

QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (Q4 2023/24)

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 HR Cttee are asked to approve the reviewed Corporate Warning Marker Register Policy.
- 1.2 HR Cttee are asked to approve the reviewed PPE Policy.
- 1.3 HR Cttee are asked to acknowledge the updated action plans for all service safety panels.
- 1.4 HR Cttee is asked to consider the contents of the annual accident/incident report and key findings detailed under section 6. Annual accident/incident report 23 – 24.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This report highlights the significant work undertaken in the Corporate Health and Safety team and throughout the Council from 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024 (Q4).
- 2.2 Feedback from the Safety Panels and Corporate Working Groups and Steering Groups are included under section 4 and 5. The quarterly accident/incident report is included under section 6; this includes key findings and details of all significant incidents.

3. SIGNIFICANT H&S WORK

3.1 Lone Working Update

The Appello Lone working system is now live and being used by a number of Housing teams. We have had very positive feedback from employees and CCTV control rooms staff. The Corporate Health and Safety Manager and CCTV Control Room Supervisor are continuing to provide training to identified services. All Housing Maintenance Trade operatives will be undertaking training throughout May 2024. The Corporate Health and Safety Manager is currently working with Operational Services and Environmental Health to set up training for all identified lone workers in their service area.

The Lone Working Project Group has been reviewing potential lone working solutions for higher risk workers. The Group are now working on undertaking an internal test of 2 lone working solutions, this includes [Orbis Protect](#) and [Eco Online Staysafe](#). 12 NFDC testers have been identified from across the organisation, the 12 testers will be broken up into 2 groups, group 1 will test Orbis week 1 and Eco Online week 2, group 2 will do the opposite. We will be testing 2 different pieces of hardware as part of the test. We will be testing the Orbis Protect RedAlert ID badges and a watch device with the Eco Online system. Feedback will be presented to the Lone Working Project Group and EMT following the test. The formal testing of both platforms is scheduled for June 2024.

The Corporate Lone Working Policy has also been reviewed to include the relevant arrangements of the Appello Lone Working app. Some minor changes have been identified. The policy will be reviewed again following the implementation of a higher risk lone working solution.

3.2 Warning Marker Register SharePoint & Policy Review

The Corporate Health and Safety Team are currently in the process of moving the current Warning Marker Register System onto SharePoint. Moving the system to a dedicated SharePoint site will allow all employees with a NFDC mobile device to access the register. The team are currently undertaking a User Acceptance Test to ensure a smooth transition. The test will be undertaken on 20th May – 31st May 2024.

The Corporate Warning Marker Register Policy has also been reviewed. This is attached as Appendix 1. Following a number of reports of properties which could present a hazard due to significant drug use, additional information has been added to the policy. The policy now allows properties to be added onto the WMR if a significant hazard is present. Approval is sought for formal implementation of this policy across the organisation.

3.3 Risk Assessment Self-Assessment Tool

As part of the H&S team work programme for 2023/2024, the H&S team have undertaken a desktop audit of the council compliance in relation to risk assessment. The Self audit was sent to all supervisors within the Council, the self-audit tool had a 96.8% completion rate. The main findings from the self-audit were:

- The most popular hazard employees are exposed to include lone working, use of DSE/homeworking, driving for work and working with members of the public.
- Only 46% of supervisors confirmed they had a list of all risk assessment required for the work their staff undertake.
- 74% of supervisors confirmed they have recorded risk assessments.
- 14% of teams do not communicate their risk assessments to their employees.
- Only 22% of teams store and share their risk assessments via SharePoint.
- 21% of supervisors were unsure who is responsible for reviewing risk assessments.
- 54% of teams who are required to use chemicals do not have up to date COSHH assessments.
- The most commonly provided PPE was safety boots, safety shoes, hi-vis, safety helmets and gloves. 21% of these supervisors were unsure if PPE met the required safety standards.

In summary, additional risk assessment training should be provided to all supervisors and managers who are responsible for undertaking and reviewing risk assessments. It has also been identified that teams communicate and store risk assessments in many different ways, this includes via paper, saved in local drives or hard copies within the office. As part of the Corporate Health and Safety Teams Intranet pages, the team have created a section of the site called "[Directorate H&S Hub](#)" this area is available to all staff via laptop or mobile device and should be used by all teams to store relevant risk assessments and H&S documentation. Personal information should not be stored on these folders, any personal information or person centric risk assessment should be stored on the employee's personal file. Many teams who currently do not have any risk assessments in place work from ATC doing normal day to day office work. Therefore, it would be reasonable to have a shared office working

risk assessment, the control measures on this assessment must be followed by all staff members working within council offices. The H&S team are currently working on a generic risk assessment for all council offices, a draft copy has been communicated to all members of the Office Safety Panel for consultation.

