**Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin**

**Health and Safety Policy**

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# Policy

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin (HWT&W) will take all reasonable and practical steps to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment at work for all its employees, volunteers, healthwatch services customers, and visitors. Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin will meet required legislation with regards to Health and Safety in the work place, and ensure that the premises used by the organisation for its office functions are appropriately provided and managed to these standards. For staff and volunteers who undertake activity away from the office premises, Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin will implement the Health and Safety policy and relevant procedures as appropriate, and ensure that staff and volunteers are aware of their individual responsibilities.

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin will:

1. Seek to prevent accidents and cases of work-related ill health, and provide adequate control of health and safety risks arising from work activities
2. Ensure all employees, temporary workers, and volunteers have the required competencies to do their work tasks and healthwatch activities, and give adequate training, information and supervision as necessary where this is needed.
3. Engage with employees and volunteers, on matters affecting day to day health and safety.
4. Maintain safe and healthy working conditions, provide and maintain equipment, and ensure safe handling, storage and use of substances.
5. Implement emergency procedures – evacuation in case of fire or other significant incidents.
6. Conduct relevant risk assessments and implement actions arising from those assessments. Request a risk assessment from a health/care service provider as appropriate for visits to their premises attended by employees and/or volunteers.
7. Meet requirements for relevant health and safety legislation regarding the reporting of accidents and ill health at work.
8. Review and revise the Health and Safety policy as necessary for relevant legislative changes, and at regular intervals.

## Responsibilities

The HWT&W Board has overall responsibility for all aspects of health and safety at Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin, and for ensuring appropriate arrangements are made to comply with all statutory requirements.

The Managing Director is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented.

All employees and volunteers will:

1. Take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and that of other people who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work or during healthwatch activities.
2. Co-operate on health and safety matters and familiarise themselves, and comply with, the organisation’s procedures and instructions on health and safety
3. Work to the highest possible standards of safety with regard to Healthwatch service customers and other stakeholders with whom we engage.
4. Report to their Team or line Manager if they are unsure how to perform a task safely, or believe it would be dangerous to perform a specific job, or use specific equipment.
5. Not tamper with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety
6. Report all health and safety concerns to their Team or line Manager.
7. Report all accidents or injury that are caused by the working environment, to their Team or line Manager.

A breach of the Health and Safety policy or procedures could result in disciplinary action being taken.

Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin will ensure:

1. The provision and maintenance of a working environment for its employees, volunteers, visitors and public/customers of its services that is safe, without risks to health, and with adequate facilities
2. A safe means of access to and exit from the workplace.
3. The provision and maintenance of equipment and systems used at work to ensure safety and without undue risks to health.
4. Safety in the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances
5. The provision of information, instruction, training and supervision necessary to ensure the health and safety of its employees, volunteers and service users.
6. Seek further advice on Health and Safety from the Health and Safety Executive when needed. (Phone: 0845 345 0055, or email hse.infoline@connaught.plc.uk )

## Consultation with Employees

 Employees will be consulted on health and safety matters through the Managing Director, or during staff meetings. The organisation will act on any legitimate concerns expressed by any interested party.

## Monitoring Health and Safety

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires that Healthwatch Telford and Wrekin undertakes and records health and safety risk assessments. Responsibility for carrying out Health and Safety inspections and assessments will be delegated to the Managing Director. The Managing Director will also undertake to complete occasional health and safety spot checks. Accidents and near misses will be investigated by the Managing Director, and the safety systems reviewed to try to prevent a recurrence. The Managing Director will report accidents and near misses to the T&W Council Contract Manager, as required by the Contract.

Health and Safety risk assessments will be conducted for volunteer activities by a staff member, who has received appropriate training to do this. H&S Risk Assessments will also be requested from a Service Provider prior to an engagement such as Enter & View Visit to the premises of the provider.

## Reporting

All hazards in the office shall be reported to the Managing Director. Potential hazards identified with externally provided services and premises shall be reported to the relevant service manager or coordinator. Once notified, action should be taken to clear the hazard.

All accidents or near misses whilst at work / involved in Healthwatch activities and services must be recorded in the HWT&W Accident Book located in the main office/First Aid box, and the Team or Line Manager and Managing Director notified.

Although risk assessments are undertaken prior to Healthwatch activities being carried out, staff and volunteers have a responsibility not to undertake an activity if they consider that the risks to themselves or others is significant.

The Managing Director has the responsibility for meeting the reporting requirements for Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1985, and for reporting such incidents to the Health and Safety Executive. The Managing Director is also responsible for reporting Accidents and near misses to the T&W Council Contract Manager.

## Policy & Procedures Review

The Health and Safety policy will be reviewed annually, and procedures reviewed every three years, or when risk assessments indicate the need for amendments, whichever is the sooner. The Policy and procedures will be reviewed and amended when there are changes to Health and Safety legislation, or new legislative requirements.