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Contents

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1. Applicability

- 1.1. It is a legal requirement, under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, that the Responsible Person demonstrates that measures have been put in place to prevent fire from starting. This document aims to provide evidence that this is being carried out and is designed as a template of an Arson Policy that can be used by Responsible Persons and amended to suit the needs of the particular location that it relates to..

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1. Arson or willful fire raising is the largest single cause of major fires in the UK.
- 2.2. At its worst, arson can lead to loss of life and significant financial consequences and the inability for the Council to provide and maintain essential services to dependent clients. Buildings owned and / or occupied by West Berkshire Council can be considered particularly vulnerable due to the following:-
 - Arson associated with other criminal acts.
 - Arson associated with a grievance.
 - Arson associated with fraud.
 - Arson associated with economic or political motivation.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. Responsible Person

- 3.1.1. Although the threat of arson cannot be completely eliminated it is the duty of the Responsible Person to take all reasonable precautions to minimise arson occurring and its effect on staff, service users, customers, visitors and contractors.
- 3.1.2. The Responsible Person must ensure that all information contained within this Arson Policy is clearly disseminated to all staff. Information may include the alteration of working practices or the instruction to increase staff vigilance.
- 3.1.3. The Responsible Person must appoint suitably trained officers to act as competent persons to help implement this policy. Alternatively they may also take on the role of the Competent Person.

3.2. Competent Person

- 3.2.1. On behalf of the Responsible Person, complete the check sheet for Arson Prevention. This should be carried out at a frequency determined by your Fire Risk Assessment. General guidelines would expect the form to be completed at least weekly. The necessity to complete the form more frequently may reflect on your premises location, low levels of street / property lighting, policies or services which are publicly ill received or any instances of arson reported or experienced in the locality.

3.3. All staff

- 3.3.1. The risk of an arson attack can be greatly reduced by staff remaining alert to changes in their work environment. It is the responsibility of all members of staff to identify potential problems and either take action to resolve the problem, or bring it to the attention of the Responsible Person or Local Manager for their action.

- 3.3.2. staff have a responsibility to report any concerns or observations they have in relation to arson. Any staff concerns should be communicated to either the Responsible Person or nominated Competent Person who will take the necessary action, if required.

4. Good Housekeeping

- 4.1. Arsonists will be frustrated in their efforts to start a fire without a ready source of fuel to burn, hence effective arson prevention requires appropriate housekeeping. The following rules shall therefore be observed at all times:-
- All rubbish shall be kept secured within the premises until it is removed to the external collection point.
 - Waste (of any description) shall not be allowed to accumulate in public or private areas, managers are to ensure that waste is removed at least once in any 24 hour period to the external waste collection point.
 - External rubbish collection points shall not be located on external walls of buildings where they could pose a threat, if ignited, to the building or its occupants.
 - External rubbish stores or bins should be locked and not easily accessed by third parties and be located a safe distance away from the building.
 - All equipment not in use shall be stored away from public access areas.
 - Flammable liquids shall be kept in a secured flammable cabinet when not in use.
 - Paper towels should not be used where an electric hand dryer is installed in areas of public access.
 - Where paper towels have to be used a metal waste bin with a self-closing lid should be in place.
 - Areas where there is continual use by visitors / members of the public, staff should be vigilant and monitor levels of housekeeping.

5. Restriction of Entry

- 5.1. If possible it is preferable to operate the building with just one entrance that is manned throughout the day. Members of staff must be alert to identifying strangers in their work environments.
- 5.2. If someone is seen that is not known to staff and are not wearing an appropriate badge (employee, visitor or contractors badge) they must be challenged. It is therefore appropriate that staff fully understand the policies relating to security and identification.
- 5.3. Other measures in force are:-
- A restricted access system as far as is possible.
 - A manager / member of staff nominated to complete a closing down inspection.
 - Booking in system for visitors / contractors.
 - Ensure, as far as possible, that all areas that the public are not allowed access to are secured.
 - Fire hazard room doors locked.
 - Check to ensure everyone who has entered the building has left on the conclusion of their business.
 - Challenge anyone acting suspiciously, without putting themselves at risk.

