

Dronfield Town Council

Fire Safety Policy (June 2024)

Version History

1.0 Fire Safety Policy – New Policy – Adopted June 2024

1. Introduction

1.1 The need to manage fire risk and ensure the safety of employees whilst at work and the safety of other relevant persons in the premises or in the vicinity of the premises is a requirement under both fire and health & safety legislation. This policy sets out clearly how the Town Council will achieve this and what it expects its employees to do to assist.

2. General Statement

2.1 Dronfield Town Council will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the risk from fire will be managed in compliance with the appropriate fire safety legislation, guidance and best practice standards.

Management of fire risks will be undertaken in such a way as to prevent injury or ill-health to employees, visitors, contractors and others who may be affected by the activities of the organisation.

In doing so, Dronfield Town Council will ensure that:

- fire safety risk assessments are carried out on all its premises
- a competent person to assist with implementing the requirements of legislation is appointed
- organisational arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of fire safety are implemented
- general fire precautions to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of its employees, students, contractors and visitors on its premises are implemented and maintained.

2.2 This Fire Safety Policy applies to all premises and activities falling, to any extent, under the control of Dronfield Town Council. The policy sets down the framework by which management and all employees, contractors and visitors will be expected to meet their fire safety duties.

3. Legal Requirement

3.1 The primary legislation applicable to fire safety is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

However, the following legislation is also relevant:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Health and Safety (Safety Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Building Act 1984, Building (Amendment) Regulations 2012: Circular 02/2012

4. Employees' Duties

4.1 All employees have a duty to take steps to ensure that they do not place themselves or others at risk of harm by assisting in identifying fire hazards as they emerge and reducing all fire risks by working in accordance with approved safe practices. They are also expected to cooperate fully with the Council in complying with any procedures that may be introduced as a measure to protect the safety and well being of staff and visitors.

4.2 The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places duties on responsible persons, to the extent that they have control over premises, to:

- assess the risks posed by fire to the safety of their employees and to anyone else who may be affected by their activities
- eliminate those risks, so far as reasonably practicable, or to otherwise reduce those risks to a tolerable level.

In Dronfield Town Council the appropriate person will be the Town Clerk.

On a day-to-day basis, the responsibility for ensuring that these duties are undertaken will be delegated to individuals within the organisation as detailed below.

4.3 Organisational Responsibilities

The appropriate person will ensure that adequate resources are made available to enable Dronfield Town Council to fulfil its duties under the Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Act.

The Town Clerk will ensure that the appropriate policies, procedures and audit protocols are in place and reviewed from time to time.

The Town Clerk will ensure that these policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to on a sustainable basis in their areas of strategic responsibility.

Line Managers will ensure that these policies and procedures are implemented and adhered to in their area of operational responsibility.

The Town Clerk will ensure that an appropriate system for carrying out fire risk assessments and developing emergency plans is in place and is implemented in all premises and activities within the premises.

The Town Clerk will ensure that action plans, fire precautions and evacuation procedures, resulting from fire risk assessments, are implemented and control measures for controlling the risk from fire are maintained.

The Town Clerk will ensure that regular inspections are carried out on control measures and general fire precautions to ensure their continued effectiveness.

The Town Clerk will ensure that fire investigations are undertaken to a suitable level for any unwanted fire-related incident.

The Town Clerk will ensure that audits are carried out periodically to ensure the effectiveness of control measures.

Employees, visitors, contractors and others will ensure they participate as requested in the fire risk assessment process and will ensure they comply with the arrangements made to control risks from fire hazards.

4.4 Arrangements

Fire Detection and Alarm System

Automatic fire detection and alarm systems and break-glass call points shall be installed, maintained and tested in accordance with BS 5839.

A maintenance contract is in place with Lumlec. It provides a full check and service of the entire system in accordance with BS 5839.

Fire alarms will be visually checked daily and tested weekly by caretakers and any defects should be reported immediately to their line manager.

Provision and Maintenance of Fire-fighting and Other Equipment

Fire fighting equipment will be installed and sited as recommended by the Fire Risk Assessment. Caretakers will have a responsibility to ensure that the equipment is accessible at all times.

An annual service contract is in force with Lumlec for maintaining the fire extinguishers.

All other fire related equipment will be installed and maintained in accordance with current best practice requirements.

Provision and Maintenance of Fire Escape Routes

Emergency lighting, fire exit route directional signage (and other signage related to fire safety), fire doors, fire lobbies and other parts of exit routes shall be available.

Emergency lighting shall be installed in all premises to the current British Standard.

The emergency lighting is under a maintenance contract with Lumlec. Emergency lighting will be tested weekly by caretakers and any defects should be reported immediately to their line manager.

Provision of Training and Information

Within six months of commencing employment, each new member of staff will attend an induction training course. This course will deal with all basic aspects of fire safety and fire equipment including where appropriate, the use of fire-fighting equipment.

