



**RUSHDEN TOWN COUNCIL
Health and Safety Policy**

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General Statement – Policy for Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare

Rushden Town Council recognises and accepts its duty to comply with all Occupational Health and Safety Legislation applicable to its business activities. In addition to meeting our legal responsibilities it is committed, in a cost effective and structured manner, to continually improve our Health and Safety performance.

The Town Clerk is ultimately responsible for Occupational Health and Safety within the Council and will pay particular attention to:

1. The provision and maintenance of safe and healthy working conditions.
2. Ensuring that suitable Risk Assessments are undertaken from which are developed safe and efficient work methods.
3. Providing information, instruction, training and supervision as is necessary to ensure the competence of individuals.
4. Making available and maintaining all necessary safety devices and protective equipment.
5. Providing and maintaining equipment and materials that are safe and without risk to the health of our employees or others who may be affected by our business activities.
6. Maintaining a constant interest in Health and Safety matters applicable to Rushden Town Council's activities, especially through consultation, and for its management to set an example in safe behaviour.

The Town Council recognises that the Council's business will grow and develop and for that purpose this document will be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect such changes.

Employees of all positions have a role in ensuring the safety of themselves and others – this is described more fully in the Health and Safety Policy. Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee, regardless of status, who wilfully or deliberately disregards, or who is consistently negligent in conforming to, Rushden Town Council's Health and Safety Policy.

Responsibilities of the Council

Both Councillors and Officers have an important role to play in the management of safety. By their actions they can have an influential effect on the development of a 'safety culture' within Rushden Town Council.

All those with supervisory responsibilities have additional duties to ensure that work activities are undertaken with due regard for safety. A Manager who fails to intervene to address unsafe acts is, in effect, accepting the practice.

Rushden Town Council will:

- Ensure that each employee is aware of their responsibilities as regards health and safety and support other staff on issues affecting safety. In this respect all staff read and understand the Health and Safety Policy, associated procedures and risk assessments made in support of it.
- Ensure that the aims of the policy are met through the appointment of a competent and adequately resourced person to enforce the policy and its arrangements, and are also met through the development and implementation of safe methods of work.
- Encourage appropriate training and re-training for all members of staff.
- Ensure that all service and contract providers approved or appointed by Rushden Town Council are assessed with regard to statutory provisions and good working practices.
- Encourage the uptake of safe actions through making personal interventions in circumstances where the principles of the policy and general good practice are not being followed.
- Ensure that a system exists, and is carried out, for the recording and reporting and investigation of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR).
- Ensure that staff wear safety equipment if this has been specified by those responsible for safety, both internal and external to the Council.
- Ensure that staff take responsibility for the correct use and storage of work equipment and perform a visual inspection before using the equipment; in addition Where checklists are provided they must be completed.
- Ensure that staff never use work equipment in a way which could endanger themselves or the others around them, and never use any equipment for purposes for which it is not designed to be used.
- Ensure all staff are aware that horseplay or practical jokes which may cause danger to others will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action where this is warranted.

- Encourage staff to be comfortable in making suggestions regarding any alternative methods of work which will reduce hazards, make the workplace a safer environment and benefit the welfare of its employees.

It is extremely important to note that ALL Members and Employees of the Council are individually responsible for their own actions and assessments of health and safety issues. Whilst policies and procedures can be documented, guidance, training and direction can be provided and Line Managers tasked with the delivery and monitoring of these policies and procedures, this does not negate the need for everyone at all times to adopt a safe and appropriate working ethic. It is essential that employer and employee co-operate together to achieve this goal.

Accidents – First Aid

In the event of an employee being hurt, the first responsibility is to ensure that any necessary first aid is promptly administered to the injury. Rushden Town Council faces different problems associated with having part of the workforce working remotely within the town.

Following an assessment of First Aid needs, taking account the nature of the work, the proximity to hospitals, ambulance services and doctors, and Town Council Events, Rushden Town Council has concluded that as a minimum there will be three fully qualified First Aiders based at the Town Council Office and two members of staff working remotely. In addition any other members of staff can undertake a one day Appointed Persons course in Emergency Aid, if they so wish.

First Aiders are only expected to administer help and assistance to a level which they feel comfortable and confident with. In respect of more serious injuries, the casualty should be protected from further harm and specialist support obtained.

A full list of the trained First Aiders and Appointed Persons with their relevant certificate expiry dates is held by the Town Clerk.

