

Report to Joint Consultative Safety Committee

Subject: Health and Safety Annual Report

Date: 28 August 2018

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1. Purpose of the Report

To provide elected members, senior management and UNISON 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 2017/18.

The report summarises the assurance risk assessment and outlines the proposed work plan for 2018/19. JCSC is annually consulted on H&S matters. Recommendations are made to the Executive in the respect of any H&S function of the Council. For the purpose of this report this report covers the extent that those functions are discharged in the Council's capacity as an employer.

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 management duties. Whilst recognising the formal responsibilities placed upon relevant managers, the H&S Officer 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 2017/18. 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.

3. Summary of H&S Performance

The H&S strategic work plan was delivered and agreed with the Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer. One of the largest improvements achieved was the introduction of AssessNET H&S software system **ASSESSNET**. The delivery of the new AssessNET system now enables an improved and immediate identification of any loss, liability or damage that may lead to a claim against the Council, together with any information or explanation required.

The H&S software required significant resource to develop and adapt to the Council's structure. The formal roll out to the wider organisation commenced on 1st January 2018. On a personal level the H&S officer achieved his NEBOSH National Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety (Level 6 qualification).

The lone working device for high risk colleagues continued in its usage and effectiveness; usage and feedback reports were issued to local management on a periodic basis.

The H&S, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity service operational risk management profile was updated.

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 produced to accompany each meeting along with a forward plan of objectives.

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. There was a H&S question added to the Council staff survey, which was to test the Council's H&S climate. Of 174 respondents, nearly 80% of employees stated they were in agreement that their working environment was healthy and safe.

Staff Survey 2017 - I feel my working environment is healthy and safe

Post-Survey 2021: Freedom working in environment is healthy and safe													
Respondents		Base	Agree	Strongly agree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
Total		174	79.3%	60	34.5%	78	44.8%	15	8.6%	16	9.2%	5	2.8%

Managers must continue to challenge colleagues to raise and maintain H&S standards. Maintaining and improving attitudes towards H&S remains important. Despite this positive indicator there remain some areas of concern. Such as gaps in contractor control, risk assessment compliance, and managers ability to prioritise H&S duties. This is no easy task for colleagues as ever-increasing and changing work priorities, restructures and new operational tasks all have a knock-on-effect on competent management of H&S.

It is expected that during the next two financial years, changes to legislation under BREXIT will have a significant impact on corporate H&S guidance, officer resource requests and occupational health resources.

4. Summary of the five key health & safety enablers

Each enabler is risk assessed using the H&S risk 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.

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 control actions planned and implemented during 2017/18:

- SLT were more visible and active leaders in health, safety and welfare,
- Additional work was completed to deliver recommendations identified in previous external H&S policy and property reviews,
- Community Relations and Leisure Services made significant improvements in terms of compliance with asbestos, fire and legionella corporate guidance. Property services with the largest number of assets has the biggest task and is making good progress in these areas,
- The risk management fund supported H&S risk management costs. In the past three years to date nearly £56,000 of investment has been directed to H&S arrangements
- The roll out of the risk assessment module on AssessNET has made good progress;
- 4 sets of guidance notes were reviewed during the financial year,
- The 'big clear-out' across the Council to prepare for agile and more electronic based working has resulted in many improvements to H&S standards; such as the standards of housekeeping, and a reduced fire load across the Civic Campus,

- Since January 2018, the Council is achieving improved compliance with RIDDOR¹ regulations

Assurance Assessment

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	
Residual risk rating 2017/18	Medium	

Residual Risk Direction: No change

The residual rating has over the past year improved. Due a combination of a number of positive factors, although there has been some varying levels of compliance.

There remains varying degrees of compliance with H&S corporate guidance. It is believed the more complex areas will start to be more successfully addressed with the full roll out of the risk assessment module. This will provide senior managers with a tool to manage non-compliance.

The limited resource of one H&S officer has continued to be stretched at times, as elements of the role remain unpredictable and dependant on circumstance. The continued associated improvements with asbestos, fire and legionella arrangements are contributing factors to the improving residual risk. This work is ongoing.

Summary of planned control actions for 2018/19:

- Employee Protection Register guidance briefing sessions had to be re-prioritised to free up resource to build the H&S software, these will be put into the forthcoming financial years' work plan,
- The procurement of and operational requirements of the Arnold Market are expected to require H&S assistance,
- As water safety is becoming a County wide improvement area; this area is expected to require officer resource to assess and develop H&S arrangements. Notably, the H&S officer continuing to be the Council's representative at the Nottinghamshire water safety partnership,
- Corporate directors are to be informed of non-compliance by the H&S officer,
- Property services is envisaged to complete the remaining legionella and fire compliance work this financial year,
- 4 sets of guidance notes will be reviewed during this financial year,
- A review of the H&S policy will be required to reflect the Chief Executive leaving post, the vacant period and consequent replacement arrangements.
- SLT to be briefed on the risk assessment module,
- Continue to support officers in the use of the AssessNET H&S software (risk assessment module).

¹ RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013

4.2 H&S Training

The H&S officer's 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.

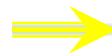
Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2017/18:

- 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 with 23 Internal H&S courses being delivered by the H&S officer, plus a further 12 external H&S courses.
- The emergency evacuation chair training requirements were addressed,
- The e-learning software procurement has been moved to 2018/19 work plan,

Assurance Assessment

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2017/17	Medium	
Residual risk rating 2017/18	Medium	

Residual Risk Direction: No change



This year's risk rating has not changed. The outlook in this area though is positive and reflects the position that the H&S training offer of internal and external training remains strong. However, attendance remains inconsistent across all services areas some being much better than others. A marked improvement area has been the number of Revenues and Welfare support colleagues that have attended training this past year.

