

Report to Joint Consultative Safety Committee

Subject: Health and Safety Annual Report

Date: 31st July 2014

Author: Health and Safety Officer.

1. Purpose of the Report

To provide management with an annual report on matters relating to organisational Health and Safety (H&S). The report will highlight H&S aims and objectives to support organisational continuous professional development. It will also explain key areas of the role including classifying each area with a level and category of risk as defined by the safety officer's opinion.

2. The Health and Safety role.

The past year has seen much change within the Council and the role of safety officer. On the 1st of January 2014 Grant Ilett, came into post. Additionally, during April the role expanded to include the Emergency Planning role.

Since starting in post, the approach has been to gauge the current H&S delivery, understanding, compliance and identify training needs within the Council. This will continue as the safety officer builds experience in all Council service areas.

The safety officer acts principally as a specialist safety officer for the Council, providing appropriate advice and assistance to enable management to meet their statutory obligations and consistent application of the Council's safety policy.

The safety officer strives to deliver the role applying industry best practice of **Plan, Do, Check, Act** principles to H&S service delivery.

The Council remains susceptible to internal and external risks, works will be undertaken to enhance the education of employees. The safety officer will support management in addressing these and other matters in a reasonably practicable manner.

The overall safety culture is significantly embedded with some improvement areas identified. This will build upon general awareness of H&S through modular courses covering areas like risk assessment and incident investigation training. Work will be undertaken to reinforce the safety culture from prompt investigations

to senior management being proactive role models for employees.

2.1 Safety Guidance

The Council Safety Policy, Organisation document and Arrangements section was reviewed throughout the past year. These documents will continue to be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Legislation changes during 2013 have initiated changes to Safety Guidance notes that have been and will continue to be updated in a planned way.

A working group will be established to address and amend Council policies within the areas of lone working, violence and aggression and management duties to provide safe working environments for Council employees. One area that will be of particular focus will be the introduction of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) customer base and the provision of secure interview rooms.

The smoking policy will also be reviewed in light of the introduction to the workplace of new unregulated products such as e-cigarettes. The will be policy will be communicated and enforced across the Council by management and supported by the safety officer.

The employee H&S handbook is an in-depth pocket size book, which in effect is a smaller version of the H&S policy arrangements document. Unfortunately, the handbooks became outdated as soon as any legislation or Council policies changed. To update and ensure accuracy of the handbook requires high amounts of limited resources reviewing and expense printing and binding the documents. Due to an increased workload and future commitments of the role this cannot be sustained. The employee H&S handbook will be withdrawn and replaced with a simpler H&S leaflet. This will simply illustrate the H&S responsibilities of all officers and Councillors within the organisation and enforce H&S responsibilities.

Works will be undertaken to fully enforce the Substance Misuse policy. Drug and Alcohol testing will be formalised such as random sampling procedures. The frequency and number tested will be reviewed initially on a quarterly basis at the Corporate Health and Safety Group (CHAS) meetings to ensure that the testing is proportionate and manages any risks that may be identified.

Additional key tasks in this area will also include:

- The review of 4 Safety Guidance Notes.

- Improved communication of safety guidance policies.

Safety Guidance

Risk Level 3, category LOW

2.2 Safety Training

The safety officer' role includes promoting and providing regular safety training for all employees in collaboration with all service areas.

The former H&S officer committed set periods of the year to deliver staff training. This resulted in long periods where staff that required training being unskilled or without the H&S knowledge they needed for potentially prolonged periods. To aid in reducing this time, training sessions will be spread throughout the year and targeted by workforce requests and risk based.

Works have commenced and will continue regarding workforce competency training sessions such as, Manager and Supervisor Risk Assessment training.

There will be some areas that will require specific attention such as training needs as a consequence of staffing restructures. The restructures are likely to result in newly promoted employees whom require H&S training.

