



## **GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL**

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

### **FIRE SAFETY POLICY**

#### **1. Introduction**

Gillingham Town Council is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all employees and visitors. This Fire Safety Policy outlines our commitment to preventing fire incidents, minimising risks and effectively responding to emergencies.

#### **2. Objectives**

- To establish and maintain a safe environment that complies with fire safety regulations and standards.
- To identify and mitigate fire hazards through regular assessments and preventive measures.
- To provide comprehensive fire safety training and awareness programmes for employees.
- To ensure prompt and effective response procedures in the event of a fire emergency.

#### **3. Responsibilities**

##### **Town Council:**

- Provide resources and support to employees to ensure compliance with fire safety regulations.
- Develop and implement fire safety policies and procedures.
- Conduct regular fire risk assessments and inspections of council-owned properties.
- Ensure that adequate fire safety measures are in place and properly maintained.

##### **Employees:**

- Familiarise themselves with fire safety procedures, evacuation routes and emergency contacts.
- Report any fire hazards or concerns to their line manager.
- Participate in fire safety training sessions and drills as required.
- Take proactive measures to prevent fire incidents and promote a safe working environment.

## **Contractors and Visitors:**

- Familiarise themselves with fire evacuation procedures and emergency exits when using Town Council buildings.
- Exercise caution and adhere to fire safety guidelines when using flammable materials or equipment.
- Report any fire hazards or safety concerns to the Town Council.

## **4. Fire Prevention and Mitigation**

- Conduct regular fire risk assessments of council-owned properties, identifying potential hazards and implementing corrective actions.
- Ensure that fire detection and alarm systems are installed, tested and maintained in accordance with regulatory requirements.
- Implement appropriate fire suppression measures, such as fire extinguishers and smoke detectors.
- Provide guidelines for the safe storage and handling of flammable materials and hazardous substances.
- Maintain clear access to fire exits, emergency escape routes and assembly points.

## **5. Fire Safety Training and Awareness**

- Provide fire safety induction training for all new employees.
- Conduct regular fire safety training sessions for employees.
- Organise fire drills and evacuation exercises to test emergency response procedures and ensure readiness.

## **6. Emergency Response Procedures**

- Establish clear protocols for reporting fires, raising alarms and evacuating buildings in the event of a fire emergency.
- Designate fire wardens to be responsible for assisting with evacuation and coordinating with emergency services.
- Maintain up-to-date emergency contact lists.
- Conduct post-incident reviews and debriefings to identify lessons learned and areas for improvement in emergency response procedures.

## **7. Compliance**

- Ensure compliance with all relevant fire safety laws, regulations and standards applicable to council-owned properties.
- Take prompt corrective action to address any identified deficiencies or violations of fire safety regulations.

## **8. Resources and Support**

- Provide adequate resources, funding and support to implement and maintain effective fire safety measures and programmes.
- Allocate responsibilities and designate qualified personnel to oversee fire safety initiatives and compliance efforts.
- Facilitate access to training, equipment and technical expertise necessary to support fire safety objectives.

## 9. Communication

- Promote open communication and collaboration with employees on fire safety matters.
- Encourage a proactive approach to reporting fire safety concerns and hazards, fostering a culture of vigilance and responsibility.

This Fire Safety Policy was reviewed by the Finance and Policy Committee on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, minute no. 627h and ratified by Full Council on 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024, This Policy will be reviewed biennially or when legislation is updated, whichever is earlier.

Signed ..... Date .....

(Mayor of Gillingham)