

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

OF

WEST BLETCHLEY COUNCIL



**221 Whaddon Way
Bletchley
Milton Keynes
MK3 7DZ**

DECEMBER 2023

Contents

1. Policy Statement
2. Employers Responsibilities
3. Employees Responsibilities
4. Roles
5. Communication and Consultation with Employees
6. Contractors
7. Information and Supervision
8. Training
9. First Aid
10. Reporting Accidents, Investigating and Monitoring
11. Emergency Procedures
12. Risk Assessments
13. Manual Handling
14. Safe Plant and Equipment
15. Electrical Safety
16. Hazardous Substances and Materials
17. Noise
18. Personal Protective Equipment
19. Welfare and Sanitary Arrangements
20. Working Environment
21. Driving at Work
22. Drugs and Alcohol
23. Smoking
24. Working Hours
25. Lone Working
26. Working with the Public

Appendices

1. Instructions for mobile phone use in vehicles
2. Manual Handling Advice
3. Vehicle Collision Procedure

1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 'West Bletchley Council (WBC) is committed to maintaining safe and healthy working conditions and to preventing accidents and instances of work-related ill health by ensuring that all activities carried out on company premises, premises within its control or activities undertaken by its employees or subcontractors are managed in such a manner so as to avoid, reduce or control all foreseeable risks to the health and safety of anyone who may be affected by such activities as far as is reasonably practicable. This policy will be reviewed and revised every 12 months or sooner if circumstances dictate'.

Signed.....

Chair of West Bletchley Council

Signed.....

Clerk to West Bletchley Council

Date.....

2 EMPLOYER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 In furtherance of the policy statement and the need to ensure compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other relevant health and safety legislation, WBC will:

- place health and safety considerations at the forefront of all business operations and work activities;
- provide and maintain safe plant, transport and equipment and ensure safe systems of work;
- ensure materials and substances used are properly stored, handled, used and transported;
- assess the risks to the health and safety of anyone who may be affected by work activities and ensure all risks are reduced to a tolerable level;
- consult with employees on matters affecting their health and safety and ensure that all employees are competent to do their tasks;
- provide information, training, instruction and supervision;
- provide a safe place of employment and endeavour to ensure all temporary places of work are suitable;
- endeavour to ensure a healthy working environment when working at places controlled by third parties;
- ensure that employees are aware of their own health and safety responsibilities and that they co-operate with management in its efforts to fulfil this policy;
- in addition to employees, look after the health and safety of other people who come into our premises or into contact with our work activity.

3 EMPLOYEES AND SUBCONTRACTORS RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 All employees, freelancers and subcontractors have a legal responsibility to take care of the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their actions or omissions and to co-

operate with supervisors and managers on health and safety issues. Employees should not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety and should report all health and safety concerns to the appropriate person as set out in this policy.

4 ROLES

- 4.1 The West Bletchley Council has corporate responsibility for health and safety in the workplace and for ensuring that adequate resources are made available to allow the implementation of this policy.
- 4.2 The Clerk to the Council (CTTC) has day to day responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- 4.3 The CTTC must ensure that the work activities of employees, and others under their control, are adequately supervised to ensure that safe systems of work are being followed.

5 COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES

- 5.1 Employees will be consulted on matters affecting their health and safety via the Health and Safety notice boards, by email and at regular staff meetings.
- 5.2 When planning work activity, where resources are increased, WBC recognises the importance of communication to all those involved.
- 5.3 During event planning and delivery WBC engage in a comprehensive series of communications with all parties involved.
- 5.4 Where appropriate, this takes the form of:
 - Formal and informal meetings both prior to and during the event
 - Email and telephone exchanges
 - Regular on site meetings

- Circulation of safety related information
- Briefings and inductions.

6 CONTRACTORS

6.1 Any contractor supplying equipment or services to WBC will be required to demonstrate their legitimacy, competence and ability to conduct operations safely before they can be considered. Prior to commencing work WBC will require documentary evidence of:

- Company details, including registered address, VAT number etc.
- Public and Employers Liability Insurance commensurate with their work activities
- Professional Indemnity Insurance (where relevant)
- Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Risk and Method Statements
- Details of staff competence
- Other details as requested (plans, technical information etc.).

6.2 Contractors will be reminded of their health and safety responsibility towards their staff and others that may be affected by their work activity.

7 INFORMATION AND SUPERVISION

7.1 Employers must display the health and safety law poster or alternatively provide all employees with individual copies of the same information in a leaflet upon engagement. The Health and Safety Law poster is displayed on the Health and Safety notice boards in the council offices. Health and safety advice is available from the Council's Health & Safety Consultant via the Administration & Finance Manager.

7.2 Employers have an added duty to young people to provide information, instruction, training and supervision. Supervision given to young people

must be greatly increased to ensure that they are fully supervised at all times. Supervision of any young workers, trainees or work experience placements will be undertaken and monitored by the CTTC.

8 TRAINING

- 8.1 All employees must receive health and safety induction training as soon as possible after starting employment and job specific health and safety training where work activities require it. Training will also be provided when risks change.
- 8.2 Supervisors and managers have a responsibility to identify training needs and to arrange and monitor training needs of all employees/ staff and others under their control.
- 8.3 A training needs analysis should be conducted for each job and if this highlights a training requirement then appropriate training must be provided within a reasonable time scale.
- 8.4 Records of all training undertaken by employees will be kept by the **Assistant** Clerk.
- 8.5 WBC will provide induction training for all employees and will provide additional job specific training for individual roles as required.

9 FIRST AID

- 9.1 WBC recognises it has a duty under the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 to have first aid provisions in the workplace and to ensure that there is always a qualified first aider or an "appointed person" present. An appointed person is someone who is authorised, in the absence of a trained first aider, to take charge of the situation if there is a serious injury or illness. They should record all the cases they treat and each record should include at least the name of the

patient, date, place, time and circumstances of the accident and details of the injury suffered and treatment given. The records should be kept in a suitable place, and should be readily available. Employers are also required to report certain work-related accidents, dangerous occurrences and diseases.

- 9.2 Whilst there is no strict legal obligation to provide facilities to visitors or members of the public, WBC recognises its general duty of care and will enhance the medical provision at events where it is appropriate to do so.
- 9.3 The first aiders are listed above the first aid kit within the staff kitchen. The first aid kits are kept in the kitchen and in the van. All accidents and instances of work-related ill health will be recorded in the accident book which is kept in the stationery cupboard. The CTTC is responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authority (RIDDOR).
- 9.4 Specific risk assessments will be undertaken for certain work activities, including for the use of VDU equipment. Where necessary health surveillance will be arranged by the CTTC who will also maintain health surveillance records.

10 REPORTING ACCIDENTS, INVESTIGATING AND MONITORING

- 10.1 No matter how trivial, all employees are required to report all accidents and work-related causes of sickness absence to their manager. The purpose of reporting such incidents and any subsequent investigation is to identify the underlying cause(s) and any contributing factors and to prevent a reoccurrence. The CTTC is responsible for investigating accidents and also responsible for investigating work-related causes of sickness absence and for acting upon the findings of an investigation where appropriate. WBC are also required to report certain work-related accidents, dangerous occurrences and diseases which fall

under the scope of 'The Reporting of Injuries, Dangerous Diseases and Occurrences Regulations 2013' (RIDDOR).

- 10.2 Accident/incident report books are located at the main Council Offices and the Frank Moran Centre. The accident books should be kept in a secure but readily available location as the content is subject to GDPR.
- 10.3 To monitor the implementation of safe working practices and to assess whether the practices are being effectively pursued WBC regularly conduct vocational assessments and seek professional advice where appropriate.

11 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

- 11.1 All staff should read the Fire Action Notices provided in all areas of the workplace which give details of the company's fire and emergency procedures. Escape routes will be checked daily to ensure they are clear and unobstructed. Fire extinguishers will be maintained and checked every 12 months by a reputable contractor. Alarms will be tested every week by the Estate Caretaker. Emergency evacuation will be tested every six months.
- 11.2 Whilst working at premises not operated by WBC, in consultation with the venue / organiser, WBC will ensure that there are sufficient fire safety arrangements in place and that staff are aware of the details.

