

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Councillor Helen Crane Executive Member for Waste, Environmental Health, Licensing and Sustainability

To: Cabinet - 3rd July 2023

(Author: Craig Fowler, Environmental Health & Licensing Manager)

Subject Corporate Health & Safety

Purpose: To propose a revised Health and Safety Policy and to recommend its formal adoption and implementation

Recommendation(s):

1) That Cabinet Approve the revised Health and Safety Policy contained at Appendix A to this report for implementation

1.0 BACKGROUND

1.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 imposes duties on Breckland Council, as an employer. These include:

- Adoption and review of a written Health and Safety Policy Statement;
- Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees;
- Ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of others visiting Breckland DC's premises or using its services.

1.2 The existing Health and Safety Policy was approved by cabinet on 4th January 2021. This was when South Holland & Breckland were in a shared management arrangement and the policy was in a shared corporate template.

1.3 The Policy is now bespoke to Breckland Council only and has been reviewed to ensure it remains up to date and in particular, reflects the changes in corporate governance, and how health & Safety is now managed.

2.0 OPTIONS

2.1 Agree the adoption of the revised Health and Safety Policy.

2.2 Agree the adoption of the revised Health and Safety Policy with amendments.

2.3 Do nothing.

3.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

3.1 To ensure Breckland is compliant with its statutory duties.

3.2 To protect the health and safety and welfare of employees and the health and safety of visitors to Breckland's premises or where services are provided by the Council.

3.3 To ensure the policy is up to date and stands up well to external scrutiny/challenge.

4.0 EXPECTED BENEFITS

4.1 To ensure compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and assist with consistent application of the policy across the Council.

- 4.2 Better and more effective standards of Health and Safety Management. This will lead to better health and safety of the workplace. Less sickness, better morale and productivity.
- 4.3 If the Council should face injury/compensation claims or legal enforcement action then the existence of an up-to-date Health and Safety Policy (which lays out the Council's Health and Safety Management arrangements) is likely to reduce substantially the risk of successful claims and reduce reputational risk.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

In preparing this report, the report author has considered the likely implications of the decision - particularly in terms of Carbon Footprint / Environmental Issues; Constitutional & Legal; Contracts; Corporate Priorities; Crime & Disorder; Data Protection; Equality & Diversity/Human Rights; Financial; Health & Wellbeing; Reputation; Risk Management; Safeguarding; Staffing; Stakeholders/Consultation/Timescales; Other

Where the report author considers that there may be implications under one or more of these headings, these are identified below.

5.1 Constitutional & Legal

- 5.1.1 It is a requirement of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 that employers with five or more employees produce and revise a written health and safety policy.
- 5.1.2 The failure to have a Health and Safety Policy Statement is an offence and the Council could be liable for prosecution and also civil claims.

5.2 Contracts

- 5.2.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no direct implications. However, the management of contractors is captured by Health and Safety Law and the revised policy will assist this process.

5.3 Corporate Priorities

- 5.3.1 This proposal supports the corporate priorities of Breckland Council and 'Breckland Cares' as well as its desire to be a caring and considerate employer.

5.4 Equality and Diversity / Human Rights

- 5.4.1 Equal opportunities. Breckland has a duty to protect the health and safety of all staff, members and visitors.

5.5 Financial

- 5.5.1 There are no direct financial implications of approving the policy.

5.6 Health & Wellbeing

5.6.1 This policy is fundamental in protecting the health and wellbeing of employees, and the protection of any other persons who could be affected by the Council's undertakings.

5.7 Reputation

5.7.1 Compliance with Health and Safety legislation will safeguard the Council's reputation.

5.8 Risk Management

5.8.1 The proposed policy is fundamental in laying down the framework for managing occupational health and safety at work and reducing risk levels for employees and work activities. Also this supports Business Continuity.

5.9 Staffing

5.9.1 There are no staffing implications by approving the policy. All staff will receive suitable and relevant training on their role and duties in ensuring the implementation of this policy.

5.10 Stakeholders / Constitution / Timescales

5.10.1 No further consultation is required. The Policy has already been to the relevant Health and Safety Groups and the relevant parties and stakeholders. At the present time Unison have no comments to make.

6.0 WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED

6.1 All

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 No acronyms used.

Background papers: - None.

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix A BDC Health & Safety Policy 2023