



Southampton City Council Policy Fire Safety Statement of Intent

Southampton City Council (the Council) places significant importance on the health, safety and welfare of staff, residents, visitors, the public and others who may be affected by its business. It is considered essential that management and staff should work together positively to achieve an environment compatible with the provision of the highest quality services where health hazards to staff, residents, visitors, the public and others are minimised so far as is reasonably practical.

The Council acknowledges that fire poses the potential for serious injury, damage and loss. It therefore accepts its responsibility, so far as is reasonably practicable, to prevent loss of life, minimise harm to people, and reduce damage to property and the environment caused by fire and other related risks in premises which are under its control or in which it is the occupier.

Southampton City Council further recognises it has statutory responsibilities as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Fire Safety Act 2023 and the Housing Act 2004. These regulations provide the minimum standard for the control and management of fire wherever the Council has a duty.

The Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) and GOV.UK (links below) provide information and guidance on how to manage fire safety and Southampton City Council will be mindful of the latest guidance and advice, provided by these regarding fire safety management and ensure that, as a minimum, its own processes and procedures follow this guidance as far as reasonably practicable.

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/fire.htm>

<https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities>

This corporate fire safety policy and arrangements will document how it intends to achieve this. This policy will apply to all premises that are directly managed by the Council and is provided to schools, leaseholders, partners etc. as guidance. Managers

of these premises are strongly advised to implement it or meet its standards in an adopted policy within premises under their direct control.

Southampton City Council accepts its responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Fire Safety Act 2021 and the Housing Act 2004 and will aim to reduce as far as reasonably practicable, the risks from fire in all its premises. In support of this the Council will adhere to the following:-

This *Statement of Intent* provides a framework of principle policies which will direct all other Council policies, procedures and decisions concerning the management of fire.

To protect its staff, visitors to its buildings and the public in general from the hazards presented by fire Southampton City Council will:


1. Appoint a director with responsibility for Health and Safety to fulfil the role of the Responsible Person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO)
2. Ensure roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of all staff are clearly defined and understood in order to secure fire safety and both corporate and individual compliance with relevant legislation.
3. Ensure that the appropriate technical expertise is available that will support the Council's best interests at all times.
4. Ensure one or more competent persons are appointed to provide fire safety advice.
5. Ensure a 'Responsible Person for Property Management' is appointed for each building where it has a duty to manage fire.
6. Ensure all corporate premises managers with site responsibilities or asset management responsibilities are provided with the appropriate training to carry out these duties with regards to fire management.
7. Ensure all Council owned, managed or occupied premises has a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment carried out by a competent person to ensure risks from fire, or from dangerous substances which could lead to fire, are assessed and control measures commensurate with the general principles of control or the principles of control (dangerous substances) described in the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 are implemented to either eliminate risk or to reduce residual risk to as low as reasonably practicable and that an action plan is implemented accordingly, with actions assigned, and that it is monitored to ensure all actions are completed appropriately in a timely manner.
8. Take all reasonable efforts to ensure fire safety is managed effectively in the properties where it has a statutory duty, including devising measures to ensure satisfactory procedures are in place to reduce risks to persons in the event of a fire and that all persons affected are able to reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency.
9. Ensure any equipment provided in Council owned, occupied or managed premises in connection with assuring fire safety is maintained, by a competent person, in a fit and efficient state with appropriate records maintained.

10. Ensure adequate cover of appropriately trained Fire Marshals in all buildings under the control of the Council or a suitable alternative process put in place (i.e. 'check tag' process).
 11. Ensure staff are provided with appropriate information, instruction and training, at appropriate intervals, regarding fire precautions, including against arson, at Council owned, managed or occupied premises.
 12. Ensure all Council owned, managed or occupied premises have a Fire Safety Management Plan and Fire Emergency Plan in place and that these are reviewed at appropriate intervals.
 13. Ensure a Fire Log Book is in place at all Council owned, managed or occupied premises detailing how fire safety is managed, including holding records of the Fire Risk Assessment and action plan, routine maintenance and testing, evacuation processes and procedures, assigned responsibilities, including details of appointed fire marshals and all other fire safety relevant information.
 14. Be proactive in reducing future fire risks and liabilities where maintenance and refurbishment works present an effective opportunity.
 15. Ensure resources are concentrated on reducing risks from fire in premises where there is high life risk.
 16. Monitor compliance with policies, procedures and fire management plans. Review performance and identify risks and introduce measures to control them.
 17. Ensure only competent, adequately qualified and trained personnel and service providers are employed to work on behalf of the Council.
 18. Undertake appropriate actions to deal with contractors and service providers that do not meet the standards set out by regulations.
 19. Ensure all Council buildings are designed, built and, where applicable, modified in accordance with current safety standards, Building Regulations and applicable codes of practice to improve passive fire protection measures.
 20. Where SCC staff shares premises with other occupiers, the Council cooperates and coordinates, as necessary, with other 'Responsible Persons' as defined by the RRFSO.
 21. Where SCC staff or services are operating from non-SCC premises; ensure that we cooperate and ensure compliance with their fire management plan.
 22. Where fires do occur, ensure effects are mitigated by ensuring;
 - There is an appropriate human response through local management
 - All persons affected can reach a place of safety in the event of an emergency
- The Arrangement section of this policy will detail who has a responsibility in managing and how fire will be managed in SCC Premises including maintained schools.

