



**EAST RIDING**  
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

## Fire Safety Guidance Document

<b>Lead Directorate and Service:</b>	Corporate Resources - Human Resources, Safety Services.
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## **1. Background**

The controlling legislation is the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order (RRO) which abolished fire certificates and is enforced by the fire authority. The fire authority have the same 'powers' as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) or local authority enforcing teams, including the right of entry to inspect premises and management systems. The RRO places the onus on organisations to consider premises fire safety by implementing effective fire management systems to minimise the risk of a fire starting, the severity of events should a fire occur, and the potential for loss of life or serious injury.

This safety guidance document provides information on East Riding of Yorkshire Council's response to this legislation and its arrangements to minimise the risk of fire outbreak, control the severity and safeguard all employees and others accessing premises.

A standardised fire safety and maintenance log book has been introduced for all council premises (owned or leased). For those teams which work from a partner agency site/premises (such as NHS) the responsibility for fulfilling the premises part of the legislation is the agency. Equally we will consider partner agency employees on our premises.

## **2. Foreword**

In accordance with the councils' corporate safety policy, the council is committed to pursuing continual improvements in health and safety. This safety guidance document supports this commitment and forms part of the councils' health and safety management system.

## **3. Implementation**

Directorates are responsible for the implementation of this safety guidance document, and communication of its content as appropriate.

This safety guidance document is available on the Safety Services intranet page and, where employees do not have access to the council's intranet, via their line manager/headteacher.

The council relies on the co-operation of all employees, and trade unions for the successful implementation of this safety guidance document.

A review of this safety guidance document will be undertaken 2 years after its implementation, and where significant changes in legislation or working practices deem this appropriate.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **4.1 Directors and Heads of Service**

Directors and Heads of Service are ultimately responsible and accountable to the Chief Executive for ensuring this safety guidance document is issued to their management team.

### **4.2 Managers and Headteachers**

Managers and Headteachers are responsible for achieving the objectives of this safety guidance document and are responsible for ensuring that:

- The information contained within this safety guidance document is implemented and complied with;
- That a responsible person (see 5.1) is nominated at each property they occupy. In shared properties an individual must be nominated to take the lead to ensure all user groups within the building play their role in complying with the legislation.
- Fire safety and maintenance log books issued by the council must be fully completed and only used to retain site fire related information;
- Where a professional fire survey has not been completed a full fire risk assessment must be completed (this can be found under safety topics on the Safety Services insight page);

- Where a fire survey has been completed, it is recommended that this is reviewed on an annual basis in sleeping accommodation or following significant changes to property, layout, or use/occupants. In the event of a significant event (fire or arson), or failure of systems then the full fire risk assessment must be completed and maintained thereafter, including an action plan;
- Control measures (safe systems of work) are introduced to reduce any potential risks to a reasonable level;
- Relevant information, instruction and training is provided (as listed in the fire safety and maintenance log book) to staff to enable them to undertake their job safely and without risk.

### **4.3 Employees**

Employees must ensure they carry out assigned tasks and duties in accordance with information, instruction, training and agreed safe systems of work. Specifically they must ensure:

- This safety guidance document is complied with;
- They participate in the completion of premise inspections as dictated by the fire log safety and maintenance log book;
- They cooperate to enable their manager/headteacher to formulate and implement effective management systems;
- They undertake fire training – site specific and general awareness as requested;
- They provide basic site specific fire awareness to any person visiting them or working in their area;
- They assist with the evacuation of service users, visitors etc as appropriate and in accordance with their training;
- Their own health and safety and that of others is not put at risk by their actions.

### **4.4 Safety Services**

The primary function of Safety Services is to support the council and its employees by providing professional, authoritative, impartial advice on all aspects of fire safety. Where managers/head teachers require further assistance, Safety Services will advise on achieving compliance with this safety guidance document.

Safety Services have produced and will maintain guidance notes on automatic hold open devices for self closing doors, fire safety and maintenance log book and fire safety inspection guide, fire safety - the capacity of rooms and other spaces, fire safety – personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs).

#### **4.5 Asset Strategy**

Asset Strategy are responsible for ensuring that buildings are legally compliant and fit for purpose. In addition they are responsible for ensuring that fire safety systems (detection, notification, evacuation equipment – emergency lighting and fire fighting equipment) is considered in the design, build, and lease of all premises used by the council and in particular, attention being drawn to usage and the needs of client base.

Asset strategy are also responsible for engaging competent persons to undertake and complete fire surveys on behalf of the council.

#### **4.6 Infrastructure and Facilities**

Infrastructure and Facilities are responsible for ensuring that site familiarisation of fire safety systems is completed for all operational teams prior to occupation

Infrastructure and Facilities are responsible for ensuring that system drawings and operational instructions of all fire related equipment are in place within one month of occupation of the premises.

Infrastructure and Facilities are also responsible for ensuring that cyclical maintenance of premises fire systems are in place prior to the formal adoption of these systems by the council. This is usually one year after handover of the premise by the contractor. Service areas are responsible for advising this date to Infrastructure and Facilities. Cyclical maintenance must include fire alarms, emergency lighting, sprinkler and other systems, such as smoke vents and rising mains, as well as portable fire fighting equipment. All systems and equipment must be serviced by competent contractors in accordance with relevant legislation or appropriate British standard.

Following premises alterations Infrastructure and Facilities will instruct contractors to amend the building fire alarm plans, located by the fire panel.

Infrastructure and Facilities are available to provide technical advice to persons undertaking fire risk assessments.

