



BELFAST CITY COUNCIL POLICY

SMOKING POLICY

DATED SEPTEMBER 2014 (DRAFT)

INTRODUCTION

The Belfast City Council Smoking Policy aims:

- To protect the health of staff, visitors and contractors from the potential ill-health effects of passive smoke and e-cigarettes whilst in Council buildings and vehicles;
- To ensure compliance with the statutory requirements of The Smoking (NI) Order 2006;
- To demonstrate the commitment of Belfast City Council to creating a cleaner, greener and healthier environment.

SCOPE

This policy will apply to all Belfast City Council staff, elected members, contractors and any other persons who enter Belfast City Council premises or vehicles.

REFERENCES

The Smoking (NI) Order 2006
The Smoke Free (Signs) Regulations 2007

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Corporate Health & Safety Manager is responsible for the implementation and review of the Smoking Policy and related documentation;
- The Elected Members, Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Team are responsible for the authorisation of the Smoking Policy and related documentation;
- The Corporate Management Team is responsible for the implementation of the Smoking Policy and related documentation within their Departments.
- All employees are required to be aware of this Policy and comply with it at all times including ensuring that customers and visitors do not smoke in Council buildings and vehicles.

POLICY STATEMENT

Smoking (including the use of electronic cigarettes) is not permitted at any main entrance /exit or inside any part of any building managed, leased or owned by Belfast City Council.

Smoking (including the use of electronic cigarettes) is not permitted inside any Belfast City Council vehicle at any time.

SMOKING CONSIDERATIONS

The smoking ban does not extend beyond the inside of Council buildings and vehicles. Where employees smoke in the open on Council grounds or are provided with smoking shelters, the following should be considered:

- Any health, safety and/or fire related risks i.e. smoking is not permitted in the vicinity of any flammable, highly flammable or explosive stores; where there is any significant combustible material; or anywhere that presents a significant fire risk
- The provision of smoking receptacles
- Public image issues such as employees gathering at the front / rear of Council buildings and employees smoking in the vicinity of children, other employees and members of the public
- Smoking must not be permitted where passive smoke could reasonably access a building via open windows, ventilation systems etc.
- Agreement (as appropriate) on times when smoking is permitted such as during authorised breaks, whilst undertaking specific activities etc.
- Any designated smoking area is compliant with the legislation if:
 - i) It has no roof; or
 - ii) It has a roof and the structure has 50% of the surrounding walls open ('roof' includes any fixed or moveable structure or device that can cover all or part of the premises as a roof including canvas awnings).

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

E-cigarettes are battery-powered products designed to replicate smoking behaviour without the use of tobacco. They consist of a cartridge containing liquid nicotine, an atomiser (heating element), a rechargeable battery and electronics. They turn nicotine, flavour and other chemicals into a vapour that is inhaled by the user. The exhaled vapour can be seen, and some products have a light emitting diode at the tip that lights up when the user inhales.

The Council's decision to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes within its buildings and vehicles is based on the British Medical Association's (BMA) guidance on the subject. The BMA advises that e-cigarettes are subject to limited regulation, are not licensed and there is no peer reviewed evidence that they are safe or effective in helping smokers cut down or quit. The BMA recommends that their use should be prohibited in workplaces and public places to limit second hand exposure to the vapour exhaled by the use, and to ensure their use does not undermine smoking prevention and cessation by reinforcing the normalcy of cigarette use.

POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Any employee found to be in breach of this Policy i.e. smoking (including e-cigarettes) in a Council building or vehicle will be liable to formal disciplinary action in accordance with established Council procedures.

The Health & Environmental Services Department within the Council have a statutory duty to enforce all smoking legislation. Any employee smoking (excluding e-cigarettes) in a Council vehicle or premises will be committing a criminal offence and may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. Failure to display appropriate signage in council vehicles or premises may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

SMOKING SIGNAGE

To ensure compliance with The Smoke-Free (Signs) Regulations (NI) 2007 all Belfast City Council vehicles and entrances to premises must display appropriate 'No Smoking' signage.

SMOKING CESSATION SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

The council will support any employee who wishes to stop smoking. They should contact the Smoking Cessation Officer at stopsmoking@belfastcity.gov.uk

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

None

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Version No.	Changes	Date
1	Third revision	April 07
2	Existing Smoking 'Code of Practice' upgraded to a Smoking 'Policy' in line with best practice and extended to include e-cigarettes.	September 14

Further Information and Advice

For further information and advice please contact the Corporate Health and Safety Unit

Health and Safety Team: DDI 9027 0400 Ext 3234

E-mail: health&safety@belfastcity.gov.uk

