

FIRE SAFETY POLICY

Statement of Intent

Fire has the potential to cause death and serious injury as well as extensive damage to property and the environment; however, most fires are preventable.

Derby City Council (DCC) recognises the importance of good fire safety management in the interests of general Health and Safety requirements and is committed to making a safe environment for its colleagues and our tenants, visitors, customers, contractors and all relevant people in and around our premises. This is in line with legal responsibilities as described in the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Roles and Responsibilities document. DCC must ensure that people who are affected by our activities are not exposed to harm from fire within our owned or managed properties, within all corporate buildings and common shared areas, and premises where DCC have an element of control.

The implementation of an organisational commitment that considers how it disseminates the fire safety message to all areas of its operations and undertakings will not only help achieve a firesafe organisation but will also demonstrate to customers, staff and other stakeholders (including the enforcing authority) that we at DCC are endeavouring to maintain continuous compliance. This organisational commitment must include all staff representative bodies and where appropriate, our residents.

The lack of suitable and sufficient fire safety management practices influences most prosecutions by an enforcing authority; however, as there is no definition in law for 'suitable and sufficient', likewise there is no defined minimum standard or function of fire safety management. The use of a defined system to manage fire safety within an organisation demonstrates to the enforcing authority that DCC is committed to actively reducing fire risk as far as is reasonable to do so.

DCC properties present a variety of risks from fire which is dependent on various factors such as: the activities carried out at each site, the differences in layout, the construction of the building and the different types of users within the premises.

DCC properties should be considered individually, and as such, the council will put in place arrangements for the assessment of risks from fire and appropriate control measures to minimise the risks identified, and to make sure that appropriate control is established and managed.

This policy outlines the principles of controls necessary to prevent or reduce the potential for harm from fire within our business operations and is based upon the requirements of health and safety and fire safety legislation, approved codes of practice, industry standards and published guidance documents. It also identifies the intentions and directions of DCC and illustrates a commitment at the most senior level towards fire safety risk management.



More detailed guidance can be found in the policy Guidance document published in support of the general principles stated in this policy. *See [hyperlink at page 5 of this Policy document](#). **

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Policy application

1. This policy applies to all DCC council colleagues, our tenants, visitors, customers, contractors, and all relevant people in and around our premises, along with all the associated site-specific arrangements and procedures.

Principles

2. DCC is committed to:
 - a) Complying with all applicable Health and Safety legislation, as outlined in the Council's Health and Safety Policy, Roles and Responsibilities document.
 - b) meeting its obligations as required by the [Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#), (FSO) which places a legal duty onto responsible persons, including employers, for preventing and controlling the risk of fire in the workplace and premises under their control.
 - c) applying principles of prevention as described in the FSO to reduce the risk of fire occurring.
 - d) taking reasonable steps as the responsible person to ensure that general fire precautions are in place that keeps individuals and premises safe from fire and crucially to make sure people can escape safely.
 - e) making sure that we meet our legal obligations under the [Equality Act 2010](#) by having suitable and sufficient Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) in place for our disabled colleagues and General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs) for our premises, to protect disabled visitors and customers.
3. To achieve this, DCC will take reasonable steps and make sure that these general fire precautions are always in place and kept serviceable. General fire precautions will include:
 - a) Measures to reduce the risk of fires occurring.
 - b) Measures to reduce the risk of the spread of fire.
 - c) Ensuring that the emergency routes and exits are provided and kept free of obstruction and are safe to use at all times.
 - d) Providing appropriate fire-fighting equipment.
 - e) Providing, where appropriate, fire detection and alarm systems to ensure that early warning of fire is given.
 - f) Providing suitable emergency fire action and evacuation procedures.
 - g) Providing fire safety information, instruction, and training appropriate to the building and activities carried on, including the roles and responsibilities of occupants.
 - h) Measures to mitigate the effects of fire.



4. For every premises there must be a fire risk assessment in place which identifies fire hazards, the persons at risk and the general fire precautions and control measures required.
 - a) The fire risk assessment must also identify fuel and other flammable substances which pose additional risks to the building and its occupants. Additional measures may be required under other legislation to control these risks.
 - b) consideration to take account the particular issues affecting 'young persons' (as defined in [article 2](#) of the FSO).
 - c) Where more than one responsible person occupies a building, they are obliged to cooperate and coordinate their activities in relation to fire safety measures.