12 RISK ASSESSMENTS

- 12.1 Every work activity to be undertaken will be subjected to a health and safety risk assessment prior to the activity starting, in consultation with those who will undertake the work. A separate fire risk assessment will also be undertaken by a "responsible person" who will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk from fire and ensure occupants can safely escape the premises if a fire does occur. A written record of the assessments will be provided identifying any significant hazards and describing the preventative and protective measures required to avoid, eliminate, reduce or control the risks identified to a tolerable level. The control measures must be implemented and adequately maintained and records kept of any monitoring or maintenance of equipment undertaken.
- 12.2 The production of Health and safety risk assessments will be overseen by the Council's Health & Safety Consultant and the findings will be reported to the CTTC. Where significant funding is required in a non-emergency situation action required to remove or control health and safety risks will be approved by the Chair of the Council or the appropriate committee. The CTTC will be responsible for ensuring the action required is implemented. The CTTC will check that the implemented actions have removed or reduced the risks. Health and safety risk assessments will be reviewed every 12 months or when significant changes in the work activity occur, whichever is soonest.
- 12.3 Fire risk assessments will be arranged and implemented by the **Assistant** Clerk and recorded in a separate document entitled "Fire Risk Assessments Findings" which, in addition to identifying hazards and describing preventative measures, will outline an emergency plan. The **Assistant** Clerk will also check that the implemented actions have removed or reduced the risks. Assessments will be reviewed every 12 months or when significant changes in the work activity occur, whichever is soonest.

13 MANUAL HANDLING

- 13.1 WBC engages in projects where manual handling cannot always be avoided and therefore subject to the Manual Handling Operations Regulation 1992.
- 13.2 WBC management will actively seek to keep manual handling operations to an absolute minimum through a recognised hierarchy of control measures.
- 13.3 When planning events, manual handling will be given due consideration in order to minimise the handling of equipment and materials. Delivery locations, plant/ handling equipment, numbers of staff etc. will all be considered in discussion with other relevant parties.
- 13.4 Where relevant to their roles, staff directly employed by WBC will be given manual handling training. Staff will ensure that they take account of the manual handling advice set out in Appendix Two.
- 13.5 No member of staff will lift, pull, push or otherwise handle goods, equipment or materials unless fit, competent and confident to do so.
- 13.6 Personal Protective Equipment will be issued and worn where appropriate.

14 SAFE PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

- 14.1 When selecting and purchasing items of plant and equipment it is essential to ensure, as far as possible, that such items are safe and are appropriate for the task and location for which they are intended to be used. The CTTC is responsible for ensuring that any new plant and equipment meets relevant health and safety standards before it is purchased.

- 14.2 Account must be taken of the persons required to use the items which must be selected to minimise any possible adverse effects to the user and other persons who may be affected. It is also essential to ensure that all plant and equipment is kept safe through regular maintenance and inspection and that all employees are trained to use equipment safely and are aware of instructions provided by manufacturers and suppliers.
- 14.3 Any problems found with plant and equipment should be reported to the CTTC who is also responsible for identifying all plant and equipment needing maintenance and for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up and for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.

15 ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- 15.1 All electrical systems used by WBC must comply with the provisions of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.
- 15.2 Electrical installation, maintenance and repair work will only be carried out by competent staff or sub-contractors.
- 15.3 Mains operated electrical equipment owned by WBC will be inspected and tested regularly. Inspection and testing will be visual and also test operation, continuity and polarity.
- 15.4 Any item found to be faulty will be withdrawn from use and clearly labelled as such. Faulty items will be brought to the attention of a supervisor or manager and either sent for repair or disposal.

16 HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES OR MATERIALS

- 16.1 Using chemicals or other hazardous substances at work can put people's health at risk. It is the policy of WBC to comply with the law

which requires employers to control exposure to hazardous substances to prevent ill health.

16.2 The main law on hazardous substances at work is the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH). It defines hazardous substances to include most hazardous chemicals (including waste and by-products), biological agents and any dust. Whilst most office type workplaces do not involve the use of any particularly hazardous materials, staff should be made aware that certain products may present a hazard, these include the vast majority of commercial chemicals, many of which have a warning label. Examples may include bleach and other cleaning agents with a warning label, wood dust, glues and adhesives, solvents, paints, pesticides and chemical fertiliser, medicines and biological agents, oils and fuels, printer/photocopier toner, inks, and paper dust. This list is not exhaustive.

