

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE REVIEW 2010/11

Accident / occupational ill health statistics

Employees

During the period April 1st 2010 to March 31st 2011, there were 22 accident book entries involving employees, the number of entries for the previous twelve months was 18.

The breakdown of the type of accident / injury sustained was as follows:

Accidents resulting in bruising	7
Accidents resulting in cuts / abrasions	8
Burns	2
Scalding	3
Musculoskeletal injury	1
Other	1

Reportable Accidents

There were 2 accidents that were notified to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

In one incident, an employee working in the Guildhall kitchen sustained a cut hand which resulted in her being absent from work for more than 3 days.

In the other incident there was a power supply failure in the Tower Street multi storey car park and a member of the public fell over and had to be taken to hospital for treatment. There was one reportable accident involving an employee during the previous 12 month period.

Non Employees (figures for 2009/10 in brackets)

There were 7 (22) entries for the period in question. Of these 1 involved a contractor working on Council premises, 5 were visitors to the City Museums of which 4 were children and 1 was in the Guildhall (Eighteen 71).

River Park Leisure Centre / Meadowside Leisure Centre

These centres are operated by DC Leisure and accident statistics are forwarded to the Sports & Physical Activity Team. A breakdown of the figures for 2010/11 can be provided if required.

Dangerous Occurrence

There were no incidents that would be classed as dangerous occurrences which had to be notified to the HSE; there was one the previous year, a ruptured gas supply pipe at the Meadowside Leisure Centre.

Miscellaneous

In addition to the above, there was 1 incident when a first aid trained Council employee attended to a member of the public where the accident occurred on a public footpath outside the City Offices.

Accident trends

The total number of recorded accidents involving members of staff has risen slightly in comparison with previous years and all bar three were relatively minor in nature. It is noted that 5 of the accidents involved catering staff in the Guildhall who have transferred from the catering contractor; this is recognised as being a higher risk working environment and this is being monitored. Apart from this, there were no discernable trends where specific action is likely to have a significant impact on the accident rate.

With regards non employees, the significant reduction in accidents can be attributed to the transfer of the Meadowside Leisure Centre to DC Leisure Management Ltd as in previous years the vast majority of accidents in this category were sport related.

In line with Health and Safety Executive statistics, slips and trips were the commonest cause of accidents involving members of the public and staff but none of the incidents recorded on council owned premises could be attributed to defective surfaces, poor cleaning regimes or trip hazards such as trailing cables.

Reported Incidents (Verbal abuse / threats)

There were 13 recorded incidents where an employee was threatened or subjected to verbal abuse and the perpetrator's home address could be identified and he / she resided in the district; all bar two involved staff in Landlord Services. In addition there were 2 recorded incidents involving parking attendants. The corresponding figures for 2009/10 were 9 and 5 respectively.

In addition to the incidents involving employees, there was 1 report from contractors working on behalf of the Council (Contract & Property Services), the same as in the previous year. The police provided details of 2 local residents who should not be visited alone.

Occupational ill health

- There were 28 referrals to the Council's occupational health consultant, this compares with 37 for 2009/10.
- There were 5 incidents of sickness absence due to work related stress and a further 5 incidents recorded as anxiety which may have had an occupational health element, this culminated in 204.5 working days lost (100.5 / 104) which equates to 4.83% of all sickness absence. The corresponding figures for the previous year were 16 work related incidents and 28 recorded as absence due to anxiety resulting in 519 days absence (121 / 398); 10.7% of all sickness absence.
- It is now possible to record sickness absence due to other forms of occupational ill health on the Selima Human Resources and Payroll System and managers have been briefed accordingly but during the period in question there has been no recorded work related sickness absence other than stress.
- 9 members of staff contacted the counselling service during 2010/11; the corresponding figure for the previous year was 10.

Conclusion

Winchester City Council continues to maintain a low accident rate as would be expected for a primarily office based organisation. As with many organisations, particularly in the service sector, occupational ill health accounts for most work related sickness absence with stress related illness being the major cause.

As for accidents, the number of recorded incidents of verbal abuse and threats against members of staff were very similar to the previous year.

Safety related training

During the period April 1st 2010 and March 31st 2011 the following safety training courses / briefings were organised with approximate attendance:

- Emergency first aid at work training – 2 one day courses (20 attendees).
- Fire safety training – 1 half day course, including practical exercise (17 attendees).
- A short health and safety briefing for Winchester Greeters outlining the basic health and safety issues, reporting arrangements and the Council's legal responsibilities (12 attendees).
- Coping at the sharp end (managing aggression) – 1 one day course for frontline staff (10 attendees).

