

EMPLOYEE SIDE LIAISON PANEL – 18th FEBRUARY 2022

HR COMMITTEE – 17 MARCH 2022

QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (Q3)

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 To note the contents of this quarterly report including incidents, projects, and safety panel feedback that may require monitoring, intervention or further review.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report provides an update on key health, safety and welfare issues during quarter 3. It has been a busy period with the continued response to Covid-19 pandemic. Accidents, incidents and near misses reported have stayed within the normal parameters, down from the last quarter. Six incidents were reported under RIDDOR. All three safety panels met to review incidents and the group action tables in Q3. The Drugs and Alcohol Policy was reviewed, consulted on and updated.
- 2.2 This report highlights the significant health, safety, and welfare work across the Council from October to December 2021. Feedback from the three Safety Panels is covered, and the accident, incident and near miss statistics are detailed in the graphical report in the **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 The updated Drug and Alcohol Policy is attached as **Appendix 3**. The policy has been discussed at the Operational Unions Meeting and at Safety Panels, with agreement that there is a need to focus on training of managers, and to educate staff on the Policy and the effects of drugs. No significant changes have been made to the updated Policy, and the training for Managers will be provided by DTec in Q4.
- 2.4 On 8th December 2021 the Government announced that the published Plan B response to Covid-19 pandemic would be implemented across England due to Omicron levels doubling every 2 to 3 days, which was putting pressure on the NHS. Covid-19 guidance stated that those who can work from home were asked to do so, which was communicated to staff with an all-staff Communications email on 9th December, which detailed “You can continue to work from N.F.D.C offices if it is essential for the effective delivery of your service, and with the consent of your manager”. This Covid-19 staff guidance has changed on multiple occasions following announcements from the Government, the latest announcement on changes being implement by Government on 19th January.
- 2.5 In December we advertised, interviewed, and offered the vacant Health and Safety Advisor post. Our new Health and Safety Advisor (George Gale) will start on 7th February, which will allow the team to deliver on the Corporate Health and Safety Workplan for 2022/2023.
- 2.6 The new Asbestos Management Working Group met on 16th November which introduced the scope of the groups remit, it will meet quarterly with Officers from all relevant Services. The group and the programme of asbestos management works follows on from the updated Corporate Control of Asbestos Policy 2021, which was drafted in response to the Housing Asbestos Management Audit from 2020. The

Corporate Asbestos Manager role has yet to be filled, which is a key element in responding to the programme of works.

- 2.7 Asbestos removal works at Compton and Sarum House are currently planned to start in April 2022, with project management consultants Ramboll Ltd leading on the CDM elements. The removal works will require a licensed removal contractor and a ASB5 notification will need to be made to the HSE. Works are expected to take several weeks and will require a temporary decant of the residents.
- 2.8 Policies and Procedures: As part of the response to the changing Covid-19 Government guidance an additional Managers Guide to Covid-19 was produced to assist with confirmation of positive cases. Documents which are in the process of being updated include: Accident and incident reporting, and investigations Policy; Health and Safety Policy; Lone Working Policy. The Lone Working Policy review will start shortly, which will also audit relevant staff's knowledge of the Warning Marker Register.

3. SAFETY PANEL FEEDBACK

- 3.1 As discussed during the quarter 2 Health and Safety Report presentation to EMT, the action tables for each of the safety panels has been assessed and standardised so that they are clearer to review. See **Appendix 2** for the significant items in the amalgamated Actions Table for the Safety Panel Groups. All Actions Tables will be reviewed prior to the April meetings for the year ahead. Agenda, minutes, and Actions Tables are now being held in one location on the health and safety team ForestNet pages to improve transparency for staff.
- 3.2 **Operations Panel:** The Drivers Handbook is the one outstanding action which is out of target date, the final draft is expected to be circulated shortly. The other safety related handbooks for staff less in-depth reviews. The significant resource required to manage the mandatory training of staff, across all operational services, was again raised. First-aid kit contents in vehicles recently reviewed to ensure they are sufficient for purposes. PPE provision and procurement raised as an area which could be reviewed, to rationalise the sources. The Service Safety Plans are in the process of being reviewed for 2022/2023 and will be presented at the April meeting.
- 3.3 **Office Based Panel:** Only one incident reported in Q3, a verbally abusive homeless client in the reception area of Lymington Town Hall. Fire Procedures for ATC to be finalised and communicated to staff shortly. The review of the security arrangements for all corporate buildings is ongoing. Fire Safety evacuation procedures have been reviewed and Fire Wardens being sought. Most of the workplace Safety Inspections have been completed, only two areas outstanding which includes LTH.
- 3.4 **Housing Panel:** The Lone Working Policy review will start in Q4, which will also focus on the highlighted areas of concerns with the Warning Marker Register which are still outstanding, the inconsistent staff training. An e-learning module is an option which be a big improvement. The continued focus on the review of risk assessments, safe systems of works, and standard operating procedures is required. Manual handling risk assessments is a specific area of focus following recent incidents – external training provider has been booked. The outstanding audit of CCTV and Community Safety was rolled over from the previous action table (and the Health and Safety Team Workplan)

