

OADBY & WIGSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL



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HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2017 TO 2018

Produced by Paul Evans

Health and Safety Officer

1 March 2018

1. Introduction and Overview

The Council recognises that health and safety are management responsibilities that rank equally with professional and service responsibilities.

The purpose of the Council's health and safety policy is to provide a framework around which a safe and healthy working environment can be maintained by good working practices concerning health and safety of the employees, public (including visitors to our premises), members and contractors within the Council.

Whilst legislation exists to enforce good standards of health and safety, all employees, the public (including visitors to our premises), members and contractors, should recognise their responsibility and actively ensure that all health and safety policies are adhered to.

This is the second health and safety annual report brought to this Committee and covers the period from April 2017 to early March 2108 (and will be described in this Annual Report as 'financial year 2017/18').

2. Corporate Governance

Elected Members of the Council shall ensure that suitable resources are made available and take necessary strategic direction to discharge the Council's health and safety responsibilities and monitor, via reports, the overall performance of the Council's health and safety management systems.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will take overall responsibility for health & safety across the Council and lead in setting corporate policy and direction.

Senior Management Team (SMT) which currently consists of the Interim Chief Executive and the Director of Finance & Transformation are responsible for the management of risks at a corporate level.

Heads of Service are responsible for managing the risks created by their service area's activities. In particular they should ensure that work related hazards are identified and risk assessments are undertaken and that these are communicated to all relevant parties, monitored and updated.

Team Leaders and other Supervisory Staff have day-to-day responsibility for managing health and safety of the people under their control.

Employees will take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their acts or omissions.

Health and Safety Officer (H&SO) will be responsible for the distribution of information for effective management systems on health and safety matters.

3. Statistical Information

Regulatory Interventions: There have been no regulatory interventions this financial year either from the Health and Safety Executive or the Leicestershire Fire & Rescue Service.

Auditing Activity: The Council's Internal Auditor, CW Audit has not carried out audits on health & safety this financial year. The audits carried out by the Health and Safety Officer are given in detail in section 6 but principally comprised building security and assistance to the property team on fire issues due to the Grenfell tower disaster.

Accident Statistics: The table below show the number of accidents at each Council owned location and 'elsewhere'. Accidents categorised as 'elsewhere' are normally staff from the depot that have accidents on site whilst collecting refuse/ recycling or undertaking grounds maintenance or street cleansing works.

Table 1: Staff Accidents via location

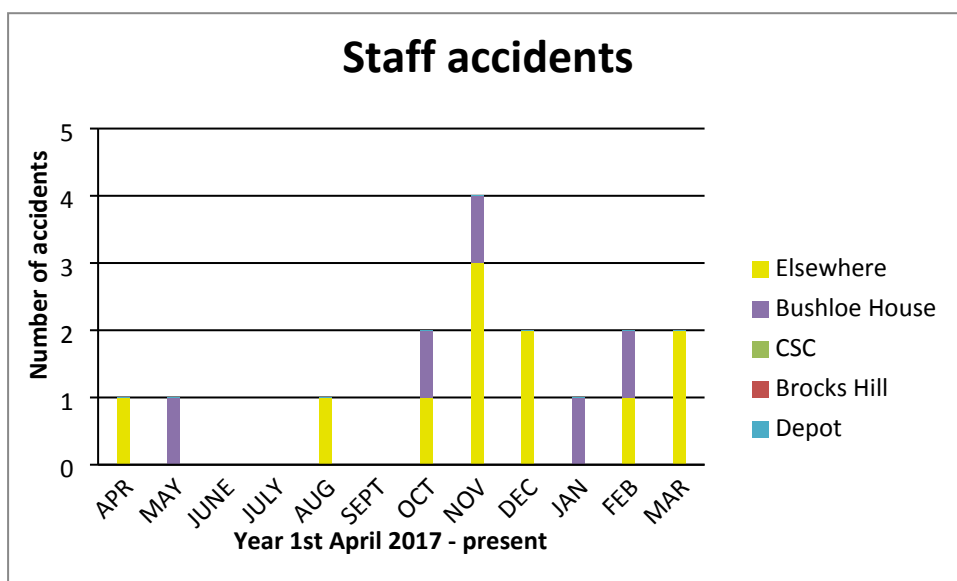


Table 1 above shows 16 accidents occurring in 2017/18 for staff related activities. The first six months only had three accidents whereas the later months had thirteen accidents. The majority of accidents were slips trips and falls (mostly due to the inclement weather) and cuts from waste contained within refuse & recycling sacks). In 2016/17 there were 14 accidents. Further comparisons with last year to this year revealed a reduction in accidents at