Incident reporting training has been included in the training plan and sessions have already been delivered. These have adapted from course feedback. This is a priority area for a number of reasons. The Council insurers (Zurich) included recommendations to improve the quality of risk assessments, incident investigations due to a number of failed civil claims and a consequent main reason why the Council's has higher insurance premiums. The most significant premium is an increase in Public Liability and Employers Liability cover. The premiums for Public Liability in 2013/14 was £74,900, this increased to £82,600 for 2014/15. The Employers Liability premium for 2013/14 was £45,000, increasing for 2014/15 to £57,800. The following tables show the loss ratios of premiums to claims settlements paid by our insurers, over 10, 5 and 3 years, for 2012/13 and 2013/14. An acceptable loss ratio is considered to be in the region of 50%-60%.

Public Liability

	2012/13	2013/14
10 Year	80%	79.7%
5 Year	80%	77.7%
3 Year	81%	88.77%

Employers Liability

	2012/13	2013/14
10 Year	141%	148.22%
5 Year	96.59%	113.23%
3 Year	86.55%	82%

As a consequence of the insurers report a working group was established during 2013/14 and work commenced on revisions to the risk assessment process and incident form procedures. To date the risk assessment process has had a

number of changes:

- The revised landscape risk assessment template had not been fully implemented across the organisation, these will be checked during the audit process.
- The risk estimation table for completing risk assessments has been complimented with a traffic light risk based table highlighting to managers high, medium and low risks and guidance on what actions are required to reduce the risks.
- Training sessions in the corporate safety guidance for risk assessments.

The incident forms has undergone the following changes to aid improvements:

- The safety guidance has been reviewed in light of RIDDOR legislation changes in 2013
- The safety officer monitored and noted the quality of incident form completion between January and March 2014. A substantial numbers showed errors, omissions to poor quality completion. Some requiring time consuming follow-up action by the safety officer to clarify and ensure local management had completed reasonable improvements.
- The incident form has been redesigned and additional checklists added to the forms to aid management incident investigations.
- A memorandum has been communicated to service managers for dissemination to their service areas
- Training sessions held to retrain managers and supervisors in incident investigations.

The safety officer received additional feedback from management. A number of requests included improvements that would simplify hazard reporting, accident statistics that can be easier to interpret and produced in seconds rather than hours or waiting for weeks for statistics. Also reminders for when training refresher are due for employees. Unfortunately, the current software is very limited in functionality and time consuming when data inputting. Improvements have been made to training records held by the safety officer. The large backlog of records held by the safety officer will continue to be sorted and logged. This is a high resource task completed within limited resources. All training records and maintaining necessary skills, information and knowledge remains a management responsibility.

The safety officer has completed the Instructor course to enable First Aid at Work (FAAW) courses in-house delivery where practicable. Unfortunately, it is impracticable for the safety officer to deliver all courses due to wider role commitments. An additional person will need to be trained to support in the FAAW course delivery. Any external trainer costs will be kept to a minimum. The First Aid register of qualified persons will continue to be managed and updated by the safety officer.

The Union Safety Representative Paul Morris has been stepped down, due to lack of activity within the role. Etwell Zviko has taken over the role and is to be

trained by UNISON. The Council should release Etwell to be trained to a suitable level for this role.

The safety officer will aim to recruit additional safety champions to support safety standards and build a stronger safety culture within the Council.

A planned approach to training will be conducted throughout the year. The plan will continue to be influenced and shaped by management requests. Training needs will also be influenced by findings from safety audits, site inspections, visits, safety policy objectives, safety networking and other observations.

Due to reducing operating budgets, training costs could be recharged to local budgets at a cost per head, or contributions requested from other budgets to support delivery.

Over the next year the safety officer and training officer will be engaged with organising and delivering a Staff Support campaign. The campaign will strive to support the workforce and reduce some of the highest reasons for absenteeism within the Council.

Safety Training

Risk Level 3, category MEDIUM

2.3 Safety Audits, Inspections and Visits

The safety officer will complete 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.

