**PLUMTREE PARISH COUNCIL – HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

Adopted March 2025, Review Due May 2026

**GENERAL STATEMENT**

Plumtree Parish Council believes that Health & Safety performance is an integral part of the efficient and cost effective discharge of its duties and is fully aware of its responsibilities under the “Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974” and other statutory provisions. The Parish Council therefore intends to meet those responsibilities as far as is reasonably practicable by incorporating good health & safety management within all its operations.

The objective of this policy is to minimise risks to health, safety and welfare of its employees, Parish Councillors, voluntary workers, general public and others affected by its activities and to minimise risks to the environment. The Council expects its members and employees to recognise their personal responsibilities in taking care of their own health & safety and that of others. All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that a safe working and community environment is created.

The Council will take the necessary steps to fulfil its statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and subsequent legislation made under that Act.  This will also apply to Approved Codes of Practice being followed, Health and Safety Executive guidance and procedures of best practice.

The policy will be kept up to date, particularly as the Council's activities change in nature and size. To ensure this, the policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed every year by the Council. Although risk assessment is a continuing process, it shall form part of the Council’s annual review.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the Council and for compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Regulations made under the Act and the Occupiers Liability Act is that of Plumtree Parish Council. The Parish Council will consult with the Clerk on all matters relating to Health and Safety.

The Clerk is responsible for this policy being carried out.

All employees should not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety.

Whenever the Clerk notices a health or safety issue, which they are not able to put right, they must advise the Chairman.

The Accident Record Book is kept in the Clerk’s office.

Risk assessments and actions resulting from them are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

Action required to remove or control risks will be approved by the Parish Council. The Clerk will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented. The Clerk will check that the implemented actions have removed or reduced the risks.

Risk assessments will be reviewed annually, or when the work activity changes, or following an accident, whichever is soonest.

COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002) assessments are the responsibility of the Parish Council. The Clerk will be responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented. The Clerk will ensure that new substances can be used safely before they are purchased. COSHH Assessments will be reviewed annually or when work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

**FIRST AID**

A First Aid box is available at the general place where the Parish Council meets.

**SPECIFIC POLICIES**

Policies for particular premises and activities are attached as appendices as follows:

Home Working/ Lone Working – Appendix 1

Lifting and Handling – Appendix 2

Litter Picking – Appendix 3

**EMPLOYMENT OF CONTRACTORS**

The notes to be given to contractors are attached as Appendix 4.

**REPORTING AND RECORDING ACCIDENTS**

The Clerk shall record all accidents in the accident book. Any resident’s accident on open public spaces for which the Parish Council is responsible, shall be reported to the Clerk and recorded in the accident book.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

All employees will be issued with a copy of this document with their terms and conditions of employment. A copy of this policy will be made available on the Council’s website.

**INFORMATION, INSTRUCTION AND SUPERVISION**

Health and Safety advice is available from the Clerk. The Parish Council is responsible to ensure that all employees are given relevant health and safety information.

**TRAINING**

The Parish Council has overall responsibility for training. Where relevant employees will be provided with specialist training relating to their duties. Training records are kept by the Clerk in staff records. Training will be identified and monitored by the Parish Council. The Clerk will arrange any necessary training.

**MONITORING**

The Clerk is responsible for investigating any accidents and reporting them to the Parish Council. The Clerk is responsible for investigating work-related causes of sickness absences and reporting them to the Parish Council.

The Parish Council is responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence and reviewing the relevant risk assessment(s).

**Appendix 1 - HOME WORKING / LONE WORKING**

Heating, Lighting and Ventilation Temperature must reach a minimum of 16 degrees Celsius within one hour of the normal start of work time.

Office lighting - Desks should be placed to gain the maximum amount of light. Free-standing desk lights should be avoided or placed so as to minimise the danger of trailing electrical leads.

Working with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) – The Clerk should not use display screen equipment continuously for long periods of time to prevent eye strain and fatigue. Work stations will be set up suitably to maintain a good posture and prevent back pain or upper limb problems whilst working on DSE.

Electrical Equipment - Mains must not be overloaded. It is important that the correct socket outlet and plug top face (where these are available) is used for each item of electrical equipment. 13 amp plugs can be used for appliances with a loading capacity maximum of 13 amps. Leads from points for various desk uses should not present a hazard by trailing across areas of access. Extension leads are for temporary use only and should not exceed 10 feet in length. Defective equipment must never be used. Employees should not attempt to effect repairs to electrical equipment, unless competent to do so.

