

# STAFF COMMITTEE

28 SEPTEMBER 2017 - 3:30 PM



**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs M Davis(Chairman), Councillor D Mason(Vice-Chairman), Councillor Mrs V M Bucknor, Councillor T R Butcher, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C J Seaton, Councillor S Tierney, Councillor F H Yeulett.

**APOLOGIES:** Councillor David Mason

Sam Anthony (Head of HR and OD)

David Vincent (Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Manager)

Joanne Goodrum (Member Services and Governance)

## **S5/17      PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of May 18, 2017 were confirmed and signed.

## **S6/17      CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT 2016/17**

Members considered the Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17 presented by David Vincent.

Members asked questions, made comments and received responses as follows:

Councillor Seaton asked whether there is a defibrillator at Fenland Hall or whether it was felt that one should be on site with trained staff. David Vincent said there is a lot of discussion around the subject previously but because we are based by the Ambulance station it wasn't felt necessary. Councillor Butcher stated that this was discussed a few years ago, but due to the cost implication it was decided against, another consideration would be where to place it in the building due to the shape and size of Fenland Hall. Councillor Bucknor suggested that if one was based in Reception then all staff would know where it was situated.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for clarification on the figure provided for staff training, where 99 staff were trained out of 515. David Vincent confirmed that the figure of 99 staff covers corporate training only, service specific health and safety training numbers are not included in these totals.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor, referring to the incident rate stated that it is currently 7.9 and was previously 9.4 per 100 employees; she asked for clarification that given that the staff reduction this has actually remained static. David Vincent stated that the figures show an improvement, he confirmed that the calculation is based on the full time equivalent against the number of accidents against 100 employees, so this takes into account the staff reductions and changes and therefore is a directly comparable figure; He added that generally all of our accidents occur within the Refuse and Cleansing Service and has not changed.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor, referring to the Health and Safety training at the Base, asked if there are written examples of the training records and how the training is given. David Vincent confirmed that all new staff members receive induction training which incorporates Corporate Health and Safety training, however new staff members working within the Refuse Team have an additional induction which includes a structured process where staff sign to say that they understand the Risk Assessments and the Safe Systems at Work, staff receive training by watching a DVD and by

1-2-1 coaching which is documented.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked which staff have received Conflict Management training. David Vincent confirmed that based on the risk assessments, Conflict Management training would essentially be offered to lone workers who have face to face contact with members of the public. This would include Officers from Planning Enforcement, Street Scene, Environmental Health and Traveller Liaison. He confirmed that as an additional measure, from next month those staff members will also be issued with a lone worker protection device which works like a panic alarm. Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked for clarification that this would also be issued to the member of staff visiting the traveller sites. David Vincent confirmed that it would.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked if the results of the audits carried out to assess compliance will be available for Committee members. Councillor Mrs Davis and David Vincent both clarified that the reports do not come to this committee as they are operational.

Councillor Mrs Bucknor asked if Fenland District Council have been fined by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in the last four years. David Vincent confirmed they have not been fined.

Councillor Yeulett asked if there was any asbestos within the Council buildings. David Vincent stated that the levels of asbestos within the buildings are minimal and when it has been found it has been removed by licenced asbestos contractors if required. As part of the Asbestos Management we had all areas surveyed by external asbestos contractors and the reports confirm that asbestos is minimal. Councillor Mrs Bucknor stated that some housing association properties have asbestos and asked who is responsible for the safe removal of that. David Vincent confirmed that this would be the responsibility of the housing association.

Councillor Yeulett, referring to previous accidents, asked if we have received any claims for compensation and if our insurance premium had been affected by the accident which took place involving the refuse vehicle. David Vincent stated that the Council have had claims made against them in the past, some of which have been defended. He agreed to seek clarification with the Insurance Manager.

Councillor Mrs Davis stated that many Town and Parish Councils own property but do not understand the importance of having the correct measures in place with regards to asbestos. She asked if it was appropriate, a letter could be sent to Town and Parish Councils to raise their awareness, Councillor Seaton stated that as the property is not owned by Fenland District Council it would not be our responsibility. The responsibility is with the asset owner. Councillor Butcher confirmed that the clerks to Town and Parish Councils should already have information regarding this matter.

Councillor Tierney asked for further information concerning the marine incident which had been referred to regarding the majority of days lost through sickness. David Vincent stated that this incident involved a ship which had collided with the pontoon at Sutton Bridge and had been fully investigated by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) as it was a shipping accident.

Councillor Seaton asked for clarification with regards to relating to the figures for lifting and handling injuries which were at their highest in 2012/13, dropped the following year and have consistently increased since. He asked what measures have been introduced on reflection of this. David Vincent confirmed that these injuries occurred within the Refuse Service, manual handling training is delivered to this service and the Health and Safety Handbook has been developed further to offer more advice and guidance. He stated that the crews are monitored by supervisors who observe while they are working and any issues are documented.

Councillor Murphy asked whether we have enough trained staff in First Aid at Fenland Hall as there are only 7 and yet there are 5 at the Base. David Vincent confirmed that there are 7 at

Fenland Hall to ensure we have sufficient cover for lunch breaks and annual leave etc and the base have 5 as they are a high-risk area. The number of First Aiders here is well within the legal requirement and therefore we are fully compliant.

Councillor Murphy referred to section 2.5, Occupational Health, which says that health surveillance is provided to various teams commencing in July 2017 and asked if these have started. David Vincent confirmed that 30 assessments have taken place since April 2017 and Marine Services are scheduled for November 2017, the other teams will be picked up as part of the rolling programme.

Councillor Murphy , referred to section 3.1, Accident Totals by kind and asked what accidents would be identified as 'All other kinds and unspecified'. David Vincent confirmed that accidents which do not fit into the other categories would be recorded here.

Councillor Murphy referred to section 3.2 Accident Totals by Services and stated while it might be clear why some teams such as Leisure record accidents, and asked what accidents are recorded by teams such as Policy and Governance. David Vincent stated that this could be a slip or manual handling injury.

Councillor Butcher asked who decides whether an accident is RIDDOR reportable. David Vincent confirmed that if a person is absent from work for more than 7 days or there is a broken bone the injury is RIDDOR reportable and it is the responsibility of the employer to report that. Sam Anthony stated that the RIDDOR classification is defined by the HSE. David Vincent stated that he completes the report and submits it to the HSE within 10 days of the accident. The HSE will notify if there is a follow up requirement, but to date we have had no contact regarding investigation for a number of years.

The Staff Committee AGREED to note the Council's performance within the Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17 and to recommend the feasibility of having a defibrillator on site at Fenland Hall is to be investigated further.

16.15pm

Chairman