The H&S team will now review each submission and contact the relevant supervisor where further action is required. The H&S team will continue to support all teams.

3.4 Depot Traffic Management Plans

Following a review of the content by the Corporate Health and Safety Manager some minor changes are required within the report prior to sending to relevant senior managers and supervisors. The target date for communication of the final report is 31st May 2024.

3.5 Health and Safety Management Audits (Transport & Workshops)

Due to staff absence there has been a delay in completing the Transport & Workshop audit. It is hoped that we will complete the final part of the audit (CMD section) by mid-May 2024. A final audit report will be sent to relevant managers and supervisors.

3.6 Winter Maintenance Plan

To ensure appropriate arrangements are in place before winter 2024, a meeting was held with key stakeholders across the organisation to discuss improvements with the current gritting processes. It was identified that gritting operations are undertaken by 2 employees out of Clay Meadow Depot and that these works do not form part of their current job description, it was also identified that a large number of housing properties are not included on the current list of locations which are required to be gritted during periods of poor weather. The group will be meeting monthly to discuss improvements with the current arrangements.

3.7 First Aid Needs Assessment

Following a first aid incident at ATC and the Site Officers stepping down as first aiders, the first aid needs assessment has been reviewed by the Corporate Health and Safety Team. NFDC have a legal requirement to provide at least 1 first aider with a first aid at work (FAAW) certificate where more than 25 employees are present in the office. Previously this provision was taken by the site officers. ATC currently has 7 trained first aiders with another 5 employees who have come forward and confirmed they are happy to volunteer. They are currently waiting to go on a FFAW training course. Due to hybrid working arrangements we cannot guarantee we will have a first aid presence at ATC Monday to Friday. The Health and Safety Team have engaged with the Information Officers about becoming first aiders as they are always in the building, unfortunately 0 Information Officers came forward. NFDC have no legal requirement to provide first aid provision to non-members of staff, however due to the type of organisation we are, we have a moral duty to provide first aid support to our customers and members of public who visit our site.

The HSE strongly recommend that employers provide at least additional FFAW trained employees if we have more than 25 employees in the building and are host any organised event which involves members of the public. Recently a reported 100+ members of the public attended ATC for a planning meeting in the Council Chamber, in this scenario additional first aid presence should be provided.

It is recommended that Democratic Services have a trained first aider within their team, although we are unlikely to have a significant number of members of the public attend ATC for a meeting, it should be considered as foreseeable, and therefore

appropriate measures should be implemented. In the short term, Democratic Service should notify the H&S team if any public meeting is likely to have a significant number of members of the public, as a general rule this could be more than 25 members of the public attend, the H&S team will ensure an appropriate first aid presence is available for the meeting.

3.8 Pesticides and Herbicides Store Inspections

Following HSE visits to a number of local authorities in Hampshire. The H&S team undertook an inspection at CMD at both the pest control store and the grounds maintenance store. A findings report has been sent to the relevant manager. Recommendations included:

- One unidentified herbicide was identified, this has now been actioned and a suitable and sufficient COSHH assessment has been completed and uploaded to Eco Online Chemical Manager.
- Inappropriate label of shelving and chemicals. All shelving and products should be labelled using the Eco Online Chemical Manager QR codes and labels.
- Inappropriate storage of PPE within the stores. Relevant PPE should be provided within each store within an accessible signed location.
- Pest control store didn't contain a label for the bund capacity. This action has been passed to the relevant supervisor to investigate further.
- Paper records and exposure monitoring. Grounds maintenance have recently introduced duplicate exposure recording books. A copy is kept by NFDC, and the operatives keep another copy. These are currently recorded on paper. All exposure monitoring is to be recorded through the Eco Online system; H&S are chasing Eco Online on implementation of this system. Grounds Maintenance supervisors are to do an audit of the current books and ensure they are being completed appropriately.
- An annual recorded inspection of the stores and bunds to be undertaken.

