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HS20 Fire Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy has been produced as a result of the legal requirements set out in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (hereafter referred to in this policy as 'the Order').
- 1.2 In this policy, references to premises are references to sites and buildings, including any part of a site or building, for which the Council is responsible.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 The Council's statement of intent is, so far as is reasonably practicable, to prevent an outbreak of fire in any premises in the first instance, and to put in place measures to ensure the safety of its employees and any visitors in the unlikely event that a fire does break out.
- 2.2 The Council intends to achieve this by complying with its duties under the Order which, for every premises, will include:
- taking the following general fire precautions:
 - measures to reduce the risk of fire, including the risk from arson;
 - measures to reduce the risk of the spread of fire;
 - measures in relation to means of escape;
 - measures for securing that, at all material times, the means of escape can be safely and effectively used;
 - measures in relation to the means for fighting fires;
 - measures in relation to the means for detecting fires and giving warning in the case of fire;
 - measures in relation to the arrangements for action to be taken in the event of fire, including:
 - (i) measures relating to the instruction and training of employees; and
 - (ii) measures to mitigate the effects of a fire.
 - undertaking suitable and sufficient fire safety risk assessments;
 - making and giving effect to appropriate fire safety arrangements;
 - where necessary, eliminating or reducing the risks from, and establishing and implementing additional emergency measures in respect of, any dangerous substances;
 - where necessary, equipping the premises with appropriate firefighting equipment and fire detectors and alarms;

- providing and maintaining appropriate emergency routes and exits that are suitably indicated by signs and, where necessary, provided with adequate emergency lighting;
- establishing and, where necessary, giving effect to appropriate procedures for serious and imminent danger and danger areas;
- ensuring that the premises and any facilities, equipment and devices provided in respect of fire safety are subject to a suitable system of maintenance and are maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair;
- appointing one or more competent persons to assist in undertaking the preventive and protective measures determined as necessary;
- providing employers of any employees working in or on the premises with appropriate comprehensible and relevant information on the risks to their employees and the preventive and protective measures taken in respect of fire;
- providing employees located in the premises with suitable and sufficient fire safety information, instruction and training;
- ensuring that, where premises are shared with any other organisation(s), the person responsible for fire safety for the Council cooperates and coordinates with any person appointed by the other organisation(s).

2.3 Relevant Group Directors are to ensure that a site or building manager, as appropriate, is appointed to take responsibility for fire safety arrangements for each premises (if necessary, in consultation with other Group Directors, such as when service areas belonging to different Groups occupy the same premises).

For a school, the person responsible for fire safety is the Head Teacher.

2.4 The responsibility for implementing the requirements of this policy and the preparation of an implementation strategy rests with each Director or Head of Service.

POLICY GUIDANCE

3. FIRE SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENTS

- 3.1 As part of the process of ensuring that it complies with its duties under the Order as described in paragraph 2.2, the Council will arrange for suitable and sufficient fire safety risk assessments (FSRAs) to be undertaken by a competent person at every premises, and for the premises to be periodically re-assessed where considered necessary.

This will help to ensure that all fire safety issues are properly assessed and that, where necessary, any required improvements are identified and implemented.

- 3.2 In order to ensure that FSRAs are suitable and sufficient, the Council will employ a specialist consultant to undertake them and, where necessary, periodically re-assess them.

The Council, in consultation with the specialist consultant, will determine the appropriate period between the FSRA and the intended periodic re-assessment for any particular premises.

- 3.3 The responsibility for determining which specialist consultant to employ to undertake FSRAs/re-assessments, and for appointing that consultant, arranging all necessary contract specifications and associated documentation and monitoring compliance with contracts, lies with the Council's Corporate Maintenance Section.

- 3.4 Before making the decision on which specialist consultant to employ to undertake FSRAs/re-assessments, the relevant officer(s) in Corporate Maintenance will consult with the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Team.

- 3.5 Site/building managers are responsible for ensuring that their premises has had a FSRA undertaken and that any periodic re-assessment is undertaken when due, liaising with Corporate Maintenance and/or the specialist consultant, as necessary.

- 3.6 Site/building managers are to liaise with the FSRA consultant regarding safety procedures that must be followed by the consultant's assessors whilst they are on site/in the building.

- 3.7 On completion of the FSRA for their premises, the site/building manager is to develop a prioritised action plan (where necessary, in consultation with technical officers in Corporate Maintenance) identifying any work/management duties required to be undertaken, names of persons or departments with the responsibility for their completion, timescales where applicable, etc.

It is the responsibility of the site/building manager to ensure that required actions are addressed and that the web-based FSRA is updated.

The web-based FSRA system utilised by the specialist consultant currently employed by the Council is called the RAMIS system.

- 3.8 Site/building managers must notify the FSRA consultant of any significant change to their premises that could affect the FSRA and which could require a re-assessment before any intended periodic re-assessment date.