16.3 The CTTC is responsible for identifying all substances which need a COSHH assessment, is responsible for undertaking COSHH assessments and is also responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented and for ensuring that all relevant employees are informed of the COSHH assessments. The result of such an assessment must show what information, instruction, training and supervision is required by staff, and any storage, handling and usage constraints or PPE to be employed. This will also apply to new substances to ensure they can be used safely before they are purchased. Assessments will be reviewed every 12 months or when the work activity changes, whichever is soonest.

17 NOISE

17.1 Occasionally, WBC staff may be exposed to higher noise levels during their working day. WBC recognise that exposure to high noise levels or prolonged exposure to noise is damaging to hearing and that practical

measures must be taken to protect staff where there is an increased risk of exposure.

17.2 Where possible steps will be taken to remove, reduce or shield the source of the noise. Where this is not possible creating distance between the source of the noise and staff and rotation of staff will be implemented.

17.3 Where other control measures have been investigated and are not practicable, when working within environments where it is anticipated staff will be exposed to noise levels in excess of 80dB(A) staff must wear hearing protection which will be provided by WBC.

17.4 All staff will be trained in the correct fitting of hearing protection.

18 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

18.1 WBC recognises that Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is not a substitute for preventative safety measures and will do everything reasonably practicable to eliminate workplace hazards at source.

18.2 WBC will supply appropriate PPE to staff as required. It is the responsibility of the member of management present to ensure staff wear their equipment when undertaking potentially hazardous tasks.

18.3 Employees have the duty to properly use any PPE issued for the duration of the time they are at risk. They must personally ensure it is correctly fitted, stored and cleaned, and must report any defects or maintenance required.

19 WELFARE AND SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS

19.1 WBC premises offers adequate and comfortable welfare arrangements as required by the Workplace (Health safety and Welfare) Regulations

1992, and the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. Permanent toilet facilities and a refreshment/food preparation area are available for staff and visitors. Space is also available for the safe storage of coats, bags and personal belongings.

20 WORKING ENVIRONMENT

- 20.1 All work activity undertaken by WBC is regulated by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Similarly, premises or sites where WBC staff are operating constitutes a place of work and must meet the requirements of the Workplace (Health, Safety & welfare) Regulations 1992.

21 DRIVING AT WORK

- 21.1 Driving is among the most hazardous tasks performed by employees. Legislation places a duty on the employer to provide a safe working environment; this is also extended to driving on business. It is a requirement for staff to follow safe driving practices. This includes steps to ensure the driver's total concentration and safe operation of vehicles, such as determining clear directions before departing, refraining from operating equipment such as mobile phones while the vehicle is moving, and not operating a vehicle when the driver's ability is impaired. Drivers are expected to follow defensive driving principles and driving regulations i.e. The Highway Code to prevent collisions.
- 21.2 WBC expects all staff whilst driving on council business to comply with traffic legislation, be conscious of road safety and demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety practice when driving. The following actions will be viewed as serious breaches of conduct:
- Drinking or under the influence of alcohol or drugs while driving
 - Driving while disqualified, or not correctly licensed
 - Reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury
 - Failing to stop after a collision

- Any actions that warrant suspension of licence

21.3 Staff who drive on business will:

- Ensure they hold a current driving licence
- Immediately notify their line manager if their driving licence has been suspended or cancelled or has limitations placed on it
- Be responsible and accountable for their actions when driving on business
- Wear seat belts
- Drive within legal speed limits
- Comply with traffic legislation
- Not use a mobile phone (including hands free kit) when driving (see Appendix One)
- Check the vehicle prior to the journey to ensure that the vehicle is within safe operating conditions. Checks should include proper inflation of tyres, clean windows, mirrors properly adjusted, brakes and lights in working order, windscreen wipers and wash in working order
- Ensure that they are familiar with the vehicle that they are about to drive. If unsure report to their line manager immediately
- Assess driving hazards and anticipate “what if scenarios”
- Report all vehicle defects to WBC management as soon as is practicable
- Follow the vehicle collision procedure set out in Appendix Three in the event of an accident
- Report any collision or near miss incident to their Manager, including those that do not result in damage or injury.