A safety audit plan will be completed with the aim of completing a minimum of 6 audits each year. Audits will be organised with local management. There is an open invitation for CHAS officers and safety representatives to join the safety officer during the audits.

Safety audits will focus on high risk departments. The high risk departments will have annual audits (Transport, Waste, PASC, Leisure and Culture). All other departments are viewed as low risk. All low risk departments will receive an audit within a three year cycle period. Any service area audit could increase in number at the request from management. An increased level of audits could be supported with an improved audit system currently not feasible.

To date, the safety officer has been engaged in supporting and facilitating improvements in H&S standards through site inspections and visits. These will continue.

Previous audits will be reviewed before commencing audits to gauge any improvements made. Some long standing issues have been highlighted in audits reviewed to date.

The safety officer has been engaged in site visits and enquiries regarding the Gedling Country Park. Works have ranged from contract compliance, project manager queries and inspections to support the PASC service area.

Safety Audits, Inspections and Visits

Risk Level 3, Category LOW

2.4 Accidents, Investigations and insurance claims.

The safety officer will collate, prepare and submit accident statistics and other safety reports for management to measure safety performance. Incidents will continue to be investigated. The development and training officers in procedures will be implemented.

The current accident package is a high resource driven package that reduces time available within the department. The restrictions of the package and limited resources of one safety officer present limitations to the role that could be released with modernisation of the service area.

Unfortunately, last year some incidents were not investigated in a prompt manner. This has not gone unnoticed by the Councils insurers and wider organisation. This in the safety officer's opinion has had a detrimental effect on the overall safety culture.

To address past trends and build a stronger safety culture the following aims and objectives have been devised:

- All RIDDOR incidents will be investigated by management and the safety officer in a timely manner.
- The safety officer will investigate all employee incidents in a timely manner. This will raise the profile that all incidents especially those involving employees are taken seriously and employees are valued within the organisation.
- Provide Quarterly incident statistics to the CHAS group.
- Managers and supervisors will be re-trained in incident investigations and understand the implications of past insurance claim losses.
- A minimum of 6 Incident investigation training sessions will be organised.
- Feedback will be given to service areas on incident form completion to ensure constant learning within the organisation.
- Improved defence of civil claims.

Between 1st Jan to 31st May there have been two RIDDOR reportable incidents and three insurance claims. All have been fully investigated by the safety officer. Learning and improvements have been made where necessary.

A programme of organisational safety training will be planned and delivered.

Organisational restructures and the introduction of new tenants to Council buildings have and will continue to require an input from the safety officer in terms of H&S duties.

Accident Analysis. Table below shows full year figures for 2013 and Jan to May 2014.

Injury Type	Year	
	2014 (Jan - May)	2013 (Jan- Dec)
SFO	8	52
STF	23	78
SMO	13	26
Near Miss	10	17
Sport Participation Injury	6	14
Reportable	2	2
Attacks (verbal / physical)	7	25
Gas/Fume/Temp	1	1
Other (not known/Specified)	12	47
Asphyxiation	0	1
Manual handling	0	10
Legionnaires	0	1
Faulty Equip	3	0
Electricity	3	0
Total Incidents	88	274

Nb. Other/ not known/ not specified incidents: A review of logging and reporting will be completed to improve their categorisation, to ensure potential learning from these incidents is not missed.

2.4.1 Safety Culture objectives -

Work will be undertaken to build a stronger safety culture. This will be measured through a number of ways:

- Near Miss incidents will become the highest incident statistic within a 3 year period.
- Each service area will have at least one safety champion to raise the profile of H&S matters such as near miss events.
- Senior Leadership Team will be visible and active leaders in safety, this will

start with a self-assessment form in June and reviewed in December.

