Willingale Parish Council

Health and Safety Policy

Adopted on: 10th March 2026
Review Date: July 2027

Introduction

Willingale Parish Council (Council) recognises and accepts its responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for staff, service users, contractors, volunteers and visitors to any of its premises, sites and undertakings and will take all reasonably practicable steps within its power to fulfil this responsibility.Through the Clerk and employees, within the ethos of self-regulation, the Council undertakes so far as is reasonably practicable:

- to provide the necessary resources and seek the co-operation of all employees with a view to implementing the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all supportive and associated legislation concerning Health, Safety and Welfare.
- to maintain all places of work in a condition that is safe and without risk to health, including the means of access to and egress from such places of work.
- to provide and ensure that work equipment and systems of work are maintained to be safe and without risks to health.
- to provide and maintain a working environment for persons at work that is safe and without risks to health, with adequate arrangements for the welfare of such persons.
- to provide appropriate personal protective equipment where necessary.
- to ensure safety and the absence of risks to health and the general environment in connection with the use, handling, storage, transport and disposal of articles and substances.
- to provide such information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the health and safety at work of all employees as well as visitors or users of facilities, on its premises, sites and any undertakings.
- to bring to the attention of all persons, including regular and temporary employees, visitors and contractors, at the place of work, their responsibilities with regard to their own safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.
- to ensure that all contractors employed at any premises, sites and undertakings are competent and to ensure that management systems are in place to facilitate close liaison concerning their work activities.
- to formulate, and where necessary practice effective procedures for use in the event of serious risk or imminent danger.
- to promote joint consultation and employee involvement in health and safety at work.

- to identify, eliminate or reduce hazards which may exist at a place of work through workstation risk or job risk assessment and to bring such hazards that remain to the attention of persons at work.
- to keep abreast of legislation by ensuring adequate and appropriate advice through persons competent in health and safety matters.
- to record and investigate accidents and cases of occupational disease, ill health and incidents of violence at work, in order to identify trends and take appropriate remedial and preventative measures.
- to provide adequate First Aid facilities.
- to monitor health and safety performances on a regular basis with regard to places of work, work activities and, where necessary, contractor activities.
- to bring this policy statement and relevant health and safety arrangements to the attention of all employees and, where necessary, other persons affected by the Council's activities.
- to review this Statement of Health and Safety Policy and the arrangements for its implementation as often as may be necessary.

This policy will be kept up to date and reviewed at least annually.

Signed: …… Date:……

Position:……..

Willingale Parish Council

RESPONSIBILITIES

Council

The Council has the ultimate responsibility for the health and safety of Willingale Parish Council butdischarges this responsibility through the Clerk down to individual employees.

The Council has nominated the Clerk to have special responsibility for health and safety. The Council will ensure that:

- they provide a lead in developing a positive health and safety culture throughout the organisation.
- all its decisions reflect its health and safety intentions.
- adequate resources are made available for the implementation of health and safety.
- they will promote the active participation of workers in improving health and safety performance.
- they will review the health and safety performance of the Council on an annual basis.

Parish Clerk

The Clerk is the designated person with overall responsibility for health and safety within the Council. The Clerk will ensure that:

- the Council's Health and Safety Policy is implemented, monitored, developed, communicated effectively, reviewed and amended as required.
- suitable and sufficient funds, people, materials and equipment are provided to meet all healthand safety requirements.
- adequate insurance cover is provided and renewed.
- competent persons are appointed to provide health and safety assistance and advice.
- an adequate system of maintenance exists and operates to keep premises, plant and workequipment in a safe condition.
- statutory examinations are planned, completed and recorded.
- there is regular communication and consultation with staff on health and safety issues.
- an effective training programme is established to ensure staff are competent to carry out theirwork in a safe manner.
- they encourage staff to report hazards and raise health and safety concerns.
- safe systems of work are developed and implemented.
- risk assessments are completed, recorded and regularly reviewed.
- premises, plant and work equipment are maintained in a safe condition.
- personal protective equipment is provided, staff instructed in its use and that records are kept.
- adequate arrangements for fire and first aid are established.
- welfare facilities provided are maintained in a satisfactory state.
- hazardous substances are stored, transported, handled and used in a safe manner accordingto manufacturers' instructions and established rules and procedures.
- health surveillance is carried out and records are kept.
- accidents, ill health and 'near miss' incidents at work are recorded, investigated and reported.
- safety issues raised are thoroughly investigated and, when necessary, further effective controls implemented and communicated to staff.
- effective contingency plans are in place with a designated competent person in charge of theplanning and control measures for situations involving imminent danger.
- contractors engaged are reputable, can demonstrate a good health and safety record and aremade aware of relevant local health and safety rules and procedures.
- health and safety notices are displayed.
- agreed safety standards are maintained particularly those relating to housekeeping.
- health and safety rules are followed by all.