## **5. Arrangements**

### **5.1 Responsible Person**

Legislation demands that a responsible person is appointed. However, the nature and demographics of the council is such that no one person or department can be assigned this duty. As such all the roles and responsibilities highlighted in item 4, “Roles and Responsibilities” are part of this role. Therefore, every workplace will nominate an on site responsible person who must co-ordinate all fire related matters impacting on site activity. In reality this means liaising with the various services and contractors to ensure that a standard is maintained and that the fire safety and maintenance log book is completed rather than ‘doing’ every task themselves. They are responsible for highlighting significant concerns to their line manager if they are unable to resolve at a localised level.

### **5.2 Premises**

Premises are designed and pass through a formal evaluation process with built-in fire safety features such as compartmentation and fire separation doors, emergency lighting, exit routes and final exits. These must be well maintained and respected.

All premises must have means to warn occupants of a fire. These range from fully automated systems, which may sound at an external control centre to manual operations. Regardless of the type and level of systems in place they must be well maintained. Employees must be aware of devices and have enough local knowledge to follow the instruction.

Fire doors need to be able to close in the event of an alarm being raised, therefore wedging is not permitted, although hold open devices can be used in certain

circumstances. If hold open devices are required then refer to fire safety guidance - automatic hold open devices for self-closing doors safety guidance note and seek clarification from infrastructure and facilities prior to purchasing and fitting.

### **5.3 Occupancy Figures**

Occupancy figures for premises depend on the number of exits, size of space and activity. Further guidance is available in fire safety guidance - the capacity of rooms and other spaces safety guidance note.

### **5.4 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans**

A number of the councils' employees and service users may have some difficulties in their response to an emergency evacuation. The purpose of a personal emergency evacuation plan (or PEEP) is to record the management plan to facilitate their evacuation, detailing necessary assistance from carers or colleagues where necessary. Further guidance on producing a personal emergency evacuation plan can be found in the fire safety guidance - personal emergency evacuation plan (PEEP) safety guidance note.

### **5.5 Housekeeping**

A fire needs three elements – fuel, oxygen and heat - to exist. Therefore effective housekeeping is an important part of fire management. All occupants are responsible for minimising the risk of a fire starting by ensuring that:

- Fire routes are clear;
- Waste is disposed of;
- Unauthorised items are not brought on site;
- Clutter is kept to a minimum; and
- Good storage of chemicals and gases is maintained.

Chemicals should be contained in a locked and labelled container. Gases should be, wherever possible, stored in minimal quantities and segregated in an external well ventilated lockable container.

Ignition sources range from electrical or hot work to sources used to commit arson. It is essential that ignition sources are controlled by management systems.

## **5.6 Fire Fighting Equipment**

Fire fighting equipment can be sprinklers or gas extinguishing systems or a variety of portable fire appliances. Infrastructure and Facilities have in place a measured term contract for the supply, installation and annual servicing of equipment and replacement if required. Should additional equipment be required following changes to a property, change of use or following recommendations from the fire risk assessment this should only be obtained through infrastructure and facilities through the existing contract. Site users must not order their own equipment direct. Fire fighting equipment should only be used by trained persons to aid evacuation

## **5.7 Staff Training**

The legislation requires that employees are fully aware of fire risks and control measures specific to the workplace they occupy as well as general fire awareness. The fire safety and maintenance log book lists site specific expectations. For employees that are based on a partnership agency site, the site manager must ensure that council employees have the same training and that this is recorded.

If personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPS) have been identified, then employees must be aware of their requirements and trained in procedures such as the use of refuge points and equipment such as evac chairs.

## **5.8 Fire Management Systems/Record Keeping**

All safety management systems must have efficient record keeping of fire related information. In order to standardise council records and ensure that contractors' input is co-ordinated, a fire safety and maintenance log book has been introduced. The fire safety and maintenance log book must be maintained on all premises and supporting evidence filed in the appropriate section in chronological order (newest in front). The books must always be available for an inspecting officer. Guidance on the completion

of the fire safety and maintenance log book, can be found in the fire safety and maintenance log book and fire safety inspection safety guidance note.

## **5.9 Fire Risk Assessments**

The majority of the council's premises have had a fire survey carried out. The fire survey will contain a list of actions which is included in the action plan. The sites responsible person must ensure that all housekeeping items are completed within two months of receipt of the document and that these standards are maintained. Infrastructure and Facilities will prioritise repairs and upgrades and report to asset strategy to agree a programme of works subject to the availability of budget. When actions are fully complete, the sites responsible person will sign and date the appropriate page of the fire survey. If the fire survey is older than 3 years it will need to be supported with a fire risk assessment, completed by site personnel.

For sites that have not had a fire survey then the fire risk assessment must be completed by the sites responsible person, with support from responsible departments and colleagues who complete the fire safety and maintenance log book. Action points must be listed and again signed and dated when complete.

Where refurbishment or alterations are made to buildings that have been instigated and funded by asset strategy they will arrange for an updated fire risk assessment to be carried out. Following a significant change of use, major refurbishment or major event carried out by the service, contact should be made with Asset Strategy who will appoint a competent person to complete a fire survey, the cost of which will be charged to the service. If the change has reduced the risk then the fire risk assessment must be completed by the person responsible for carrying out the fire risk assessment.

Inspections must be completed as instructed in the fire safety and maintenance log book for all premises features, equipment present and employee expectations. Deviations must be pre-agreed with Safety Services.

Contractors' certificates, worksheets etc must also be stored in the relevant section of the fire safety and maintenance log book. There are a number of sheets which specifically require a contractor certificate and record of activity. These must be

completed by the contractor's representative. Please inform Infrastructure and Facilities should this not occur.