Within every three years all staff will receive refresher training.

Fire action notices are posted in prominent locations within buildings.

Handouts containing fire prevention information for contractors and visitors will be issued by the appropriate member of staff.

A permit to work systems for contractors engaging in hot work is in force where necessary and is managed by the Outside Services Team Leader.

A file of relevant information including plans and details of the locations of hazardous substance areas, etc is kept at the Civic Hall for use by the fire brigade and other emergency services.

Vulnerable Persons

Dronfield Town Council recognises its responsibility to ensure any occupiers with vulnerabilities such as mobility difficulties to ensure they are safely evacuated.

A process will be adopted to ensure appropriate Personal and/or Generic Emergency Evacuation Plans are developed and utilised.

Fire Drills

The following personnel have been nominated and trained in emergency procedures.

1. Phil Backhouse
2. Dave Roberts
3. Paul Duncan

Fire drills will be held once a year. These drills are to be arranged by a caretaker, who will trigger the alarms and reset them once the drill is completed.

5. Communication

5.1 Dronfield Town Council as the employer is the “Responsible Person” for purposes of the Fire Safety Order 2005. Members and Staff will be kept informed by the Town Clerk, who will be known as the “Duty Holder”, of any changes that are made to the Council’s fire safety procedures and significant findings from fire risk assessments. The Council will also ensure that all visitors to its premises are briefed in the evacuation procedures and not left alone unless they are aware of, and familiar with, all available escape routes.

6. Procedures

6.1 The following procedures have been introduced in order to maintain high standards of fire safety:

- A fire risk assessment has been undertaken under the Fire Safety Order which will be reviewed annually. However more frequent reviews will occur if there are any changes that will impact on its effectiveness. These may include alterations to the premises or new work processes.
- The emergency fire action plan and the fire evacuation procedures will be reviewed and practiced at least annually and a record of fire evacuation drills will be kept.
- A Fire Safety Log Book will be kept containing the following documents which are available for inspection if required:
 - General Emergency Evacuation Plan
 - Fire safety risk assessments
 - Examinations, inspections and tests carried out on fire fighting and detection equipment, emergency lighting and alarm systems
 - Records of fire evacuation drills
- Training will be provided as necessary to all staff with additional role based training being given to any staff with extra fire safety responsibilities, such as fire marshals and fire safety assistants, which may include the use of fire extinguishers.
- All new members of staff and temporary employees will be provided with fire safety training at induction including how to raise the alarm and the available escape routes.
- All emergency exits will be clearly signed, unlocked (except by approved emergency door release mechanisms) and kept free from obstructions at all times.

- All fire-related equipment will be regularly serviced and maintained. If any employee notices fire safety equipment is defective or missing, they must report it to the Duty Holder otherwise known as the Town Clerk.
- The fire alarm system will be tested weekly. Staff will be told when a test is scheduled.
- Any other fire safety systems will be checked regularly to ensure correct operation, where necessary, e.g. emergency lighting, fire extinguishers and smoke detection.
- When public events take place that are outside normal day-to-day operations, the Town Council will ensure an equivalent level of fire safety exists during the period in which the event takes place by requiring users to comply with the Council fire safety policy and emergency procedures.

This policy forms part of an employee's condition of employment. Failure to comply will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

7. Actions in the event of a fire

7.1 On discovering a fire

- If you discover a fire raise the alarm immediately by operating the fire alarm system.
- If you have been trained and feel that it is safe to do so, attempt to fight the fire using the equipment provided.
- If this fails, ensure that no one is left in the room and close the door behind you. Then evacuate immediately to the assembly point.
- Ensure that you or the designated person has called the fire and rescue service.
- Play your part in the roll call so you are safely accounted for.

7.2 If you hear the Fire Alarm

- Operate any essential shut down devices e.g. machinery.
- Immediately leave using the nearest available fire exit.
- Report to the assembly point for a roll call.
- If you are with a visitor, ensure they accompany you.

7.3 Fire Marshals/Safety Assistants

- Ensure all staff and visitors around you evacuate the building and proceed to the assembly point.
- Report to the Duty Holder, noting any absentees

7.4 Duty Holder

- Gather all information regarding the evacuation.
- Establish if it is a genuine fire or false alarm by checking the fire panel located in the office foyer.
- Ensure that in event of any fires that the fire and rescue service has been called.

Liaise with the fire and rescue service incident commander on their arrival, giving full details of the fire including names of any persons believed to be missing.

8. Fire Safety Log Book

8.1 A record of the fire risk assessment, the fire safety action plan, the emergency fire plans, the nature, frequency and dates of any training events, the nature, frequency and dates of all tests, checks and servicing activities, a record of any dangerous substances, a record of those persons appointed as fire marshals or fire safety assistants and their respective roles and an up to date plan drawing of the premises will be kept in the Town Council's fire safety log book.