6. Fire Hazards – Staff Access

- 6.1. Only members of staff and authorised contractors are allowed entry into the fire hazard rooms, they shall be kept locked at all other times, fire hazard rooms include:-
- Cleaners stores/cupboards

- Chemical stores
- Store rooms
- Kitchens
- Stationary Cupboards
- Contractors/workmen's stores

7. Fire Hazard Areas – Specialist Access

7.1. Only Facilities staff and authorised contractors are to have access to the following areas:-

- Lift motor rooms
- Plant rooms
- Electrical intake rooms or cupboards
- Boiler rooms
- Main gas intake rooms
- Workshops
- Any confined spaces – roof-spaces, ducts or voids etc
- Flammable liquid stores

7.2. Closedown Procedure

7.3. The following closedown procedure shall be observed:-

- Check all rooms and public areas close all windows and doors
- Switch off all unnecessary electrical appliances
- Complete a physical search of each room in that area, include toilets, kitchens etc. (do not lock in an arsonist!)
- Switch off all lights (Automatic)
- After completing the above, switch on the security alarm (if appropriate) and secure the external door.

7.4. Reporting

7.5. If you believe there is a risk of arson, report it to the Responsible Person, speak to your manager, and complete an entry on to Webrisk Accident/Incident System as a near miss.

7.6. If there has been an incident of Arson then this must be reported on to the Webrisk

7.7. Accident / Incident System as soon as possible as an incident of Fire.

8. Links to Other Policies

8.1. This policy must be read in conjunction with the following Corporate policies, procedures and with any local procedures:-

- Fire Safety Logbook and Emergency Plan
- Fire Safety Policy
- Accident/incident Reporting Policy and Procedure
- Security Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy

9. Useful Information

9.1. Attached at Appendices A is a check sheet that all Responsible Persons can use to assist in reducing the risk to their building, from Arson.

9.2. Sources of Information

www.communities.gov.uk/fire/arsonreduction

www.arsonpreventionbureau.org.uk

www.rbfrs.co.uk

www.fire.gov.uk

www.hse.gov.uk

ARSON PREVENTION CHECK LIST

SECURITY	YES	NO	N/A
Are the numbers of entrance points kept to a minimum, whilst still providing a safe means of escape from the building?			
Are perimeter fences, wall and gates strong and high enough to keep intruders out?			
Are the doors and windows in good repair and kept locked when not in use?			
Are the locks and any padlocks used of good quality?			
Are there a restricted number of people who hold keys (close control of key holders)?			
Are the gaps under external doors kept as small as possible and sealed where deemed appropriate?			
Are metal containers fitted to the inside of the letterboxes?			
Do the metal boxes fitted to letterboxes contain fire suppressant devices?			
Are all stored materials kept away from perimeter walls or fences where it could be set alight?			
Are intruder alarms installed, particularly in vulnerable areas?			
Is continuous security lighting provided, particularly in external areas?			
EMPLOYEES			
Do staff know how to prevent Arson from occurring?			
Would staff challenge anyone who should not be on or in the premises and report any suspicious activity?			
Are all new employees vetted for Arson related convictions?			
Are contractors supervised?			
Do the employees know the company's policy for preventing Arson?			
VISITORS			
Is the access and movement of visitors and contractors controlled?			

FIRE PROTECTION			
Is the fixed and portable fire fighting equipment regularly maintained and protected against sabotage?			
Are all combustible waste and hazardous goods stored within locked cupboards and lockers?			
Is rubbish awaiting collection in a secure compound away from your premises?			
Is waste material build up kept to a minimum within the premises?			
Are arrangements made with the Waste Contractors to remove all waste before the commencement of holiday periods?			
Is the frequency of waste collections monitored (arrange more collections in times of heavy use)?			

END OF DAY CHECKS			
Does a named individual secure the building at the end of each working day?			
Are doors and windows secured at the end of each day?			
Has any combustible material been left lying around?			
Are there any unauthorised people on the premises?			
Are the intruder and fire alarms switched on?			
Is the external lighting switched on?			
Are all flammable liquids in the correct storage facility?			

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS