**Display Screen Equipment Users Policy**

**Who is a ‘Display Screen Equipment User’?**

Any employee required to use a display screen in the course of their work for the Council is regarded as a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) User.

This may include those employees who have to use a computer, till screens, machine tool screens or any other LED/Display screen.

**What are the requirements?**

Under the Health & Safety (DSE) Regulations 1992 (amended 2002) the Council, as an employer, is required to provide eye tests, on request, to all current or new DSE users.

On from this, the Council is then also required to contribute towards the cost of ‘basic spectacles’ if these are needed for the DSE use and therefore in order to carry out your role with the Council.

**What will the Council contribute?**

The Council will make the following contributions:

 Eye tests - £27

 Spectacles for DSE use - £49

**How do I arrange an eye test?**

First you will need to establish if you are a DSE user or not. If you are, carry on reading. If you’re not, then the Council will not contribute towards the cost of any eye test or spectacles needed.

The Council has agreed a special rate with Sussex Eyecare (in Broad Street, Seaford, 01323 892 211) for eye tests for DSE users, as above. You can contact Sussex Eyecare, stating the you are a Town Council employee, who is a DSE user, looking to arrange an eye test.

If you wish to use an alternative optician, this is fine, however please note that the Council will only reimburse up to £27 towards the cost of the eye test; any additional amount would have to be met yourself.

Please inform the Executive Support Officer if you have arranged an eye test so they can make a note of this and the financial implication for the Council.

**How does payment work for an eye test?**

If you arrange an eye test through Sussex Eyecare, they will invoice the Council directly for the cost of the eye test.

If you arrange an eye test through an alternative optician, you will need to pay for this yourself and then submit an expense claim to the Finance Manager (using the Staff Expenses Claim Form), with the receipt for your eye test. You will be reimbursed £27 or the cost of your eye test, whichever is less, in your next available salary payment. This payment will not be subject to tax, national insurance or pension deductions.

**What if I need glasses for DSE use?**

If you are found to need glasses for DSE use, or need replacement glasses for those already using glasses, the Council will make a contribution of £49 or the cost of the glasses, whichever is less. This contribution will be made providing the glasses are required specifically to view the screen clearly at the distance required by your role and that this would not be possible with your vision uncorrected or using glasses already required for general day-to-day use.

You may wish to ask the optician to make a note that glasses are needed for DSE use on any receipt or glasses booking form, just to avoid any doubt. If there is any uncertainty as to whether the above criterion has been met, this will need to be checked with the optician before any contribution is made by the Council.

*So, far example;*

* *if you require glasses for general day-to-day use or for reading anything within a certain distance, you would not usually be entitled to the contribution towards the cost of your glasses, as they are not exclusively for DSE use. Or,*
* *if you can’t see the screen from 1 metre away but can see if from 1 foot away, which is the distance you are required to work from, you would not usually be entitled to the contribution, as the glasses are not needed for the requirements of your role. Or,*
* *if you currently wear glasses for DSE use, so would be entitled to a contribution from the Council, but are getting new glasses for cosmetic or personal reasons i.e. because you fancy new colour frames; the Council would not contribute towards these replacement glasses.*

This £49 contribution is the established cost for a ‘basic’ pair of spectacles; it is completely up to the individual whether they wish to have ‘basic’ glasses or pick an alternative lens or frame style.

There is no provision for employers to fund the cost of contact lenses, as many opticians would not recommend lenses for prolonged DSE use.

**How does payment work for glasses?**

As with the eye test, if you arrange your glasses through Sussex Eyecare, they will invoice the Council directly for the £49 contribution towards the glasses or the cost of the glasses, whichever is less. If you have opted for alternative/more expensive glasses, then you will have to pay the remaining balance yourself at the time with Sussex Eyecare.

If you arrange glasses through an alternative optician or retailer, you will need to pay for this yourself and then submit an expense claim to the Finance Manager (using the Staff Expenses Claim Form), with the receipt for your glasses.

You will be reimbursed £49 or the cost of your glasses, whichever is less, in your next available salary payment. This payment will not be subject to tax, national insurance or pension deductions.

**How often should I have my eyes tested?**

Regulations state that the professional guidance of the optometrist should be followed. In practice, this is often a two-year cycle, but will depend entirely on the condition of the individual patient and must be respected by the employer.

If you experience visual difficulties whether at work or that affect your work, you can arrange for an eye test and the Council will honour this.

The Council would ask out of courtesy that you keep the Executive Support Officer informed of planned eye tests and recommendations from your optometrist if you are likely to have to make a claim more frequently than every two years, just so the financial implications can be factored in.

The Regulations do include a ‘reasonableness’ condition, so employers can legitimately resist frivolous or excessive claims towards eye test costs.

If you’re unsure about any aspect of the Council’s DSE user eyecare scheme, please speak with the Executive Support Officer.

Adopted: 24th January 2019

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