition will be subject to a risk assessment, which will define the appropriate precautions required.

3.12.9 Manual Handling

Manual handling operations are subject to a manual handling assessment to ensure compliance with the Manual Handling Regulations and training will be given to all those employees who are required to carry out significant manual handling operations.

3.13 Contractors

Contractors shall: -

- 3.13.1 Carry out all work in accordance with relevant statutory requirements and in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy;
- 3.13.2 Notify the Council, his own employees and other persons who may be at risk by his undertakings of those risks.
- 3.13.3 Provide those under his control with the appropriate personal protective equipment and clothing at his own expense.
- 3.13.4 Inform the Council's Health and Safety Officer of any accident or incident which has occurred on Council property as a result of his undertaking - including accidents or damage involving the general public.
- 3.13.5 Allow inspection and copies to be taken of any relevant Safety records or documentation as is deemed necessary by an authorised Council employee.
- 3.13.6 Comply with any safety instruction or notice issued by an authorised Council employee, i.e. Health and Safety Officer.
- 3.13.7 Ensure all plant and equipment brought onto site is routinely maintained and in good repair.
- 3.13.8 Ensure his workforce are suitably qualified, competent and adequately supervised for the work they are undertaking.
- 3.13.9 Ensure the workplace is kept clean and tidy.
- 3.13.10 Ensure aisles or exits are not at any time obstructed.
- 3.13.11 Ensure he has adequate insurance cover.
- 3.13.12 Ensure that the workforce is suitably trained and assessed for competence, in the use of equipment/activity to be undertaken.
- 3.13.13 Expand, develop and implement the Health and Safety Plan (where applicable) under the Construction (Design and Management)(NI) Regulations.

3.14 Construction Design & Management (NI) Regulations (CDM)

- 3.14.1 The Council recognises its duties of the various duty holders contained in the CDM regulations and shall apply the requirements in full to projects which fall under the following categories: -
 - (a) Works lasting for more than 30 days (NOTIFIABLE).
 - (b) Works involving more than 500 person days of work (NOTIFIABLE).
 - (c) Works involving 5 people or more on site at any one time (NON-NOTIFIABLE).
- 3.14.2 The Council recognises its duty, as a Client under the CDM Regulations in so far as reasonably practicable shall: -
 - (a) Select and appoint a competent planning supervisor and principal contractor.
 - (b) Be satisfied that the planning supervisor and principal contractor are competent and will allocate adequate resources for Health and Safety.
 - (c) Be satisfied that designers and contractors are also competent, and will allocate adequate resources when making arrangements for them to complete the project.
 - (d) Provide the planning supervisor with information relevant to Health and Safety on the project.
 - (e) Ensure construction work does not start until the principal contractor has prepared a satisfactory Health and Safety Plan.
 - (f) Ensure the Health and Safety file is available and satisfactory for inspection, after the project is completed.

OR

- 3.14.3 The Council recognises the provision under the aforementioned legislation to appoint an agent who will act on his behalf and take full responsibility for the project.

3.15 Monitoring

- 3.15.1 Health and Safety audits, surveys and inspection reports will highlight areas of strengths and weaknesses with regard to Health, Safety and Welfare of persons at risk.
- 3.15.2 Accident, injury and ill health records may be used, as an indicator, thus assisting management in monitoring any short falls of existing control measures.
- 3.15.3 Safety Committee records may be used, thus assisting management in monitoring the effectiveness of Council Policy and Procedures.

3.16 Vehicles

To ensure the safety of all concerned, certain conditions associated with the use of Council vehicles must be maintained. These are: -

- 3.7.1 All road going vehicles shall conform to the requirements of the Road Traffic (NI) Order.
- 3.7.2 All road going vehicles shall be tested and inspected annually by the Driving and Vehicle Testing Agency (with the exception of Mechanical Sweepers and Agricultural Vehicles).
- 3.7.3 All vehicles shall undergo planned maintenance.
- 3.7.4 All vehicles shall have the necessary insurance cover for the purpose of their use.
- 3.7.5 All vehicles shall have valid Road Tax (where applicable) as required by the Road Traffic (NI) Order.
- 3.7.6 All drivers shall receive all necessary training to ensure they can perform competently.
- 3.7.7 Where practicable rider-operated vehicles will be fitted with a rider restraint system if there is a risk of the vehicle overturning or of the operator being thrown from the vehicle. If a restraint is provided it must be used at all times.
- 3.7.8 Employees must carry out daily checks of their vehicles prior to use and in conjunction with the laid down checking procedure.
- 3.7.9 Employees must not drive or operate any vehicle for which they do not hold an appropriate driving licence or permit.
- 3.7.10 All employees who are required to drive company vehicles must submit a copy of their current licence and immediately inform management of any endorsements that are attained.
- 3.7.11 Employees must not carry unauthorised passengers or unauthorised loads.
- 3.7.12 Only vehicles specifically designed with positions for the carrying of passengers can be used for this purpose. Passengers must use the positions (and the restraints) provided at all times and the number of passengers must not exceed the number of positions provided.
- 3.7.13 Employees must not use the Councils vehicles for unauthorised purposes.
- 3.7.14 Employees must not overload a vehicle beyond its stated capacity.
- 3.7.15 Employees must not drive or operate vehicles whilst suffering from a medical condition, illness or any other condition, including alcohol or drugs, which may affect their driving or operating ability.
- 3.7.16 Employees must not drive or operate any vehicles (including personal vehicles while on council business) whilst using mobile phones or any other communication devices such as two way radios or while performing any task which could impair their ability to react appropriately to any potential situation.