Such a change could be, for example, an extension to a building, alterations to the internal layout of a building, a change of use of a building or a significant increase in the number of occupants in a building.

- 3.9 Site/building managers must review the FSRA annually using the re-assessment referral questionnaire form, and file the form appropriately on RAMIS.
- 3.10 Site/building managers must inform occupants of premises, both permanent occupants and any visitors, of any significant risks identified by the FSRA.
- 3.11 Where the Council only occupies part of a premises, the site/building manager must inform any person(s) responsible for the other part(s) of the premises of any significant findings that could affect the other part(s).

4. FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT, DEVICES AND SYSTEMS, ETC.

- 4.1 The Council will employ specialist contractors to install in premises all fire safety equipment, devices and systems, including signage, determined as necessary by the findings of the relevant FSRA.
- 4.2 The Council will employ specialist contractors to test, service and maintain to statutory requirements all appropriate fire safety equipment, devices and systems installed in premises, including any illuminated signs, to ensure that they are maintained in an efficient state, efficient working order and in good repair.
- 4.3 The responsibility for determining which specialist contractors to employ to install and/or test, service and maintain appropriate fire safety equipment, devices and systems, and for appointing those contractors, arranging all necessary contract specifications and associated documentation and monitoring compliance with contracts, lies with the Council's Corporate Maintenance Section.

- 4.4 Site/building managers must monitor to ensure that the specialist contractors are undertaking the necessary testing, servicing and maintenance of all appropriate fire safety equipment, devices and systems, and that records of the same are entered in the fire log book and/or on RAMIS.
- 4.5 Site/building managers must ensure that all required in-house checks/tests of appropriate fire safety equipment, devices and systems are undertaken and that records of the same are entered in the fire log book and, where appropriate, on RAMIS.

In-house checks/tests are also to include ensuring that:

- escape routes are kept clear of obstructions and can be easily used in the event of a fire;
- any devices fitted to fire doors, such as door hold-open devices, work properly;
- locking mechanisms to final exit doors, such as panic bolts and electronic door releases, work properly.

- 4.6 Where checks/tests indicate a fault, site/building managers must take appropriate action to remedy the fault and record details of the action taken in the fire log book and, where appropriate, on RAMIS.

False alarms are to be considered as a fault.

- 4.7 Where site/building managers delegate the duty of undertaking in-house fire safety checks/tests to other employees, they must monitor to ensure that those checks/tests are being properly carried out and that details are recorded in the fire log book and, where appropriate, on RAMIS.
- In addition to undertaking such monitoring, site/building managers must evidence that they are doing so (one means of evidencing monitoring would be to periodically sign the fire log book record sheets).

5. FIRE-RELATED INCIDENTS

- 5.1 Site/building managers must report fire-related incidents to relevant officers in Corporate Maintenance, and also to the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Team using the Council's Incident/Accident Investigation and Injury Record form HS 5(A).

6. FIRE SAFETY PROCEDURES

- 6.1 Site/building managers must ensure that suitable fire safety procedures, including an evacuation plan, are developed and implemented for their premises.

Fire procedures must be appropriate to the particular premises and take into account the findings of the fire safety risk assessment.

- 6.2 Where premises include occupants that require assistance to evacuate, such as some mobility or sensory impaired disabled people for example, site/building managers must ensure that suitable personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are developed for those occupants, including both permanent occupants and visitors.
- 6.3 Evacuation plans, including those for disabled people, must not rely on the assistance of the Fire and Rescue Service to be effective.
- 6.4 Site/building managers are to ensure that fire safety procedures are documented and copies kept in the fire log book.
- 6.5 Site/building managers must ensure that fire safety procedures are brought to the attention of the occupants of their premises, both permanent occupants and visitors, including any contractors.

The posting of 'what to do in case of fire' fire action notices in strategic locations throughout a building can assist in informing people, particularly non-employees, about the fire procedures for a premises. Any such fire action notices must be consistent in the information provided and reflect the fire procedures developed for the premises.

- 6.6 Where the Council only occupies part of a premises and the fire safety procedures could affect occupiers of any other part(s), for example having to use the same escape route(s) in the event of a fire, the site/building manager must cooperate and coordinate with any person(s) responsible for the other part(s) of the premises.
- 6.7 Employees are not expected to try and fight a fire unless it is safe to do so and they have been trained in the use of firefighting equipment, or if they need to do so to make their escape from a building.

Employees must not put themselves at risk to fight a fire – their personal safety must always be the priority.

7. FIRE SAFETY INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING

- 7.1 Site/building managers must ensure that employees located in their premises are provided with all necessary fire safety information, instruction and training, and that records of the same are kept in the fire log book.

Training provided to employees is to be suitable for their roles and responsibilities.

- 7.2 Employees nominated to undertake additional duties in respect of fire safety, such as people appointed to undertake in-house checks/tests of equipment, devices or systems, people appointed to act as fire marshals to help ensure the safe evacuation of occupants in the event of a fire, or similar, people nominated in a personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) to provide assistance to a disabled person in an evacuation, or similar, will require training over and above that provided to employees in general.

