

## THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

### Health and Safety

### **Policy On Control Of Asbestos**

#### **POLICY REFERENCE**

This policy document refers to the following aims and objectives outlined in the Council's general statement of Health and Safety Policy:

- a) Arrangements for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, safety and the absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- b) The provision and maintenance of a working environment for employees that is, as far as is reasonably practicable, safe without risks to health and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.

#### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Highland Council recognises the health risks associated with breathing in air contaminated with asbestos dust/fibres. Arrangements will be made therefore to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees and others (clients, contractors, pupils and public) who use Highland Council premises are not at risk from exposure to hazardous forms of Asbestos. The arrangements will take account of current legislative requirements, codes of practice and other guidance produced by the Health and Safety Executive.

#### **ARRANGEMENTS**

The following action will be taken to ensure that an effective management system is established for the control of asbestos in Highland Council premises:

- 1) An [Asbestos Register](#) will be maintained, identifying the location, type, condition and appropriate control measures relating to asbestos in all Highland Council premises.
- 2) Surveys of premises not currently on the asbestos register will be carried out to determine whether asbestos is present.
- 3) Where asbestos is discovered in premises it will be categorised and subsequently managed in accordance with the risk it presents.
- 4) The assessment of risk in any location will determine whether the asbestos has a potential for fibre release.

5) Asbestos with a potential for fibre release will be:

- a) repaired and sealed
- b) enclosed or
- c) removed

whichever is most appropriate, depending on its location and the potential risk for future damage.

6) All asbestos, whether in good condition or repaired, sealed or enclosed will be recorded and where service policy and practicality allows, will be labelled. Its condition will be regularly monitored.

7) The presence of asbestos in a building, including its location, condition and management arrangements will be brought to the attention of the person responsible for maintaining that building and the Responsible Premises Officer in the form of an Asbestos Management Plan document specific for each property.

8) Procedural arrangements will be developed to ensure that any person required to undertake building maintenance, repair or cleaning work will not disturb or accidentally cause the release of asbestos fibres during the course of their work. In high risk areas this may involve a permit to work system.

9) The Housing and Property Services, Property Risk Management Officer will act as Asbestos Co-ordinator. Responsibilities will include:

- a) Maintaining the asbestos register.
- b) Liaising with all Council Services to ensure that appropriate surveys are carried out.
- c) Arranging the employment of specialist consultants for advice and services associated with asbestos and its control.
- d) Checking in conjunction with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager risk assessments and method statements of contractors involved in work that may present asbestos risks.
- e) Co-ordinating asbestos activities under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007.
- f) Ensuring that the Health and Safety Executive are informed of any proposed asbestos removal work.
- g) Ensuring that any asbestos waste is disposed of in accordance with statutory requirements and that the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency is given the requisite notice of intended disposal.

10) Sampling of material suspected of containing asbestos will only be undertaken by persons competent to do so. Except for certain prescribed circumstances the removal of asbestos will only be undertaken by licensed contractors.

- 11) Asbestos surveying carried out by external resources shall only be carried out by organisations with competent persons having personal certification for asbestos surveys from a certification body and which has been accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

## **TRAINING**

- 1) Arrangements will be made to ensure that persons who may encounter asbestos during the course of their work are given appropriate training to enable them to:
  - a) Identify the situations in which asbestos may be present.
  - b) Recognise asbestos or material likely to contain asbestos and the need to prevent its disturbance.
  - c) Be aware of the health risks associated with asbestos.
  - d) Understand the requirements of safe working practices to avoid or minimise the risks to health.
  - e) Understand the requirements of implementing an Asbestos Management Plan owned by the person in charge of the premises.

## **CONSULTATION**

Employees and/or their representatives will be made aware of the proposed arrangements for managing asbestos in any premises where they are required to work. They will also be consulted on the adequacy and effectiveness of measures designed to control the risk of their exposure to asbestos by considering the contents of an Asbestos Management Plan (where one has been prepared for the property).

## **GUIDANCE**

To assist in the effective implementation of this policy, detailed guidance will be provided on the following aspects:

- a) Legal requirements
- b) The dangers associated with asbestos
- c) Where asbestos is likely to be found
- d) The management of asbestos in buildings, including Asbestos Register, Appointment of Contractors, removal, etc.
- e) The safe disposal of asbestos waste.
- f) Information for contractors.
- g) Training arrangements.
- h) Information for and consultation with employees.
- i) Arrangements for health surveillance.

## **LEGAL REFERENCE**

This policy and its associated guidance outline the provisions the Council will make to discharge its duties in relation to the following statutory requirements.

The Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974 – the duty to maintain so far as is reasonably practicable any place of work in a condition that is safe and without risks to health.

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 (with particular reference to Regulation 4 – Duty to Manage).