

## **COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 30 November, 2021**

Present:-

Ade McCormick (Joint Chair)

|   |   |  |   |
|---|---|--|---|
| Councillors                                     | Barr<br>Blank   | Councillor                                   | P Niblock<br>K Falconer                                       |
| Vanessa Watson<br>Donna Reddish                 | Housing<br>Service Director -<br>Corporate                  | Karen Knight<br>Paul Longley<br>Liam Rich    | Unison<br>Unison<br>Unite                                     |
| Heather Spink<br>Marc Jasinski<br>Rachel O'Neil | HR<br>H&S Advisor<br>Service Director -<br>Digital, HR & CS | Derek Skinner<br><br>Kim Walsh<br>Nick Bates | Digital Project<br>Manager<br>Housing<br>Waste<br>Procurement |

\*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

### **23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Innes and Caulfield, Ian Waller, Andrew Fowler, Theresa Channel and Neil Johnson.

### **24 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11TH AUGUST 2021**

The minutes of the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2021 were agreed as a true record.

### **25 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

### **26 UPDATE ON STAFF CAUTION LIST**

The Digital Project Manager presented an update to the committee on the Staff Caution List (SCL) which detailed the project overview, actions taken and training delivered.

The project commenced on 3 May 2021, with project and steering groups set up to deliver within set governance.

Actions included the removal of multiple versions of SCL information, removal of incidents delays in approval and ensuring cautions on the SCL remained relevant.

Consideration was also made to allow CBC employees to access SCL through Salesforce whilst mobile and for third parties to request access to SCL for red/green flags.

In addition, unreasonable complainant policy applied (UCPA) was to be shown in SCL, along with caution within 200m of the address and an audit log with notifications introduced.

Multiple training courses dependant on access required were identified and training was planned to run from 22 November to 10 December.

The Housing Officer then gave an online demonstration on how the SCL worked and how it was accessed by both CBC and third party employees.

## 27 **MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORTS**

Written reports were submitted by members of the Council's Corporate Management and Senior Leadership Teams to update the Committee on health and safety matters from their service areas during the previous quarter.

The reports provided information on workplace inspections, specific incident investigations, training and communications.

The key points raised from the reports were as follows:

### Corporate

- Monthly health and safety office inspections carried out in September with key findings related to trip hazards, disposal of broken equipment and PAT testing out of date
- Joint health and safety inspection with trade unions took place on 4 October with findings to be reported next quarter
- Zero accidents reported and one incident of a Covid 19 confirmed case which following investigation was identified as non-work related
- 100% PDR completion rate for 2021/22
- Zero outstanding training elements were reported at the end of Q3
- Directorate Management Team meetings programmed for the year
- Directorate DJCC meetings programmed for the year
- Tier 4 recruitment now complete with Health, Safety & Risk Manager role now filled and successful applicant due to commence in January 2022

### Finance

- Six monthly office inspections had been re-instated from October 2021
- All risk assessments were re-visited in July 2021 and had been confirmed as up to date
- One incident reported of an employee off for 2 weeks with work related stress. Since return to work the new stress questionnaire was issued for completion and referral to occupational health was in progress
- Online training was largely up to date with only 1 outstanding element
- Team meetings were ongoing with various areas discussed including DSE assessments, working from home, keeping windows open, Covid 19 precautions, employee helpline, mental health and lateral flow tests
- Directorate DJCC meetings programmed for the year

### Economic Growth

The Service Director was unable to attend the committee but the key points in the report were as follows

- Six monthly joint health and safety inspection was carried out on 15 October 2021
- An annual inspection was to take place at the end of October 2021 with results to be shared in Q4 report
- Risk assessments confirmed as up to date and under continual review
- No accidents / incidents had been reported
- Online training was largely up to date with just 3 courses outstanding in Q3 and 1 refresher course
- Woodhead had continued with the construction of Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre on the Holywell Cross and the Health and Safety Committee were due to visit the site on 15 October 2021 with an update to Committee expected in Q4
- Danaher and Walsh had completed the public realm works Elder Way and Packers Row was to start after Christmas
- Work was underway on Sheffield Road to deliver a new facility for Jewson with the project on programme for 4 February 2022
- Property and Technical Services had continued to be challenged for capacity and were currently finalizing a draft new structure

### Housing

- Investment and Assets Town Hall G28 joint inspection was completed in September
- Weekly health and safety inspections have been carried out by team leaders on all work areas
- All risk assessments were being revised in line with current government guidelines and council policy

- 33 Incidents reported in quarter including cases of verbal abuse and positive Covid 19 cases
- Continued compliance on online training has been seen but push continues to clear outstanding training elements
- A review was being undertaken of the health and safety practices at the Stonegravel Depot
- Housing inspections have recommenced in a Covid safe manner
- Stress risk questionnaires are being completed by all staff
- Staff are reminded at all team meetings and 121's of support available from the Employee Support Service and Mental Health first aiders
- Staff are being encouraged to take 2 X lateral flow tests per week

### Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing

The Service Director was unable to attend the committee so members were asked to review the full report and share any questions arising with the Executive Director.

