

## **Report to Joint Consultative Safety Committee**

**Subject:** Health and Safety Annual Report

**Date:** 29 August 2017

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### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To provide elected members, senior management and union representatives with an annual report on matters relating to health and safety (H&S). This includes the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Officer's work plan for 2016/17. The report summarises the assurance risk assessment and outlines the proposed work plan for 2017/18.

### **2. Background**

The Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Officer, herein referred to as H&S Officer acts principally as the specialist H&S practitioner for the Council. He provides appropriate advice and assistance to aid management to meet their statutory obligations, and facilitates a consistent application of the Council's H&S policy.

The role also includes a lead role for emergency planning and Business continuity, as well as occupational health duties. The H&S service has continued to evolve and modernise. Whilst recognising the formal responsibilities placed upon relevant managers, the position has a general responsibility and authority to provide an appropriate enforcement role when there is a discernible breach of H&S.

The H&S officer has undertaken a comprehensive work plan during 2016/17. Planning, implementing, checking progress, and acting on results. The H&S officer strives to undertake his work in a supportive manner, with positive reinforcement and a hands-on approach where necessary.

A strong ingrained H&S culture is the corner stone for strong H&S performance linked to positive H&S attitudes and opinions of the whole workforce, reinforced at the highest levels of the organisation. The Council's H&S culture is ameliorating and by its very nature is a constant ongoing process.

The Council is now reflecting a wider population trend of an ageing workforce, which is outlined below in table 1, by contrasting the profile of 2016 to 2017, it is likely this trend will continue as officers work for longer in their careers, which will change the shape of the H&S resources needed. Such as an ageing older workforce will likely have more

health conditions, and indeed more complex ones. As a result these will need more management and H&S officer resource to ensure that reasonable workplace adjustments are made.

Table 1. Workplace Profiling for 2016 and 2017

Workplace Profile 2016		Workplace Profile 2017	
Female	<b>248</b>	Female	<b>247</b>
Male	<b>242</b>	Male	<b>238</b>
Age 18 and under	<b>0</b> (apart from temporary work experience)	Age 18 and under	<b>0</b> (apart from temporary work experience)
19-25	<b>44</b>	19-25	<b>36</b>
26-39	<b>104</b>	26-39	<b>99</b>
40-65	<b>327</b>	40-65	<b>323</b>
66 and over	<b>15</b>	66 and over	<b>27</b>
manual role	<b>145</b>	manual role	<b>141</b>
Non-manual	<b>345</b>	Non-manual	<b>344</b>
Comments:  Nearly 70% of the workforce is over 40 years of age, which could be argued is matching the wider ageing population.		Comments: In comparison to 2016.  Generally, the trend has been towards an ageing workforce. 72% of the workforce is now over the age of 40. This may result in increased resource to occupational rehabilitation, ill health and workplace adjustments to tackle absenteeism and maximise attendance.	

### **3. Summary of H&S performance**

The profile of H&S continues to grow, with the service now reporting directly to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance. H&S is now a consideration in service plans, H&S software has been purchased, and the roll out of the employee protection register and lone worker devices have also commenced.

Management's attention towards H&S has recently improved through the use of the Covalent system for H&S audit report action updating, improved understanding of report recommendations, H&S training delivery and the quality of risk assessments.

Managers must continue to challenge colleagues to raise and maintain H&S standards. Changing attitudes towards H&S takes time, and there still remain some areas of concern. Some of the contributing factors identified are ever-increasing and changing work priorities, restructures, new operational tasks, all of which have a knock-on-effect on competent management of H&S.

Conversely, there are many examples of improvements from:

- Delivery of industry specific manual handling training for depot staff;
- Good consultation during the implementation of the permit-to-work guidance;
- New approaches to first aid training delivery for HGV drivers;
- Substantial progress with the management of hazardous substances in workshops; and
- Construction projects being delivered in accordance with current Construction Design Management regulations, e.g. the Depot waste offices and the Gedling country park visitor centre.

The H&S concerns previously highlighted in last years report concerning planning (development services) have improved. Within waste services, manual handling training for the majority of the team was completed, however some areas remained slow to improve, such as the audit action plan implementation. It is hoped with the recent service restructure that new approaches, attitudes and energy will have many positive impacts moving forward, and audit report recommendations will be implemented.

The Corporate Health and Safety (CHAS) group meetings have continued to meet quarterly to address corporate risks in consultation with nominated CHAS representatives. Briefing notes were introduced which has on average halved the length of meetings, resulting in better discussion of topics and meetings that are more outcome focused.

#### 4. Summary of the five key health & safety enablers

Each enabler is risk assessed using the H&S area and risks definitions outlined in appendix A. The last five financial years are summarised in appendix 2.

##### 4.1 Health and Safety Guidance and assistance

National legislation, Health and Safety Executive (HSE) guidance, case law, other industry best practice changes, alongside organisation learning and management support requests have shaped the H&S officer's priorities. New H&S policies and approaches have been and will continue to be developed in consultation with the workforce.