Bushloe House but an increase from 5 to 11 for Operation and Street Scene staff. The increase is due to cuts from sharp objects contained within refuse sacks; slips, trips & falls (especially in inclement weather) and could also be because of a raised awareness in reporting procedures.

Accidents reported at Brocks Hill have not been included this year. This is due to an agreement with the head of Health and Leisure and the H&SO that only 'staff' accidents should be included within the document.

Accident investigations into the above resulted in:

- improvements to the visibility of a section of staircase
- removal of certain types of crockery
- changes to the way drivers exit vehicles whilst undertaking waste management duties
- consideration of changes to glove procurement
- assisting in the decision making process for the procurement of heavier gauge plastic recycling sacks

Near Misses are included within the Health and Safety Policy for employees to report and for supervisory staff to undertake investigations. Only one near miss has been reported this financial year which resulted in changes to how a cupboard in a heavily used area is filled and emptied.

Accidents (RIDDOR): The Council has had two reportable accidents so far this financial year. One accident in the early part of the year resulted in the closure of the zip wire play area at Brocks Hill after a risk assessment found it was not fit for purpose. The removal was subsequently reported to the Service Delivery Committee. The other reportable accident concerned a member of the Operation and Street Scene staff who received a cut from object(s) placed within a black refuse sack resulting in a number of days off work. This type of incident should reduce if wheeled bins are introduced.

4. Partnerships

The Health and Safety Officer attends the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Safety Advisers Group meetings where technical information is discussed.

5. Joint Consultation

The Health and Safety Group has been meeting for over two years since its first meeting in March 2016. Attendees are from various teams within the Council and also represent all key buildings. Representation is also from the trade unions, senior management and the Health and Safety Officer. There is regular discussion on accidents; fire evacuation procedure; risk assessments; lone working and other important elements. All agenda items and notes of the meetings are available for staff on the Intranet.

At the time of writing this report it is intended that the Staff Group and the Health and Safety Group be combined into one – the suggested name at present is the ‘Staff and Wellbeing Group’. The intention of this new group is not only to consider health and safety items but also health initiatives, workplace wellbeing etc. The next meeting of the Health and Safety Group will be in late March where this proposal will be discussed.

6. Key Activities 2017/18

The Health and Safety Policy was submitted to this Committee in March 2017 and approved.

The non-exhaustive list below shows a number of areas that the Health and Safety Officer has been involved in this financial year:

- Fire evacuations have been successfully carried out at Bushloe House, Customer Services, the depot and Brocks Hill over the last twelve months. Revised fire evacuation plans have been produced for all the above properties. Revised plans will be produced for Bushloe House after the building work near reception is complete.
- Events such as the Grenfell tower fire and other national incidents resulted in assisting the property team on fire risk assessments (FRA); and also building security assessments. None of the council’s housing stock had similar type of cladding that was at Grenfell. However, due to the seriousness of the situation and potential risk to the public, FRA’s were carried out on the residential blocks of flats; action work plans developed and maintenance/ improvement works are being carried out on a priority list by the property team. Similarly, maintenance works to Bushloe House is programmed to improve building security.
- The risk assessments at the depot have been revised and updated where necessary. A handbook of safe working practices for all operational staff based on these risk assessments has been produced. All depot staff received a copy earlier this year and it is also available on the intranet.
- The vehicle that clinical waste was collected in was inspected and required improvements to bring it up to standard; which were subsequently carried out.
- The Learning Pool module ‘Introduction to Health and Safety’ has been introduced as a compulsory module for all staff with a deadline for completion of 31 March 2018
- The health and safety knowledge bank on the intranet is updated on a regular basis principally with the inclusion of the lone worker policy and minor improvements to forms.