Furniture, Fittings and Equipment - Heavy equipment and furniture must not be moved by an individual. Office equipment whether manually or electrically operated, must not be used by unauthorised, untrained personnel. Filing cabinets should always have sufficient weight in the bottom drawer to prevent the cabinet from tipping when a full top drawer is opened. Filing cabinet and desk drawers must always be closed immediately after use. Drawer filing cabinets should be inspected at least every six months to ensure correct loading and smoothness of operation, with particular regard to the effectiveness of the drawer stops. Damaged or defective cabinets must not be used.

Personal Safety - The Clerk should make arrangements to meet contractors or members of the public, at a suitable venue open to the public. If the meeting is arranged outside, in the village, the Clerk may wish to ask for a councillor or member of staff to accompany them. The Clerk should not make arrangements to meet contractors, residents, or representatives from local authorities etc. at their home

**Appendix 2 - LIFTING AND HANDLING**

Good Techniques for Manual Handling:

1 Keep feet apart, bending the knees and keeping the back as straight as possible.

2 Test the weight of the load before you lift it. If it is too heavy for you to lift then ask for help.

3 Keep the load as close to the body as possible.

4 Keep twisting of the torso to a minimum if turning to one side. Move your feet instead.

5 Lift or carry goods in small amounts where possible.

6 Wrap the load or use gloves if it has sharp edges.

7 Use a table or bench as a half way resting point.

**Appendix 3 – LITTER PICKING**

Plumtree Parish Council may carry out periodic litter picking events. Litter picking should only take place within the dedicated 30mph section of the village. Employees, volunteers and councillors should not stand in the highway when collecting litter. For safety litter should be collected from the pavement or verge area only.

For all litter picking events there will be a dedicated lead, this will in most instances be one of the councillors or the Clerk. Any concerns, incidents or accidents should be reported to this individual.

When employees, volunteers or councillors undertake litter picking and collection there is the possibility they will come across discarded hypodermic syringes/needles. As the needles can cause contaminated puncture wounds the Parish Council will ensure:

1 Employees, volunteers and councillors are aware that syringes may be found in litter and when clearing open spaces etc.

2 All employees, volunteers and councillors undertaking litter clearing must be provided with PPE (gloves, high visibility jackets and litter pickers) and are advised to use the litter pickers rather than hands.

3 Employees, volunteers and councillors to inform the Clerk if they find a syringe and be alert to areas where extra care is needed. Any employee, volunteer or councillor receiving a puncture wound from a broken syringe or syringe needle will be instructed to seek medical attention immediately.

This is not a conclusive list of hazards associated with litter picking and employees, volunteers and councillors are urged to maintain vigilance when carrying out litter picking activities.

**Appendix 4 - NOTES FOR CONTRACTORS**

For Plumtree Parish Council to comply with Health and Safety legislation, all outside contractors employed to do work for the Council are to be made aware of the expected requirements related to health and safety. A contractor accepting a contract from the Council shall be deemed to have agreed to comply with the following requirements :

1 You and your employees will conform, in all respects, to your legal duties and responsibilities as laid down by the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and all relevant statutory provisions.

2 As a contractor, you will supply and ensure that your employees wear and use protective equipment or anything provided in the interest of health, safety or welfare of any of the relevant statutory provisions.

3 You and your employees will ensure that all equipment, plant machinery and apparatus brought onto or used on the Council premises or other premises on behalf of the Council are safe and without risk to health, and are maintained to a standard that will not constitute an offence under the Act or any of the relevant statutory provisions.

4 Any incidents or accidents should be reported to the Clerk.

5 The Council will retain the right to stop any operation, plant or equipment, or the action of any of your employees if it is considered that there is a hazard to the safety and health of employees or others. The Council will not accept any responsibility for any increased costs arising out of such action.

6 In the event of the Council taking this action, your site representative will be notified verbally and will have confirmation in writing by the Council's representative to order such a stoppage.

7 The Council will be indemnified by you or your insurers in respect of any claims, costs or expenses arising out of any incidents involving you or your employees on Council premises or other land/premises when acting on behalf of the Council.