

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held as a Virtual Meeting on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 11:30 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Members:-

Councillor David Dixon in the Chair

Councillors Allan Bailey, Nick Clarke, Tricia Clough and Andrew Joesbury.

UNISON:- Chris McKinney, Kevin Shillitto and Liz Robinson

Officers:- Steve Brunt (Joint Head of Streetscene), Sarah Gordon (Human Resources and OD Manager), Mark Dungworth (Strategic Repairs Manager), Bronwen MacArthur – Williams (Health & Safety Manager), Ian Clay (Health and Safety Advisor (Housing)), Matt Cooper (Corporate Property Manager), Jayne Stokes (Health and Safety Apprentice), Tom Scott (Governance Officer) and Hannah Douthwaite (Democratic Services Assistant).

### **SAF7-20/21      APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Wayne Carter (Leisure Operations Manager) and Rebecca Hutchinson (Health and Safety Advisor).

### **SAF8-20/21      URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business to be considered at the meeting.

### **SAF9-20/21      DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

### **SAF10-20/21      MINUTES**

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Chris McKinney

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

### **SAF11-20/21      SICKNESS ABSENCE QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2020)**

The HR and Organisational Development Manager presented the Sickness Absence report for quarter three (October 2020 – December 2020). The average number of days lost per employee for quarter three was 1.14 days this meant that the projected 2020/21 outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee was 5.32 days which was well below the annual target for the Local Performance Indicator of 8.5 days.

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Table one in the report showed the comparison of data to previous years with 2020/21 on track to be significantly lower than the last three years for average days lost per employee. Table two also looked at the percentage of long term cases compared to short term sickness absence again with a comparison to data from previous years. Table four compared the three highest departments for sickness absence per quarter over the last three years and table five showed the departments with the lowest sickness absence levels.

Analysis work had also been undertaken on whether the lockdown period had increased specific sickness issues, such as stress and depression, headaches and migraines and back problems. The average days lost for those specific areas had remained around the same level of days lost in comparison to previous years but would be looked at in more detail at the end of quarter four.

Moved by Councillor David Dixon and seconded by Councillor Tricia Clough  
**RESOLVED** that the report for sickness absence be noted.

### **SAF12-20/21      HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE**

The Health and Safety Manager presented the Committee with a Health and Safety update and details of any incidents that had occurred. The total number of employee accidents recorded in the quarter was five, of those five there were no lost time accidents reported for quarter three and therefore there were no days lost.

The breakdown for the five reported accidents were two falls from heights, two incidents of being struck by a moving object and one slip, trip or fall. Four were associated with StreetScene and one was Housing repairs. The overall total number of incidents for the year was significantly lower than last year however, it was noted that due to lockdown and associated restrictions some service areas hadn't been operational in the same capacity as previous years.

Risk assessments for The Arc and Riverside Depot had been updated at the end of January and the Coronavirus Protective Measures Guidance Notes had been reviewed and version 6 recently issued. The Health & Safety Team were maintaining a presence across all sites during lockdown, this had been more frequent at Riverside Depot due to the number of people on site and the nature of activities undertaken. The Arc remained fairly quiet as employees continued to work from home following Government guidance and where required and practical any Health and Safety training had taken place over Zoom.

It was noted that guidance and policies were in place but ultimately it was down to the individual employees to ensure they were complying with guidance to ensure everyone's safety. Numbers had been added to office doors to clearly display the maximum number of people that could safely be in each room at the same time.

A Member wished to note that they had recently attended a meeting regarding asbestos and the planned approach to keep everyone safe; it was clear from the meeting that the team were dedicated to their role.

A query was raised with the incident relating to hedge cutting as the beginning of the report stated no days had been lost due to accidents in this quarter but this incident

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detailed that the employee concerned had phoned in sick at a later date. It was confirmed that this would be looked into and clarified.

A Unison representative questioned what the procedure was for reporting incidents while working from home and whether or not they would be classed as a workplace incident. It was confirmed that if an incident happened at home during normal working hours it would be reportable however, as of yet none had been received. Guidance would be circulated to senior managers to pass on to their teams.

It was likely that there had been a couple of occasions where Covid-19 had been passed between staff however, it was hard to prove if the cases were directly related or a coincidence. The authority was unable to force staff to undertake regular Covid-19 testing however, employees were actively encouraged to visit community testing centres where possible. Any confirmed cases or suspected cases of Coronavirus needed to be reported immediately to managers, each case was dealt with individually but each area the employee had been would be deep cleaned to help reduce any further transmission.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Kevin Shillitto  
**RESOLVED** that the Health and Safety update be noted.

The meeting concluded at 12:10 hours.