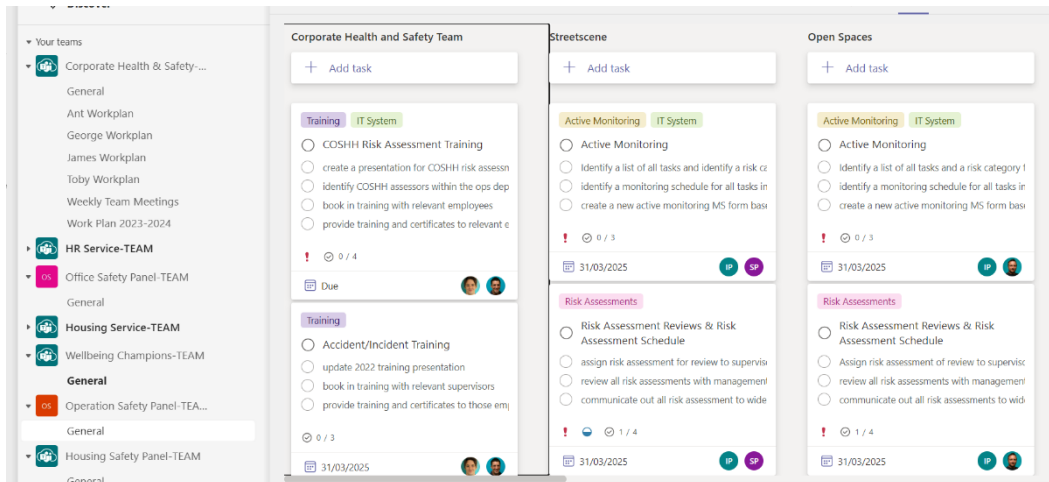
It is unlikely that any enforcement action would be taken during a HSE inspection on either store however enforcement action could be taken on other areas of CMD due to inappropriate storage of equipment and materials. Teams at the depot have historically struggled with space. A large amount of equipment and tools are stored within the grounds maintenance shed, due to space issues equipment is also stored outside and therefore is exposed to the elements which has a significant effect on the life expectancy and cost of repairs. Although these issues will be resolved due to the construction of a new depot, additional action should be considered prior to completion of the works.

3.9 Corporate PPE Policy

Following the approval of the Corporate RPE Policy, the Corporate PPE Policy has been updated to include a summary of the specific procedures and requirements of the Corporate RPE Policy. This update has been through all safety panels (Housing panel has not been held at the time of writing this report). Each panel has been provided with a policy impact assessment and a full copy of the reviewed policy. See appendix 2 to 2D. HR Ctte are asked to approve this policy for formal implementation across the organisation.

4. SAFETY PANELS

The Corporate Health and Safety Team have created new Teams channels for each of the Safety Panels. These Teams channels will act as the centre place for the sharing of documentation and recording of actions and Safety Rep issues or concerns. All action tables are now held on these Teams channels. EMT can be provided access to each of the Safety Panel Teams channels upon request.



4.1 Operational Safety Panel

The Operational Safety Panel was undertaken on 23/04/2024. A new term of reference was agreed to reduce the size of the panel, new actions were agreed and added to the action table, all teams have been allocated the following actions for this financial year:

- Active Monitoring – review the current active monitoring inspection process, moving from employee based to task based. Create a new inspection form based in MS forms for each task identified.
- Risk Assessment Reviews & Risk Assessment Schedule – review all risk assessments and create a new risk assessment schedule/tracker, identifying all risk assessments within the service area.

The Corporate Health and Safety team have been tasked with the following actions:

- COSHH Risk Assessment Training – provide COSHH assessor training including training on the Eco Online system as per the Corporate COSHH policy.
- Accident/Incident Training – provide accident/incident investigation training to all supervisors across operational services.

WMR Policy

All panel members were happy with the changes proposed in the reviewed WMR policy.

LMS

Members advised that single sign on was not working for mobile devices and shared training laptops. This has been raised to HR for action.

IOSH CDM Awareness Course

Supervisors are struggling to find time to complete the IOSH CDM Awareness course and it tends to fall to the bottom of the priority list. An extension can be required purchased appropriate.

Workplace Stress and Anxiety

Workloads, stress, and anxiety was raised at the previous Safety Panel. The Assistant Director – Place Operations, the HR Service Manager, and two members of the Health and Safety team met before the Safety Panel to discuss potential action. It was agreed that most of the anxiety and stress was being caused by a number of new IT systems being implemented across the Council and within the service, this includes Bartect, Itrent, Eco Online Chemical Manager, Appello Lone working, LMS and general changes and updates to Office 365.

It was agreed that a further audit needs to be undertaken to fully understand employees concerns and the level of training being provided for each new software being implemented. In addition, a survey will be undertaken with the workforce.

All members agreed this would be a step forward.