2.4.2 Safety Software upgrade objectives:

The Safety Officer will investigate options for upgrading the safety software. Meetings have been held and further arranged for management to consider potential implementation. A business case will be put forward to the Service Manager and Director for Audit and Asset Management. This is a potential joint procurement option with other Local Authorities. All options will include in-house developments.

New Safety Software package Council and current management requirements:

- Improved 'at a glance' functionality for management to prioritise their H&S tasks.
- A central secure area for H&S and sensitive documentation. Ease of access for document requests (weakness reported by our Insurers). At present records are largely paper intense, which pose management issues from referencing, limited storage space amongst others.
- Employee portal, for all staff to access. A simple gateway to enable staff and contractors to report incidents, near miss & hazards that trigger email notifications
- All employees to be able to view safety information from risk assessments to DSE form completion in clear defined question sets.
- Anonymous 'whistle blowing' hazard reporting (near miss) system, to improve H&S culture and hazard reporting across the Council. In essence to empower the entire workforce in H&S.
- The quality and consistency of information being created and stored needs to be improved, there are software options that have approval levels to ensure information is checked before it is stored.
- Efficient reporting and support function to send reminders when actions are required.
- Management feedback has requested tools to identify and monitor individual training needs, software options must have this function as well as automatic email reminders and training matrix report. An easy way of identifying trends and gaps in workforce competency. A central point to log all training rather than the current differentiated department record systems (this is a weakness of current systems also highlighted by our Insurers and claims losses). This would save time and reduce duplication and sharing of information.

- Move towards a paperless system (resource cost savings).
- Reduce time and effort completing H&S tasks and analysis. Reports produced in seconds rather than many minutes.
- Audit systems are at present time consuming and paper heavy. Any software upgrade should include auditing and monitoring module, with easy at a glance tracked actions, compliance reports, as well as the ability to customise audits depending on departmental needs. They should be easy to set-up and amend. This would encourage continuous professional development rather than annually reviews.
- Spread workloads to manageable tasks which can be set by local management.
- Introduce templates and 'drop-down' menus for ease of task completion.
- Increased time to be proactive rather than reactive to H&S issues.
- Reduce time required to complete safety audits.

Accidents, Investigations and insurance claims

Risk Level 2 – Category MEDIUM

2.5 Occupational Health.

Health surveillance continued to be delivered during the past year in conjunction and support of the personnel team. The occupational health clinics were arranged throughout the previous year. These clinics and other health surveillance have continued to be delivered and be managed by the safety officer with support of local management. In addition, nurse and doctor appointments completing appointments and advising management on any adjustments needed within the workplace.

Significant work will be undertaken to review and ensure legal compliance with occupational health surveillance including the occupational health employee database management.

A formal contract will be arranged with an occupational health provider to further reduce current charges for this service.

Meetings have been held with the current occupational health provider to ascertain the current compliance. The Council' database is extensive and considerable time has been made to improve its management. This will continue to remain prudent in Council obligations.

2.5.1 Health fair 2014 - Work has been undertaken to source funding and support for future health fair events. The January 2014 event was successful. SLT were asked to make a decision on the future of the event. It was agreed that the safety officer would plan with service area support will be granted to aid in planning and delivery of the event. The Chief Executive, is to approach our partners in requesting a contributory subsidy to aid in funding the event and engage a active commitment to potential joint venture events.

2.5.2 The corporate eye test procedure changes. The corporate eye test procedure has changed, which will result in a net cost saving to the Council. A corporate account has been arranged with Specsavers. In effect reducing the cost per employee from £65 per to £17. The budget for 2014/15 has been reduced to £4000. Hence this saving has been necessary. Further funding can be requested to ensure the Council's monitoring duties are maintained to a reasonably practicable level.

Works will commence on a staff support campaign designed to work towards improve staff resilience, tackle presenteeism and stress related absence from the workplace. Training sessions that will be targeted towards employees and management.

