

Corporate Fire Safety Policy

Draft



EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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CORPORATE FIRE SAFETY

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1.0 Introduction

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 together with the Management of Health and Safety At Work Regulations 1999, and other associated fire safety legislation, impose duties on all employers in respect of fire safety at work. These duties extend to the Council, its employees and other persons who may be affected by the Council's work activities. As the employer, the Council has formulated a Fire Safety Policy to include these duties.

2.0 Key Principles

This Fire Safety Policy aims to ensure that if possible, outbreaks of fire do not occur and that if they do, they are rapidly detected and appropriate emergency procedures implemented to preserve life and assets.

This Policy describes the objectives and responsibilities for Fire Safety within the Council. It covers all persons employed by the Council and all persons affected by the work of Council employees.

This Policy also aims to document the structure of the organisation and the management of Fire Safety within the Council and its premises.

Post-incident response and evaluation are essential for an effective fire prevention programme. It is also important that we learn lessons from fire incidents and from incidents when the alarm systems have been activated. Effective incident investigation and review of risk assessments will help prevent further incidents.

It is vital to the effectiveness of the Policy that the document is available to all staff; they understand its contents and are aware of their role in ensuring a fire safe environment.

In general, this Fire Safety Policy requires:

- The undertaking of a 'Fire Risk Assessment' for council premises.
- Storing hazardous substances safely.
- Satisfactory precautions and procedures relating to evacuation and means of escape from fire.
- Effective means of detecting fire and raising the alarm.
- Provision of fire-fighting equipment.
- Suitable arrangements for maintaining and testing fire safety equipment and facilities.
- Information, instruction and training in fire safety.

3. Definitions

Responsible Person

Contained within the Fire Safety Order is reference to a 'responsible person' who has overall responsibility for fire safety within workplaces under his control. The 'responsible person' within the Council is the Chief Executive.

Competent Persons

Competent Persons will have specific duties given to them by the Responsible Person (Legislative). In all cases the Responsible Person (Legislative) will ensure that any appointed competent person is sufficiently trained, experienced and knowledgeable to undertake such assigned duties to assist them in the application of proper preventative and protective measures.

Site Log Book

A folder present at every premises of the Council containing records on completion of statutory checks, fire safety guidance and contractor signing in registers.

Fire Warden

The nominated individual(s) assigned responsibilities in respect of coordinating emergency fire evacuations and assessing fire hazards during their daily tasks. These individuals must have received training on executing this role.

Fire Risk Assessment

A suitable and sufficient risk assessment document provided by a competent person which details fire safety risks present within Council premises. This supports compliance with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Council

The Council (corporate body), as the employer is ultimately responsible in law for:

- (a) The fire safety of Council's employees whilst at work.
- (b) The conduct of the Council's undertakings, to ensure the fire safety of the public, and other persons not in their employment.

To meet these responsibilities the Council will ensure that:

- There is an effective overall Policy for the fire safety of employees and other persons who may be affected by the Council's undertaking and that adequate funds are available to meet fire safety requirements.
- Any necessary changes are made to the Council's Fire Safety Policy.
- The Council is organised and has sufficient numbers of competent staff to meet its responsibility for fire safety.

4.2 The Chief Executive

As the Responsible Person for fire safety within the Council as defined in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 this person is responsible for:

- Ensuring organisational compliance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 in relation to premises under their control.
- Ensuring a Fire Safety Management structure exists within the Council.
- Ensuring audit arrangements exist to oversee fire safety compliance.
- Ensuring the provision of appropriate financial and physical resources to support fire safety management arrangements.

Any third party who has to any extent control over a part or whole of a premises will be the Responsible Person for those premises or relevant part regardless of whether the Council owns, are sub-letting, leasing or in any other way handing over control of the premises to the third party.

4.3 Management Team

Take board level responsibility for the Council's compliance with the Fire Safety Order 2005 including:

- Provide strategic direction and oversight of corporate strategies and policies relating to fire precautions.
- Ensure that robust fire safety management systems, arrangements and organisation exist in each service.
- Support the Chief Executive in meeting his safety responsibilities for the Council as a whole.
- Ensure that there is an appropriate and resourced response to fire safety risk assessments.

4.4 Open Spaces & Facilities Manager (Competent Persons)

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring associated maintenance and testing responsibilities are undertaken in line with statutory requirements.

4.5 Facilities Team Leader (Competent Person)

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring associated maintenance and testing responsibilities are undertaken in line with statutory requirements.
- Ensuring the provision of fire-fighting equipment within premises of the Council.