21.4 Where council business necessitates the use of their own private vehicles staff will:

- Complete annually an insurance undertaking form
- Ensure their insurance covers business travel

- Ensure that their vehicle has valid road tax
- Ensure that their vehicle is in a roadworthy condition and, where applicable, has a valid MOT certificate
- Ensure that they are not taking any medication that may impair their driving ability

WBC will not accept liability for any damage to privately owned vehicles

21.5 Should a member of staff have an unacceptable level of collisions whilst driving on business, WBC may request the driver completes additional training, before allowing that person to drive on business again.

21.6 WBC will not require staff to drive under conditions which are considered unsafe and/or likely to create an unsafe environment, physical distress, fatigue, etc.

We will do this by:

- ensuring that company vehicles are used which meet high standards of safety and are well maintained
- ensuring that staff are aware of their responsibility to check the vehicle prior to use
- ensuring that staff are comfortable driving the vehicle that they are provided with
- ensuring all staff have undertaken a familiarisation session with the vehicle to be driven
- ensuring that where additional training is required, through Risk Assessment, this will be provided on request
- requiring line managers to manage work schedules to ensure that safe driving practices are maintained
- taking into account individual driving needs and experience
- the collation of statistics on collisions and near miss incidents
- regular review of policy and procedures.

22 DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

- 22.1 WBC have a zero tolerance policy with regard to the use of alcohol or drugs. Any member of staff, freelancer or subcontractor found to be under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance during the hours of work will be removed from site and may be subject to disciplinary action.

23 SMOKING

- 23.1 WBC operate a strict no smoking policy on any premises, venue or vehicle. When working at event sites specific outdoor smoking areas will be notified to all staff.
- 23.2 Smoking whilst in vehicles is also not permitted.

24 WORKING HOURS

- 24.1 WBC recognises the Working Time Regulations 1998, and will do everything as far as is reasonably practicable to eliminate workplace stress and hazards associated with long working hours.
- 24.2 Managers must ensure that work schedules and rotas allow for sufficient breaks and rest periods.
- 24.3 Staff must not undertake duties if they feel their safety or the safety of others is compromised by fatigue. Managers must remain mindful of the health and safety of worker's judgement and concentration being compromised by excessive working hours.

25 LONE WORKING

- 25.1 WBC recognises the fact that there are times where staff are required to work on their own at or away from the office premises during and after office hours.
- 25.2 During office hours suitable arrangements are in place to monitor staff movements and should without notice they appear to deviate from their anticipated schedule of movements an agreed plan will be implemented.

26 WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC

- 26.1 WBC recognises the important role staff play in maintaining good relations with the public. In addition, staff have health and safety responsibilities to the public under Section 3 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

It is the duty of management to:

- Make an assessment on the profile / potential demeanour of members of the public including public spaces, buildings etc.
 - Ensure provision is made to give suitable information and instruction to the public to protect their health and safety
 - Inform all staff, working on site, of any potential hazards arising from the numbers or behaviours of anticipated attendees
 - Ensure staff conduct themselves with courtesy and politeness at all times when dealing with the public and be aware of the ambassadorial role they play.
- 26.2 In the event of disruptive or disorderly behaviour from members of the public, staff should immediately contact security or police for assistance. Under no circumstances should staff place themselves at

risk by becoming involved in arguments or confrontations with members of the public.

APPENDIX ONE - Instructions for mobile phone use in vehicles

A substantial body of research shows that using hand-held or hands-free mobile phone while driving is a significant distraction and substantially increases the risk of the driver crashing. Research shows that individuals are four times more likely to crash, injuring or killing themselves and/or other people.

Using a hands-free phone while driving, does not significantly reduce risks, because the problems are caused mainly by the mental distraction and divided attention, (RoSPA).

