

Clerk and CEO are inter-changeable titles, as are Deputy Clerk and COO.

Extreme Weather Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Under the Health & Safety at Work Act 2005, The Council has a responsibility to ensure safe access for workers and visitors to premises owned by the Town Council. In the event of extreme weather conditions, risk assessments must be in place to determine the areas of priority for the Council's maintenance team in providing this safe access.

1.2 Extreme weather is defined as weather conditions which:

- a) have unusual consequences which affect working conditions
- b) prevent staff getting to work
- c) cause significant problems for staff getting to and from work

This can include heat, snow, ice, fog, floods or high winds which render travel extremely hazardous. Extremely hazardous is defined as conditions in which the Police and/or appropriate motoring organisations advise the public not to make unnecessary journeys or not to travel at all unless necessary.

1.3 This Policy is to ensure the proper management of staff and resources in the event of extreme weather conditions.

2. Implementation

2.1 To ensure that the council is able to respond to changes in adverse weather, The Town Clerk must ensure that they regularly check their emails for updates from the Emergency Planning Officer to ensure the flow of communication to their staff.

2.2 There are three types of warning

- a) **YELLOW** – These are issued when it is likely that the weather will cause some low level impacts, including disruption to travel in a few places.
- b) **AMBER** – Meaning there is an increased likelihood of impact from severe weather, with possibility of travel delays and or road and rail closures, power cuts and potential risk to life and property.
- c) **RED** – Dangerous weather is expected. It is very likely that there will be a risk to life, with substantial disruption to travel, possibly widespread damage to property and infrastructure.

2.3 In order to implement aspects of this policy, it is intended to work in partnership with other authorities including Norfolk County Council and South Norfolk Council to ensure priority areas within the town are maintained.

3. Extreme Winter Weather

In instances of extreme winter weather, the maintenance manager must ensure:

- a) sufficient stocks of sand are available and easily accessible at Council owned Site, if sites owned by South Norfolk ensure that they are aware if their sand needs replenishing.
- b) policies for other authorities are known where the Council team may provide some clearance on their behalf for example town centre pavements (Norfolk County Council), bus station and selected car parks, specifically by the Health Centre (South Norfolk Council).

4. Severe Storms

4.1 Carry out a regular assessment of the trees throughout the weather event on Council owned land including the Park, The Lowes, Rectory Meadow, the Cemetery, DYCC and any other trees which the Maintenance Manager considers to be of significance. The maintenance Manager should contact the Council's nominated tree surgeon if any trees are damaged or blown down.

4.2 Should a severe storm occur while the Christmas Lights are insitu, after the storm has passed the lights must be inspected for any damage or health and safety issues, and any issues reported to the Council's lighting contractor.

5. Prolonged & Extreme Heatwave

The significant risks identified from prolonged & extreme heatwave are heat stroke (see clause 7.1 below); burns from contact with extremely hot items such as play equipment; and maintaining floral bedding schemes. Monitoring, assessment and appropriate measures based on the assessment should be carried out throughout the conditions.

6. Flooding

In the event of significant flooding affecting the town, then the Emergency Plan will be implemented. In this instance, the Town Clerk will co-ordinate with the District Council Emergency Officer a suitable response to the incident.

7. Action Plan

7.1 All members of Council staff working in an outdoor environment should make themselves aware of the weather forecast for the days which they are scheduled to work in order to ensure they are properly attired and prepared for the conditions of the day. Extreme weather forecasts may entail a change in attendance times to deal with emergency situations.

7.2 The Chain of Command within the team of Council staff is set out below. Should guidance be required on implementing the policy, whoever is on duty should contact the first person within the chain and if unavailable, to work their way down the list. All members of the maintenance team should carry copies of this policy in their vehicles for reference should it need to be implemented.

