

Leicester
City Council

Finance Resources & Equal Opportunities Committee
Cabinet

4th July 02
15th July 02

HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

Report of the Service Director (Human Resources & Equalities)

1. Purpose of Report

To update Cabinet on progress against the Health and Safety Project Plan and present the Annual Report on Health & Safety. FREOPS have also requested the report to make any comments to Cabinet.

1.1 Summary

Cabinet requested a further update of progress against the Authority's Health and Safety Project Plan. In addition, an Annual Report on Health & Safety is usually presented. This report is intended to fulfil both these requirements.

The commitment to improve Health & Safety Management and revitalize Health & Safety Action Plan was considered by the Scrutiny Committee and approved by Cabinet in June 2001.

Scrutiny Committee requested information concerning accident and attack statistics. The Council's performance between 1998 and 2001 is attached at Appendix 2.

This report presents a summary of progress against the agreed plan.

2. Recommendations

For Cabinet:

- 2.1 That progress and further action be noted and good practice commended.
- 2.2 That it be noted that the Best Value Review of HR will include recommendation to strengthen the Health and Safety function.

2.3.1 For FREOPs

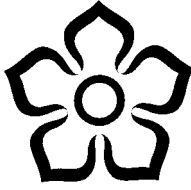
To note the report and make any comments to Cabinet that they see fit.

3. **Financial and Legal Implications**

Departments are responsible for ensuring that the Revenue Strategies provide adequate resources to meet H & S obligations. This was reviewed specifically in the last budget round. Costing Safety Action Plan is an area identified for further development. The project is aimed at helping the Council better meet its Health and Safety legal obligations. The existence of clear corporate standards and their effective communication and monitoring affords protection to those that follow them and has implications for improvements in service delivery.

4. **Report Author/Officer to Contact**

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. The Report

1.1 Cabinet approved a Health and Safety Project Plan in June 2001 to revitalise procedures so that:

1. Responsibilities are clear;
2. There are streamlined procedures for systematically identifying and addressing risks Council-wide;
3. Action Plans are developed to address the most significant risks and are monitored until complete;
4. Council-wide monitoring and reporting arrangements are comprehensive and effective;
5. Communications are clear and effective;
6. Resources and training across the Council are adequate and effective;
7. The Safety Manual reflects the revitalised procedures and there are arrangements for keeping it up to date.

1.2 Assessment of Progress to date

1.2.1 Responsibilities are clear

A Statement of roles and responsibilities for Health and Safety has been approved and is now in place. Monitoring against the

statement occurs on a regular basis, including six monthly meetings between the departments and the corporate Health & Safety units.

In addition, a revised and revitalized cycle for reporting and consultation on Health & Safety is attached at Appendix 1. This has been drawn-up in consultation with 'Champion' Service Directors who are responsible for promoting Health & Safety in their department. The cycle now forms the basis of the Council's Health & Safety Management system.

1.2.2 Streamlined Procedures

Working arrangements between the Council's Risk Management Services and Health and Safety have helped to improve the streamlining of procedures and identification of corporate risks.

Work with the Safety Advisors Group has helped to identify priorities for action and a programme of updating the Council's Safety Manual has helped to ensure procedures are revised and kept updated (see also 3.27).

1.2.3 Action Plans

The following five risk areas have been identified and agreed, as priorities for action. Each has a separate action plan and a summary of progress is presented below:-

- Work related Upper Limb Disorder;
- Stress
- Contractors
- Water management Systems
- Asbestos

Work related Upper Limb Disorder:

A revised Risk Assessment Management system has been developed and is currently subject to consultation with departments, prior to formal implementation. This will help managers and staff to better identify the nature of risks in the workplace that can affect upper body problems, e.g. back strains.

Stress:

Two pilot work areas have joined the initial programme. Housing Hostels and Regeneration Helpdesk. Departmental personnel and Safety staff and trade unions nominees completed their training in April for implementation of the pilot in May 2002. It is planned to roll out the

programme to other work areas in 2002/3 and make links with other related Health & Welfare projects e.g. family friendly policy application.

Contractors:

The Project has been completed on time and was presented to the Town Clerk on 28th May 2002. Completion of the project will mean a better, more integrated and auditable approach to the management of contractors.

Water Management Systems:

The project was completed on time and was presented to the Town Clerk on 28th May, 2002. Completion of the project will mean that the 'Water Safety Management Pack' implementation will be monitored at regular review meetings.

Asbestos:

The project was completed by the end of April. This will help to inform revised asbestos management arrangements and will help the authority to better identify and action risks for the management of asbestos.

1.2.4 Monitoring and Reporting

Regular monitoring and review of departmental action plans has taken place through six monthly review meetings including all departments. A summary of both good practice points and action points arising from the most recent round of review meetings are summarized below:-

1. Commitment and Partnership Working

- All Departmental Service Directors and Health & Safety "Champions" attended these meetings, as did the Council's Risk Manager. This reflected the closer working between the two sections and avoided duplication of the "Champions" effort given that they also "champion" Risk Management. These meetings demonstrated substantial areas of good practice and some (though not all) are identified below.
- The commitment of the Arts & Leisure Health & Safety "Champion" in accompanying the Departmental Safety Advisor on planned visits, an exercise he found to be beneficial and helpful in securing general service improvement.

