Health & Safety Planning

Author	Fiona Duddy	Contact details	healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk
Owner	Fiona Duddy		

Date	18.05.21	Version number	1.0	Document status	Complete

Governance Committee		Date approved	
Review date			

Strategic Alignment
Outcome: Achieve the Council's objectives for health and safety planning.
Action:

Consultation process			
Stakeholders	1		
Distribution			

Change record

Date	insert date	Author	insert contact details
Change made		insert details of changes made	

Contents

Further guidance on this matter can also be obtained from healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk

1. Introduction

Planning is essential for the implementation of health and safety policies. Adequate control of risks will only be achieved through co-ordinated action by all employees of the Council and its Services.

The methods used to plan and implement health and safety programmes should be the same as those used to plan and implement changes in any other management process.

Effective planning is concerned with prevention through identifying, eliminating, and controlling of hazards and risks.

2. Establishing the Context

The principal elements required to secure effective health and safety management are:

- Policy;
- Organisation;
- Planning and implementing;
- Measuring performance; and
- Reviewing and auditing.

Planning is identified as a key element and to address the issue the Chief Executive directs the preparation of a safety strategy actionplan which will outline specific health and safety objectives with realistic timescale for their accomplishment. These objectives will be developed in consultation with Heads of Service, the Council Health and Safety Officer and Trade Union Representatives where appropriate.

- Compare existing arrangements against requirements of relevant legislation dealing with health and safety management issues.

- Establish performance standards after a thorough analysis of existing and potential risks.

- Assess the effectiveness of existing resources devoted to health and safety.

3. **Planning Process**

3.1 **Planning for Effective Health and Safety Management**

In all business or management activities, effective planning is paramount in achieving the desired outcome. The effective management of health and safety is no different, although the consequences of failure may involve a high human cost. Planning is critical for the smooth implementation of policies and standards throughout any organisation. Success will only be achieved through the effective control of risks.

In order for the council to be successful at managing health and safety issues there is a health and safety management system in place which will:

a) Identify health and safety objectives together with the targets and timescales for implementation. In other words a "safety strategy action plan" must be developed (see figure 1) and linked to other corporate plans.

Figure 1 - "Sample Safety Action Plan"

Objective	Method	Target	Action Party
Risk assessment protocols in place for all council services	Training of service Risk assessors and introduction of service assessment review teams	Assessors trained by realistic date	Service Managers/ Health and Safety

		Review Teams established by realistic date	Service Managers/ Health and Safety
All managers / supervisors trained to an appropriate level in health and safety	Provide appropriate standards of training along with outline of training courses	Training to commence by realistic date	Corporate Management Team / Health and Safety Unit

b) Set standards of performance that will enhance the health and safety culture within the council, the general factors for consideration are accepted to be:

- Control

  systems to ensure effective operation of the system, for example, policy formulation, provision of adequate resources, auditing, reviewing performance etc.

- Competence

  systems designed to ensure appropriate recruitment and induction, provision of information and training, availability for competent cover during absence and competent supervision etc.

- Communication

  systems established to permit the gathering and dissemination of information, consultation with all employees, information and instructions, posters and organisation standards etc.

- Co-operation

  set standards to determine levels of co-operation, for example, health and safety committees, safety circles

  or

  safety action teams, along with interaction with other employers operating in the same work environment.

c) Set standards of performance for the control of risks that have been identified via the various risk assessment schemes (including specialist assessments, for example, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health, Fire or Manual Handling). Such standards must reflect the control hierarchy outlined in many of the H.S.E. publications.

d) Enable the Council to take steps to plan priorities in terms of the provision and maintenance of control measures for identified risks. Such control measures must be implemented in a manner which will give priority to the higher risk activities and manage risks where short term elimination is not possible.

e) Establish performance standards that will permit the control of risks not only to employees but also those who may be affected by the activities of the authority, for example, clients, pupils, visitors, public etc.

f) It is essential that appropriate and detailed records of all the planning steps are kept, such records should be maintained at a level of detail appropriate to the level of risk identified.

3.2 Resourcing the measures necessary to manage health and safety

3.2.1 What needs to be resourced?

The risk assessment process will have identified details of those matters requiring action to be taken but the following list indicates some of the broad categories that will require funding allocation:

- Building maintenance and improvements (for example, to comply with Fire Safety legislation or Health and Safety (Workplace) Regulations).

- Work equipment maintenance and improvements (including portable appliance inspection and/or testing)

- Implementation of other measures to control risks, for example, purchase and maintenance of personal protective equipment

- Health surveillance (for example, pre-employment medicals, monitoring for hand arm vibration, respiratory issues or noise induced hearing loss.)