4.6 Health & Safety Advisor (Competent Person)

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring that this Policy is reviewed on a regular basis and updated in order to take into account legislative changes and the application of continuous improvement based upon best practice in Fire Safety and Prevention.
- Ensuring the monitoring of compliance with the requirements of this Policy, e.g. the completion of Fire Risk Assessment and associated actions.
- Liaising with external agencies on Fire compliance related matters.

4.7 Responsible Persons (Local)

These persons e.g. are Managers for E-Space North / South, Oliver Cromwell House and are responsible for:

- **Site Log Book:** To ensure the Site Log Book provided to you by Facilities is clearly available to contractors and staff on site. As the Responsible Person (Local) you must ensure that the records within are completed and available for inspection as required.
- **Fire Alarms:** Shall be tested on a weekly basis, with tests logged in the Site Log Book.
- **Fire Evacuation Drills:** Must be carried out at least every six months, and recorded in the Site Log Book.

- **Emergency Lighting:** To be tested by a competent person/contractor once a month and recorded in Site Log Book. Please note that some newer or refurbished premises may have an automatic testing system which requires inspection of the control panel.
- **Fire Wardens:** Ensure that sufficient trained Fire Wardens are appointed. Those nominated as Fire Wardens should be communicated to building users via poster display and have undergone Fire Warden Training. As the Responsible Person (Local), check to see if the names of the current Fire Wardens are displayed in the premises.
- **Fire Safety Inspection:** As the Responsible Person (Local) you should perform monthly inspections to identify fire safety hazards and to take action to rectify any found. The Fire Safety Inspection templates will provide a list of items to look for as part of this tour. The inspection should be recorded using the template and copies retained in the Site Log Book for inspection purposes. Actions from these inspections should be dealt with locally and any significant concerns escalated to the Health and Safety Advisor.
- **Quarterly Building Fire Safety Inspection:** As the Responsible Person (Local) you should complete this form every three months and submit a copy to the Facilities Team Leader for monitoring fire safety purposes.

4.8 Employees

Are responsible for:

- Ensuring co-operation with managers/supervisors on matters of fire safety compliance.
- Ensuring they do not misuse or interfere with any equipment provided for their health and safety.
- Ensuring fire related incidents are reported in line with local health and safety reporting arrangements.
- Ensuring the reporting of any shortcomings in the fire safety controls provided by the organisation to the Health and Safety Manager.
- Ensuring completion of mandatory training in relation to fire safety or specific roles in relation to fire safety.
- Ensuring they understand the following local arrangements for any building they visit or reside:
 - What to do if you discover a fire.
 - What to do if you hear the fire alarm.
 - The location of available fire exits.
 - Where your nearest Fire Assembly Point is located.
- Ensuring the safety of any visitors that they might have and for informing them of the required actions in the event of emergency. This responsibility also extends to evacuating them from site in the event of an emergency.
- Ensuring appropriate response and conduct when required to evacuate any council premises under fire drill or fire incident conditions.

5. Arrangements for carrying out this Policy

The Council recognises its obligations under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and implements the following practical arrangements in order to meet these obligations.

5.1 Fire Risk Assessments

Responsible Person

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 the responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed for the purpose of identifying the general fire precautions he needs to take to comply with the requirements and

prohibitions imposed on him by or under this Order.

Enforcing Authority

The local authority Fire and Rescue Officers have a duty to enforce the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order. They have various rights, including the right to enter and inspect the premises, to make enquiries, to request the production of information, records and documents and to take samples.

Open Spaces and Facilities Manager

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring a competent fire risk assessor is appointed to deliver fire risk assessments for the Councils' premises. The fire risk assessment must encompass all aspects of premises fire safety.
- Ensuring a fire risk assessment is undertaken for all 'occupied' buildings every two years, unless the fire risk assessor requires this to be undertaken on a more frequent basis due to existence of additional fire risks.
- Ensuring an additional fire risk assessment is undertaken if there is any change in the circumstances of the workplace, including but not limited to:
 - A modification or extension which is likely to affect the means of escape, fire risk/hazard and associated fire precautions.
 - The number of employees increases, decreases, or otherwise provides a material change.
 - There is some reason to suppose the original assessment is out of date, e.g. with regard to regulation.
 - Ensuring a record log is maintained of when Fire Risk Assessments have been undertaken and make this available to other competent persons.
 - Ensuring the Fire Risk Assessor clearly identifies who is to action any required tasks and within what specified timescales.
 - Ensuring any tasks to be actioned are communicated to those responsible for rectification.
 - Ensuring any Fire Risk Assessment actions allocated to you are undertaken or mitigated in an appropriate manner and that the Fire Risk Assessment action plan is updated to identify the actions taken.
 - Ensuring the Fire Risk Assessment and related action plan is made accessible to all competent persons and those required to action.

