

Report to: **Personnel Committee**



Date of Meeting 28 January 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Corporate Health and Safety Policy Update

Report summary:

East Devon District Council has a moral and legal responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its staff, members, customers and partners. For this reason, the Council employs specialist, qualified officers who are based in the Environmental Health Service, to advise the Council on health and safety matters and ensure compliance.

It is a legal requirement under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 that the Council prepare a written statement of general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of employees. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy achieves this and this review ensures that it is up to date.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

- Approve the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the Council is compliant with Health and Safety law.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Assets and Economy
- ☐ Communications and Democracy
- ☒ Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- ☐ Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- ☐ Environment - Nature and Climate
- ☐ Environment - Operational
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The current policy is out of date and does not reflect recent changes to the organisation. Whilst the content is still technically accurate, being out of date does introduce some risk should an enforcement agency intervene.

Links to background information

Appendix 1 – Draft Corporate Health and Safety Policy

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ A supported and engaged community
 - ☐ Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - ☐ Resilient economy that supports local business
 - ☒ Financially secure and improving quality of services
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Report in full

1. Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, imposes duties on employers for the health and safety of its employees and non-employees who are affected by the ‘work activity’.

One of the requirements of the Act is:

Every employer to prepare and as often as may be appropriate revise a written statement of his general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of his employees and the organisation and arrangements for the time being in force for carrying out that policy, and to bring the statement and any revision of it to the notice of all of his employees.

Failure to comply with these requirements can have serious consequences – for both organisations and individuals. Sanctions include fines, imprisonment and disqualification.

2. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy

The Council has had a policy in place for many years. The latest format was first produced in 2004 and was last fully reviewed in 2017, although the Chief Executive signs an updated Health and Safety Policy Statement each year. This means that it does not fully reflect the changes that have occurred within the organisation or the wider health and safety field. As such a full review of the policy has been carried out – both as part of a wider audit and review by the Corporate Safety Team.

The review found that the technical aspects of the policy were still valid (although the majority of the detail is contained in separate arrangements – such as policies and procedures covering specific safety aspects). However structural changes have not been reflected and there some gaps in responsibilities.

The Policy has been updated to address these issues. The main changes are:

- Now reflects current structure.
- Wording updated and clarified.
- Now clarifies member responsibilities.

3. Conclusions

The updated Corporate Health and Safety Policy now reflects the structure of the Council and reflects the Council’s commitment to health and safety. It also helps the Council meet its statutory requirements.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implication arising from this report.

Legal implications:

To follow