- Health and safety training

- Project management (for example, conducting assessments of properties to record the presence of asbestos-based materials and implementing a management system to control asbestos in properties)

As important as it is to plan for safety there are nonetheless situations that will cause unexpected expenditure (for example, changes in legislation, highlighting of a previously unrecognised hazard through accident investigation or risk assessment review etc.) and resources must be available for immediate work.

3.2.2 Budget allocation and management

To achieve best practice, Services need to ensure that adequate resources are provided and to this end when budgets are being prepared cognisance must be taken of health and safety requirements. This will obviously vary depending on the current standard of health and safety within the Service and any impending changes in legislation.

3.2.3 Prioritising expenditure

There are various tools that can be used to assist in prioritisation of health and safety expenditure.

Public or employee concerns may emphasise a particular issue that apparently requires investment. It is critical in such a situation to consider the issue through risk assessment, as perceived risk can be higher or lower than actual risk and can sometimes lead to inappropriate priority being given to that issue.

The overarching guideline should be that dictated by the risk assessment process which should not only identify hazards but also estimate levels or risk in relation to the potential ill effects and numbers at risk. The findings of health and safety audits will also help in highlighting areas of concern.

No matter how health and safety issues which require to be addressed are identified it is essential that action programmes are established at Council, Service and establishment level in which issues are listed in order of priority so that funds can be used to best effect. It is important that these programmes are flexible so that new issues or concerns can be slotted into the programme at the appropriate point.

3.3   Practical Application

Strategic objectives to improve health and safety standards will normally be set following a review of the Service's Health and Safety performance (for example see figure 1).

It is essential however that more specific objectives are set by Services which arise from strategic objectives, accident trends from risk assessments, or a review of risk assessments undertaken by each Service.   This would also include specific assessments carried out under for example the Manual Handling (Operations) Regulations 1992 or the Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 etc.

Following these assessments the action required to enable the Service to meet the requirements of the relevant regulations or to meet best practice standards needs to be catalogued and prioritised.

A Brief Introduction to Health and Safety Planning

Planning is the key to ensuring that health and safety measures really work. Planning involves the setting of measurable objectives to be achieved, the identification of hazards, the assessment of risk, the implementation of standards of performance and the development of a positive safety culture. These things will not happen by themselves, they need to be carefully planned, co-ordinated and implemented and understood by all.

The Health and Safety Executive identify the key elements of a successful Health and Safety Management Strategy as:

- Policy;
- Organisation;
- Planning and implementing;
- Measuring performance; and
- Reviewing and auditing.

The results of planning need to be recorded in writing. All organisations should be pro-active with their management processes, continually checking that standards are being met. As an organisation we can't wait until something goes wrong such as an accident, injury or dangerous occurrence before we review our safety procedures. North Lanarkshire Council will endeavour to be proactive, not reactive!

Proactive Planning

There is an expectation that each Service will outline its own health and safety plan for each year. In pursuit of this plan some forethought will be required to ensure the correct areas of work are focused on. This may well require some discussion and consultation and include such things as:

- identification of hazards and the assessment of risks and the means for their elimination/control
- agreement of health and safety targets with managers, supervisors and team members that go beyond simple safety compliance
- design of tasks, processes, equipment, products and services with regard to health and safety
- establishment of safe systems of work
- establishment of procedures to deal with serious and imminent danger
- means of ensuring co-operation with other employers, contractors and neighbours etc.
- setting of standards against which health and safety performance can be measured

Standards help to build a positive culture within the workforce and to control risks. They should identify who does what, when and with what results.

Standards can be set for a range of topics and circumstances and these might fall into the following broad headings:

- Premises, places of work and for environmental control
- Plant and substances, purchase, supply, transport, storage and use
- Procedures, design of jobs and the way work is carried out
- People, training and supervision
- Products and services, design, delivery, transport and storage

Is the plan working?

Over the lifetime of the plan some monitoring work will be required to ensure the aims outlined in the plan are being achieved. Measurable objectives and performance standards, with regard to physical resources, human resources and information, need to be set as part of this process

Active and reactive monitoring arrangements need to ensure that the objectives and performance standards are being met in practice. Auditing should ensure that the whole system for setting, implementing and measuring standards is effective. Monitoring should be undertaken by local managers, Service health and safety teams and the corporate health and safety team. Trade Unions also play an important role in the monitoring of health and safety standards.

The Council's annual health and safety plan is presented to Policy and Strategy Committee each year around August or September. Service produced plans are considered at local Senior Management Team (SMT) meetings and Health and Safety Forums.

The planning process seeks the views of all relevant stakeholders and employees can provide input to this process through their line manager, local health and safety forums, their trade union representative, or the Council safety & wellbeing team.