First Aid Kits and Accident Books

Rushden Town Council will ensure that the town office, vehicles and the storage depot are provided with fully equipped First Aid kits plus an appropriate Accident Book to be compliant with the Data Protection legislation. First Aiders in each location are responsible for checking the First Aid kits and ensuring that the supplies are maintained.

All incidents must be recorded in the Accident Book or on the relevant Accident and/or Incident Forms. Details in the accident book should remain confidential at all times.

Accidents - Recording and Reporting

All injuries, no matter how small, must be recorded, including injuries to staff, sub-contractors, visitors and members of the public. Some may need to be reported to the Enforcing Authority.

An accident is defined as:

“an unplanned event with the potential to cause damage to property or injury to people.”

There is no such thing as a minor accident; the difference in levels of injury is luck!

For instance a brick falling from a scaffold that hits someone is just as much an accident as if the brick fell and missed.

Recording

It is essential that Rushden Town Council records all accidents especially those involving injuries in order that we learn from them as well as meet our statutory obligations. Those accidents involving injuries will be recorded in an Accident Book. The Town Clerk or a designated individual will ensure that suitable investigations are undertaken and reports made, where relevant.

All staff are reminded that alteration of an accident scene without clear authorisation is a serious disciplinary offence.

The reason for investigating accidents is that by identifying the causes of all incidents we reduce the likelihood of having a similar but more serious one, perhaps even a fatality. If an injury has occurred, use the report form in the latter part of this section to investigate the causes of the accident.

Reporting

Some incidents and injuries must be reported to the Enforcing Authority under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995).

These are generally the more major incidents and a full list follows. Failure to report is in itself an offence. Further, if an injured person claims Industrial Injuries Benefit then the Benefits Agency will check with the Enforcing Authority that a RIDDOR report has been made.

An event that has been reported under RIDDOR will be kept for a minimum of 3 years.

RIDDOR Report Forms to use: F2508 – Injuries and Dangerous Occurrences
F2508A – Diseases

It is essential that RIDDOR reports are accurate and factual because they are both legal documents and also because the words used will determine which incidents warrant a Regulator’s visit.

Accordingly, reports made under RIDDOR will only be

made by the Town Clerk. Reports should avoid words that indicate an absence of control (e.g. “slippery”, “dangerous”, “uneven”, “unstable”, “defective”).

RIDDOR Report Centre

Incidents may be reported by any of the following routes:

- Telephone - 0845 300 99 23
- Internet - by completing the relevant form online (www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/)
- Form - by completing the relevant hard copy form and sending (<https://www.hse.gov.uk/forms/incident/index.htm>):

By fax - 0845 3009924

By post to - Incident Contact Centre

Caerphilly Business Park

Caerphilly

CF83 3GG

The Incident Contact Centre will forward details of incidents to the relevant Enforcing Authority which will be the Environmental Health Department of Aylesbury Vale District Council.

Over 3 day Injuries

The most common form of reportable incident are those that involve the injured person not being able to undertake their normal work for more than three days, including days which would not normally be worked (e.g. part-time, weekends, holidays) e.g. an incident on a Thursday leading to absence would become reportable if the injured person could not resume their normal work on the following Monday morning.

Major Injuries (edited list)

- an employee or member of the public being taken to hospital, by whatever means
- fractures other than to fingers, thumbs or toes
- dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine
- loss of sight (temporary or permanent)
- injury resulting from an electric shock or electrical burn leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours
- any other injury leading to hypothermia, heat-induced illness or unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or requiring admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

Dangerous Occurrences (edited list)

- electrical short circuit or overload causing fire or explosion
- explosion or fire causing suspension of normal work for over 24 hours

Prescribed Diseases

If an employee is absent from work due to a disease that is reportable under RIDDOR a written diagnosis from a doctor must be obtained and form F2508A completed and dispatched to HSE within ten days.

- certain poisonings
- some skin diseases such as occupational dermatitis, skin cancer, chrome ulcer, oil folliculitis/acne
- lung diseases including occupational asthma, farmer's lung, pneumoconiosis, asbestosis, mesothelioma
- infections such as leptospirosis; hepatitis; tuberculosis; anthrax; legionellosis and tetanus
- other conditions such as occupational cancer; certain musculo-skeletal disorders; decompression illness and hand-arm vibration syndrome

Accidents - Investigation

There is no such thing as a minor accident – the difference between the injuries associated with one incident and another is luck. Accordingly all accidents must be investigated in order to try to reduce their likelihood of recurrence.