Facilities Team Leader and Responsible Persons (Local)

Are responsible for:

- Ensuring any Fire Risk Assessment actions allocated to them are undertaken or mitigated in an appropriate manner and that the Fire Risk Assessment action plan is updated to identify the actions taken.

Health & Safety Advisor

Is responsible for:

- Ensuring that non-compliance in relation to Fire Risk Assessment completion is reported to the Council's Health & Safety Working Group.
- Facilitating the close out of actions generated from fire risk assessment with those to which the action is assigned.

5.2 Fire Precautions

The Council will implement fire preventative measures, and will make and give effect to such fire safety arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the size of the undertaking & the nature of activities. These fire safety arrangements are more specifically referred to in the following sections.

5.3 Flammable Substances

Where flammable substances are present in or on Council premises, the Council will ensure that the risk to relevant persons related to the presence of the substance is either eliminated or reduced so far as is reasonably practicable.

The Council will so far as is reasonably practicable, replace a dangerous substance (or the use of a dangerous substance), with a substance or process which either eliminates or reduces the risk to relevant persons.

The Council will arrange for the safe handling, storage & transport of flammable substances & waste containing flammable substances.

5.4 Fire Detection & Fire Fighting

All premises will be equipped with fire detectors, alarms & appropriate fire-fighting equipment. Measures will be taken for fire-fighting in Council premises & competent persons (fire wardens) nominated to implement those measures. The Council will ensure that the number of such persons, their training & the equipment available to them are adequate, taking into account the size of, and the specific hazards involved in, the premises concerned.

The Council will arrange for any necessary contacts with external emergency services, particularly as regards fire-fighting, rescue work, first aid & emergency medical care.

5.5 Emergency Routes & Exits

Emergency exits from premises & the exits themselves will be kept clear at all times. Emergency routes & exits will lead as directly as possible to a place of safety. The number, distribution & dimensions of emergency routes & exits will be adequate having regard to the use, equipment & dimensions of the premises and the maximum number of persons who may be present there at any one time. Emergency doors will open in the direction of escape unless in so doing they create additional hazards whereby persons could be struck by the door.

Emergency doors will not be so locked or fastened that they cannot be easily and immediately opened by any person who may require to use them in an emergency. Emergency routes and exits will be indicated by signs. Emergency routes and exits requiring illumination will be provided with emergency lighting of adequate intensity in case of failure of normal lighting.

5.6 Procedures for Serious & Imminent Danger

The Council will establish & where necessary, implement appropriate procedures, including fire drills, to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger to relevant persons. The Council will ensure that persons will be prevented from resuming work in any situation where there is still a serious and imminent danger.

The Council will nominate a sufficient number of competent persons to implement those procedures in so far as they relate to the evacuation of persons from premises. The competent

persons nominated to implement procedures for the evacuation of persons from premises will have complete authority with respect to and during this evacuation.

5.7 Maintenance

The Council will ensure that its premises and any facilities, equipment and devices provided in respect of the premises are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair.

Where the premises form part of a building, the Council will make arrangements with the occupier of any other premises forming part of the building for the purpose of ensuring that the requirements of the above paragraph are met.

5.8 Safety Assistance

The Council will appoint competent persons to assist in undertaking the preventative and protective measures. These persons will be the appointed Fire Wardens and the Health and Safety Advisor.

The Council will ensure that the persons appointed have adequate time available and the means at their disposal to fulfil their functions.

5.9 Provision of Information to Employees

The Council will provide all employees with comprehensible and relevant fire safety information on:

- The risks to them identified by the risk assessments
- The preventative & protective measures
- The procedures to be followed in the event of serious and imminent danger
- The identities of the appointed fire wardens.

5.10 Training

The Council will ensure that all employees are provided with adequate fire safety training:

- At the time when they are first employed
- Periodically repeated thereafter

The training will include suitable & sufficient instruction and training on the precautions and actions to be taken by employees in order to safeguard themselves & other relevant persons on the premises.

The training will be provided in a manner appropriate to the risks identified by the fire risk assessments. Specific fire safety training will be provided at regular intervals to the Council's appointed fire wardens. Particular attention is to be paid to young and inexperienced employees to ensure that they are properly supervised.

5.11 Fire Evacuation Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS)

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEP) are provided for staff where assisted emergency evacuation is required. The PEEP template is available from the Health and Safety intranet pages or via the Health and Safety Manager.
- Ensuring those assigned responsibilities for assisting persons to which a PEEP applies are aware and receive appropriate training in the use of equipment required for evacuation e.g. Evac Chair training.
- Ensuring Fire Wardens for the building area are aware of the presence and content of the PEEP and for whom it is provided.