### Digital, HR and Customer Services

- Joint quarterly inspection completed in September
- Annual health and safety tour to be completed in Q4
- Risk assessments were being reviewed in Customers, Revenues and Benefits
- All other service areas had up to date risk assessments
- One incident of a Covid riddor reportable case in the quarter. Learning related the case to behaviours so managers' briefings updated to highlight to all staff
- IOSH managing safely training course has been requested for all CRB service managers
- Counter terrorism training was being scheduled for CRB employees

## 28 **FUTURE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

An action was taken for all Service Directors to provide one piece of supporting evidence with all future quarterly reports. This could be anything related to the health and safety reporting, for example a risk assessment, an office inspection report or training log.

**RESOLVED** – That the action be noted.

## 29 **INCIDENT/ACCIDENT INFORMATION**

The Corporate Health and Safety Advisor presented a report on the number of incidents/accidents over the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The number of

incidents reported for the quarter was 61 which was an increase of 16 on the previous quarter. It was reported that this increase was not unexpected following the easing of restrictions as more Council premises re-opened and more employees returned to the workplace.

There had been 1 RIDDOR reportable incident over the quarter and 1 lost time incident where an accident had led to an injury that resulted in the employee taking time off work.

It was noted for a second quarter that not all returns to work had been reported on the SHE system and omissions of data were still being seen. A further reminder for team managers to complete this stage should be issued by Service Directors and any training needs identified.

A member asked if incidents of verbal / physical abuse were all reported to the police. The Corporate Health and Safety Advisor confirmed that all physical incidents were reported to the police, but not all verbal abuse was dependant on the type or level of abuse.

## **30 OCCUPATIONAL ILL HEALTH STATISTICS**

The Human Resources Business Partner presented a report detailing the occupational ill health statistics for the quarter 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

It was noted that Q3 had seen an increase in the number of occurrences of self-isolation as a result of COVID-19 with a total of 217 periods of isolation between 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021 which was more than quadrupled since the previous quarter. More than 60% of isolations as a whole during this quarter were as a result of either the employee's household members and/or support bubble members displaying symptoms, or via Test & Trace as a result of close contact with a positive case.

Support continues for employees that have been absent following a positive test result with phased returns, as exhaustion is apparent after contracting the virus and a gradual introduction into the workplace supports employees in coming back to working life.

The average days lost per occurrence for MSK within the quarter is 21 days, with 5.5% of days lost being work-related.

The most common reason for absence and most days lost in Q3 that had been categorised as 'work related' was 'stress/anxiety/depression/mental health' accounting for 32% of all days lost to sickness absence.

To support staff HR continue to work closely with Line Managers to monitor sickness absence, promote the newly introduced Mental Health First Aider programme, the Employee Assistance Programme and ensure the relevant support mechanisms are in place to support employees returning to work.

Sickness absence reasoning related to operations remained high with many staff having planned operations that had been delayed by Covid 19.

Overall, the number of days lost for the quarter had increased by 17%. An increase in long term sickness had an impact on the number of days lost with staff carried into Q3 from Q2 having an impact on overall figures.

### **31 CORONAVIRUS STAGE 4 WORKING OPS/ARRANGEMENTS**

The Executive Director presented an update from the Resources Response and Recovery Group detailing the National Covid position and the Local Covid position.

It was noted that current actions for CBC / Resources Group included CBC retaining 'Covid-secure' office based guidance/risk assessments, Council taking a cautious approach to reviewing future Covid H&S arrangements, staff who can work from home, should continue to do so, and staff who come into the workplace should follow existing H & S arrangements.

Actions were said to be underway with regards to both external and internal comms around the need to wear face coverings in light of the latest "Omicron" variant.

The Resources Group focus remained on ventilation and CO2 monitoring, test and trace and case investigation.

Next steps were said to include the CLT reviewing longer term requirements / arrangements / resourcing of Resources Group, keeping a close eye on emerging stats and info regarding Covid 19 and the new strain "Omicron" and continuing to work with CBC services and staff to ensure appropriate H&S measures are in place.

It was also noted that the new Strategic Health & Safety and Risk Manager would join from early January 2022.

### **32 UPDATE FROM HEALTH AND SAFETY FORUM**

The Corporate Health and Safety Advisor presented an update of the work of the Health and Safety Forum and its role to look at specific issues, prioritise actions and ensure compliance against all requirements.

It was noted that current focus was on Asbestos Management for both Domestic and Non-Domestic premises. The Service Director for Corporate confirmed that a draft policy and draft management guidelines were to be shared with the CLT and next steps were to report back to the next Health and Safety Committee in February 2022.

**33**      **DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 16 February, 2022 at 9.30am.