Any employees nominated to undertake additional fire safety duties, such as to act fire marshals, must be competent for the role.

- 7.3 Training is to include carrying out fire drills to test the efficiency and suitability of fire procedures and evacuation plans.

A minimum of two fire drills a year should be carried out at each premises (at some premises it may be advisable to carry out more, for example, in schools it may be advisable to carry one out near the start of each term).

8. EMPLOYEES' DUTIES

- 8.1 Employees are required to comply with all fire safety procedures.
- 8.2 Employees have a duty to report to their line manager any issues they become aware of that may adversely affect fire safety.
- 8.3 Employees are not permitted to misuse any equipment, system, device or similar provided in respect of fire safety.

9. RECORDS

- 9.1 It is essential that appropriate fire safety records are kept and that they can readily be made available for inspection by, for example, visiting Fire Officers, since they are a means of evidencing that the Council is complying with its duties under the Order.
- 9.2 The following records must be kept, together with any others deemed appropriate for the particular premises:
- details of any visits by Fire Officers;
 - the fire safety risk assessment, together with any measures implemented as a result;
 - in-house checks/tests of fire safety equipment, devices and systems, such as fire alarm call points, emergency lighting and firefighting equipment;

- in-house checks/tests of escape routes, including devices such as door-hold open devices and locking mechanisms to final exit doors, such as panic bolts and electronic door releases;
- details of action taken when checks/tests reveal faults;
- periodic tests/servicing by specialist contractors on fire safety equipment and systems, such as fire alarm and emergency lighting systems and firefighting equipment;
- details of any false alarms and action taken to prevent recurrences;
- fire safety arrangements and procedures including, where appropriate, any personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) prepared in respect of the evacuation of a disabled person;
- details of any people given additional responsibilities in respect of fire safety, such as someone appointed to the role of fire marshal;
- details of fire safety information, instruction and training provided to employees;
- details of fire drills, including subsequent debriefing meetings, any issues identified in such meetings and the measures implemented to address those issues;
- evidence of monitoring by site/building managers to ensure required in-house checks/tests are being properly undertaken (where they do not undertake such checks/tests themselves).

10. ADVICE

- 10.1 Advice on the implementation of this policy can be obtained from the Health and Safety Team, Human Resources, Tŷ Elai, Williamstown, CF40 1NY, telephone 01443 425531.

SITE/BUILDING MANAGERS CHECKLIST

	✓ As Appropriate		
	N/A	Yes	No
• Has a fire safety risk assessment (FSRA) been undertaken for the premises?			
• Are you arranging for any measures identified as necessary in the FSRA to be addressed?			
• Are you aware of any intended FSRA re-assessment date and that you are required to liaise with Corporate Maintenance and/or the FSRA consultant, as necessary, to arrange for the re-assessment to be undertaken?			
• Are you aware that you will need to notify the FSRA consultant of any significant change to your premises?			
• Are you aware that you need to complete an annual FSRA review questionnaire?			
• Are you aware that you need to report fire-related incidents to Corporate Maintenance and the Corporate Health and Safety Team?			
• If you share a premises with any other employer, are you aware that you must consult and cooperate with the person appointed by the other employer to be responsible for fire safety?			
• Are there appropriate fire safety arrangements and procedures in place including, where necessary, personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for disabled people?			
• Are there suitable and sufficient escape routes and exits, suitably indicated by signs, and are these inspected, tested and maintained in efficient working order?			
• Is any emergency lighting inspected, tested and maintained in efficient working order (including in-house checks/tests)?			
• Is any fire detection and alarm system inspected, tested and maintained in efficient working order (including in-house checks/tests)?			

	✓ As Appropriate		
	N/A	Yes	No
• Is firefighting equipment inspected, tested and maintained in efficient working order (including in-house checks/tests)?			
• Is any other fire safety device, equipment or system inspected, tested and maintained in efficient working order (including in-house checks/tests)?			
• Have employees been provided with comprehensible and relevant information on fire safety?			
• Have any outside employers or self-employed people working on the premises been provided with comprehensible and relevant information on the risks identified by the FSRA, the preventive and protective measures put in place and the identities of the person appointed to take charge of those measures?			
• Have employees, including any given additional responsibilities, been provided with appropriate fire safety training?			
• Are fire drills held at least twice a year?			
• Are debriefing meetings held after fire drills and are measures implemented to address any issues identified in such meetings?			
• Is there a fire log book for the premises?			
• Is all relevant fire safety information recorded in the fire log book?			
• Do you update the RAMIS system as required, and do you check that specialist contractors do so as well and inform Corporate Maintenance if there are any issues?			

Completed by: _____
(Signature)

Confirmed by: _____
(Signature)

Name: _____
(Print)

Name: _____
(Print)

Designation: _____

Designation: _____

Date: _____

Date: _____