- Refresher training for first aiders on the use of defibrillators (8 attendees).
- Manual handling training for Guildhall / Estates staff (10 attendees).

In addition to the above, the following team / group specific health and safety briefings / training was undertaken:

- Health and safety training (various topics) - Managers and care assistants employed in extra care sheltered housing schemes in accordance with the accreditation requirements of the Care Quality Commission.
- Health and safety briefings for Scheme Managers – Supported Housing Services.
- Health and safety training DVDs on first aid, fire safety and risk assessment are available in house and are used on an ad hoc basis.

E learning

An E induction programme was developed and introduced in 2008/9 which is completed by all new employees and this includes an introduction to health and safety and this is supplemented by four interactive health and safety modules covering the key topics of slips, trips and falls, fire safety, manual handling and violence and aggression in the workplace.

All staff were asked to complete the slips and trips module in July 2010 and there were over 110 respondents. This will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

All new employees who regularly use display screen equipment (DSE) complete online training, test and workstation assessment modules. The assessment module can be resent to members of staff that have to relocate thus invalidating the original workstation assessment.

Review of Action Plan 2010/11

Contract Management

In conjunction with the East Hampshire District Council's Corporate Health & Safety Advisor, a revised prequalification questionnaire was drawn up for the joint waste, recycling and grounds maintenance contract and the health and safety submissions from the prospective contractors were assessed and scored.

The Health & Safety Advisor also reviewed and commented on the prequalification questionnaire and guidance notes for the Housing Services responsive repairs contract.

Supported Housing Safety Assessment

In accordance with the Hampshire County Council review of the supported housing service, a health and safety audit of all the sheltered housing schemes including hostel accommodation, extra care homes and the mobile warden service, has been completed and the service review reports submitted to the Housing Services Manager.

Stress Management

The analysis of the stress survey using the Health and Safety Executive's management software tool was initially deferred prior to being completed due to technical difficulties. Heads of Teams were given an overview of the findings, which were virtually identical to the previous survey in 2006, together with their team's strengths and weaknesses in the seven stressor areas (demands / control / managers' support / peer support / relationships / role / change) for use at staff appraisals.

Asbestos Management

This is a priority health and safety topic for the Health and Safety Executive as deaths due to exposure to asbestos have yet to peak and as such the arrangements for managing asbestos in both corporate premises and the housing stock needs to be regularly reviewed.

To make information on asbestos containing materials more readily accessible to all managers, including site plans and photographs, a number of options and management software tools have been considered including a shared service with Southampton City Council and a service level agreement with Hampshire Scientific Service for all aspects of asbestos management.

At present Breeze Environmental is contracted to survey and monitor asbestos containing materials in corporate buildings, Property Services have trialled Keystone Asset Management Software which has been designed specifically for social housing providers.

Integrated Impact Assessments

This was a corporate initiative to incorporate a health safety element with sustainability and equality issues in an integrated impact assessment screening process. A question set covering the health and safety implications arising from planned projects, contracts and policy decisions was duly drawn up.

Inter Authority Auditing

The selection of contractors and the monitoring of contracts was the topic for the County wide inter authority audit programme and Winchester City Council was due to be audited before the end of the year.

Preparatory work on identifying service contracts, client officers and the circulation of the audit question set was completed but in light of the comprehensive spending review and cancellation of projects by member authorities, the audit programme was suspended.

HEALTH & SAFETY ACTION PLAN 2011/12

Annual Action Plan

The Health & Safety Action Plan highlights the principal occupational health safety and welfare issues that will need to be addressed. The programme is not exhaustive and will be amended if other specific topics arise during the period in question i.e. in response to a change in health and safety legislation.

Some health and safety issues by their very nature are cyclic, particularly in areas such as health and safety training for staff in 'at risk work activities' and the review and updating of corporate health and safety policies, procedures and guidance notes. Similarly, carrying out fire risk assessments for all premises to which the public has access and / or Council employees work, as well as risk assessing work activities in general, need to be periodically reviewed to ensure they are still valid.

Training

As in previous years, health and safety training has been targeted at the principal risk areas such as manual handling and dealing with potentially aggressive customers and as such these courses are run on at least an annual basis to pick up newly appointed staff and to provide refresher training as required.