Employees

All employees must:

- take reasonable care of their own safety.
- take reasonable care of the safety of others affected by their actions.
- observe the safety rules.
- comply with the Health and Safety policy.
- conform to all written or verbal instructions given to them to ensure their personal safety andthe safety of others.
- dress sensibly and safely for their particular working environment or occupation.
- conduct themselves in an orderly manner in the workplace.
- use all safety equipment and/or protective clothing as directed.
- avoid any improvisations of any form which could create an unnecessary risk to their personals afety and the safety of others.
- maintain all equipment in good condition and report defects to the Clerk.
- report any safety hazard or malfunction of any item of plant or equipment to the Clerk
- report all accidents within 24 hours to the Clerk or in their absence the Chair of the Council whether an injury is sustained or not.
- attend as requested any health and safety training course.
- observe all laid down procedures for processes, materials and substances used.
- observe the fire evacuation procedure and the position of all fire equipment and fire exit routes.

Arrangements

Accident Investigation and Reporting

An accident is an unplanned event that causes injury to persons, damage to property or a combination of both.

A near miss is an unplanned event that did not cause injury or damage but had the potential to do so.

It is our policy to investigate as soon as possible:

- All accidents resulting in any reportable injury or losses of any assets
- Accidents, however minor
- All near-misses

A documented investigation will take place for selected incidents with witness statements and photographs taken where appropriate.

Certain accidents causing injury, diseases and dangerous occurrences are reportable to the enforcing authority under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

Reporting of such an incident is done online via the HSE portal.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

No alcohol can be consumed at work at any time unless with the permission of the Clerk.

Anyone found taking alcohol or drugs at work without permission is guilty of gross misconduct and will be disciplined accordingly.

The Council reserves the right to require employees to undertake a medical test if it considers thereto be a safety implication.

Consultation and Training

The Council is committed to providing employees with adequate information, instruction andtraining.

A mixture of both internal and external training will be provided and;

- We will ensure that all newly appointed or promoted staff receive an efficient inductioninto their jobs.
- We will provide training to increase the productivity and performance of existing staff, ensuring that they are updated in line with new legislative requirements, techniques

and technology.
- Training needs will be reviewed at least once a year.
- Records of training will be kept for all employees.

Contractors
All contractors working on Council premises and land or on behalf of the Council are required to comply with appropriate rules and regulations governing their work activities.
Before any work is undertaken insurance, risk assessment and method statement are requested.

COSHH
We recognise that some substances have the potential to cause ill health and we will introduce measures to identify any such substances our employees use or are exposed to inthe course of their work.
Where practical alternatives exist, we will not use harmful substances.
Substances that we must use will be assessed and control measures introduced to prevent risk.
Employees will be advised of the risks, provided with the appropriate protective equipment and trained accordingly.

Display Screen Equipment
All reasonable steps will be taken by the Council to secure the health and safety of employeeswho work with display screen equipment.

To achieve this objective the Council will:
- carry out an assessment of each user's workstation.
- implement necessary measures to remedy any risks found as a result of the assessment.
- provide adequate information and training to persons working with display screen equipment.
- endeavour to incorporate changes of task within the working day, to prevent intensive periodsof on-screen activity.
- review software to ensure that it is suitable for the task and is not unnecessarily complicated.
- reimburse employees for eye tests when requested.
- advise existing employees, and all persons applying for work with display screen equipment,of the risks to health and how these are to be avoided.
- investigate any discomfort or ill-health believed to be associated with the use of displayscreen equipment and take appropriate remedial action.
- make special arrangements for individuals with health conditions that could be adversely affected by working with display screen equipment.

Employees must:
- comply with the instructions and training given regarding safe workstation set-up and use, including the need for regular changes of activity or breaks and the use of the equipment provided.
- inform the Clerk of any disability or health condition which may affect their ability to work using display screen equipment or be affected by working with DSE (this information willbe treated confidentially).