Andrew Travers
Interim Chief Executive

Southampton City Council Signed:  **Dated: 11th April 2024**

Cllr Lorna Fielker
Leader of The Council

Southampton City Council Signed:  **Dated: 12.4.2024**

STATEMENT:

In order to comply with legislation and fulfil statutory responsibility, the Council must make sure that:

Appropriate advice, competence and resources are provided, to carry out the preventive and protective measures required by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (RRFSO);

- All properties have a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment;
- Appropriate information, instruction and training is provided to all employees and non-employees on Southampton City Council premises.
- Each property has an appointed Responsible Person – Property Management

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to:

- All managers including head teachers;
- All employees of Southampton City Council;
- All contractors working for or on behalf of the Council.

Version Control

This Safe Working Procedure is issued and managed by Corporate Health and Safety Service.

Version Number	Date	Amendments
Version 1.00	Nov 2001	
Version 9.00	May 2007	
Version 10.00	Dec 2010	
Version 10.01	July 2012	Minor Amendments
Version 10.02	Dec 2015	Formatting and links
Version 10.03	Dec 2019	General review
Version 10.04	Jan 2020	Review of FRA requirements
Version 10.05	Mar 2020	Combine Policy and SWP
Version 11.00	June 2020	Include additional Fire Management Plan details
Version 11.01	May 2021	Policy updated for signing by new leader of the council and to clarify FRA arrangements pending further decision by the Council
Version 11.02	May 2022	Policy updated for signing by new leader of the council
Version 11.03	Aug 2023	Policy review and Fire Safety Act updated to reflect new version coming into effect from 1 st Oct 2023
Version 11.04	Mar 2024	Policy updated for signing by new leader of the council and new interim Chief Executive
Review Conducted		Next Review Date
		Jun 2012
	July 2012	July 2013
	Dec 2015	Dec 2017
	Dec 2019	Dec 2021
	Mar 2020	Mar 2022
	June 2020	Jun 2022
	May 2021	May 2023
	Aug 2023	Aug 2024
	Mar 2024	Mar 2025