New members of staff go through the E Induction programme which includes modules on fire safety, violence and aggression in the workplace, manual handling and slips, trips and falls. These modules can also be used for refresher training but are not a substitute for conventional training which will be provided where there are specific work related risks.

This cycle of safety training will continue with additional courses organised on an ad hoc basis in response to any changes in health and safety legislation that would impact on the Council's work activities.

Specific Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Issues:

Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Information

Corporate health and safety policies, procedures and guidance notes on the Intranet health & safety page are regularly reviewed and updated as required.

Lead Officer – Health & Safety Advisor

Stress Management

As highlighted in the review section, the results of the last stress survey were analysed and Heads of Teams advised of the principal stress management issues that needed to be addressed. As this topic is an enforcement priority for the Health and Safety Executive and potentially a major issue with regards sickness absence levels and business continuity, another survey will be undertaken in the autumn to gauge progress.

Lead Officer – Head of Organisational Development

DSEasy Training and Workstation Assessment

The Council introduced the DSEasy online workstation training and assessment programme in 2007. The large number of office moves over the last few months has rendered a high percentage of the assessments invalid and a number of teams, particularly in the old Policy Group, have split up. The decision has been taken to archive all the existing assessments, the service provider will set up a new structure and the training and assessment programme will be re-launched following recent office moves in September 2011.

Lead Officer – Health & Safety Advisor

Health and Safety Executive Audit

The waste collection and recycling industry has a poor safety record and this sector is an enforcement priority for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). As part of their regional enforcement programme the HSE are visiting all the local authorities in Hampshire to audit waste management, both contracted and in house services. The HSE are planning to visit Winchester in July and they will review the arrangements for implementing and monitoring the new joint waste contract and will also audit the current contractor Serco.

Lead Officer – Joint EHDC / WCC Environmental Services Client Team Manager

Driving for the Council

A working party has been set up to draft a comprehensive manual for all staff that drive on Council business. This will cover lease cars, the grey fleet (staff that use their own vehicle), commercial vehicles, accident reporting, driver assessment, documentation checks and best practice.

Lead Officer – Risk Management & Insurance Officer

Transfer of Direct Services

With effect from October a number of direct services, currently provided by Serco will be transferred back to the Council i.e. play ground / play equipment inspection and maintenance, street works (name plates / signage), river maintenance, pest control, highway repairs and the maintenance of sewage treatment works.

There are a significant number of health, safety and welfare issues that will need to be addressed such as risk assessing all the work activities, provision and use of work equipment such as specialist vehicles, hoists, access equipment, underground cable detection equipment, health and safety training, the provision of personal protective equipment and setting up safe systems of work and operating practices and procedures.

To support the transferred services, a new depot will be established which will be subject to the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations and there will be a wide range of occupational health, safety and welfare requirements, examples being traffic management (segregation of vehicles from pedestrians), laundering arrangements, staff welfare facilities, compressed gas / pesticide storage, site security, first aid and fire safety arrangements and a range of maintenance and inspection regimes.

Lead Officers – Head of Access & Infrastructure / Head of Environmental Protection.

Supported Housing Safety Assessment

The review of the sheltered housing schemes, temporary accommodation sites and the mobile warden service is undertaken annually as required under the Hampshire County Council supported housing programme.

Lead Officers – Health and Safety Advisor / Housing Services Manager

Contract and Partnership Management

Following the review of the health and safety submissions of the contractors that tendered for the joint Winchester City Council / East Hampshire District Council waste, recycling, street cleansing grounds maintenance contract, in conjunction with colleagues at East Hampshire and Havant, a model guidance note and prequalification questionnaire pro forma for managers is being drafted to ensure a more robust and consistent approach to the selection of contractors and the monitoring thereof.

A similar exercise is also being undertaken with regards the management of contracted leisure services in conjunction with Eastleigh, Rushmoor and East Hampshire where this service is provided by DC Leisure Management Ltd.

Partnership working is being actively encouraged and there are potentially significant health, safety and insurance issues for Councils depending on the nature of the partnership. There is currently minimal guidance on the risk implications for authorities entering into or instigating partnerships and a guidance note and flow chart is being drafted for officers who are involved in partnership working.

Lead Officers – Corporate Safety Advisors (Winchester City Council, East Hampshire District Council and Havant, Rushmoor and Eastleigh Borough Councils).