General Guidance

The investigation process will more than likely involve employees in order that a genuine understanding of the causes are reached and that any corrective actions are understood.

The aim of the investigation is to find out what exactly happened; why it happened including any secondary causes and what can be done to prevent recurrence.

However, this does not preclude management invoking the disciplinary procedure, as a separate issue, on completion of the accident investigation for blatant or wilful disregard of Health and Safety legislation, policy or procedures should this be found to be necessary. This may, in some cases, also include the injured party.

Information Gathering

As soon as possible the relevant person will initiate the investigation, there is a specific form for use in these situations, see attached Appendix A.

Fundamentally this can be summarised as:

“Who was doing what, when, where and why?”

1. Visit scene of accident, make diagrams and/or a plan of the area. Include measurements where possible; make notes of what you see.
2. Take photographs of scene and any equipment/machinery involved if appropriate.
3. Interview all persons involved and any witnesses. Take statements and names and addresses etc.
 - Keep all persons/witnesses apart if possible.
 - Interview them separately and not together.
 - Try to put them at ease.
 - Explain object is to find out what happened and why, to try and prevent it in future not to lay blame.
 - Encourage them to tell you what they saw - not what they think happened.
 - Ask open questions, not ones that allow a yes/no answer.
 - Ask them to show you what happened on the diagram/plan you have drawn.
 - Ask them if the plan is accurate or has anything not been included that was there at the time of the incident.
 - If you receive conflicting statements, interview persons again.
 - Stick to the facts; don't make assumptions.

4. Obtain any relevant documentation and photocopy for accident investigation file, such documents might include: -

- Training records
- Work schedules
- Work instructions
- Risk Assessments
- Machine or equipment service agreements
- Relevant policies and procedures

This list is by no means complete.

Control

Do not allow any equipment involved to be repaired prior to the final completion of the investigation.

Always be prepared to adjourn the investigation and ask for help if you think you need it.