Occupational Health

2.6 Emergency Planning

The Civil contingencies Act places a duty on the Council to undertake preparatory measures to respond to any emergency situation, which may occur within the district's boundaries, the Council also undertakes to provide assistance to neighbouring Councils, when requested, following an emergency within their boundaries.

The Gedling Borough Council Emergency Plan is split into 3 parts, Sections 1 to 6 (Part A) Contains all the District Council's Emergency Plans, which are public documents, and available for viewing on the Gedling Borough Council web pages.

Section 7 (Part B – confidential), This part of the Emergency Plan contains information that could not be included in the Part A (public) section of the Emergency Plan or added to the Part B Contacts Database. It contains details of contracts with businesses such as Transport companies and Plant equipment providers as well as current emergency procedures.

Section 8 (Part C – Confidential), This Part of the Emergency Plan all the District Council's Emergency contact information and is confidential.

At this time due to changes in responsibilities within the Audit and Asset Management service rea, the safety officer has inherited the emergency planning role.

Emergency planning training or refresher training is a significant area that needs addressing this year. Due to restructures within the Leisure and Culture and Housing & Localities service areas, rest centre training is likely to be an area of significant training areas. The council remains well prepared to deal with its regular risk area of flooding. The frontline staff within the Parks and Street Care service area are well experienced and well versed in reacting to these emergencies.

Key tasks that will be planned and delivered by the safety officer.

- Identify our emergency planning partners and how we work with them.
- Operational, Tactical and Strategic training for officers involved in emergency planning roles and responsibilities will be organised between October 2014 and June 2015.
- The emergency phone and a rota system will be arranged.
- Any training events and exercises that would be beneficial to Council officers will be arranged where possible in conjunction with Nottinghamshire County Council NCC (e.g. leisure centre rest centre training).
- Rest Centre readiness will be assessed by NCC.
- The role of attending Event Safety Advisory Group Liaison Meeting at County

- level, historically a senior manager will be clarified.
- The safety officer will attend local resilience forum (LRF) and LRF Flood Planning and Warning Group Meetings where practicable.
 - Emergency plan for the Council will be updated.
 - Local Resilience Forum (LRF) Emergency plans will be reviewed and any actions planned accordingly.
 - The government classification scheme for documentation will be implemented within Council emergency plans.
 - The safety officer has inherited the role of leading on Council SAG meetings for Council events, events that is expected to have over 5000 attendees. This will not include non – Council planned events at this time due to resource constraints.
 - The emergency planning budget will be managed by the safety officer. Including service level agreements with NCC and Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC).
 - The satellite phone functionality and subscription details will be reviewed.

Savings for 2014/15

- National Resilience extranet costing £198 per annum has been replaced with Resilience direct which is now a free service.

Potential savings will be investigated.

- Satellite phone, to be withdrawn. Current phones are inoperable (x2 phones), subscription savings would be £445 per annum.

NCC are currently reviewing their satellite phone function, identifying a potential cost saving as many local authorities (LA's) have already withdrawn their satellite phones. If NCC withdraws their satellite phone, the safety officer would recommend that GBC follow suit.

Emergency Planning

Risk Level 2 – Category MEDIUM

2.7 Health and Safety service delivery.

The safety officer will continue to promote safety education in conjunction with management, encouraging safety consciousness at all levels within the organisation and assisting and encouraging supervisory managers to develop safe working practices.

The Safety Officer has undertaken a First Aid at Work instructor course. He will commence a NEBOSH Occupational Health and Safety Diploma and other training session, seminars and networking events to maintain a competent dialogue with all departments, other local authorities and outside bodies, on H&S matters, to promote and encourage professional development

Additional duties.

Safety Officer budget will be managed prudently by the safety officer and additional funds requested as and when required to ensure the Councils remains prudent in its duties.

Potential for omissions in compliance, skills and knowledge. Hence a focus on the safety officer to build on experience, skills, knowledge and qualifications.

2.7.2 H&S liaison, networking, bench marking.

A review of meetings the safety officer attends has been reviewed to rationalise the need to attend them, ensuring any duplication is avoided.

