



Display Screens Policy

South Wingfield Parish Council has adopted this Display Screens Policy to provide a sound structure to the way it conducts its business.

Purpose

South Wingfield Parish Council recognises that Display screens may pose a risk to the health of users. This document details how Risk Assessments are carried out and the steps taken to control this risk.

Display Screens

Although the legal definition of display screens includes other equipment, with South Wingfield Parish Council, "display screen" refers to the use of computers. The Workstation includes the display screen equipment (DSE), accessories to the screen (keyboard etc), disk drive, telephone, modem, printer, document holder, chair, desk and immediate work environment.

Display Screen User

As the regulations are for the protection of employees who use DSE and that the main hazards from their use are musculoskeletal problems, visual fatigue and stress caused by a combination of factors, the definition of user or operator is not set in clear, definite terms. The legal definition given is "an employee who habitually uses display screen equipment as a significant part of his normal work"

This usually means that in South Wingfield Parish Council, the users will be the Clerk. The Clerk will recognise "Users" when carrying out the risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

For any "User" a risk assessment must be completed using the correct form, DSE RA1.

The assessment consists of a detailed inspection of the workplace and particular workstation. Three items are considered at the workstation:- the equipment, job design and the environment. The user is also interviewed regarding possible symptoms associated with DSE and a copy of the leaflet 'Working with VDUs' [HSE INDG36] left with them. This is available from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg36.pdf>

The standard we expect at a workstation is as follows:-

1. Chair must be on five castors and be adjustable in height and for the position of the backrest.
2. The user's feet must reach the floor or be supported by a footrest.
3. The monitor must be directly in front of the user with the top of the screen level with the eyes of the user. (please note that this means that a user cannot use a laptop unless a separate keyboard is fitted and the screen used as the monitor.)
4. The keyboard must be movable, independent of the screen, and be in good repair and condition.

5. The screen should not be affected by glare. Bright lights can cause glare directly from light bulbs or strip lights, or indirectly by reflection from light coloured walls, glass or metal etc. Repositioning may help, as may the judicious use of wall posters and calendars etc. It is usual for “down lighters” to be used in an office with display screen users, and that vertical adjustable blinds be fitted to windows to prevent sunlight causing glare.
6. The user should plan workload to include a break away from the machine every 50-60 minutes. This break should last 5 minutes or so. The break is not an excuse not to work, but takes the member of staff away from the screen where other tasks may be performed, such as filing, telephoning etc. It is far better to have 5 minutes every hour than 20 minutes every two hours.
7. Users are entitled to an eye and eyesight tests paid for by the employer. These are facilitated by the Home Manager. The report on the test will state when the next test is advised. If the optometrist reports that corrective appliances are required by the user, and that their usual appliances are not suitable, the employer may contribute towards the cost. The user must contact the Home manager and obtain agreement for contribution before ordering such appliances.
8. Users should adjust furniture to allow the correct posture to be adopted when working on display screen equipment. The elbow should be at an angle of 90 degree with the lower arm parallel to the floor. The lower back must be supported by the back rest.
9. Each user should be trained in the hazards and potential health effects of using Display Screen Equipment.
10. Laptop computers must not be used by users unless supplementary equipment is provided to comply with the requirements of the Display Screen Regulations. This may be the provision of a separate keyboard and mouse and placing the lap top on a stand to use the lap top screen as the monitor.

The assessment is not complete until the preventive and protective measures have been carried out. This may entail changes to furniture and the training of the user.

Training

The Clerk must ensure that all users are trained in the safe use of display screens, including the correct use of software.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Clerk to ensure that this policy and procedure are adhered to. Users must cooperate with the Clerk and comply with control measures identified by risk assessment.