

## **COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 16th February, 2022**

Present:-

Councillor Blank (Chair)

Councillors	Barr J Innes Caulfield	Councillor	Brittain K Falconer
Vanessa Watson Donna Reddish	Housing Service Director - Corporate	Karen Knight Paul Longley Liam Rich	Unison Unison Unite
Hazel James Ian Waller	HR Service Director - Leisure	Tony Devereux  Grant Ilett	Unison Housing HS & Risk Manager
Neil Johnson	Service Director - Economic Growth	Marc Jasinski Andrew Grainger	H&S Advisor Capital Contracts Manager
Theresa Channell Liz Cook	Service Director – Finance Service Director - Housing	Trevor Barnett  Meghan Hammond - Gant	Capital Contracts Manager H&S  Economic Development

\*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

### **32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor P Niblock, Ade McCormick and Andrew Fowler.

### **33 INTRODUCTIONS**

### **34 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30TH NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were agreed as a true record.

### **35 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

## **36 MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORTS**

Written reports were submitted by members of the Council's Corporate Leadership Team to update the Committee on health and safety matters from their directorates 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 were carried out in September with key findings related to trip hazards, disposal of broken equipment and PAT testing out of date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 key findings related to trip hazards, inappropriate storage identified, a TV found behind a photocopier and PAT testing affecting all offices
- PAT testing was completed in December 2021
- Risk assessments enabled the successful and safe 11<sup>th</sup> hour ceremony, Remembrance Sunday and Electoral Canvassing
- Decision made in December 2021 to suspend committees during the first 2 weeks of January due to the rising Covid 19 rates
- One incident of a Covid 19 confirmed case which following investigation was identified as non-work related
- 100% PDR completion rate for 2021/22
- 100% PDR half year check in completion rate for 2021/22
- Zero outstanding training elements were reported at the end of Q4
- Directorate Management Team meetings programmed for 2021/22 and 2022/23
- Directorate DJCC meetings programmed for
- Grant Ilett appointed to Health, Safety & Risk Manager role in Q4 and commenced in January 2022

### Finance

- No joint office inspections had been undertaken in Q4
- No annual Health and Safety inspection had been carried in in 2021
- All risk assessments were up to date and reviewed regularly
- Limited use of Accountancy and Internal Audit offices in 2021 but regular checks of signage and cleaning products had continued
- Zero accidents or incidents reported in Q4
- Online training was up to date with no outstanding elements
- 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

## Economic Growth

- Six monthly joint health and safety inspection was carried out on 15 October 2021
- An annual inspection was due to take place at the end of October 2021 but had not yet been undertaken
- Risk assessments for site visits were confirmed as up to date and under continual review
- Workplace inspections were carried out and one issue was noted around one of the fire exits and the need for a fob to open it. This was raised with Facilities Management who confirmed that in the event of a fire alarm the electricians allowed the use of the doors both ways and without the need for a fob.
- No accidents / incidents had been reported in the quarter
- No accidents / incidents had been reported in the last 12 months
- Online training was largely up to date with just 8 courses outstanding in Q4
- Woodhead had continued with the construction of Northern Gateway Enterprise Centre on the Holywell Cross
- Danaher and Walsh were preparing for the next stage of the public realm programme on Packers Row
- Work was almost complete on Sheffield Road to deliver a new facility for Jewson with the project on programme for 4 February 2022
- CBC was successful in securing £19.982m Levelling Up funding to deliver two complementary projects that would form a transformational package to bring vitality, vibrancy and viability to the heart of the town
- First project was refurbishment and remodelling of Stephenson Hall to create a unique facility, fusing the performing arts, visual arts and heritage
- Second project was transformational regeneration of the historic town centre core, centred around four key public spaces and the connectivity between these, Stephenson Hall, St Marys and All Saints and key visitor arrival points