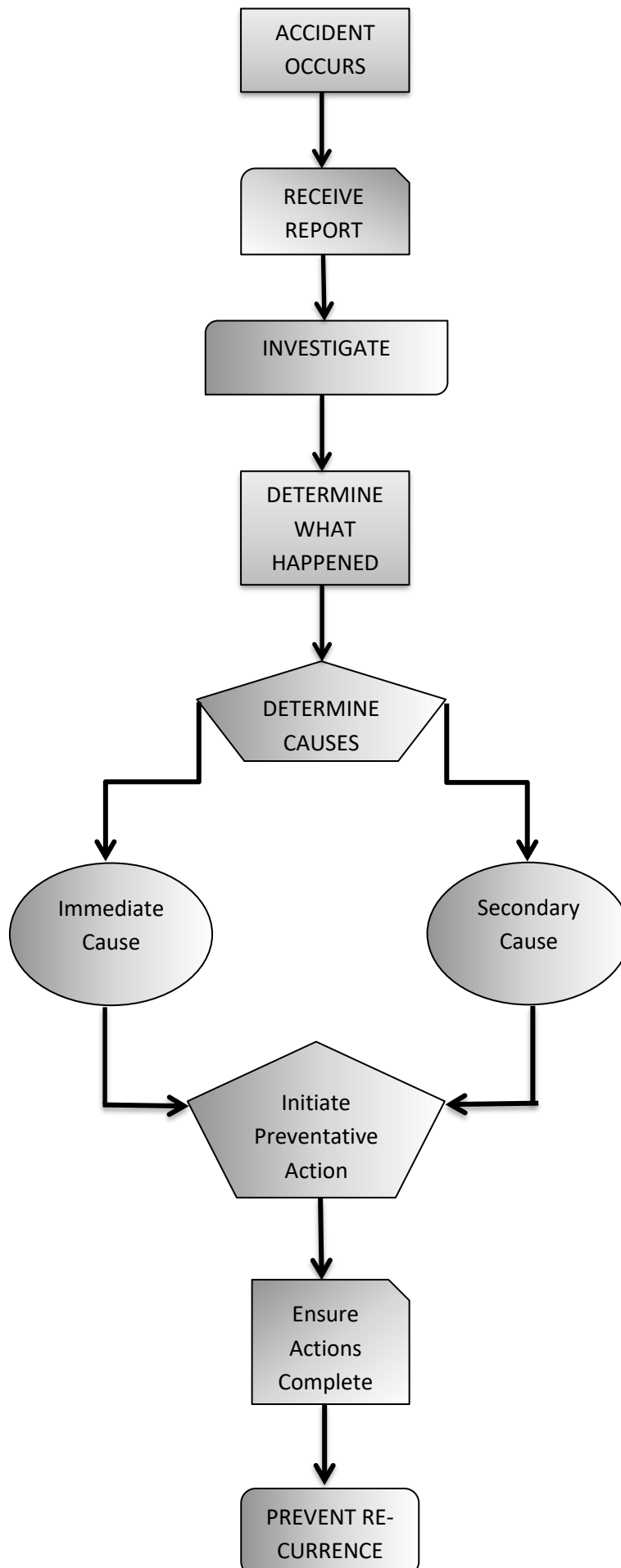
Record

Ensure if appropriate, an entry has been made in the Accident Book and/or the Incident Log and assess whether the incident is reportable under RIDDOR as mentioned previously. The completed investigation documents should be retained in the Town Office.

NEVER admit liability to any person nor hand over a copy of your investigation to client, employee, injured party, insurance company or otherwise.

Remember - do not speculate on the outcome or “gossip” about any incident.

Accident Investigation Procedure



Risk Assessment and Control

The identification, assessment, and control of risk are the cornerstones of effective Health and Safety Management and modern legislation. All activities in life involve a degree of risk; in the work context the aim is to reduce the level of risk as far as reasonably practicable. The purpose of Risk Assessment is to identify both the existing measures needed to reduce risk and assess whether there are any additional measures that could be introduced.

Responsibilities

The Town Clerk is responsible for overseeing that suitable Risk Assessments are undertaken although these tasks may be delegated to other members of staff. In line with the obligations to consult employees on matters of Health and Safety, the process of Risk Assessment will involve those who undertake the activity either individually or through representation.

Process

The process of Risk Assessment is illustrated on the next page but will involve the identification of:

- Tasks/Activities
- Hazards
- Persons Exposed
- Nature of Harm
- Existing and Additional Control Measures
- Residual Risks
- Review Period

Levels of Risk

One of the purposes of Risk Assessment is to identify those risks that are inadequately controlled. Therefore it is useful to have a means of judging the degree of risk control achieved by the control measures. Rather than use complex calculation systems the procedure employs a simple risk estimator relating the severity of harm to the likelihood of the harm. In determining the risk, regard should be made to the vulnerability of the persons at risk. Attention is also paid to the robustness of the risk control arrangements.

SEVERITY	Severe	MEDIUM	HIGH	HIGH
	Minor	LOW	MEDIUM	MEDIUM
	Trivial	LOW	LOW	
		Unlikely	Likely	Certain

LIKELIHOOD

Definitions

Hazard: “something with the potential to cause harm”

Risk: “the likelihood of the harm occurring together with the severity of the harm”

Consultation

Risk Assessors are encouraged to involve those who undertake the specific tasks both to ensure that the Risk Assessments relate to the work as it is undertaken and in the spirit of consultation. Such involvement is also likely to enhance acceptance of the identified risk control measures. All Risk Assessments are fully documented and retained in the Council’s offices.

Control Measures

The following list of control measures is included as an aide memoir of the types of techniques that are available.

- ELIMINATE hazardous substances/methods/materials/processes
- SUBSTITUTE less hazardous forms
- CLEAN to remove solid/liquid contaminants
- DISPOSE of hazardous materials/substances safely
- ENCLOSE hazardous substances/noise/materials/equipment
- EXCLUDE non-essential personnel from the work area
- MINIMISE generation of hazardous substances/materials/noise
- PROVIDE risk assessments, safe working practices, adequate facilities for eating, drinking and resting etc, appropriate signage
- PROHIBIT eating, drinking, smoking etc in certain work areas
- REDUCE the number of people exposed and the period of exposure

STORE hazardous materials/substances safely

DISCIPLINE self-discipline by management when necessary to correct wrong doings

Review

Rushden Town Council will review Risk Assessments either annually, in the event of an incident or should there be a significant change to current working practices.

Adequate Control

All activities in life involve risk, work is no exception. The aim of these Risk Assessments is to ensure that the level of risk is reduced as far as reasonably practicable. As a result it is recognised that accidents will occur but the aim is to reduce their frequency, minimise the severity of injuries and most importantly learn from experience.