

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR - CUSTOMERS, GOVERNANCE AND
EMPLOYEES****HEALTH AND SAFETY SIX MONTHLY UPDATE****Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Members on ongoing health and safety support and development.
2. To seek approval for the 2021-2022 Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan (Appendix A)

Information**Health and Safety management system development**

3. The first ISO45001 continuing assessment audit was undertaken by the British Standards Institute (BSI) over two days 1st and 2nd of July 2021.
4. This audit examined progress since the successful award of ISO45001 in January 2021 and looked at how the management system is being developed to reflect the requirements of the new ISO45001 standard.
5. No major nonconformities were identified and work to close out pre-existing minor system improvements noted. These are mainly administrative and document management requirements and are being addressed within a new ISO45001 intranet-based toolkit due to be launched late 2021.
6. The next planned BSI audit date is 12th and 13th January 2022.
7. Key developments since January are:
 - A revised ISO45001 compliant Corporate Health and Safety Policy statement
 - Simplified and reduced number of safety forms now designated F45 from former SR-safety record forms
 - A more user-friendly risk assessment format (F45-1) with a staff communication record incorporated
 - A manager's health and safety arrangements self-audit tool (F45-2) which will inform the annual governance arrangements audit of teams and services - substantial, reasonable, or limited assurance levels of compliance.

8. Having successfully achieved ISO45001 during the pandemic, work is now taking place in conjunction with Nottingham University in respect of ISO45003, a new standard that works alongside and complements ISO45001 focusing on Psychosocial risk.
9. This is a guidance standard not requiring formal accreditation or audit and as such can be implemented at minimal cost providing a benchmark against best practice for work in the areas of behavioural safety, psychological health, safety and wellbeing. For example staff counselling, mental health first aid, stress management and wellbeing initiatives and will therefore compliment and supplement work already underway in these areas.
10. This is particularly timely emerging from the pandemic with foreseeable issue of staff anxiety, social isolation and personal impacts arising from Covid 19 and broadens the opportunities for joint working with HR colleagues and the occupational health service.

Health and Safety action plan

11. The attached action plan, Appendix A was reviewed as draft by BSI at the July audit and found to reflect the key safety priorities.
12. It is intended that the development of future health and safety plans are overseen by Health and Safety Compliance Board with progress tracking reported at the board along with a more formal management review split between April and September meetings. This will meet the requirement of planning and management review under the ISO45001 standard.

Corporate building reoccupation

13. The health and safety team are supporting a broader corporate building reoccupation working group as we transition from the statutory Covid related requirements and control measures into a new hybrid working model.
14. In order to provide intelligence led decisions we have implemented a programme of reoccupation checks that can be upscaled as staffing numbers increase. A three-point check focuses on the effective implementation of emergency procedures, infection prevention and control measures including the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) reoccupation requirements, particularly ventilation and staff confidence on their return to office working. The latter including behavioural aspects and psychosocial elements.
15. Emergency procedures prove to be challenging with pre pandemic arrangements now having to be re-thought. Low building occupancy has led to a significantly reduced number of volunteer fire wardens and first aiders present in county office estate and presents additional evacuation planning issues for those requiring assistance (Personal Evacuation Plans).
16. Mitigation work with corporate property, facilities management and with Arc fire safety specialist is underway to address the issue. A review of fire warden zones has taken place and options being considered include new building and fire safety inductions for all staff, enhanced frequency of evacuation practices, an app logging emergency cover availability to zones, and enhanced use of the proximity card system.

17. A key measure to limit Covid transmission is a high degree of natural ventilation. During the pandemic ventilation and air conditioning systems were reviewed by Corporate Property and those systems with recirculation capability only, were isolated. The three-point check verifies that buildings are being ventilated, mainly by opening windows. Window stickers have been distributed advising staff of the ventilation requirement and not to close. There will be inevitable tensions between ventilation and the maintenance of a comfortable working temperature as we move towards autumn.

Water safety and drowning prevention

18. 2021 has seen an increase of inland open water drowning events. We have reviewed the risk assessments for the open water the Council and its partners have responsibility for. We have supported drowning prevention education events held at the National Water Sports Centre and adjacent (across the river) Colwick Park, both impacted on in hot weather by unauthorised open water swimming and large crowd numbers.
19. We are supporting and working with the Nottinghamshire Water Safety Partnership to develop a Nottinghamshire drowning prevention policy.
20. In 2019 we held a successful water safety education event at County Hall, something we are looking at planning for again with partners for next year.

Work with schools

21. 2021 has seen a strong buyback of health and safety support through our 'Services 4 Schools' offer. Feedback from schools on the advice and support provided to them during the pandemic and on a continuing basis has been very positive.
22. Most of the advice and support continues to focus on Covid control measures and work has been undertaken on both whole school and individual staff risk assessments reflecting the changes made by the recent relaxation of Government guidance. This removes existing requirements around face coverings and social distancing in the classroom environment.
23. The new risk assessments highlight key points for self-administration by school leaders and places emphasis on ventilation, hygiene and cleaning regime reflecting the HSEs broader non-school guidance.

Ongoing Support to the Personal Protective Equipment cell

24. Work continues to support PPE distribution and safe use. Face fit testing requests have reduced but it will be important to retain capability to step this up if required again and look at a programme of updates and face fit retests for high risk areas.
25. Support continues with the Community Asymptomatic (lateral flow) testing programme and routine, now monthly, compliance visits to both static and mobile testing sites. We have additionally supported the City Council with risk assessments of refuges for vulnerable people and hotel-based asylum seeker sites.

Other Options Considered

26. No other options have been considered.

Reasons for Recommendations

27. Elected members require visibility of health and safety performance, compliance and risk control measures in place to make informed decisions affecting the Council's health and safety risks.

Statutory and Policy Implications

28. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Data Protection and Information Governance

29. There are no implications arising directly from this report as no individual or personal data or information is used.

Financial Implications

30. There are no additional financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resources Implications

31. These are outlined in the body of the report. The health and safety support provided in line with government guidance aims to ensure the continued health, safety and wellbeing of staff.

Public Sector Equality Duty Implications

32. The proposals in this report meet the Council's existing commitment to meeting, and where possible exceeding, the statutory requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

- 1) Recognise the work of the Health and Safety team in achieving the ISO 45001 standard and support the work underway to work towards the ISO 45003 standard
- 2) Approve the action plan attached as Appendix A.
- 3) Receive a further Health and Safety update report in six months.

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Constitutional Comments (KK 25/08/21)

33. The proposals in this report are within the remit of the Personnel Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 24/08/21)

34. There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

HR Comments (JP 31/08/21)

35. The Council has an ongoing commitment to managing Health and Safety. Planning and performance review are key requirements of the Health and Safety Management System.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All