

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH, SAFETY & WELL-BEING FIRE SAFETY POLICY 2007

Date: **June 2007**

Review Date: **2 Yearly (unless need identified earlier)**

Reviewed May 2009

Policy Type: **Corporate Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy** Document: Fire Safety
Order Policy Page 2 of 5 Status: Final

Approval: **by CHSWC at 12th June 2007**

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Key Associated Policies

and documents: **DCC Health & Safety Policy**

DCC Fire Safety Tool-Kit Document: Fire Safety Order Policy Page 3 of 5 Status: Final

1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Devon County Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all of its employees. We will therefore promote a positive workplace culture that:

- Complies with legal requirements and best practice including guidance from the Department for Communities and Local Government

- Identifies the hazards and effectively manages the risks associated with fire in all premises controlled by Devon County Council and to work with the responsible person in premises under the control of other organisations where DCC employees are located

- Enables managers and staff to carry out fire safety risk assessments that are accurate, understandable, and consistent

 - Manages identified risks with solutions that are reasonably practicable

- Sees the provision of information and appropriate training as a core element

- Enables managers to address issues raised by staff and anyone who is affected by our services

- Fully supports the active participation of staff representation by recognised Trade Unions in the development and implementation of health and safety related policies and procedures

1.2 The successful implementation of this policy can only be achieved by co-operative effort at all levels within the organisation.

2. CONTEXT

2.1 The Regulatory Reform Order (Fire Safety) 2005 simplifies the law relating to fire safety in the workplace and replaces most of the previous fire safety legislation including the need for fire certificates.

2.2 The law now requires any person who has some level of control over premises to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire, and make sure people can escape if there is a fire. This includes a requirement to carry out a fire safety risk assessment and consider others who may be affected including neighbouring properties.

2.3 Devon County Council is committed to providing a safe environment that is free from all reasonably foreseeable and significant risks to our employees and those affected by our activities. This policy and guidance supports the Corporate Health & Safety Policy with information enabling the effective management of fire risks.

2.4 While the legislation and this policy are primarily concerned with the protection of people rather than property, effective arrangements to prevent fires will achieve benefits in both respects.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 This policy applies to all Directorates and Services within Devon County Council, but may be supplemented by Directorate procedures and guidance, which set out specific detail relating to service needs.

3.2 Directorates will be provided with a tool-kit to support them in implementing and integrating this policy into their working practices. Alternatively, directorates may use their own procedures but they must be able to demonstrate that they are meeting the requirements of this Corporate Policy.

3.3 The standards that form part of this policy will be used to monitor directorate practices and management of fire safety issues.

3.4 Directorates should ensure that those with responsibilities under this policy:

- Are trained to an appropriate level
- Have access to competent advice and support
- Have access to the resources necessary to meet the issues identified with this policy and the associated implementation plan requirements
- Have sufficient time allocated to carry out the necessary tasks associated with this policy

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 The Chief Executive and Director of each Service are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented and managed effectively in accordance with the Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

4.2 The Central Health, Safety and Well-being Committee are responsible for the development of this policy and for monitoring its implementation.

4.3 Managers and supervisors at all levels are directly responsible for ensuring this policy is known and acted upon. This accountability cannot be discharged by delegation.

4.4 Responsibility for various aspects of fire safety within council premises depends on the type of establishment.

4.5 A key responsibility is to carry out a fire safety risk assessment. The essential elements of such an assessment are:

- Identify fire hazards
- Identify people at risk
- Evaluate the risk
- Remove, reduce and protect from the risk
- Record the findings of the assessment and action taken
- Ensure an effective emergency plan is in place
- Inform, instruct and train
- Review the assessment

4.6 All employees must:

Take care of their own health and safety and that of others who maybe affected by what they do, or fail to do, at work.

Follow precautions identified in fire safety risk assessments

Follow procedures relating to fire safety for their workplace

Inform their line manager / supervisor of any concerns regarding fire safety

Participate in fire safety training, as agreed with their manager / supervisor

Comply with the fire safety arrangements of host organisations when visiting or working at their premises

5. AUDIT, MONITOR & REVIEW

5.1 All directorates and services within Devon County Council must be able to demonstrate compliance with this policy in accordance with their own auditing procedures, Directorate Annual Health and Safety Reports and via the Directorate Quarterly Management report to the Central Health, Safety and Well-being Committee.

5.2 This includes providing confirmation on:

How directorates have reviewed existing arrangements and carried out steps for implementation where necessary

How those with responsibility for premises (Establishment managers, head teachers, etc) are fulfilling their responsibilities.

How fire safety risk assessments for premises are being carried out incorporating the essential elements outlined in section 4.5

How directorates are meeting the responsibilities outlined in section 4

6. EQUALITY STATEMENT

6.1 The Council will only commit to policies and practices which will eradicate discrimination and promote equality for all, regardless of age, gender, disability, religion and belief, race and ethnicity and sexual orientation.

6.2 This policy and related guidance has been subject of an Equality Impact and Needs Assessment. This assessment will be integral to all future policy and guidance reviews.

7. REVIEW OF THE POLICY

7.1 The Central Health, Safety and Well-being Committee will review this Policy every two years or sooner if changes are made to current legislation and the guidance issued from the Department for Communities and Local Government.