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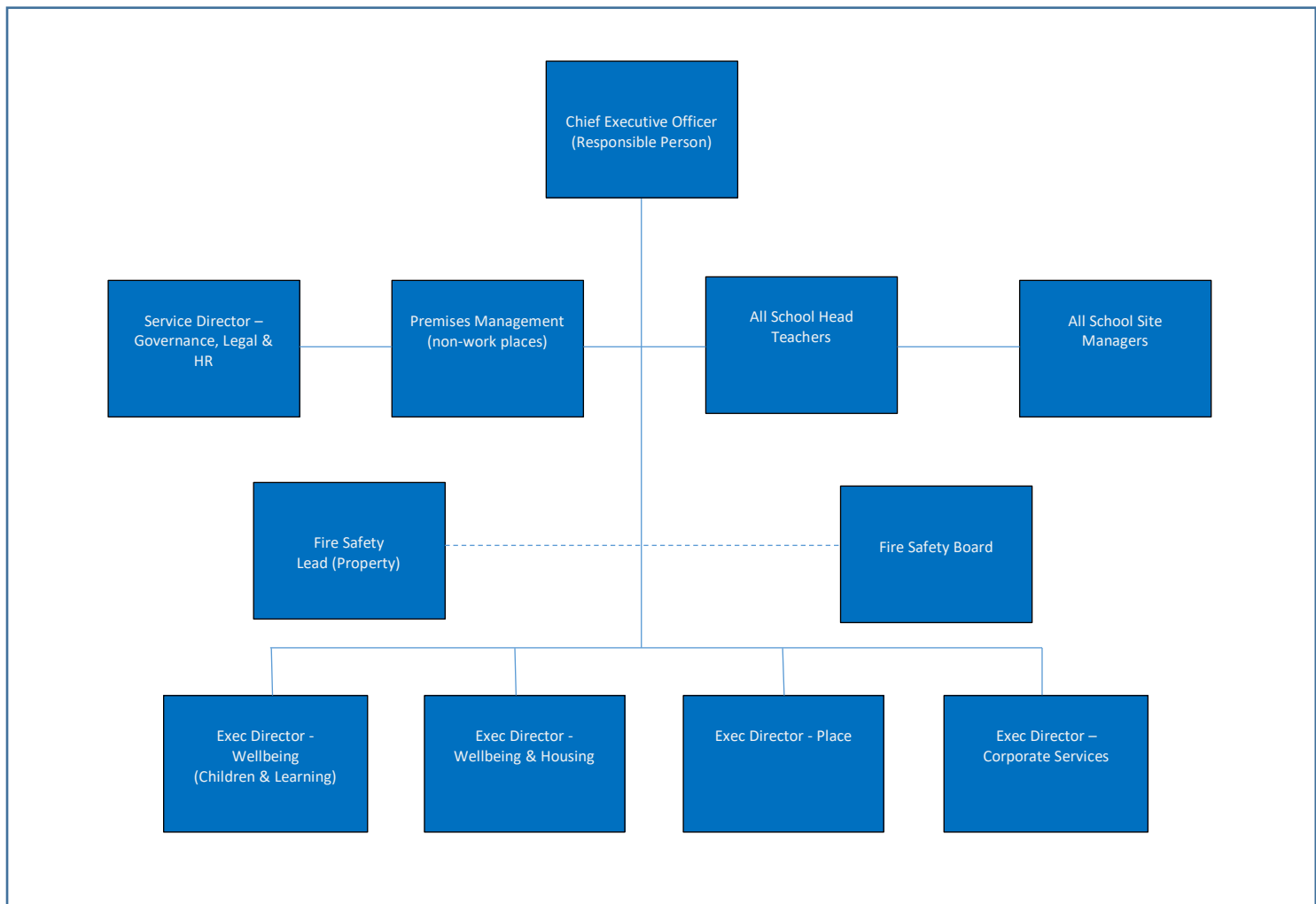
Forms

Forms below can be downloaded from the Corporate Health and Safety [Forms Library](#)

- Fire Action Notice (with Fire Marshal or without Fire Marshal)
- Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

Hierarchy of Responsibility

- 1.1. Responsibility for complying with the RRFSO for all workplaces, rests with the employer i.e. Southampton City Council. The employer is held by strict liability under the Order and will always be held to be the “Responsible Person” where the workplace is to any extent under his or her control.
- 1.2. The Responsible Person referred to in the RRFSO (The Employer) is a person with strict liability for fire safety. He or she is not the same person as the Responsible Person – Property Management.
- 1.3. Responsibility for complying with the RRFSO for all non-workplaces rest with owner of the premises or the person who has direct or delegated control of the premises.
- 1.4. Below is a schematic identifying fire safety responsibilities for Southampton City Council.



Fire Risk Assessment

- 1.5. A suitable and sufficient recorded fire risk assessment is required for all workplaces as per the requirements of the RRFSO.
- 1.6. A fire risk assessment needs to be completed by a 'competent' person. The competent fire risk assessor should:
 - 1.6.1. Understand the relevant fire safety legislation;
 - 1.6.2. Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the Government guidance document relevant to the premises in question.
 - 1.6.3. Have appropriate education, training, knowledge and experience in the principles of fire safety;
 - 1.6.4. Have an understanding of fire development and the behavior of people in fire;
 - 1.6.5. Understand the fire hazards, fire risks and relevant factors associated with occupants at special risk within the buildings of the type in question;
 - 1.6.6. Understand the causes of fire and means for their prevention;
 - 1.6.7. Understand the design principles of fire protection measures;
 - 1.6.8. Have appropriate training and/or experience in carrying out fire risk assessments.
- 1.7. Towards completing a Fire Risk Assessment, a drawing of the floor plan of the site will assist in this task. The floor plan should be populated with relevant information such as location of fire extinguishers, call points, smoke detectors, fire exits etc.
- 1.8. The Fire Risk Assessment is a 'live' document that must be formally reviewed annually. If there is any reason to suspect that the Building Fire Risk Assessment is invalid or there has been a significant change in the premises that has affected the fire precautions, the fire risk assessment will need to be reviewed, and if necessary revised. Reasons for review could include:
 - 1.8.1. Changes to work processes or the way that they are organised, including the introduction of new equipment;
 - 1.8.2. Alterations to the building, including the internal layout and building works
 - 1.8.3. Substantial changes to furniture and fixings;
 - 1.8.4. The introduction, change of use or increase in the storage of hazardous substances;
 - 1.8.5. The failure of fire precautions, e.g. fire detection systems and alarm systems, life safety sprinklers or ventilation systems;
 - 1.8.6. Significant changes to displays or quantities of stock;
 - 1.8.7. A significant increase in the number of people present; and
 - 1.8.8. The presence of people with some form of disability;

