

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday, 4th September 2024 at 14:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillors Justin Gilbody, Tom Munro, and Jane Yates.

Chris McKinney (Unison) and Violet Parker (Union).

Officers:- Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Bronwen MacArthur-Williams (Health & Safety Manager), Ollie Fishburn (HR & Payroll Manager), Jayne Stokes (Health & Safety Advisor), and Amy Bryan (Governance and Civic Manager).

SAF1-24/25 ELECTION OF CHAIR 2024/25

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Chris McKinney

RESOLVED that Councillor Jane Yates be elected as Chair of the Safety Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

Councillor Jane Yates in the Chair

SAF2-24/25 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR 2024/25

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Violet Parker

RESOLVED that Chris McKinney be appointed as Vice-Chair of the Safety Committee for the 2024/25 Municipal Year.

SAF3-24/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Amanda Davis, Councillor Jeanne Raspin and Liz Robinson (Unison).

SAF4-24/25 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

SAF5-24/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations made at the meeting.

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SAF6-24/25 MINUTES

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Jane Yates

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on 9th May 2024 be approved as a true and correct record.

SAF7-24/25 HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE - QUARTER 1 (APRIL - JUNE 2024)

The Health and Safety Advisor presented the Health & Safety Update Quarter 1 report for April to June 2024.

The report explained that the total number of employee accidents in Quarter 1 had been 12 (excluding Dragonfly Developments Ltd.). This compared to 12 accidents occurring during Quarter 1 of 2023/24. Quarter 1's employee accidents occurred in the following service areas:

- Streetscene – 6;
- Leisure – 6.

The following types of incident had been involved:

- Struck by a moving object – 3;
- Manual handling – 2;
- Slips/trips/falls – 3;
- Ill health – 1;
- Contact with moving machinery – 1;
- Cuts and abrasions – 1;
- Struct by a fixed object – 1.

1 of these accidents had been RIDDOR reportable as it resulted lost time over 7 days.

There were no near misses reported during this Quarter.

The total number of accidents reported by Members of the Public had been 38 and none of these had been serious enough to be RIDDOR reportable.

There had been four near misses and two accidents reported by Dragonfly Development Ltd. during Quarter 1.

The report detailed the training that had been undertaken by both Council and Dragonfly Development Ltd. employees. The report also set out details of the three formal Council inspections that had occurred, and the 20 Dragonfly Development Ltd. formal inspections.

Moved by Councillor Tom Munro and seconded by Councillor Justin Gilbody

RESOLVED that 1) the Health and Safety update be noted;

2) good Health and Safety management remained a key performance priority for the Council, be noted.

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SAF8-24/25 SICKNESS ABSENCE - QUARTER 1 (APRIL - JUNE 2024)

The HR and Payroll Manager presented the Sickness Absence Quarter 1 report for April to June 2024. The report set out the average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 1 2024/25 was 2.24 days – the projected outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee for 2024/25 was 8.96 days. The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2024 was 8.5 days.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 of the attached Appendix 1 detailed the key patterns and trends experienced corporately in relation to sickness absence. Table 1 showed the total loss from sickness absence for Quarter 1 2024/25 was £88,097.39. Table 2 showed the Long Term (72%) and Short Term (28%) percentages. Table 3 showed the top 3 reasons of absence, being “Other Muscular/Skeletal”, “Operations/Hospital” and “Stress/Depression”.

Key trends in the data revealed the following:

- The overall average days lost due to sickness in Quarter 1 2024/25 was 2.24; this had decreased from Quarter 4 2023/24 and was the lowest Quarter 1 in terms of average days lost since 2022/23;
- There was a direct correlation between employees undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness. This was reinforced by Muscular/Skeletal absences regularly being in the top three reasons for sickness absence;
- Three services had experienced zero sickness in Quarter 1 and a further six services had experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee;
- Stress/Depression had remained in the top three reasons for absence since 2019/20;
- There were ten cases of absence due to Stress/Depression during Quarter 1 2024/25, five of which were work related, five none work related;
- COVID-19 accounted for 12 days lost due to sickness in Quarter 1 2024/25, which had slightly increased in comparison to five days lost in Quarter 4 2023/4;
- There were 18 long term cases in this quarter; 14 were due to physical health ailments and four cases were related to Stress/Depression (all of which were work related). Appropriate support and assistance were being provided to facilitate support for those who had returned to work and those planning to do so. Five employees had since returned to work and eight remained absent, five of which had left the Council's employ.

Managers had support from the HR Advisor and were issued monthly sickness absence information. Managers were also able to access sickness information for their teams daily via HR21 Self Service.

The report set out the steps the Council had taken to support employees.

In answer to a question regarding Minute SF49-23/24 of the previous meeting, the HR and Payroll Manager confirmed that the Employee Engagement Officer had now started and had run a mental health awareness campaign. The HR and Payroll Manager also reported that Mental Health First Aider Training, run by Derbyshire County Council, had been offered and advertised to staff and the new employee benefit scheme, Vivip had launched this week and included a staff support service.

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In answer to a question regarding flu vaccinations, the HR and Payroll Manager confirmed that the Council had changed its practice this year and instead of issuing vouchers, staff could get a flu vaccination at their preferred provider and reclaim the cost (up to £18).

Moved by Councillor Justin Gilbody and seconded by Councillor Tom Munro
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

SAF9-24/25 CHANGES TO HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY FORMAT - BRIEFING PAPER

The Health & Safety Manager presented a briefing note regarding format changes to the Council's Health and Safety Policy. The Council's Health & Safety Policy format reflected the Health & Safety Executive's example of 3 separate sections i.e.: Health & Safety Policy Statement (1), Organisation & Responsibilities (2) and Arrangements (3).

Until 2018, the Council's Policy reflected this format. The previous post holder had then split each section and filed these separately. Although the Council remained legislatively compliant (as all information could still be provided), the document then existed in a fragmented and uncoordinated format.

The current Health & Safety Manager had refreshed and reunited the three sections into one Policy document.

The benefits of amalgamating the documentation were that it had become easier to locate in one location and it contextualised Health & Safety when reading one complete document and improved the review process.

Beyond any necessary updates (e.g.: a new management structure), there had been only minor textual changes.

Policy reviews would be undertaken in tandem with the Health & Safety Statement review, currently on a biennial timeframe. The next review would be in September 2025.

The meeting concluded at 14:26 hours.