

Thame Town Council

Fire Safety Policy

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 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 Thame Town Council is a responsible employer and takes its fire safety duties seriously. This policy is implemented to assist the Council as far as it is reasonably practicable to comply at all times with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 as well as the Council's other legal obligations towards its staff and visitors. Due to its importance, this fire safety policy also forms part of the Council's overall health and safety policy.

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.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Thame 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 every 2 years. 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.
- The Fire Safety Management Policy will identify the specific roles and responsibilities of all staff.
- A Fire Safety Book will be kept containing the following documents which are available for inspection if required:
 - Fire procedures and guidance
 - 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.
- Collect the grab bag in the Information Centre and the spare keys from the key cupboard.
- 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 Information Centre.
- 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. 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.