2. Health & Safety Training

- The progress made by some Departments in Health and Safety Management Training; (Housing, Environment & Development, Arts & Leisure and Commercial Services,) the Institute of Occupational Safety & Health accreditation given to Social Services to run their own courses.
- The systematic approach to evaluating training in Arts & Leisure.
- The general improvement in developing training records both in terms of attendance and course content and the attempts by Housing and Environment & Development to develop refresher training records.

3. Innovation and Good Practice

- The use of the Health and Safety Performance Monitoring Pad in Arts & Leisure was the subject of a presentation at the officer Safety Advisors group meeting in January 2002. The pad provides a better way to monitor Health & Safety on site visits.
- Work on developing a "one stop select list." (The select list working Party) (Town Clerk & Corporate Resources)
- Improved prioritising of urgent work (Town Clerk's & Corporate Resources)
- The attendance of the Service
- Directors and Health & Safety "Champion" TC&CRD, at the January meeting of Safety Advisors Group to discuss the distribution of inspection reports and streamline inspections carried out by departments and the centre
- The general systematic approach of Education

Action Points arising from the Departmental review of H&S Meetings

The need for ongoing activity and continuous improvement is built into the Action Plan. Each department has its own Action Plan with feedback following the six monthly review meeting. The following list is put forward as being relevant to all departments, albeit examples of good practice can be used to help inform improvements. The service is promoting improved sharing and dissemination of good practice in 2002/03.

1. **Improvements in Training**

Identifying training as a result of the hazard identification and risk assessment process.

Improving training records and access to information on training courses.

Both of these mean that training is being integrated within the Health & Safety management system.

2. **Developing a Strategic Approach**

Develop the use of accident/incident/attack statistics to identify or review risks and follow up systematically in the Departmental Action Plans

3. **Corporate Working**

Ensure that corporate links are addressed in the Departmental Safety Action Plan.

4. **Costing and Prioritising Action Plan**

Cost and prioritise Departmental Action Plans.

Include monitoring arrangements in the plan and carry them out.

5. **Engaging Managers to accept their Health & Safety responsibilities**

Identify managers (not Safety advisors) with responsibility for the different areas in the action plan.

Ensure that once a risk is identified, action to address it is cross-referenced and prioritised in the plan.

Communicate the relevant parts of the core responsibilities document to all referred to in that document. Set up assessment and review arrangements to check responsibilities working in practice.

1.2.5 Clear and Effective Communications

Communication between the service and its customers are continuing to improve. A regular reporting of progress by departments against the project plan is in place.

1.2.6 Resources and Training

Development and training are referred to above. Improved utilisation of available resources has also been advised, however projected imbalance in resourcing across the Council has been identified in the Best Value Review for HR. Details will be presented soon.

1.2.7 Progress of New Safety Manual

Joint funding by Town Clerk's Department and Strategic Resources Group has enabled this work to be externally commissioned from Aston University. An outline draft is available.

Conclusion - Building on Improvements to date

The report presents evidence of improvements by all departments. It also indicates areas for further improvement. The aim is for Health and Safety to be accepted by line managers as a 'management activity'. The H&S Champions have an important role in this, however a proposal for 'middle managers' forum has received broad support for 2002/03. The forum will provide an operational management focus on H&S with, for example, good practice initiatives being disseminated and shared across departments.

Future Priorities - 2002/3:

Topics for the future programme have been finalised by the Council's Safety advisor Group as follows:-

- Safety procedures for partnership working and elective risk **(Social Services & Education)**
- Revitalising the current Management of Health Safety and Environmental Risk Audit to reflect the new style of working **(Housing, CS & Risk Management)**
- Improving the co-ordination of Inspections: to ensure that the results are made available promptly to relevant people and remedial action is identified, programmed and executed. The document audit trail for such important information also requires substantial improvement. **(CHSU, TC & CRD, E&D)**
- Driver safety **(CHSU, A&L & Risk Management)**
- Middle managers Health & Safety Forum **(CHSU - all departments)**

Health & Safety and Best Value

Members are asked to note that the Best Value Review for Health and Safety has identified a need to improve the corporate capacity of the Health & Safety service. Further details will be available in the final Best Value report.

2. Financial and Legal Implications

Departments are responsible for ensuring that the Revenue Strategies provide adequate resources to meet H & S obligations. This was

reviewed specifically in the last budget round. Costing Safety Action Plan is an area identified for further development. The project is aimed at helping the Council better meet its Health and Safety legal obligations. The existence of clear corporate standards and their effective communication and monitoring affords protection to those that follow them and has implications for improvements in service delivery.

3. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References Within Supporting Information
Equal Opportunities	No	
Policy	Yes	The report refers to actions that inform on H & S policy development
Sustainable and Environmental	No	
Crime & Disorder	No	
Human Rights	No	
Elderly/People on Low Income	No	

4. Access to Information

Background information is available from the files of the Senior Health & Safety Adviser.

5. Consultations

The main report has been subject to consultation with Directors' Board and Strategic Resources Group.

6. Report Author/Officer to Contact

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