

Wednesday, 25 September 2024

EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Employment, Health & Safety Committee was held on Wednesday, 25 September 2024 at the Civic Centre, Ridley Street, Redcar.

PRESENT Councillors M Head (Chair), P Grogan (Vice-Chair), A Brook, K Evans, M Fairley, C Hannaway, P McInnes, L Pallister, D Powlay, S Smith and L White.

OFFICIALS H Housman, J Garnett, J Moutter, A Liddle, M Lyth and S Newton.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Clark and V Rider.

39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Grogan declared an interest in all matters relating to Fire Safety as the owner of a Fire Protection Company.

40 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 MAY 2024 AND NOTE THE ATTENDANCE MATRIX

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8 May 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record and the attendance matrix be noted.

41 HEALTH AND SAFETY PRESENTATION

The Health and Safety Officer updated Members on Health and Safety Performance.

The presentation gave details of:

- Health and Safety Performance to year end 2023/2024;
- Health and Safety Performance so far of 2024/2025;
- Accidents recorded from all Directorates and services across the Council;
- Minor and Major injuries and those that resulted in more than 7 days absence;
- Total accident rates and causes of accidents;

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- Near miss occurrences;
- Notification of assaults;
- Radon Management and Surveys;
- Health and Safety Update – Changes to legislation; and,
- Health and Safety Update – Training.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- The Health and Safety Officer reported that the reports of near miss occurrences were lower than expected and as a result an exercise of near miss reporting awareness would occur.
- Following discussions at previous meetings, the reporting of assaults had been split between wilful and not wilful in order to better reflect the situation of assaults that occurred in S.E.N school settings.
- Following discussions at previous meetings, Earth, Environmental and Geotechnic Ltd had been commissioned to conduct a more detailed survey on all premises identified as above 1% risk of Radon. The Health and Safety Officer reported that all monitoring identified by the Radon risk assessment process had been completed and the results were well below the action values listed in legislation. Furthermore, all council buildings had been issued with a Radon Risk Assessment, to be reviewed every ten years.
- A Member requested that where an accident was reported to the Health and Safety Executive that more detail be included in future reports to the Committee. The Health and Safety Officer gave more detail about the incident included in the current report and agreed to include more details in future reports.
- A Member enquired about the uptake figures of Health and Safety training by the staff of the Council. The Health and Safety Officer agreed to circulate this information.
- A discussion around the difficulty of access to training and policies by frontline staff took place. The Health and Safety Officer reported that an annual training package for the frontline staff was scheduled to take place and managers had been updated on all courses and related information.
- A Member enquired about the strategic overview of the types of accidents that took place. The Health and Safety Officer reported that the details of accidents were routinely reported to DMT and strategic discussions about those accidents took place at that level.

RESOLVED that the information in the presentation be noted.

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42 **PATERNITY LEAVE AND PATERNITY LEAVE FOR ADOPTIVE PARENTS PROVISIONS**

The Head of HR presented a report which sought approval to the implementation of the revised Paternity Leave Provisions and Paternity Leave for Adopted Parents Provisions.

Members were advised that the current Paternity Leave and the Paternity Leave for Adoptive Parents Provisions were approved on 8 February 2023, however, due to recent employment law changes, it had been necessary to review these provisions to ensure continued compliance with employment legislation. due to a change in legislation.

FRESLOVED that the revised Paternity Leave Provisions and revised Paternity Leave for Adopted Parents Provisions be approved.

43 **MANAGING HEALTH, ATTENDANCE AND WELLBEING POLICY**

The Head of HR presented a report which sought approval for the implementation of the revised Managing Health, Attendance & Wellbeing Policy.

Members were advised that the current Managing Health Attendance and Wellbeing Policy was approved on 19 August 2020. In line with normal arrangements to review Human Resources policies, the policy had been amended to bring it up-to-date and ensure compliance with relevant employment and equality legislation

RESOLVED that the revised Managing Health, Attendance & Wellbeing Policy be approved and implemented with immediate effect.

44 **STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY**

The Head of HR presented a report which sought approval for the implementation of the revised Stress Management Policy (previously titled Mental Health at Work Policy)

Members were advised that the current policy was approved on 19 August 2020 and, in line with normal arrangements to review Human Resources policies, the policy had been amended to bring it up-to-date and ensure compliance with relevant employment and equality legislation.

RESOLVED that the revised Stress Management Policy be approved and implemented with immediate effect

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45 **ORGANISATIONAL PLAN METRICS - WORKFORCE**

The Head of Strategic Policy, Performance & Improvement presented a report which gave details of the organisation's performance in relation to the workforce metrics, adopted as part of the organisational scorecard within the Council's Organisational Plan and highlighted key messages behind the data provided.

As part of the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- The Head of HR provided an explanation of the process behind the employee driver declaration check carried out by managers;
- Members enquired whether random drug and alcohol checks were conducted within the Council and whether managers had been trained for signs of misuse. The Head of HR confirmed that there was no provision for random checks of drugs and alcohol within the current Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy; however, there were provisions for tests with cause, or if triggered by an accident at work. The Head of HR also confirmed that the Lead Officer for Alcohol and Substance Misuse was consulted along with external organisations at reviews of the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy and that within the current Policy there was guidance for managers regarding potential misuse signs in employees and a training course was available for all managers;
- Members raised concerns regarding the number of sickness absences and the number of appraisals undertaken; and,
- A discussion ensued around the attendance of Assistant Directors at future meetings to answer questions relating to improvement in their respective service areas and it was agreed that this was to be arranged.

RESOLVED that:

1. The information in the report be noted; and,
2. All Assistant Directors be invited to attend at future quarterly meetings of this Committee

46 **ANY OTHER ITEM THE CHAIR CERTIFIES AS URGENT**

Future Meetings

The Chair sought approval for the Employment Health and Safety Committee meetings to take place once every quarter in person, with interim meetings scheduled as and when any urgent issues arise to be held via Microsoft Teams.

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RESOLVED that meetings of the Employment Health and Safety Committee be held once a quarter in person, and any urgent interim meetings be held via Microsoft Teams as and when required.

Lone Working Policy

A Member requested that the Lone Working Policy, particularly relating to libraries, be added to a future agenda of this Committees and Officers from that Directorate be invited to attend.

RESOLVED that the Lone Working Policy, particularly relating to libraries, be added to a future agenda of this Committees and Officers from that Directorate be invited to attend.