4.2 Housing Safety Panel

Booked for 08/05/2024.

4.3 Office Safety Panel

The Office Safety Panel was undertaken on 24/04/2024. New actions were agreed and added to the action table, this includes:

- Security Procedures (Council Offices) – review the draft security procedures for all council offices.
- Evac Mats – Implement the new evac mats in all council offices and provide training to all fire wardens.

The Health and Safety Team and the office safety reps undertook workplace inspections at all 3 Council offices during quarter 4. The Health and Safety Team have added all actions required from these inspections to the panel Teams channel. All actions have now been allocated to a responsible person.

Generic Office & Interview Room Risk Assessments

The Corporate Health and Safety Team have put together draft generic risk assessments for the use of corporate offices and general office work, and for the use of the interview rooms at ATC, LTH and NMTH. These assessments have been communicated to all members of the Office Safety Panel for review. Once agreed they will communicate to all employees and made available on the H&S SharePoint pages.

Adjustable Chairs in Meeting Rooms (ATC)

A concern has been raised by an employee in relation to the chairs currently in place in all meeting rooms at ATC. A request has been made to add suitable office style chairs within each meeting room. Currently the employee will try and take their office

chair with them to an office however this is not practical. The employee is suffering with back pain during long meetings. The Civic Buildings & Facilities Manager has confirmed that we are currently looking at all ATC offices and meeting rooms, the furniture and requirements will be included within this review. H&S advised that it would be reasonable to place office chairs in certain rooms where longer meetings are held or those where it is unreasonable for the employee to take their office chair with them. The employees DSE assessment should be reviewed as a poor workplace set up may also be antagonising the issue.

Concerns in the Post Room

Colleagues in the post room have raised a number of concerns with the lighting, fan unit and general electrics in their area. This will be reviewed by Facilities and a member of the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

5. WORKING GROUPS & STEERING GROUPS

5.1 CDM Working Group

Booked for 09/05/2024 [CDM Working Group \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

5.2 Asbestos Working Group

Booked for 03/05/2024 [HealthandSafetyTeamSite - Asbestos Working Group – KPI Report Q3.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

5.3 Housing Operational Working Group

Booked for 07/05/2024 [Housing Operational Working Group \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

6. ANNUAL ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT 23-24

- 6.1 Appendix 3 contains a high-level accident/incident reporting statistics for the financial year (23-24). The Health and Safety team are currently working on improvements to the accident/incident reporting databases, this will provide more detailed accident/incident reporting statistics for the next financial year.
- 6.2 There has been an increase in the total number of reports received, number of non-reportable accident/incidents and the number of RIDDOR reportable incidents sent to the HSE this financial year. We have also seen an overall decrease in the total number of near misses reported this financial year. An idealistic trend would be to see a reduction in the total number of reports, non-reportable accidents and RIDDOR reportable incidents, the number of near misses reported should be higher than the total number of non-reportable and RIDDOR reportable incidents during a given time period.
- 6.3 The total number of days lost due to a work-related accident/incident was 449 this financial year, this is an increase of 120 days. 79% of the days lost were reported within operational services. 3 possible fractures were also reported within Operational Services in 23/24, these incidents resulted in a total of 143 days lost.
- 6.4 This financial year we have seen a 166% increase in the number of verbal abuse incidents reported, this is partly due to a general increase in reporting awareness however, this is also a general trend in many public sector facing organisations.
- 6.5 We have also seen nearly double the amount of slip, trip and fall incidents reported over this period, this can partly be associated with the extremely poor weather we have experienced this winter. However further investigation is required within operational services to review this trend in more detail.