##### **Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2016/17:**

1. The Council's H&S policy was reviewed, and actions completed to raise the awareness and communication of the Council's H&S policy,
2. 4 sets of H&S management guidance were reviewed,
3. A property asset list was developed and initial assessments made to asbestos, fire and legionella,
4. The risk management fund supported H&S risk management costs,
5. The Employee Protection Register guidance was completed,
6. The Deputy Chief Executive completed a review of non-compliance and restructure of waste services,
7. Zurich Municipal the Council's insurers provided an impartial assessment of the H&S policy and property review including a sample of asbestos, fire and legionella arrangements,

##### **Assurance Assessment**

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2015/16	Low	Deteriorating previously
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	

**Residual Risk Direction:** No change at present 

The residual rating has been a combination of a number of factors of varying levels of compliance. The H&S culture in a number of Council workplaces is largely no longer a growing concern, with positive signs of progress being made. There are still some pockets of resistance of compliance with H&S corporate guidance, such as areas within leisure, waste services and public protection.

The limited resource of one H&S officer has at times been stretched by a number of management requests, as well as the loss of administration support from the former Audit and Risk technician. This sadly, gave rise to delays in improving some corporate guidance.

The associated improvements with asbestos, fire and legionella arrangements are contributing factors to the improving residual risk. This work is ongoing.

The revision to the vibration guidance note as a result of the HSE carpal tunnel syndrome enquiry highlighted a gap in arrangements concerning vibration monitoring for Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) and Whole Body Vibration (WBV) assessments.

As a result of the murder of MP Jo Cox, both Councillor and employee personal safety advice was reviewed.

The observations and opinions were formed from H&S audits, inspections, visits, references to Health and Safety Executive (HSE) legislation and accident and incident learning etc. For H&S to be successful, management must first buy-in and then challenge unacceptable work practices.

#### **Summary of planned control actions for 2017/18:**

- SLT will be visible and active leaders in health, safety and welfare,
- Deliver recommendations of the H&S policy review,
- Fully implement the risk assessment module on AssessNET (new electronic software),
- 4 sets of guidance notes will be reviewed during this financial year,
- Employee Protection Register guidance briefing sessions to the wider workforce will commence,
- Corporate directors are to be informed of non-compliance by the H&S officer,
- A H&S staff survey will be conducted as part of the staff survey, or an alternative option considered,

## **4.2 Safety Training**

The H&S officer' role includes promoting and providing regular safety training and education for all employees in collaboration with service managers. Training commitments are influenced by management requests, internal learning and gap analysis.

#### **Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2016/17:**

- The H&S officer continued to promote H&S consciousness within all levels of the organisation and assisting with the development of safe working practices.
- Training was delivered in a planned approach. 30 Internal H&S courses delivered by the H&S officer (an increase of 10). 12 external H&S courses delivered (an increase of 3).
- The central training database was developed further, providing a tool for management to interrogate and highlight training needs. The H&S training matrix has started to be rolled out,
- The emergency evacuation chair training requirements were addressed,
- A business case for online e-learning was submitted and a budget confirmed for 17/18 financial year,

## **Assurance Assessment**

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2015/16	Medium	Improving previously
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	

**Residual Risk Direction:** No change at present 

Whilst this year's actions have not moved the residual risk rating up to Low, we remain tracking towards this status. We continue to see more employees attending H&S training. However, there are still gaps in training. Assistance is needed to fully implement the staff training matrix. It is essential that all colleagues attend the right H&S course at the right times and that on the job training is being refreshed. Management must ensure that all colleagues requiring H&S training are released from workplaces to attend. It is expected as eLearning becomes available it will likely reduce the impact on operational resources.

H&S training requirements are not optional and mandatory training needs to be attended to satisfy H&S legislation.

### **Summary of planned control actions for 2017/18:**

1. Continue to deliver training in a planned approach,
2. Where internal H&S training cannot fulfil the training need, external training contractors will be engaged to deliver the training,
3. SLT and Service managers are required to continue supporting and ensure those requiring H&S training are effectively released to attend,
4. Start the implementation of eLearning in Quarter 4

## **4.3 Safety Audits & Inspections**

The H&S officer completes planned and unannounced periodic assessments, inspections or audits to identify unsafe plant, working procedures or practices and wherever possible, advise on remedial action to overcome any negative observations to the service area concerned.

### **Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2016/17:**

- 6 H&S audits were completed,
- Three corporate directors conducted H&S tours, these are now recorded on CHAS briefing notes. H&S tours are positive reinforcement of H&S standards and raise awareness of workplace H&S matters,
- H&S site inspections and unannounced visits completed,

## **Assurance Assessment**

Inherent risk rating	Medium	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2015/16	Medium	Improving previously
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Low	

**Residual Risk Direction:** No change at present 

The overall residual risk rating has been affected by findings from H&S audits undertaken with the exception of one service area that has provided evidence that H&S consciousness is there, but time and resource to fully implement actions and progress H&S has been slow in areas.

Summary of H&S audit results:

- Waste services failed their audit,
- Arnold Leisure Centre (LC) – Bonington Theatre, Carlton Forum LC and Richard Herrod Centre – all had unsatisfactory results.
- Calverton LC, Redhill LC, Transport services and PASC (Arborist team) – received satisfactory results.

