

GENERAL OFFICE HEALTH AND SAFETY

References:

- A. Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
- B. Provision and use of Work Equipment Regulations (as amended).
- C. Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (as amended).
- D. Health and Safety (Manual Handling Operations) Regulations (as amended).

Introduction

1. The potential hazards to be found in the office environment cannot be over-emphasised. They range from electrical hazards, to slip and trip hazards, fire, or hazards arising from the use of display screens, injuries from poor manual handling or poor posture. NB: this policy is closely associated with our Health and Safety Policy.

Responsibilities

2. The Town Clerk has overall responsibility for office safety and must ensure that unsafe practices such as overloading of electrical sockets, dangerously laid electrical cables and incorrect use of office furniture are eliminated. However, it is the responsibility of all staff and Councillors to exercise care in the workplace.
3. All employees at all times are also responsible for their own safety and the safety of others in the office environment by adopting good safety practices. These relate, below to:

High Level Access

4. If you find it necessary to obtain something from a shelf or cupboard, ask a colleague who is taller to help you or use the stool.

Desk and Chairs

5. Close drawers after use, so that you and your colleagues do not walk into them.

Filing Cabinets

6. Most filing cabinets have safety devices to prevent staff from opening more than one drawer. Nevertheless it is good practice to never open more than one drawer at a time. If possible, place heavier objects in the bottom or lower drawers.

Corridors and Staircases

7. All corridors form part of the means to escape in the event of fire. These must be kept clear at all times.
8. Do not use fire extinguishers to wedge doors open.
9. When natural light is insufficient, ensure that electric lights (where available) are switched on.

Floor Coverings

10. Watch out for loose or turned up floor coverings. Report hazards to the Town Clerk or the Assistant Town Clerk.

Spillages

11. If you spill something on floors or stairs, ensure that it is wiped up immediately. Likewise if you discover spilt fluid, don't just leave it there for your colleagues to slip on.

Wires, Cables and Flexes

12. Tripping over loose wires is one of the major causes of accidents in offices. Ensure that all cables are securely fastened and kept well away from any area where people may walk.

Paper Trimmer

13. The paper trimmer must be fitted with a guard to prevent fingers getting cut. Never operate a trimmer without the appropriate guard securely fixed in place. Report an unguarded or damaged trimmer immediately to the Town Clerk.

Shredding Machine

14. Ensure all loose items of clothing e.g. tie, loose sleeves etc, and long hair are away from the shredding machine opening prior to operation.