

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, 5th May 2022 at 11:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Chris McKinney (UNISON) in the Chair

Councillors Allan Bailey, Nick Clarke and Andrew Joesbury.

UNISON: Liz Robinson (UNISON).

Officers:- Grant Galloway (Executive Director of Strategy and Development), Steve Brunt (Assistant Director – Streetscene), Bronwen MacArthur-Williams (Health & Safety Manager), Rebecca Hutchinson (Health & Safety Adviser), Ian Clay (Health and Safety Advisor - Housing), Wayne Carter (Leisure Operations Manager), Matthew Cooper (Corporate Property Manager), Helen Mitchell (H.R. Link Officer - Advisory & Systems), and Tom Scott (Governance Officer).

SAF14-21/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Tricia Clough and Maxine Dixon, and Sara Gordon (HR & OD Manager).

SAF15-21/22 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

SAF16-21/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

SAF17-21/22 MINUTES – 20TH JANUARY 2022

The Health and Safety Manager referred to the paragraph in the Health and Safety Update Quarter 2 item, which included the words: "*The Health & Safety Manager explained that COVID19 had interrupted the training programme so staff undertaking training had not been recorded,*" and felt the wording suggested that the issue had been Health and Safety officers not recording training. She clarified that no training had occurred as the programme had been suspended due to COVID 19.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Chris McKinney (UNISON)
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on 20th January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

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SAF18-21/22 SICKNESS ABSENCE - QUARTER 4 (JANUARY 2022 – MARCH 2022)

The Human Resources Link Officer presented the Sickness Absence report for Quarter 4 (January – March 2022) and explained that one of the key trends of Quarter 4 had been sickness increasing due to the easing of national COVID 19 restrictions.

Of the thirteen long term sickness absence cases, eleven had returned to work and two were still outstanding.

Mental health awareness sessions had been recently held and the Human Resources Link Officer advised the meeting that these were now being undertaken quarterly. Throughout 2021/22, 107 members of staff had attended the sessions. Resilience training to help with mental and physical health had received 40 attendees.

Six members of staff had taken up the Council's promotion of a cycle to work scheme which was helping to reduce carbon emissions associated with travelling to and from work. Committee was also reminded that the Go! Active leisure facility was available to all employees at a discounted rate and to date, 40 members of staff had taken up the offer.

The report summarised how:

- The average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 4 was 2.19 days.
- The actual 2021/22 outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee was 8.7 days.
- The 2021/22 outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee, (discounting COVID 19 related symptoms) was 6.5 days.

The Union representative raised Unison's concern regarding stress and mental health issues remaining the top reasons for staff absence. The HR Link Officer noted that HR already had a number of measures in place but this was being looked into further.

In relation to the ongoing financial crisis, Members queried if the Council had put anything in place to support employees with their mental health, such as counselling for financial difficulties. The Human Resources Link Officer confirmed that the Employee Assistance Programme offered different strands of counselling and advice, including advice on debt and finance, and both Unions also offered support mechanisms. She added that the HR Team were proactive in supporting employees as much as possible and were open to further suggestions and ideas from Members and officers

Moved by Councillor Nick Clarke and seconded by Councillor Andrew Joesbury
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

SAF19-21/22 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE – QUARTER 4 - (JANUARY 2022 – MARCH 2022)

The Health and Safety Manager presented the Quarter 4 (January 2022 – March 2022) Health and Safety update.

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The report noted 11 employee related accidents during the quarter. One was a leisure visitor accident and had been reported under RIDDOR. There were thirty nine incidents involving Members of the public of which one had been RIDDOR reportable.

The Health and Safety Manager explained that a total of 75 employees had missed Health and Safety training in the 2021/22 year. Councillor Andrew Joesbury requested that for future Safety Committee meetings, the Health and Safety Update report include information on the reasons for employees not attending training.

The Assistant Director – Streetscene explained that a number of Streetscene employees had not been able to take up the Health and Safety training due to a large backlog of training.

In response to a Member's question, the Health and Safety Manager explained that Health and Safety would be moving to the same system as HR, which would allow them to automatically notify all employees of training sessions. Committee was also informed that Health and Safety officers retained details of all training undertaken by staff.

Councillor Andrew Joesbury suggested that staff training information should be transferred onto a system via HR. The Executive Director of Strategy and Development agreed.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Chris McKinney
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 hours.