- 6.6 We have also seen a slight reduction of manual handling incidents; this is following the review of a number of task specific manual handling risk assessments and additional training provided to operational staff. The Council should continue to see a decrease in the number of manual handling incidents reported due to the introduction of wheeled bins in waste.
- 6.7 There has also been a large reduction in contact with sharp incidents. This is due to increase training and awareness provided to staff and additional work with members of the public to raise awareness of not placing sharps within their general waste.
- 6.8 **RIDDOR 1 – Waste, 7 or more days, 22/01/2024.**
During a glass collection an operative was loading a 1100 litre bin on the lift and the bin would not go up. Operative brought the bin back down several times but it still would not function. Operative proceeded to shove the bin with his side, he then felt pain in his shoulder. Supervisors provided toolbox talks to employees reminding them to ask for help or contact the supervisor in this situation. The manual handling risk assessment for 1100ltr bins was recently reviewed. Incident resulted in 19 days lost.
- 6.9 **RIDDOR 2 – Waste, 7 or more days, 07/02/2024**
At approximately 7am a refuse operative was in the process of collecting waste sacks from properties in Marryat Road. In carrying out this task the operative was walking across a residential car park when a reversing car contacted him knocking him to the floor. There were no witnesses to the incident and no CCTV available. The car drove off as if nothing had happened and so the operative felt that they were likely unaware of what had happened. The refuse operative was wearing full class 3 high visibility clothing as provided by the waste service at the time of the incident. On the day of the incident the supervisor was contacted about the incident. They later visited the injured operative who confirmed that they were okay to continue the round. The operative called in sick the following day, following his self-certification period they attended the GP who signed them off from work with “rib trauma”, a second GP note stated, “possible fracture”. Although this incident was reported as a 7 or more-day RIDDOR, a fracture is also RIDDOR reportable as a specified Injury. The H&S team consulted with the HSE to confirm if a “possible fracture” as identified on the GP note should be reported under RIDDOR as there is no evidence to confirm the fracture. The HSE did come back and confirmed this would still need to be reported under RIDDOR 2013. A review of the round risk assessment was undertaken a no further action identified. This injury resulted in 27 days lost.
- 6.10 **RIDDOR 3 – Housing Maintenance, 7 or more days, 06/02/2024**
While carrying a radiator (600x600 single) into a property from their van the IP felt a large sharp tweak in their upper right side of the back. The injury resulted in the employee taking 14 days off and therefore was reported to the HSE under RIDDOR. Additional manual handling training has been provided and additional toolbox talks provided to Gas team. Manual handling and generic risk assessment for the task has been reviewed, no further action identified.
- 6.11 **Significant Incident 1 – Streetscene, 23/01/2024**
Streetscene operative was emptying a dog waste bin. The bin was damaged and loose on its post. In attempting to remove the sack from the bin the lid of the bin closed shut and trapped the operative’s right hand and index finger causing bleeding and damaged to the nail. This injury did not meet the criteria of RIDDOR 20213. First aid was administered by operative on site and was then taken to Lymington minor injuries unit. Appropriate PPE was being worn at the time of the incident. The damaged bin has now been removed and replaced. Damaged bins of this type must be reported for replacement as soon as possible. This incident resulted in 6 days lost.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

7.1. With the introduction of the new Learning Management System (LMS), the following courses have been assessed as mandatory for all employees to complete:

- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) (only for employees who met the criteria of a DSE user)
- Fire Safety
- Office Safety
- Driving Safely (for employees who drive on council business)
- Manual handling L1
- Drug and Alcohol Awareness

All employees have been given until September 2024 to complete all required courses. All H&S courses have a refresher period of 2 years. Additional role specific courses will be implemented in the near future, this includes personal safety, lone working, CDM Awareness and Asbestos Awareness.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There may be some financial implications if there is a need to procure additional training using an outside body.

9. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. ENVIROMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No new requirements or issues identified.

11. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None identified.

12. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 Not identified.

13. EMT COMMENTS

13.1 It was agreed that the Warning Marker Register would be an item at a future Leadership Team meeting to ensure that all senior managers are aware of their responsibilities.

13.2 It was agreed that the Winter Maintenance Plan working group would be chaired by either an Assistant Director or the Strategic Director. EMT agreed that further work was required to identify all sites that needed to be included in the plan.

13.3 EMT noted the significant increase in the accident statistics. It was noted that further work was required to ensure that supervisors are out and about checking on the crews to ensure safe working practices are being followed.

13.4 It was agreed that there would be further work to look for trends in the data and that safety panel matters should form a work plan to be considered in the future.

- 13.5 It was agreed that with regard to First Aiders at ATC there would be a further recruitment drive to see if other staff would take up the offer of First Aid Training. The preference would be to look for volunteers. EMT would like a further discussion and update on this in due course.
- 13.6 EMT supported the additional labelling as identified in 3.8. It was also agreed that a proportionate response in relation to the storage of equipment at Claymeadow Depot would be taken bearing in mind the future relocation to Hardley Depot.

14. APPENDICES

- 1 – Corporate Warning Marker Policy
- 2 – Corporate PPE Policy
- 2A – Corporate PPE Policy Eye Protection
- 2B – Corporate PPE Policy Standards
- 2C – Corporate PPE Issuing Form
- 2D – Corporate PPE Policy Impact Assessment
- 3 – Annual Accident/Incident Report 23-24

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Background Papers:

“None”.