5.12 Hot Works to Buildings

Hot works to buildings involve the undertaking of works by contractors which may involve a naked flame or hot welding.

This is common for works involving:

- Flat roof felts works or other coverings – bitumen/tar boilers.
- Plumbing – welding of copper pipes – blowlamps/blowtorches.
- Grinding wheels and cutting discs.

The Facilities Team has its own 'Hot Work Procedure' to which proposed works will comply. They are responsible for ensuring all contractor hot works are undertaken in accordance with the Hot Work Procedure.

Responsible Persons (Local) are responsible for ensuring that contractors are to undertake hot work in accordance with the Facilities hot work procedure. They must not permit a contractor to undertake hot work in or outside of their building without seeking the approval of the Facilities Team in the first instance.

5.12 Records

The Council will ensure that there are suitable & sufficient arrangements for keeping of statutory records. The statutory records will include risk assessments, safe systems of work, fire evacuation procedures, completed fire safety log books, fire safety training records etc.

5.13 Monitoring

Monitoring of fire safety performance will be carried out. This will be achieved through fire safety inspections, surveys, sampling and study of fire safety documentation. There will be sufficient staff with adequate facilities to carry out the monitoring.

In the event of a fire safety incident the performance of individuals or groups will be measured against the extent of compliance with the Fire Safety Policy objectives as set out within this Policy and specific procedures.

6.0 Department for Communities and Local Government

The Guidance documents listed below are available on the Internet at the Communities website

www.firesafetyguides.communities.gov.uk

This website will take you to the home page where you should select *Fire and Resilience*, then select *Fire Safety Law and Guidance Documents for Business*. If in doubt about the appropriate guide, please contact the Health and Safety Advisor.

There are 13 guides as well as a document on Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Offices and Shops
2. Factories and Warehouses
3. Sleeping accommodation
4. Residential Care premises
5. Educational premises
6. Small and Medium places of Assembly
7. Large places of Assembly
8. Theatres and Cinemas
9. Outdoor events
10. Healthcare premises
11. Transport Premises
12. Means of escape for people with disabilities
13. Animal premises and stables

Appendix 1 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

It is important that managers get to know their staff so that they can be aware of any conditions, whether temporary or permanent, which may affect the person's ability to escape from the building in an emergency.

It is the Line Manager's responsibility to produce a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan for each member of staff with permanent or temporary disabilities.

The category of disabilities that may need to consider for a PEEP are:

1. Staff with mobility, visual, hearing or learning impairments.
2. Staff with degenerative diseases.
3. Staff who are heavily pregnant or are temporarily disabled due to an accident or illness.

Name		Location	
Disability issue			
Assistance Required (Eg physical , mechanical)			
Action to be taken in an emergency			
Staff nominated to assist		Training requirements	Retraining date
Manager Name		Signature	Date
Review date			

Appendix 2 Quarterly Building Fire Safety Inspection

Quarterly Check Date:		Name:	
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Building/area check:		Sig:	
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FIRE EXTINGUISHERS	Yes	No
Are all fire extinguishers in position?		
Are all pins and seals provided?		
Are user instructions visible above extinguisher?		
MEANS OF ESCAPE	Yes	No
Are all means of escape clear and available?		
Do the door devices on all means of escape operate satisfactory?		
Are all means of escape clearly indicated?		
Are there any trip hazards? (eg, raised carpet edges, raised door thresholds etc.)		
Are all external routes clear?		
FIRE ACTION NOTICES	Yes	No
Are sufficient up-to-date fire action notices, prominently displayed throughout the area/building on all exit doors?		
Are these notices legible		
FIRE WARNING SYSTEM	Yes	No
Are all operating points (i.e., break glass units) of the fire warning system unobstructed?		
ELECTRICAL	Yes	No
Are extension leads in use (no daisy chaining)		
Are there any visible damage to electrical equipment (inc plugs / sockets)		
Does all portable equipment have a valid PAT test label?		
LIGHTING	Yes	No
Is the lighting level adequate in all areas?		
Is emergency lighting functional where fitted?		
HAZARD CONTROL	Yes	No
Excess storage is stored in the correct place, does not obstruct walkways and does not pose a trip hazard?		
Are flammable liquids / COSHH being correctly used and stored within the team?		
Electrical equipment is not stored / used in corridors?		
Are staff aware of the evacuation procedures?		

General comments:		
Manager name:	Signature:	Date:

Once completed submit a copy of this form to the Facilities Team Leader for monitoring and record keeping purposes.