## Housing

- Investment and Assets Town Hall G28 joint inspection was completed in November
- Careline 20.12.21 – Covid safe office inspection completed by premise manager
- Investment and Assets Team projects annual Health and Safety tour was planned for 18.02.22
- All risk assessments were up to date and available on One Drive via PDA, Tablets, Laptops or hard copy
- 49 Incidents reported in quarter with over 50% being positive Covid 19 cases
- Continued compliance on online training has been seen but push continued to clear outstanding training elements with training either in process or being planned
- Managers have been tasked with clearing outstanding completions
- Staff continue to be encouraged to take lateral flow tests and check updated corporate guidance and risk assessments on Aspire

- Housing inspections continue in a Covid safe manner and most DFG work is still carried out remotely or by our partners at DCC

#### Leisure, Culture and Community Wellbeing

- Joint quarterly inspections were completed in December at the Pomegranate and Winding Wheel theatres
- Six monthly joint inspection was carried out at the Crematorium in October
- Various other areas had also been inspected in Q4
- Risk assessments were up to date and Leisure were currently commencing annual review of all
- A number of incidents reported on SHE in Q4, including a various Covid positive cases and one non-employee RIDDOR reportable incident
- Training needs have been identified across all areas with classroom training elements planned for March 2022
- Work was currently underway within services to make sure training need via Aspire is allocated to correct staff to address outstanding elements
- Contained within the outstanding training were a number of new starters who were being taken through the required learning as quickly as possible and there were also some leavers which needed to be removed from these figures
- the leisure service was reviewing training alignments to make sure that the right training was aligned to the right staff
- Figures were to be reviewed monthly at the leisure management team meeting to help support and direct improved performance
- Staff had been trained on the new staff caution list system

There was no report available for Digital, HR and Customer Services.

## 37 **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> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021.

It was noted that Q4 had seen an increase in the number of occurrences of self-isolation as a result of Covid 19 with a total of 485 periods of isolation between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 which was more than triple the previous quarter. More than 50% 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.

Overall 27% of the workforce had tested positive for Covid 19 to date with the majority now recovered and back to work. However, support was ongoing for those staff experiencing "long Covid".

The average days lost per occurrence for MSK within the quarter was 15 days, with 42% of days lost being work-related. The number of days lost to this absence reason

had increased by 29%, which could be attributed to a small number of long term sickness absence.

During Q4 28% of all days lost were as a result of stress, which was a decrease on Q3 and incidences of 'work related' stress had also halved.

An increase in mental health related illness was emerging as the effects of Covid 19 and changes to day-to-day life continued. In order to support staff HR were continuing to work closely with Line Managers to monitor sickness absence, upskill and coach managers on how to deal with mental health conditions and how to support staff in the workplace that suffer with mental illness. HR had been supporting managers to complete wellness action plans.

HRBP's were continuing to promote the newly introduced Mental Health First Aider programme, the Employee Assistance Programme and ensure the relevant support mechanisms were in place to support employees returning to work. 31 staff had now been trained as Mental Health First Aiders.

## **38 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> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. The number of incidents reported for the quarter was 153 which was an increase of 147% 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.

However, it was noted that if Covid 19 incidents were discounted there was a decrease in the number of employee non reportable incidents, near miss incidents and ASB incidents compared to the previous quarter.

There had been 5 RIDDOR reportable incident over the quarter compared to 1 the previous quarter. Three of these were Covid 19 related and there was also 1 non-employee RIDDOR reportable incident.

There were 3 lost time incidents where an accident had led to an injury that resulted in the employee taking time off work and 89 incidents where employees had tested positive for Covid 19 and had to isolate for 10 days.

It was noted that some returns to work had still not been reported correctly on the SHE system and omissions of data were still being seen. Despite previous requests for team managers to complete this stage and reminders be issued by Service Directors there have been no training needs identified and no request for additional training.

## **39 CORONAVIRUS STAGE 4 WORKING / OPERATING ARRANGEMENTS**

There was no update provided this quarter due to sickness absence.

**40 UPDATE ON THE STRATEGIC HEALTH AND SAFETY REVIEW**

The Strategic Health, Safety and Risk Manger updated the committee on the upcoming scoping meeting to review various health and safety issues, processes and actions. It was suggested that updates could be provided in each future quarterly Council Health and Safety Committee.

**41 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was raised.

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

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 18 May, 2022 at 9.30am.