

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, on Thursday, 14 February 2019 at 1400 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:- R Bowler, H Gilmour and B R Murray-Carr.

UNISON:- L Robinson.

UNITE:- No representatives present.

K Shillitto (UNISON) in the Chair

Officers:- H Mitchell (HR Link Officer – Advisory & Systems), S Brunt, (Joint Head of Streetscene), R Hutchinson (Health and Safety Co-ordinator), M Dungworth (Strategic Repairs Manager), M Cooper (Corporate Property Manager), B MacArthur-Williams (Health & Safety Manager) and A Maher (Governance & Civic Officer) .

### **0653. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J E Bennett and W Carter (Leisure Operations Manager).

### **0654. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

### **0655. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made.

### **0656. MINUTES – 15 NOVEMBER 2018**

Moved by Councillor H Gilmour and seconded by Councillor B R Murray-Carr.

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 15th November 2018 be approved as a true record.

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### **0657. SICKNESS ABSENCE QUARTER 3: OCTOBER 2018 – DECEMBER 2018**

The report to Committee set out the sickness absence figures for the third quarter of 2018/19 (October to December 2018).

The Committee learned that on average 2.52 days per employee had been lost due to sickness during the quarter. For the year as a whole, it was projected that an average of 8.8 days per employee would be lost due to sickness absence.

Members noted that the expected outturn for 2018/19 compared favourably to what had been recorded in 2017/18, when an average of 9.3 days had been lost for each employee.

The Committee discussed sickness absences, and especially the impact of long term illnesses. The Committee noted that muscular and skeletal problems, along with stress/depression continued to drive many sickness absences. The meeting discussed the reasons for stress and depression related absences – and whether there was a trend for more of them to be due to work related rather than domestic reasons. Analysis showed that there was no particular prevalence of stress cases in one department / section compared with another. What was notable was the level of personal issues impacting on wellbeing and attendance at work. Several support avenues have been facilitated, including AXA Employee Assistance Programme, Occupational Health, Training and Awareness, signposting to Counselling etc.

Members noted that the information in the report only covered those services managed by the Council. There was a consensus that the Committee should also receive information about those services provided by NEDDC to Bolsover DC under the terms of the Strategic Alliance. It was agreed, therefore, consideration be given to future reports including sickness absence levels for the NEDDC Environmental Health Service.

Moved by Councillor R Bowler and seconded by Councillor H Gilmour.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

(Human Resources & Organisation Development Manager)

### **0658. ACCIDENT STATISTICS REPORT**

The Committee considered information on accidents experienced by employees during the third quarter of 2018/19. The Committee was informed that nine employees had accidents during the quarter. Six of these, it was explained, had been due to a “lack of risk perception”, one accident had occurred because “rules or instructions” had not been followed and two were due to the use of the wrong equipment or defective tools.

The number of accidents recorded during the quarter had been below the targeted figure of 9.5 days per quarter. However, the number of days lost due to accidents had risen significantly. Members were informed that the increase had been caused

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by an ongoing absence of an employee, as a result of an injury which had occurred at an earlier date.

The Committee discussed the reasons for accidents and especially those caused by a lack of risk perception. They were told that a further programme of training would be launched shortly to help highlight the importance of understanding and mitigated risks. The Committee also asked for and received an explanation of the circumstances in which an employee had been bitten by a dog. Members were told about the risk management arrangements which were in place to protect employees from animal attacks, such as this. These arrangements were welcomed.

Moved by Councillor H Gilmour and seconded by Councillor B R Murray-Carr.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **0659. HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT**

The report gave details of the Council's Health and Safety performance during the third quarter of 2018/19. This included information about when the last work place inspections had taken place and what progress had been made on implementing the actions which had been agreed following on from them.

The Committee was informed that work was underway to try and refine the inspection process, so that managers can take greater responsibility for the inspections in their service areas.

Members noted that the planned inspections of the Contact Centres had now taken place. No significant health and safety problems were identified.

The Committee noted that nine names had been added to the Employee Protection Register and four had been removed. The number of employees on the Register, it was explained, now stood at 57. No underlying reasons for the ongoing increase had been identified.

Finally, concern was raised about whether appropriate safety and high visibility clothing was being provided for staff. The Chair and Vice Chair agreed to discuss this with the relevant Service Managers in order to determine whether there any specific issues which the Committee should consider.

Moved by Councillor H Gilmour and seconded by Councillor B R Murray-Carr.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 1430 hours.