Fire Safety Management Plan

- 1.9. The Fire Authorities are the main agency responsible for enforcing all fire-safety legislation in non-domestic premises. If they visit the premises the Inspector may request to see evidence of the Fire Safety Management Plan.
- 1.10. Documents that may be requested include:
 - 1.10.1. Fire Risk Assessment and action plan
 - 1.10.2. Fire Precautions Log Book
 - 1.10.3. Records of staff training and drills

- 1.10.4. Records of testing and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment
- 1.10.5. Records of notification of faults and records of repair to fire-related equipment or passive fire protection
- 1.10.6. Records of testing and maintenance of all fire safety systems including fire alarms, emergency lighting, sprinkler systems and smoke ventilation systems
- 1.10.7. Records of fire inspections
- 1.10.8. Fire Safety Policy and Procedures
- 1.10.9. Confirmation of the 'Responsible Person' for the building
- 1.10.10. The inspector may also wish to inspect all or part of the premises and to talk to members of staff.
- 1.10.11. Further guidance on the implementation of these documents can be found on the [Fire Safety Micro Site](#)

Information and Training

- 1.11. Anyone connected with the working environment must be aware of the fire procedures for the site/workplace, which could include a vehicle. The amount of information is dependent on the size and hazards present.
- 1.12. For visitors to a 'low' risk environment, a 'Fire Action Notice' (see [Fire Safety Micro Site](#) for an example) displayed in common areas and site plan may be sufficient. Additional controls could include:
 - 1.12.1. Ensuring all visitors are accompanied by a member of staff at all times;
 - 1.12.2. Providing information to visitors about the site;
 - 1.12.3. Advising visitors when they sign into the building of the emergency procedures;
 - 1.12.4. Illustrating the procedures on a visitor's badge.
- 1.13. For employees and temporary workers, the fire emergency procedures must be provided on the first day of starting work within a new environment, this is included within the 'staff induction' checklist that must be given to new staff.
- 1.14. The fire arrangements have to be made specific to the site, to include:
 - 1.14.1. A physical walk around to show the escape routes;
 - 1.14.2. The location of the assembly point;
 - 1.14.3. Any additional hazards to be aware of;
 - 1.14.4. Any arrangements that are in place or required i.e. Location of extinguishers/call points, what is sounds or looks like (flashing beacon);
 - 1.14.5. How to call the emergency services;
 - 1.14.6. Introduction of the Fire Marshal(s) for the area.
- 1.15. For employees with access onto the Southampton City Council intranet, there is 'Fire Safety E-Learning' available that should be completed every two years. To access this system, a 'Login' and 'Password' is required. To obtain access to this visit the [Learning & Development](#) site on the intranet. For staff that do not have access to online training, local training provision must be made relevant to their job role.
- 1.16. For schools, there is a Fire Safety training available via iHasco if this is used by the school, otherwise from other training providers sourced locally. Fire Safety training in schools should be provided annually and when a new member of staff joins.
- 1.17. All course attendance and training must be recorded locally.
- 1.18. Training courses are available through Learning and Development and include:
 - 1.18.1. Fire Marshal Training

- 1.19. Further information on the course content and available dates can be found on the [Learning & Development](#) intranet page.
- 1.20. Where provided, evacuation chair training for nominated staff must be carried out and refreshed regularly. Training is available through the evacuation chair suppliers, or alternatively contact the Health and Safety Service via email: health.and.safety@southampton.gov.uk

Honorarium Payment

- 1.21. Fire Marshals, where relevant, may currently receive an honorarium payment. It is the line manager's responsibility to instruct and liaise with HR Pay in writing (an email is acceptable), providing all details, if an allowance is to be paid. Similarly the line manager must ensure the allowance ceases when it is no longer appropriate. To contact HR Pay please use hr.pay@southampton.gov.uk or hr.payschools@southampton.gov.uk