- Accident investigations that are undertaken are analysed and changes to operating procedures are made where appropriate (see section 3 for further details of improvements that have been made.)
- The annual display screen equipment (DSE) assessments for staff have been undertaken and recorded by managers and their teams. Staff are now more aware of working with DSE: some have acquired footrests and replacement chairs; others new workstations. Workstation exercises to reduce muscular aches and pains for staff to undertake were added to the intranet in October of last year.
- The Customer Alert System (previously known as the corporate warning system) was introduced to managers and staff. Incidents that have occurred principally at Customer Services are recorded on the system with two currently categorised.
- The Lone Working Policy and Procedure was approved at this Committee in July 2017. Training with lone workers has been carried out earlier this year by a representative of the Suzy Lamplugh Trust. Heads of Service have introduced lone working as an agenda item (and indirectly the customer alert system) at their team meetings to consider risks that their staff may become involved in.
- First Aid training and re-training has been undertaken for staff at the three main council sites.
- In depth risk assessment on the new area of Finance & Transformation following the building works has resulted in fire escape routes more clear than previously, rationalisation of electrical sockets and leads and extract fan checks.
- Responses to previous internal audit reports on health and safety based on the Action Plans have been carried out that have improved procedures for health and safety management at the depot.
- Audit of works to the Boulter Crescent Community Flat following a risk assessment process and planning the improvements in have improved the safety and welfare of staff and public who use the facility
- Working with the Human Resources Team on: revising and updating the drug and alcohol policy in order to make management and staff responsibilities more clear; working time changes to the public cleansing team to improve lone worker safety and the health at work day that was successfully undertaken in March 2018.

7. Risks

The high level risks associated with the council's business are shown in the table below, along with a brief description. Risks that were very high – such as the health and safety policy or the fire risk assessment at Bushloe House are now 'below the line' as work has been undertaken over the last two years to reduce the risk to manageable proportions.

Risks that are 'above the line' will be worked on over the year, i.e.,

- Risk assessment training will be via a learning pool module that will be 'written' and introduced for all staff
- To ensure that the Health and Safety Group continues to meet quarterly in order to coordinate health and safety issues at the council . Any reductions in meeting frequencies will infer a downgrading in health and safety importance.
- To have adequate accident investigations that are carried out by supervisory staff or the H&SO and to ensure that appropriate changes are made to protocols to reduce accident reoccurrence
- Any injuries or near misses to the Operation and Street Scene workforce due to the implementation of the clear sacks (comingled collections) and continued use of the black refuse sacks will be carefully monitored. Comparisons can then be made in the future if wheeled bins are introduced..

| | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| A | Very High | | | | |
| B | High | | | 8 | |
| C | Significant | | 6 | 5, 7 | |
| D | Low | | 3, 4 | | |
| E | Very Low | | | 1 | 2 |
| F | Almost Impossible | | | | |
| | | Negligible | Marginal | Critical | Catastrophic |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

| Risk No. | Description |
|----------|--|
| 1 | First Aid – ensuring numbers and competencies are up to date |
| 2 | Fire Risk assessments are updated and evacuation procedures are regular |
| 3 | Health and Safety Policy (and annual report) updated annually |
| 4 | Awareness training on health and safety carried on annually (and Inductions) |

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|---|---|
| 5 | Risk Assessment training |
| 6 | To ensure the Health and Safety Group meets quarterly |
| 7 | Accident Investigations |
| 8 | Refuse & Recycling collection methods – accident monitoring on sack use |

8. Action Plan 2018/19

The main focus in 2018/19 will be:

- Monitoring the Lone Worker system, including communication devices
- The Customer Alert System
- Accident investigations for managers
- Updating the drug and alcohol policy
- Producing a Learning Pool module on risk assessments
- Safe systems of work within the depot workshop
- Other areas as suggested by the Health and Safety Group
- Stress management
- Assisting the Operation & Street Scene service – changes to refuse & recycling practices

9. Conclusion

The role of health and safety at both senior management team and by all officers is increasing in importance and in profile. The dissemination of information by emails, Health and Safety Group, Notice Boards and the Intranet is assisting in this process. The use of Learning Pool, initially with the 'Introduction to Health and Safety module' and future ones has also brought health and safety to a much wider audience within the Council.

The work in 2018/19 will build on these foundations and lead to more informed officers on their role within health and safety culture.

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