- report to the Clerk any discomfort or health concern believed to be associated with the use of DSE (this information will be treated confidentially). See further guidance at appendix 1.

Occupational Ill Health
We will take all reasonably practicable measures to prevent our employees from suffering any adverse health risks. Early detection of adverse health risks associated with our activities allows thecouncil to confirm that adequate controls measures are in place.

Where, by risk assessment, it is considered appropriate we will provide health surveillance by qualified medical professionals.

All employees considered to be at risk will be required to comply with all reasonable requests for medical surveillance.

The frequency of surveillance will be determined by several factors which may include the individual's susceptibility to harm. This will be discussed with the health professional and a programme of testing put into place.

Pregnant Females
We recognise that all work involving pregnant women and nursing mothers will need to take into account their physical and psychological capacity.

Employees are reminded that they have a duty to advise their employer as soon as they know theyare pregnant.

Risk Assessment
We will carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of our employees and to others who might be affected by our work activities.

Safety Inspections
Safety inspections will be arranged at appropriate intervals. All safety equipment such will be regularly tested to ensure effectiveness.

Stress Management
We recognise that stress is an increasing factor in our daily lives.

The definition of stress is "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other demands placed upon them". This makes an important distinction between pressure, whichcan be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

The Council will attempt to identify the stressors within the workplace and control them.

Wherever possible, it will consult with staff on issues and train the Clerk in good management practices.

The Council will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by work related issues.

It is every employee's responsibility to raise concerns to the Town Clerk and accept counselling when recommended.

List of Legislation:

CONSREG	Construction (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 2015
COSHH	Control of Substance Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002
FIRE	Fire Precautions Act 1999, plus Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety)Order 2005
HASAWA	Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
MHO	Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992
MHSWR	Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
PUWER	Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment Regulations 1992
EAWR	Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
RIDDOR	Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
NOISE	Noise at Work Regulations 2005
FIRST AID	First Aid Regulations 1991
LOLER	Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998

Willingale Parish Council

APPENDIX 1 - Display Screen Equipment (DSE)/Visual Display Unit (VDU)

Some practical tips:

Getting comfortable

- Adjust your chair and VDU to find the most comfortable position for your work. As a broadguide, your forearms should be approximately horizontal and your eyes the same height as the top of the VDU.
- Make sure you have enough work space to take whatever documents or other equipmentyou need.
- Try different arrangements of keyboard, screen, mouse and documents to find the best arrangement for you. A document holder may help you avoid awkward neck and eye movements.
- Arrange your desk and VDU to avoid glare, or bright reflections on the screen. This will be easiest if neither you nor the screen is directly facing windows or bright lights. Adjustcurtains or blinds to prevent unwanted light.
- Make sure there is space under your desk to move your legs freely. Move any obstaclessuch as boxes or equipment.
- Avoid excess pressure from the edge of your seat on the backs of your legs and knees. A footrest may be helpful, particularly for smaller users.

Keying In

- Adjust your keyboard to get a good keying position. A space in front of the keyboard is sometimes helpful for resting the hands and wrists when not keying.
- Try to keep your wrists straight when keying. Keep a soft touch on the keys and don't overstretch your fingers. Good keyboard technique is important.

Using a mouse

- Position the mouse within easy reach, so it can be used with the wrist straight. Sit uprightand close to the desk, so you don't have to work with your mouse arm stretched. Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support your forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard.

Reading the screen

- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Make sure the screen surface is clean.
- In setting up software, choose options giving text that is large enough to read easily on yourscreen, when you are sitting in a normal, comfortable working position. Select colours that are easy on the eye (avoid red text on a blue background, or vice-versa).
- Individual characters on the screen should be sharply focused and should not flicker or move. If they do, the VDU may need servicing or adjustment.

Posture and breaks

- Don't sit in the same position for long periods. Make sure you change your posture as often as practicable. Some movement is desirable, but avoid repeated stretching to reachthings you need (if this happens a lot, rearrange your workstation)
- Most jobs provide opportunities to take a break from the screen, e.g. to do filing or photocopying. Make use of them. If there are no such natural breaks in your job, your employer should plan for you to have rest breaks. Frequent short breaks are better than fewer long ones.