Management should be strongly encouraged to prioritise conducting H&S inspections across all workplaces. This is an important proactive approach to H&S. There are gaps in arrangements in this area. The H&S tours by SLT will continue to help raise the profile of H&S across the Council.

### **Summary of planned control actions for 2017/18:**

- The H&S officer will complete a minimum of 6 H&S audits,
- Now that the waste service restructure has been concluded, their audit action can now be addressed,
- Conduct H&S tours with SLT,
- Conduct workplace inspections as and when required,
- Service managers to ensure that each workplace receives a reasonable number of H&S inspections,
- Review the H&S Audit process,

## **4.4 Accidents and Investigations**

The H&S officer continued to collate, prepare and submit accident statistics and other safety reports for management to measure safety performance. Incidents continued to be investigated and feedback given on the quality of the form completion through the CHAS group.

**Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2016/17:**

- All Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and other incidents were investigated by management with the support of the H&S officer where required,
- Successful defence of a carpal tunnel syndrome HSE enquiry,
- All accident and incidents requiring the H&S officers input or support were conducted in a timely manner,
- The H&S officer provided positive reinforcement of good practice and improvements were made to the quality of the accident and incident reports,
- Quarterly incident statistics now form part of the CHAS group briefing notes.

**Assurance Assessment**

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to the inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2015/16	Medium	Improving previously
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	



**Residual Risk Direction:** No change at present

Whilst this year’s actions have not moved the residual risk rating up to Low, we continue to track towards this status. A number of accident and incident reports took too long to be submitted to the H&S officer, service managers need to ensure that this improves. It is essential that employees take responsibility for reporting all accidents and incidents, particularly hazard and near misses on the corporate forms. The common misunderstandings and errors completing corporate accident and incident report form should start to be eliminated with the launch of the accident module of the AssessNET software.

**Summary of planned control actions for 2017/18:**

The following actions are planned to maintain and improve the Council’s assurance level with respect to Accidents & Investigations:

- Fully implement the AssessNET H&S software (accident reporting module)
- The H&S officer will provide feedback and communicate findings to management and the CHAS group,
- The H&S officer to provide support on all Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) and other incidents were required,
- to provide positive reinforcement of good practice,
- SLT should reinforce the standards of accident and incident reporting to be completed in a timely manner and conduct either a minimum, low, medium or high level investigations as per accident and incident investigation management guidance (risk assessed approach)
  
- SLT and service managers must ensure that hazards and near misses are reported using the corporate accident and incident report form,

- SLT and service managers should ensure that accident and incident report forms are fully completed, as well as corporate witness statements where required,

NB. All accidents and incidents are also known and referred to as adverse events.

Refer to Appendix 3, For accident and incident statistics.

#### 4.5 Occupational Health

The occupational health management and surveillance continued to be delivered during the past year in conjunction with the personnel team and local management.

##### **Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2016/17:**

- Completion of occupational health clinics and other relevant appointments,
- The occupational health contract procurement exercise undertaken, and new contract secured,
- HAVwear (REACTEC) vibratory monitoring contract was investigated, and online cloud based monitoring developed further with the PASC operations manager,
- Noise monitoring equipment was purchased by leisure colleagues to trial, assessments as required for waste services and the tree team in PASC, This will include a review of control measures,
- Improvements made to Carlton Forum Leisure Centres reception workstations,
- Completed local exhaust ventilation arrangement review in transport workshops,

##### **Assurance Assessment**

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2015/16	Medium	Improving previously
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	



**Residual Risk Direction:** No change at present

The residual risk remains as a medium risk due to the capacity issues of the H&S officer to dedicate resource to managing this area, the H&S officer made every effort to maintain the improving status. The noise assessments and initial surveys of leisure centre pool plant rooms and bar areas of the Richard Herrod centre remain incomplete.

##### **Summary of planned control actions for 2017/18:**

The following actions are planned to maintain and improve the Council's assurance level with respect to Occupational Health:

- Amend the corporate H&S induction form to reference issuing health surveillance forms where required,

- The noise assessments and initial surveys of leisure centre pool plant rooms and bar areas of the Richard Herrod centre remain incomplete.
- Look for rationalisation opportunities to better streamline occupational health provision with organisational development colleagues,
- Continue to manage and make further improvements to the occupational health arrangements & H&S policy,

Investigate HAVS and WBV testing And measurements in conjunction with relevant depot managers.

## **5. Resource Implications**

Planned work is to be completed within existing budgets. Additional support from other department budgets will be requested as and when required. Resource will be committed in a risk based approach. Focus will be given to high risks first, and then medium followed by the remaining low risks.

It is recognised that there needs to be close scrutiny of budgets in order that H&S costs are managed to an acceptable level. H&S and other expenditure rationalisation will continue to be an important factor before being committed.

## **6. Recommendations**

6.1 The group is asked to note the report.

6.2 To provide support of the actions required by all levels of the Council to address H&S actions.

6.3 To re-focus management's attention on H&S, and for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to make clear the H&S expectations on their service managers.

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix 1. Risk Level definitions.

Appendix 2. Overview of Risk Types.

Appendix 3. Accident and Incident Statistics