Chain of Command

1.	Town Clerk	Miss Sarah Richards	07375 559571
2.	Deputy Town Clerk	Miss Sonya French	07841 038295
3.	Maintenance Manager	Mr R Ludkin	07436 798234

In the event of extreme weather conditions, the following procedure should be adhered to:

- a) Assess the conditions – depending on the day of the week and the number of staff available, it may be more appropriate to do nothing. Use Chain of Command above for guidance if necessary.
- b) Decide on staffing requirements based on the conditions/day of the week etc and if necessary, use the Chain of Command above to arrange for additional staff or to seek guidance.
- c) Prioritise areas for clearance (of snow or other debris – following a storm for example) based on the table attached to this policy.
- d) Reassess conditions throughout the day and carry out further work as required (such as additional salting if conditions change).
- e) Only clear those areas for which there is sufficient salt supply to distribute over them, which should be done immediately after clearing and repeated throughout the day if conditions require it.

8. Travelling to work in extreme weather conditions

8.1 In the event of extreme weather conditions, e.g., heavy snow or flooding, employees are expected to make every reasonable attempt to arrive at work at the employee's scheduled start time, unless this would present any risk to the employee.

8.2 If the employee decides that weather conditions are sufficiently severe to prevent them from travelling to and arriving safely at work, the employee may choose to either take the day as annual leave or as authorised unpaid leave.

8.3 In either case, the employee must telephone their Line Manager before their scheduled start time and inform them of the option the employee wishes to take.

8.4 If the employee decides to travel to work and then subsequently find that the weather conditions prevent the employee from completing their journey, the employee must telephone their line manager as soon as possible and inform them of the exact circumstances. In this case, the Line Manager in conjunction with the Chief Operations Officer, at their discretion having considered the circumstances, will decide whether the employee will receive full pay.

8.4 In any event, if the employee's absence from work, or lateness in arriving at work, is considered reasonable due to extreme weather conditions, the employee's absence or lateness will not be subject to the Council's disciplinary procedure, provided the employee has notified the manager as set out above.

9.1 The Town Clerk or Buildings & Facilities Manager will identify and undertake the following actions, including out of office hours:

- Will assess the risk regarding severe weather and the impact this will have by obtaining information from the Emergency Officer at South Norfolk Council.
- High winds – check for high winds above a scale 9 are defined as high winds.
- Flooding – flood warnings will be monitored.
- Snow and ice – weather warnings will be monitored during storms.

- The Town Clerk will update Councillors and staff of the current situation regarding any severe weather.
- If staff cannot travel to work, then Councillors will make themselves available to assist with continuity of services.
- The Council will endeavour to keep the website continually updated.

9.2 The Maintenance Team will be alerted to undertake the following activities depending on the weather conditions and the associated risks:

a. High Winds – The periods of high wind, the following sites will be visually inspected for damage

- Council Offices Car Park
- Sports Ground
- Diss Park
- The Entry
- Rectory Meadow
- The Walkway trees next to the Mere
- Diss Cemetery
- Corn Hall (Completed by Corn Hall Trust)
- St Marys Churchyard
- Madgetts Walk

b. Flooding – during and following periods of flooding, the areas around the Mere will be checked and cleared as necessary.

c. Heavy snow and ice – gritting will take place by South Norfolk Council. Council Maintenance Team to check council owned areas and lay grit if required. The stock of grit held by the Council should be checked regularly during the winter months.

d. Heat Waves – work patterns and tasks may be altered to avoid outside work during heat waves. This is for staff safety, as well as to avoid damage to plants through watering in daytime. The Council will comply with any water restrictions. Ensure staff drink plenty of water, wear hat, appropriate clothing, sunblock and where possible work during cooler hours of the day.

e. In extreme weather conditions where transport is difficult or dangerous it may not be possible to treat/inspect Council owned land as staff may have difficulty in reaching locations.

f. Staff will endeavour to pass on reports about severe weather problems outside of the scope of this policy to the appropriate body, e.g., Town Clerk, Chief Operations Officer or Buildings & Facilities Manager.