

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

STANDARDS AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 6 JUNE 2024

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

**REPORT OF TEAM MANAGER ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROTECTION AND
LICENSING**

PART A – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To note the work being undertaken on Corporate Health and Safety during the past year, and to agree future work priorities and delivery proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee discuss and note the progress made on meeting our obligations with regard to Corporate Health and Safety during the last year, and to support future work priorities and delivery.

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

POLICY/COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Council Plan objectives?	
	YES	Prosperous Communities
	Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) been completed?	
	NO	Not required as no changes being proposed.
SCRUTINY POWERS APPLICABLE	NO	Report to Standards and Resources Committee
KEY DECISION	NO	
TARGET COMPLETION/ DELIVERY DATE	FURTHER 12 MONTHS	
FINANCIAL IMPACT	YES	Fulfilling the Council's obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 is met from existing budgets. Reducing financial burden and risk of insurance claims.

LEGAL ISSUES	YES	The Council has common law and statutory duty relating to the health and safety of its employees, contractors and members of the public under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and its related regulations and approved codes of practice.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	YES	<p>Risk of non-compliance with Health and safety legislation detailed in corporate risk register.</p> <p>Opportunity to have positive impact on employees health and wellbeing</p>
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	NONE	

PART B – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

4.1 Background Information

Health and safety is about preventing people from being harmed by work or becoming ill through work. As an authority we have both a legal and moral duty towards our own employees, contractors and members of the public.

Currently Corporate Health and Safety is co-ordinated by the Team Manager Environmental Health Protection and Licensing, with support from within the team.

We have an established Health and Safety Steering Group which meets on a six weekly basis. This is chaired by the Team Manager or Assistant Team Manager, Environmental Health Protection and Licensing, and is attended by various representatives, including from Community Services, Commercial and Enterprise, and representatives of ELT. This group works very well in bringing any issues or concerns forward, and is also an excellent forum for discussing risks, emerging issues, and future workplans. Attendance at this group from the various representatives has been good and is considered to be critical.

Over the last year we have reviewed the meeting and reporting structure and have introduced a more strategic group to consider emerging health and safety issues and have a broader overview of the risk profile of internal health and safety. This group meets on a quarterly basis and is attended by elected members, relevant Assistant Directors, and a corporate Director (also Monitoring Officer).

A Health and Safety area is maintained on the Core where all documents, policies and risk assessments are available, including minutes of the steering group meetings. This will be reviewed along with the ongoing review of the Core - One version of the truth.

Risk assessments are reviewed on an annual basis.

4.2 Focus of the last year

Health and safety policy

The overarching Health and Safety at Work policy has been reviewed, provided on the internal website and implemented.

First aid provision

We have a team of trained first aiders / fire marshals operating in a joint role, with a rota in place for Codsall Community Hub to provide cover every day. The team have been trained in evac chair use. This is to enable them to safely and comfortably transport any persons who are unable to use the stairs in the event of an evacuation, particularly in the event of a fire when the lifts would not be accessible. The new build now provides for safe refuges on landing areas with call points to summon assistance in this instance.

Leisure duty officers, and Baggeridge rangers are also first aid trained. Street scene staff have also received emergency first aid training. Refresher first aid courses have recently been delivered.

First aid supplies are also checked and replenished as required.

Fire marshal training

Fire evacuation refresher training has been delivered for lead fire marshals. Again, a rota is in place to cover weekdays in the Community Hub.

Lift Evacuation

Two members of staff have been trained to undertake lift evacuation in the unlikely event that it is required.

Lockdown policy

Officers have continued to work to develop a policy and procedure that can be implemented in the event of a significant incident that would require lockdown of the Community Hub. Part of this procedure has required work to be undertaken to the alarm system to add alarm call points that will activate a tonal alarm in the event of a lockdown incident. These alarm points have now been installed with final commissioning and testing of the system due to be undertaken during June.

Once the system is fully tested briefing sessions will be held with all staff and tenants to ensure that the procedure is understood and this will be tested at points throughout the year, in a similar way to fire evacuation drills.

Protect Duty/Martyn's Law – Officers continue to participate in and attend the Staffordshire Protect and Prepare Board, chaired by Staffordshire Police and are following the progression of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill (also known as Martyn's Law) through Parliament. The Bill is currently out for a second round of consultation which the council has responded to, which is likely to place requirements on a wide range of publicly accessible buildings/locations.

Tree Safety

The Council has a duty to ensure that any tree for which it has responsibility is safe. A tree inspector has been appointed and has been undertaking inspections and assessments of all trees on SSC land and where necessary detailing and prioritising and works that are required to ensure the trees are safe. Trees have also been assigned a risk rating to enable programming of future inspection and condition monitoring. This has been a significant undertaking and has provided an essential baseline assessment of the tree stock – we will continue to undertake regular inspections.

Health Surveillance

As an employer we have a duty to protect the health and wellbeing of employees and in particular we have a duty to monitor the potential health impacts of exposure to equipment which emits noise and vibration. To fulfil this requirement we undertake annual health surveillance with the Street Scene operatives and the rangers from Baggeridge – this involves them having a hearing test (audiometry) and completing a self-assessment questionnaire related to hand-arm vibration which can lead to circulatory and sensory issues. Where there are any indications of potential health impact the staff member is referred for further medical assessment by an Occupational Health Practitioner.

Construction projects

Across our estates several construction projects are on going which are managed by the Commercial and Enterprise Team. Update / refresher CDM training is due to be delivered for those who have already completed the training, and additional staff members are to be offered training.

Risk assessments, Policies and Adjustments

We continue to undertake and review risk assessments as required. Maternity risk assessments are also completed and reviewed at appropriate timings.

The team have this year supported with a number of adjustment assessments for staff with disabilities and implemented reasonable adjustments, for example sight and hearing difficulties. Occupational health risk assessments have also been undertaken, for example in the case of asthma.

Policies continue to be reviewed when required.

Stress and wellbeing policy

The existing policy has been reviewed in conjunction with human resources. It has also been updated to include the latest Health and Safety Executive advice and questionnaires. Team managers and assistant team managers have received practical training on its implementation, and all of ELT will be provided with an awareness session shortly.

Please see revised policy attached in Appendix 1.

Open water review

Following an incident during a very cold snap where a dog walker fell through ice while attempting to rescue a dog we have reviewed the provision of all inflatable safety devices. Some have been identified on a risk basis to be replaced with lockable easily accessible devices working in a similar way to public defibrillators. We will continue to review this on a risk basis.

Training

The induction programme has recently been reviewed and now includes a specific section delivered by a representative from the health and safety team for new starters.

Stress prevention and awareness training sessions were delivered to all managers and assistant team managers.

Health and wellbeing award

In October last year the authority was accredited with the Workplace Wellbeing Charter from Health at Work. Health and safety management was a main aspect for this accreditation, and we are delighted that the management of health, safety and wellbeing has been recognised. The charter group are now working towards progressing to the next level of accreditation.

Insurance audit

A recent insurance audit showed a good outcome with limited minor recommendations which have since been implemented.

Internal Audit

The internal health and safety service is currently being audited. Any outcomes and recommendations will form part of the ongoing work plan.

4.2 Accident update

There have been no reportable accidents since the last update.

4.3 Resourcing

An additional part time member of staff to support work of the team and to deliver training has been recruited.

4.4 Going forward

The team will continue to support health and safety management of construction projects, advise on health and safety in relation to elections, and implement outcomes of the internal audit.

There will be continual review of risk assessments and policies.

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

None identified.

6. PREVIOUS MINUTES

An update on the management of corporate health and safety is provided annually.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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