Safety professionals are effective networkers sharing best practice readily; colleagues across the industry have been very welcoming and supportive in welcoming the new safety officer into the role. Their help and support notably Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire County Council, Broxtowe, Bassetlaw and Newark and Sherwood must be noted for thanks.

Maintain safety Group UK membership, by attending NOSHA (Nottinghamshire Occupational Safety and Health Association) meetings, but to a reduced 6 meetings per annum targeting continuous professional development (CPD) sessions.

Nottinghamshire Risk Management Group (NRMG), all of Nottinghamshire's H&S Officers across the east midlands attended meetings, this is an invaluable networking session, which has proved invaluable in sharing information

East Midlands Safety network is where historically. The Council has benefited in times and resources saved due to documents and knowledge shared during this

group. i.e. Watercourse management, tree management, lone working policies.

East Midlands Safety Officers Group, ceased attendance due to low participation across East Midlands. Group has now eConference set-up.

Courses the safety officer has complete and intends to complete during 2014/15, training seminars and continuous professional development

Course/ Training/CPD	Target Date	Comments
Complete First Aid at Work Instructor Course	Mar 14	Completed.
Dementia Awareness Course	Feb 14	Completed.
Hand Arm Vibration Management training.	May 14	Completed.
Confined spaces seminars	May 14	Completed.
Health and Wellbeing Seminar	April 14	Completed.
Attend National Safety Exhibition (London)	June 14	Completed.
Safeguarding Children & Young People and Protecting Vulnerable Adults	26 th June 14	Completed.
NEBOSH Diploma in Occupational Health and Safety.	Sept 2015	Course identified. Start date pending. Target Sept 14.
Emergency planning in-house training	Sept 14	NCC to provide training support. Planning stages.
Emergency planning Operational and Tactical training.	Mar 2015	External provider (limited availability). Dates identified, requests circulated to EP Officers.

Asbestos Management Course (P405)	June 2015	Deferred to 2015. Meeting with Line Manager- Diploma higher priority (May 14)
Fire Safety, Risk Assessment or NEBOSH Fire Certificate	Dec 2014	TBC.
East Midlands IOSH branch meetings	Ongoing	

The safety officer will strive to continue his work in a supportive manner, with positive reinforcement and a hands-on approach where necessary. It is hoped in time, the hands-on approach will reduce as training and experience of officers improves.

Health & Safety service delivery

Risk Level 2 – Category MEDIUM

3. Resource Implications

Planned work is to be completed within existing budgets. Additional support from other department budgets will be requested as and when required.

4. Recommendation

The group is asked to note the report.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1. Level and Category Risk definitions.

Appendix 2. Summary of risk for all safety officer areas

Appendix 1.

Risk – Standard Definitions

H&S area and risks.

H&S recommendations are categorised, depending upon the level of associated risk, as follows:

Level	Category	Definition
1	High	Action is essential to manage exposure to fundamental risks that could expose the Council and its employees to loss. The majority of the significant risks relating to the area reviewed are not effectively managed.
2	Medium	Action is necessary to manage exposure to significant risks. There are a number of significant risks relating to the area reviewed that are not effectively managed.
3	Low	Action is desirable and should result in enhanced control or better effectiveness in H&S. The risks relating to the objectives of the areas reviewed are reasonably managed and are not cause for major concern.

Summary of risk for all safety officer areas:

Safety Guidance

Risk Level 3, category LOW

Safety Training

Risk Level 3, category MEDIUM

Safety Audits, Inspections and Visits

Risk Level 3, Category LOW

Accidents, Investigations and insurance claims

Risk Level 2 – Category MEDIUM

Occupational Health

Risk Level 3 – Category LOW

Emergency Planning

Risk Level 2 – Category MEDIUM

Health & Safety service delivery

Risk Level 2 – Category MEDIUM