The reasons provided for none attendance varies from workload levels to last minute unplanned commitments. H&S training requirements are not optional and mandatory training needs to be attended to satisfy our legal duties.

The general feedback to H&S courses remains very positive and constructive feedback is welcomed. A new addition to the training plan was the specific fire awareness training, delivered by Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services's trading company, which included the usage of fire extinguishers. These courses were well received and well attended.

It remains essential that all colleagues attend the right H&S course at the right times and that on the job training is being refreshed, despite busy work commitments. It is up to management to ensure that all colleagues requiring H&S training are released

‘providing sufficient information. Instruction, training and supervision to enable all employees to avoid hazards to their own health and safety at work’;

‘Attend all health and safety training sessions arranged on your behalf’.

- Procure and implement eLearning software,
- Management requests will continue to shape H&S training provision,
- Continue to deliver training in a planned way,
- A mixture of internal and external training will be provided to cover the training needs,
- SLT and Service managers continued support is required to ensure those requiring H&S training are effectively released to attend.

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 2017/18:

- The H&S officer delivered over 40 audit sets of assessment, and associated documentation was completed,
- The previous waste service audit actions were transferred to the new Transport and Waste Service Manager,
- All service areas had H&S tours completed with their corporate director,
- The CHAS briefing notes for each quarter noted the H&S site inspections and unannounced visits that were completed,
- A review of the H&S Audit process was completed.

Assurance Assessment

Inherent risk rating	Medium	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Low	
Residual risk rating 2017/18	Low	

Residual Risk Direction: No change



The overall residual risk rating has remained steady overall. Premises audits across the Council's estate saw continued improvements.

Management should be strongly encouraged to prioritise conducting H&S inspections across all workplaces. This is an important proactive approach to H&S, and there are gaps in arrangements in this area. This could present some residual risk to the Council which may need to be mitigated by other external support options.

The H&S tours by SLT continued to help raise the profile of H&S across the Council. A weakness identified is that officers must be clear they can delegate tasks to other officers but they cannot ultimately delegate their H&S responsibilities.

Summary of planned control actions for 2018/19:

- The H&S officer will complete a minimum of 6 H&S audits,
- Provide further assistance to Transport and Waste services to complete outstanding audit actions,
- Conduct H&S tours with SLT; requesting an update from every service area regarding the observations and comments made during previous H&S tours,
- Conduct workplace inspections as and when required,
- Service managers to ensure that each workplace receives a reasonable number of H&S inspections.

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 continue 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 2017/18:

- All RIDDOR and other incidents that required an investigation were completed by management with the support of the H&S officer where required,
- 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 are included in the CHAS group briefing notes.
- Fully implemented the AssessNET H&S software (accident, incident and hazard reporting modules),
- The H&S officer provided feedback and communicated incidents and investigation findings to management, corporately via the CHAS group briefing notes.
- All employees now have AssessNET to report hazards and near misses.

Assurance Assessment

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to the inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	
Residual risk rating 2017/18	Medium	

Residual Risk Direction: No change

Whilst this year's actions have not moved the residual risk rating up to Low, the Council continues to track towards this status. It is realistically expected that once the new AssessNET reporting system is fully embedded, the residual risk rating will improve to a low risk rating.

Over the past year a reducing number of accident and incident reports took too long to be submitted to the H&S officer. It is essential that any person required to report an incident do so using the new online AssessNET system.

The numbers of common misunderstandings and errors in completing the hand written corporate accident and incident report forms have started to reduce with the introduction of the new software; that being said the new system will take time to become 'second nature' for colleagues to use. One area of particular improvement with the new system is the reduction with issues of interpreting poor handwriting.

By far one of the biggest improvement areas in recent months has been the amount of hazards and near misses being reported.

Summary of planned control actions for 2018/19:

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

- Continue to support officers in the use of the AssessNET H&S software (accident, incident & hazard reporting modules),
- The H&S officer to continue to provide feedback and statistics to management via the CHAS group,
- The H&S officer to provide support on all RIDDOR and other incidents where required,
- to provide positive reinforcement of good practice,
- SLT to be briefed on the accident, incident and hazard reporting module compliance,
- SLT once briefed can then provide an informed level of control over the use of the AssessNET system; such as actions associated with reports being completed in a timely manner.

4.5 Occupational Health

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

Summary of control actions planned and implemented during 2017/18:

- Completion of occupational health clinics and other relevant appointments,
- The occupational health contract remains in place for the areas managed by the H&S officer,
- the corporate H&S induction form has been amended to include the issuing of occupational health surveillance forms where required,
- The noise assessments and initial surveys of leisure centres has progressed,
- The review and rationalisation opportunities to better streamline occupational health provision with organisational development colleagues was investigated,
- A supplier has been ascertained for HAVS² and WBV³ testing to obtain measurements and further works are planned for 2018/19,
- Continue to manage and make further improvements to the occupational health arrangements & the H&S policy.

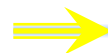
Assurance Assessment

² HAVS – Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome

³ WBV – Whole Body Vibration

Inherent risk rating	High	No change to inherent risk
Residual risk rating 2016/17	Medium	
Residual risk rating 2017/18	Medium	

Residual Risk Direction: No change



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 worked hard to maintain compliance.

Summary of planned control actions for 2018/19:

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

- The noise assessments and initial surveys will continue across the Council, as part of a periodic risk assessment process,
- Continue to manage and make further improvements to the occupational health arrangements & H&S policy,
- Work with environmental services department to conduct WBV and HAVS assessment of plant and equipment.

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 agree and support the actions required by all levels of the Council to address H&S actions.

6.3 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