Mobile phones cause distractions in three ways:

- Taking hands off the wheel
- Becoming engrossed in a conversation and not concentrating on the road
- Mental distraction

The use of mobile phones whilst driving is not acceptable except where a legally compliant hands free unit is installed, and even then it is strongly advised against. Staff should adopt the following principles:

- You must never use a mobile phone whilst driving unless you have a fully legally compliant hands-free unit and are an experienced driver used to handling such equipment: even in such cases you should never initiate calls whilst driving.
- Unless you have a hands-free unit your phone should be switched off, with divert all calls to voicemail and check messages when your vehicle is stationary.
- Never make calls, dial numbers or text while driving, even with a hands-free unit.

From a safety point of view, all use of mobile phones should be avoided while the vehicle is being driven, even with hands-free units, as drivers cannot fully concentrate on driving if they have to process and respond to phone calls. If the phone has to be left on (and this may only be the case where a legally compliant hands-free unit is installed), the driver should pull off the road (in a safe position) to make a call or take a call for any length of time. If in such conditions you receive a call you should indicate that you are driving and that you will call back when stationary.

Drivers should also be aware that if you have a collision using a hands-free device you may be prosecuted for driving without due care and attention.

APPENDIX TWO- Manual Handling Advice

The first priority when considering manual handling is to avoid the possibility of personal injury. Manual handling is the biggest single cause of accident and injury at work. Every time you lift or carry you put yourself at risk, and manual handling injuries are both painful and long-term. So, it's vital you take simple steps to look after yourself. It doesn't matter whether the job is lifting boxes of file paper or display items— everyone is at risk of injury.

Please take the time to read this advice sheet. Please let us know if you feel there are any manual handling jobs you do that are especially tricky or which you feel should be changed.

Step 1.

Can you avoid having to do things by hand?

Avoiding manual handling doesn't mean being lazy.

It means being aware of the risks and avoiding a serious workplace hazard.



DON'T STRUGGLE WITH IT

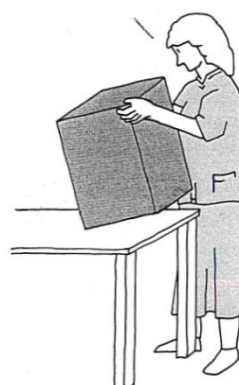


Use mechanical aids wherever possible. There is a trolley in the van. Make use of it.

Step 2.

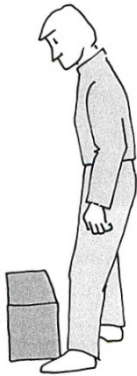
If you do have to shift it by hand just take a couple of moments to think about what you're going to do. Make sure you know what's in the box. How heavy is it? Is it delicate, fragile or sharp? Where are you going with it? Is the route clear? Do you need any help?

It only takes a couple of seconds. A bad back injury will last the rest of your life...

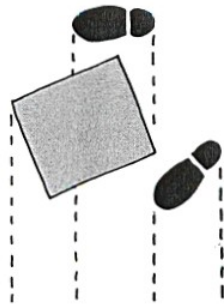


Step 3.

Look after yourself by lifting properly.



Get close to the load



Position your feet either side for good balance. Bend your knees not your back to get down to the load

Step 5



Get a good grip, keeping your shoulders parallel with hips, and your back straight

Step 6

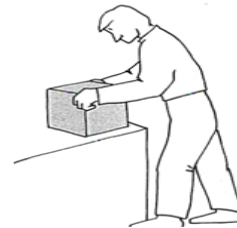
Step 4



Lift using your leg muscles in a smooth move - don't jerk. Stay balanced and keep your back straight



Off you go!



Then you get there, don't drop it. Lower the load smoothly.

APPENDIX THREE - Vehicle Collision Procedure

Stop your vehicle at the scene or as close as is safe, always ensure your safety first. Complete the collision report form by collecting the following information at the scene:

- Stay calm – do not become engaged with the other party over who is to blame
- Do not admit liability
- Details of the other vehicle
- Name and address of the other driver
- Name and address of any witnesses
- Name of insurer
- Description of incident
- Take photographs of the scene
- Complete collision report

Contact the police:

- If there are injuries
- There is a disagreement over the accident (offences alleged)
- If you damage property other than your own
- If you feel unsafe
- To get the incident reference number

Contact your line manager and:

- Notify of any/all injuries and vehicle damage sustained
- Hand in completed collision report form