Maintenance of Fire Equipment

- 1.22. Planned inspection, maintenance and testing procedures should be established and used to ensure that all fire protection systems can operate effectively when required. Arrangements should be made for all fire safety equipment, installations and systems to be inspected and tested on a regular basis by a competent person, This service may be provided by Property Services. See **SWP Property Management and Compliance** available on the [Safe Working Procedures](#) page for further guidance regarding:
 - 1.22.1. Fire detection systems
 - 1.22.2. Automatic suppression systems
 - 1.22.3. Door control mechanisms
 - 1.22.4. Smoke control systems
 - 1.22.5. Evacuation and fire-fighting lifts
 - 1.22.6. Emergency lighting
 - 1.22.7. Standby power systems
 - 1.22.8. Escalators/lifts
- 1.23. Further information on the routine inspection and maintenance of fire safety installations can be found in the [Fire Safety Micro Site](#). [The Responsible Person – Property Management](#) must ensure that all inspections, maintenance and testing procedures are recorded and carried out by a competent person. Where the Responsible Person – Property Management decides not to follow the guidance, they must justify their decision through risk assessment and in writing.

Evacuation Procedures

- 1.24. Every site must have an emergency evacuation procedure established and a fire drill carried out at least annually (termly in schools). This should be recorded and any shortcomings identified through the fire drill should be remedied.
Note; All SCC owned residential blocks of flats operate a "Defend in Place" policy as agreed with HFRS and evacuation in those cases is managed and controlled by HFRS if deemed necessary when they attend an incident. The exception to this are the Houses of Multiple Occupation designated Homeless Units that operate a "Simultaneous Evacuation" Policy

- 1.25. Procedures must be in place to fully evacuate everyone from the building. It is permitted to temporarily use refuges but not to be reliant on the fire and rescue services to assist in the evacuation, this must be undertaken by onsite staff or PEEP buddies.
- 1.26. Any employee who has difficulty in evacuating premises unaided must bring this to the attention of their line manager and have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) agreed with control measures in place.
- 1.27. A **PEEP** form is available in the [Forms library](#) and must be completed in consultation with the line manager and the individual. The procedures agreed must be practiced and recorded and all interested parties provided with a copy. For Civic Buildings (Civic Centre, Guildhall and One Guildhall Square) copies should also be forwarded to Facilities Management (FM) and the Corporate Health and Safety Service (CHSS).

Control of Contractors

- 1.28. The Senior Managers/Headteachers must ensure that contractor's operations and the fire risks associated with such operations are adequately assessed and controlled. If 'hot works' are being carried out, these activities need to be authorised. See **SWP Control of Contractors** and **SWP Permit to Works** on [Safe Working Procedures](#) page on Staff Stuff and [Hot Works Permit](#).
- 1.29. Any building works need to consider the hazard of fire and smoke, and incorporate appropriate precautions.

Electrical Safety

- 1.30. Electrical faults are a common cause of fires. Arrangements must be in place for the testing and inspection of both the fixed electrical installations and all portable appliances. See **SWP Electrical Safety in the Workplace** on [Safe Working Procedures](#) page on Staff Stuff.

Other [Safe Working Procedures](#) Relevant to This Document

- Property Management and Compliance
- Fire Door Protocol
- DSEAR
- Gas Safety
- Risk Assessment
- Young Persons at Work
- Work Equipment
- Workplace Health, Safety and Welfare

Note: Other safe working procedures may apply and the assessor should consult the SWPs. An A-Z is available on the Council's [Health and Safety Intranet](#).

1. Main Legislation and Guidance Relevant to This Document

- 3.1. [Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974](#)
- 3.2. [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- 3.3. [Construction, Design and Management Regulations 2015](#)
- 3.4. [The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#)
- 3.5. [Fire Safety Act 2022](#)
- 3.6. [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022](#)
- 3.7. [Fire Safety \(England\) Regulations 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Note; Changes to the Building Safety Act 2022 mean that a new Fire Safety Act (2023) will come into effect from 1st October 2023 and therefore, after this date please refer to the 2023 versions for points 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7 above

2. Further Information

- 4.1. Corporate Health and Safety Service – email health.and.safety@southampton.gov.uk Telephone 023 8091 7770 (option 6)
- 4.2. Health and Safety Executive
www.hse.gov.uk
 - 4.1.1. [HSG 168 Fire Safety in Construction](#)