

Witham Town Council: VDU Policy

Policy Overview

This policy explains how Witham Town Council manages risk for officers working on Display Screen Equipment, including both in-office and remote working environments. The policy applies to all employees, contractors and temporary staff who regularly use DSE as part of their normal work.

Employer Obligations

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 along with subsequent amendments and current HSE guidance, place specific requirements on employers to protect workers from the health risks associated with DSE.

Employers' must-

- Analyse workstations, assess and reduce risks. This includes equipment, furniture, work environment, the job being done and any special needs required by staff.
- Provide adjustable chairs and suitable lighting.
- Plan work so there are breaks or changes of activity, encouraging micro-pauses away from the computer.
- On request, provide eye tests or spectacles if special ones are required.
- Provide health, safety and training information specific to the safe use of working with VDUs and computers
- Extend these obligations to remote working environments, ensuring employees have appropriate equipment and support at home.
- Ensure that all new starters receive DSE training and a workstation assessment as part of their induction.
- Review and update DSE assessments when there are significant changes in workstation setup, job role, or if an employee reports discomfort or health issues related to DSE use.
- Provide reasonable adjustments for employees with disabilities or specific health needs, in line with the Equality Act 2010.

Risk Assessment

Witham Town Council will perform an annual risk assessment to mitigate against any negligence regarding their employer obligations. This includes assessments for remote workstations.

Eye Tests

The Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 Regulation 5 sets out an employer's responsibility for providing eyesight tests. It provides that the employer must ensure that employees who are VDU users, or who are to become VDU users, are provided with an appropriate eye and eyesight test if they request one.

To comply with this Witham Town Council will fund the cost of eye examinations and eyesight tests upon a valid receipt from a suitably qualified and registered ophthalmic optician, optometrist or doctor.

If, after examination, it should prove necessary to purchase spectacles in order to assist the employee, whose vision needs to be corrected for defects at the viewing distance or distances used specifically for the display screen work concerned, the Town Council will fund such spectacles to a maximum value of £200.00. This is only payable once the employee has passed probation and is a permanent member of staff. Employees on fixed term contracts of a year or less are only entitled to this contribution at the discretion of the Town Clerk.

Eye tests may be repeated at regular intervals, typically every two years, or sooner if recommended by the optometrist.

Remote and Hybrid Working

Witham Town Council recognises the increase in remote and hybrid working. The Council will provide guidance and, where necessary, equipment (such as chairs, screens, or keyboard/mouse) to ensure remote workstations meet the same standards as office-based workstations. Employees must report any issues or discomfort promptly to their line manager.

Training and Information

All staff will receive periodic training on safe DSE use, including posture, breaks, workstation setup, and reporting procedures for discomfort or health concerns. Training records will be maintained.

Data Protection

All data collected during risk assessments or through eye test requests will be handled in compliance with GDPR.

Agreed at Staffing Committee

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