

Cotesbach Parish Council

HEALTH and SAFETY POLICY

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1. Health and Safety Policy Statement

The Parish Council understands that it is required to comply with Health and Safety Law and Regulations, examples of which are listed in Appendix 1 of this Policy. The Parish Council believes that an excellent health and safety performance is an integral part of the wellbeing of its employees, contractors, volunteers, Councillors and the community. It also supports the efficient and cost effective discharge of the Council's functions. Accordingly, the Council will incorporate good health and safety management into all its operations to minimise any risks to the health, safety and welfare of its employees, contractors, voluntary workers, councillors, the general public and others affected by its activities, and to minimise risks to the environment. The Council will strive to ensure that safe working and community environments are created wherever decisions and procedures are under its control. Parish Councillors (Councillors) and the Parish Clerk (the Clerk) have the responsibility for implementing this Policy and must ensure that health and safety is given priority in strategies and day to day functions. Employees, contractors and volunteers will be made aware of this Policy and the importance of commitment to its objectives. They will be required to cooperate with it and to strive to ensure that their own work is carried out without risk to themselves, to others, or to the environment. The health and safety management arrangements for implementing this Policy are set out below.

2. Duties and Responsibilities

i) Councillors and the Clerk

The Councillors and Clerk are jointly responsible for the implementation of this Health and Safety Policy and for monitoring the day to day delivery of the Council's functions.

In doing so, they will ensure that:

- a copy of this policy is available to all employees, contractors and voluntary workers on appointment, co-option, renewal or selection. Opportunities shall be given to discuss this policy on an individual basis, if requested, to ensure that it is fully understood and implemented.
- the Council's functions are monitored by adequate record keeping in the form of Minutes of all meetings and written records of all contracts appointments co- option's or selections. Such Minutes and records shall describe all strategy decisions and confirmations regarding health and safety sufficient to show that the objectives of this Health and Safety Policy are being complied with.
- all contracts shall include a duty to comply with statutory health, safety and environmental requirements.
- The Councillors, Clerk, employees and volunteers have adequate competence and training for carrying out their functions without risk to the health, safety and welfare of themselves, those around them, and the environment, and that they are aware of the hazards which may exist

within their functions.

- The Councillors, Clerk, employees and volunteers fully understand and comply with this Policy and do not undertake any function where technical knowledge or experience is necessary to prevent risk to themselves, to others, or to the environment unless they possess such knowledge or experience, or is under supervision of a competent person having regard to the nature of the work;
- safe methods of work are adopted;
- all suppliers comply with Section 6 of the Health & Safety at Work Act (HASWA) in supplying articles, materials and substances that are safe and without risk to health when properly used and to provide information to enable them to be properly used;
- any injury or accident arising out of the Council's functions is recorded, reported and investigated as required by law to prevent recurrence.
- regular inspections of relevant assets of the Council are carried out by competent persons and relevant written records kept.
- risk assessments of the Council's functions and assets are drawn up and regularly reviewed;
- any comments, issues, complaints, feedback or concerns regarding health and safety in general or this Policy in particular are brought to the attention of the Council in writing as relevant to the circumstances.
- All relevant insurance policies are reviewed annually and have relevant levels of cover and excess.

ii) **Volunteers**

Volunteers have a responsibility to:

- conduct themselves safely at all times and conform to this Policy and relevant Legislation.
- request assistance or advice about any area of work that they are not familiar with.
- take care of the safety, health and welfare of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and cooperate with the Parish Council to enable it to fulfil statutory obligations. They should also ensure that they are physically fit and technically responsible for the work requested of them.
- properly use any tools, materials, equipment, plant, machinery and safety devices involved in their work. They will use such items only for the purposes for which they were intended, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and relevant guidelines, and they will not interfere with, alter or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- ensure all accidents and near miss incidents shall be reported to the Clerk, and recorded in the Parish Council's Accident Book as soon after the event as possible.
- cooperate with the Parish Council in investigating all accidents and near misses.

iii) **Contractors**

Contractors engaged by the Council shall have responsibility to conduct themselves safely at all times and conform to this Policy and relevant Legislation.

- take care of the safety, health and welfare of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions and cooperate with the Parish Council to enable it to fulfil statutory obligations.
- ensure they have adequate competence and training for carrying out their functions without risk to the health, safety and welfare of themselves, those around them, and the environment, and that they are aware of the hazards which may exist within their functions.
- ensure work sequences undertaken by them are in compliance with statutory legislation and Codes of Practice.
- properly use any tools, materials, equipment, plant, machinery and safety devices involved in their work. Such items shall be in sound working order with appropriate testing and certification and they shall be used only for the purposes for which they were intended, in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and relevant guidelines.
- not interfere with, alter or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare.
- report any injury sustained whilst engaged on work for the Council to the Clerk without delay.
- provide the Council with written risk assessments and method statements before commencing work for it.

iv) **Visitors**

The Council owes a duty of care to visitors of the Council's assets and shall ensure that relevant safe access and egress is available and that that its assets are adequately insured and maintained in a safe condition.

3. Arrangements for Health and Safety

- i) The enforcement agency for Local Authorities is the Health & Safety Executive. Any visit or inspection carried out by Statutory Inspectors shall be coordinated with the full cooperation of the Parish Council and any recommendations given implemented as soon as reasonably practicable.
- ii) A risk assessment shall be drawn up for assets controlled by the Council. Such assessments shall be in writing and monitored and reviewed appropriately.
- iii) Councillors shall be responsible for ensuring that appropriate health and safety training is provided for Councillors, the Clerk and volunteers. The Clerk shall be responsible for maintaining records of such training.

- iv) The Clerk is to be notified immediately if an accident occurs to anyone whilst on Council business. This includes Councillors, the Clerk, volunteers, visitors and contractors. Accidents and near misses shall be investigated by the Clerk and remedial actions recommended to the Parish Council where appropriate.
- v) Provision and Use of Work Equipment. If equipment provided by the Parish Council is damaged or faulty this must be reported immediately for repair or replacement (Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998). If the equipment is lost or damaged through negligence, such loss or damage must be reported immediately.
- vi) Violence/Personal Safety. So as to avoid violence and aggression from members of the public or contractors, Councillors and the Clerk should avoid getting into a confrontational situation. Always remain polite, but back off from situations that are potentially dangerous. Any incidents should be reported to the Clerk who may call the police, if it is considered necessary.
- vii) Inspections and Documentation Review. An annual inspection of village assets will be carried out and the findings recorded. Any serious defects or items for attention must be actioned as soon as reasonably practicable. Activity risk assessments, the health and safety policy document and all other health and safety documentation will also be reviewed annually taking into account any changes in personnel, procedural or physical changes.

APPENDIX 1

Legislation

The following Health and Safety Legislation may affect the Councillors, Clerk, volunteers, visitors and contractors:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASWA)
- The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)
- Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992
- Health & Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981
- Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 2002
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases And Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)
- Control of Substances Hazardous To Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH)
- Fire Precautions Act 1971
- Electricity At Work Regulations 1989

This is not a definitive list, other legislation may be relevant.

Reviewed and approved at the Annual Parish Council meeting on 12th May 2026; minute 7