**RISK ASSESSMENT No: E**

**HAZARD: USE OF STRIMMERS**

**NATURE OF WORK:**

* Vegetation clearance undertaken by powered machinery

**HAZARDS:**

* Ejected blades, flails or attachments
* Flying debris/stones
* Contact with rotating/moving parts
* Contact with hot engine
* Kickback
* Noise
* Vibration
* Incorrectly wearing of harness and other PPE
* Contact with certain vegetation (i.e. Hogweed)
* Slip, trip or fall

**THOSE AT RISK:**

* Operator
* Other workers
* Path users

**POSSIBLE RESULTS:**

* Abrasions, cuts and amputations
* Burns
* Hearing loss
* White finger, also known as hand-arm vibration syndrome
* Skin irritation
* Damage to property

**PPE TO BE WORN:**

* Safety goggles or a full-face visor (ideally complying with EN166). Alternatively, a chainsaw helmet with a suitable full-face mesh visor (ideally complying with EN1731) may be worn.
* Ear defenders (ideally complying with EN352).
* Suitable gloves (ideally complying with EN 388) that gives protection from thorns, brambles and harmful weeds and also keeps your hands warm and dry.
* Chainsaw trousers or chaps, incorporating chain clogging material (complying with EN381) when operating clearing saws.
* Suitable safety boots that offer good grip and ankle support (complying with EN345-1). Chainsaw boots (complying with EN345 part 2 and EN381) may be worn.
* Always ensure that you use the harness to support the machine which must be fitted and adjusted correctly in line with the manufacturer’s handbook.

**CONTROL MEASURES:**

* You are advised to complete a risk assessment.
* Use and maintain machinery in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
* Before use, undertake a visual inspection to see that guards, blade bolts and cutter assembly are in place and not worn or damaged. Check the oil and fuel levels before use.
* Before use, remove debris/hazards from strimming area.
* Strim in daylight or good artificial light, looking at least one metre ahead for any debris.
* Consider the need for warning signs to let path users know of your presence.
* Cease mowing when approached by a path user and allow safe passage.
* Take care when working on steep ground, always watch your footing.
* Do not over reach.
* Ensure direction of cutting is correct to avoid jamming or kickback.
* Do not put hands or feet near rotating parts.
* Do not refuel with the engine running or when it is hot.
* Wash off vegetation sap (particularly hogweed) as soon as possible.
* Where possible do not strim straight after it has been raining.
* The Council does not encourage the use of clearing saws and brushcutters.