4. ACCIDENTS, INCIDENTS AND NEAR MISSES

- 4.1 The graphical report in the Appendix details the accidents, incidents, near misses and vehicle incidents occurring in quarter 3. There was a total of 42 accidents/ incidents/ near misses reported across the Council, down from 50 in Q2.
- 4.2 Reportable incidents: there were 6 incidents which were reported under RIDDOR to the Health and Safety Executive, which included two Covid-19 transmissions at work. These and other significant incidents are detailed in the paragraphs below.
- 4.3 Asbestos management incident: 51 Dukeswood Drive, Private Sector Lease property. As part of taking on a PSL property Housing Maintenance trades from Gas Safety and Electrical teams (and an EPC assessment) accessed the property to undertake maintenance works (boiler replacement, etc) from 3rd September 2021 before an asbestos survey had been undertaken on 8th October. The asbestos survey by Allium found damaged asbestos insulation board in the airing cupboard and some debris in the kitchen cupboard below. This resulted in the property being closed down and air reassurance tests being undertaken onsite, all of which passed. Removal and encapsulations works were subsequently undertaken before access was allowed to the property by non-asbestos professionals. A knowledge gap on asbestos management identified, and the practice of trades only being allowed to start onsite once an asbestos survey has been reviewed needs to be reinforced.
- 4.4 RIDDOR (19/10/21): Gas Engineers carrying a boiler pack (approx. 40kg) up the communal staircase to first floor flat, where employee fell on the 2nd step from the top injuring ribs and losing consciousness. Ambulance called to incident and employee was taken to hospital. Work was detailed as a two-person job, so planning improvement required. No manual handling risk assessment in place for the task.
- 4.5 RIDDOR (25/10/21): Re-roofing of garages, where employee was handling new roof sheets and where twisting while manual handling sheets led to a muscle strain injury and pain. Injury led to employee missing from work for several days - 7-day injury under the RIDDOR regulations. No manual handling risk assessment in place for the task.
- 4.6 RIDDOR (16/11/21): While undertaking flooring work the employee was cutting edging with a stanley knife and slipped, cutting the top off their thumb which required hospital treatment. 26 days missed due to the injury. Cut resistant gloves available from stores but not used by employee. Task risk assessment to be reviewed to provide more detailed risk control measures to staff and managers.
- 4.7 RIDDOR (16/11/21) waste employee who strained knee when exiting the refuse vehicle, he continued working on the day, but the injury meant he was not able to work the following day. In total over 7 days away from work (34 lost days in total). No witness to the incident.
- 4.8 There were 14 vehicle incidents during the quarter, and these were reviewed on 6th January as part of the routine vehicle accident review meeting. Significant issues are reviewed by Insurance Officer, Transport Manager and Health and Safety Advisor. Reversing manoeuvres was the cause of most incidents, and additional staff training is to be pursued with the Council insurers.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS PROPOSAL

- 5.1 In order to enhance the performance management of health and safety across the Council, and to focus on critical compliance topics it is proposed to introduce a set of indicators which will be reported on quarterly and reviewed annually. The **F.L.A.G.S.**

compliance system of KPI's would require reporting from Services to the Corporate H&S Team, and would cover the following elements: **Fire Safety**, % FRA remedials actions completed; **Lifting equipment** (statutory examinations under LOLER) and **Legionella compliance**; **Asbestos management**, % of management surveys completed in the housing stock (communal areas & individual units); **Gas Safety**; & **Safety specific risks** such as reporting on mandatory training (% completion) across the workforce. If there is agreement that providing these compliance indicators into the quarterly report is worthwhile, then a more detailed proposal will be brought back to EMT in the Q4 report.

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

6.1 The Health and Safety Team provide 4 mandatory e-learning courses for all staff through the Seminar software system: Office Safety; Fire Safety; Manual Handling; and Display Screen Equipment. Additionally there is Driving on Council Business, and COSHH training for relevant staff. The Seminar software is an old IT package, and because of its age staff are recommended to view the e-learning courses through Internet Explorer rather than the Microsoft Edge system. The current system does not link to a Learning Management System so there is no reporting undertaken on % of new starters successfully completing the training (or refresher training). Microsoft Ltd have confirmed that support for the Internet Explorer system will stop on 15th June 2022.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None. No significant changes to the current practices being considered.

8. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are none.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are none.

10. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No new requirements or issues identified.

11. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

11.1 No new requirements or issues identified.

12. EMT COMMENTS

12.1 EMT were supportive of the suggestion to have Service KPI's which cover health and safety elements, but there is a need to review a broader range of KPI's which could be included and ensure there isn't just a focus on one or two Services. Corporate Health and Safety Manager to have discussions with Business Improvements and Elections Service Manager, on how best to take this proposal forward.

12.2 A future HR report will consider a Learning Management System which will assist in identifying and tracking training needs. Part of the system will deliver e-learning training to staff which would include Health and Safety training. The system would integrate with the iTrent system and hold records against staff. This would allow reporting on health and safety training (and other training) to be provided in quarterly reports.

13. EMPLOYEE SIDE COMMENTS

None received

14. Appendix:

- 1. Table of accident, incident and near miss reporting for quarter 3 (2021/2022);*
- 2. Safety Panels Actions Table;*
- 3. Drugs and Alcohol Policy.*

For further information contact:

Spencer Scott
Corporate Health & Safety Manager
023 8028 5435
Spencer.scott@nfdc.gov.uk

Background Papers:

"None".