

# PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

## Revitalising Corporate Health & Safety 16 October 2012

### Report of Head of Health & Housing

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Personnel Committee of a review carried out of corporate health and safety.

**This report is public.**

#### RECOMMENDATION:

(1) That this information report be noted.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The council's current arrangements for managing occupational safety were designed some years ago, when there was greater managerial capacity and more senior management tiers. The existing corporate health and safety structures include:
- a council-wide Safety Policy and service-specific safety policies
  - a corporate Safety Officer function to provide coordinate, advice, training and support
  - a structural link with Learning and Development (in Human Resources) via Employee Performance & Development Appraisals
  - a corporate employee Safety Committee
  - a link in the council's Constitution between corporate health & safety and the Joint Consultative Committee
- 1.2 Historically, Personnel Committee has not been involved in decisions about corporate health and safety, i.e. the discharging of the council's legal requirements imposed principally under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and legislation. Instead, the Joint Consultative Committee has tended to be the route for Safety Committee reports on matters of safety performance and any resource implications.
- 1.3 Members will clearly have an interest in monitoring the attainment of corporate safety standards. Matters of operational safety provision and management, and ultimately matters of regulatory compliance, are identified in the council's Safety Policy as the responsibility ultimately of the Chief Executive supported by Service Heads.

## **2.0 Progress of the Current Review**

- 2.1 The review included background research with the Safety Officer, one-to-one meetings with Service Heads, meetings with key corporate functions (Property, Human Resources, Partnerships, Audit, Civil Contingencies), reflection on existing arrangements (including the attention to safety within the existing EDPA process) and examination of corporate safety functions in selected other local authorities.

## **3.0 Findings and Corresponding Decisions**

- 3.1 A great deal of change has taken place and it is now appropriate to update our approach to safety management, taking into account the experiences of managers and staff and also noting how other councils have approached similar issues. The following action plan is proposed:
1. The establishment of a consistently strong safety culture through management focussed on ongoing risk assessment, delegation, monitoring, exception reporting and prompt corrective action, and staff serving as safety 'champions'.
  2. The devising of corporate health and safety competencies to provide a framework for future training and development of staff and managers.
  3. Assigning to the Head of Resources/Senior Property Officer the lead role in coordinating matters of safety which concern the structure, condition and occupation of council buildings and land.
  4. The introduction of monitoring and reporting (at service and corporate levels) on safety attainment and performance.
  5. Periodic auditing of occupational safety attainment to assist service managers and provide additional corporate assurance.
  6. That post-specific safety roles and responsibilities will be defined within the revised Safety Policy and that specific safety responsibilities will be stated within job descriptions.
- 3.2 These actions will be addressed through a corporate safety strategy, including an action plan, within which managers and staff positively influence and participate in ownership of the council's future approach to corporate safety. There will be various opportunities to consult and engage staff on the individual recommendations that have received approval.

## **4.0 Further Work**

- 4.1 Officers are now developing the corporate safety strategy and action plan to provide a framework for the agreed developments in safety / management. Meanwhile, revision of the council's Safety Policy will be completed shortly for discussion by Management Team and final consideration by Personnel Committee.

### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

No adverse impact has been identified.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report at this stage.

**OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS****Human Resources:**

There are no direct HR implications arising from this report at this stage.

**Information Services:**

There are no direct IS implications arising from this report at this stage.

**Property:**

There are no direct Property implications arising from this report at this stage.

**Open Spaces:**

There are no direct Open Spaces implications arising from this report at this stage.

**SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Deputy Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments

**MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Council's Safety Policy

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