Roles and responsibilities

5. Derby City Council – the corporate body, will be the 'Responsible Person' in the name of the Chief Executive.
 - a) The responsible person can be defined as the employer (in a workplace) or the occupier, or anyone who has a degree of control of the premises, or the owner. The responsible person may delegate, where appropriate, the day to day duties in relation to management of fire safety to an appointed manager as a Responsible Person.
 - b) Other managers – in particular, those in charge of DCC buildings may be deemed a responsible person dependent upon their duties and delegated roles within their post.
 - c) Other colleagues may be designated as Competent Persons in relation to fire safety; (a competent person can be defined as one who has sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them to properly to assist in undertaking the preventive and protective measures as defined in the FSO).
 - d) All colleagues should be familiar with this policy and understand the requirements contained herein, including the need to report any potential fire safety hazards, acts or omissions that increase the fire risk at the premises, to their appropriate line manager.

Key Actions

6. To comply with [article 3](#) of the FSO, DCC recognises our role of Responsible Person and will complete the duties as defined in the various sections of that Order.

The Council will apply systems, processes, and procedures to implement this fire safety policy such as:



- a) Ensuring a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) is in place for all premises under their control and address any resulting significant findings.
- b) Carry out a review of the FRA and the site fire safety procedures at appropriate intervals and following significant fire related incidents.
- c) Producing a site-specific fire safety management plan for all premises under their control which shall include the details of the fire safety arrangements at the premises as well as keeping accurate records; for example, the organisation of regular inspection, testing and maintenance of fire safety systems and management processes as well as staff fire safety training, and making sure that the communication procedures with any emergency / rescue services are clear and concise and well understood by all colleagues and other building occupants.
- d) Ensuring that in the event of fire, all occupants can safely evacuate the premises in a timely manner.
- e) Reducing the risk of fires occurring by applying the principles of prevention and applying measures that consider the general fire precautions in section 3 (a to h) above.
- f) Producing a concise, site specific, fire action notice for all premises and have this appropriately displayed.
- g) To consider the inclusion of suppression systems for all new buildings, large extensions, and major refurbishments to all Derby City Council building stock. The council has agreed with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service and Derbyshire County Council a Statement of Intent regarding the inclusion of sprinklers to all new school builds and those undergoing refurbishments. The press release and the Statement can be viewed [here](#)
- h) Appointing competent and nominated people to assist in meeting the requirements of legislation.
- i) Producing a [Fire Safety Guidance Document*](#) for use by all DCC colleagues detailing procedures for implementing this policy.
- j) Maintaining thorough and accurate records of fire safety information where construction works are proposed including:
 - design parameters of new buildings, extensions, and refurbishments
 - variances from accepted design, including any fire engineered solutions
 - making sure that before construction works begin a clear management structure outlining responsibilities and agreements to ensure suitable, co-operation and coordination of the works is in place. Where necessary, the Construction, Design and management regulations must be applied.
- e) Ensuring all colleagues have appropriate knowledge and training to a level of fire safety awareness commensurate with their duties.
- f) Ensuring that regular controlled, coordinated and monitored fire drills are undertaken and any learning points are addressed and communicated to all relevant people.
- g) Recording near miss and fire incidents.



- h) Making sure that suitable and sufficient resources are available for delivering all the organisational fire safety measures that are required.
- i) Making sure that this policy is accessible to all colleagues for example, in other formats.
- j) Ensuring that where general emergency evacuation plans (GEEPs) and personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are in place, they are regularly practised and reviewed.
- k) Making sure that suitable audits are carried out to check managers are complying with is policy.

Support and information

- The [Draft DCC Fire Safety Guidance Document*](#) provides specific details on the policy actions so that site managers can identify the procedures and methods to implement this policy.
- The Firesafetyteam@derby.gov.uk will provide advice and support on fire safety related matters.
- A '[Fire risk assessments on school sites](#)' guidance document is also be available via the school's information portal.
- This policy will be reviewed periodically, and following any major incident, any significant change in DCC business or changes to applicable legislation. Improvements and alterations should be carried out following advice from the Fire and Rescue Service, and our insurers.

*Document in preparation.