

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, 3rd November, 2022, at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Andrew Joesbury in the Chair

Councillors: Allan Bailey and Maxine Dixon.

UNISON: Jessica Clayton, Chris McKinney and Liz Robinson

Officers: Steve Brunt (Assistant Director of Streetscene), Bronwen MacArthur-Williams (Health & Safety Manager), Peter Wilmot (HR Business Partner), Jayne Stokes (Corporate Health & Safety Adviser), Wayne Carter (Leisure Operations Manager) and Lindsay Harshaw (Governance & Civic Officer).

SAF09-22/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Sara Gordon (HR & OD Manager) and Ian Clay (Health & Safety Adviser & Housing).

SAF10-22/23 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

SAF11-22/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

SAF12-22/23 MINUTES – 28TH JULY 2022

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Jessica Clayton

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Safety Committee meeting held on 28th July, 2022, be approved as a correct record.

SAF13-22/23 SICKNESS ABSENCE – QUARTER 2 (JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022)

The HR Business Partner presented the Sickness Absence report for Quarter 2 (July – September 2022) and highlighted that the average number of days lost per employee was 2.02 days and the average number of days lost per employee, if COVID related symptoms were discounted was 1.65 days. The 2022/23 forecast figure for the average number of days lost per employee was 8.62 days.

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It was noted that there had been a fairly even split between short term and long term absence which was indicative of the first quarter.

The key trends for sickness absence were highlighted as follows:-

- The overall average days lost due to sickness had reduced from 2.29 in Quarter 1 to 2.02 for Quarter 2
- 157.5 days had been lost in Quarter 2 due to Covid19 symptoms (employees unfit for work) compared with 283 days lost in the last quarter, this decrease may have been due to the summer period and warmer climate
- 5 services had experienced zero sickness in Quarter 2 and a further 5 services had experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee
- 3 cases of absence had been due to Stress/Depression during Quarter 2, 1 of which was personal/work related and 2 were not work related
- There had been 17 long term cases in Quarter 2, 14 of which were due to physical health ailments and 3 were related to stress/depression. Appropriate support had been provided to those who had returned to work and those planning to do so
- Covid19 sickness remained in the top three reasons for sickness

A Member queried the guidelines for staff experiencing ill health due to Covid. The HR Business Manager advised that employees would be encouraged to remain off work until they had tested negative. It was suggested that staff be reminded of the Covid guidelines.

A Member referred to the availability of flu vaccinations for staff. The HR Business Manager stated that the Council had offered flu vaccination vouchers to all members of staff.

Another Member queried the length of time an employee could receive sick pay. The HR Business Manager advised that sick pay was usually six months full pay and six months half pay, however, this was dependent on the length of service and was over a rolling 12 month period.

A Member stressed the importance of continuing to provide mental health support.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Liz Robinson

RESOLVED that (1) the report be noted,

(2) the Covid19 guidelines be re-issued to staff for information.

(HR Business Manager)

SAF14-22/23 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE – QUARTER 2 (JULY – SEPTEMBER 2022)

The Health & Safety Manager presented the Quarter 2 (July – September 2022) Health and Safety update.

It was noted that the total number of accidents reported involving members of the public was 73, however, none of these were RIDDOR reportable.

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Quarter 2 of 2022/23 had seen 18 employee accidents reported, compared to Quarter 2 of 2021/22 which had seen 9 accidents reported. The 18 accidents had taken place in the following service areas:-

- Streetscene – 10
- Housing – 5
- Planning – 1
- Property Services – 1
- Leisure – 1

None of the above 18 accidents were RIDDOR reportable and only 1 lost time day was recorded.

It was highlighted that the 18 accidents represented a significant increase on the same quarter last year. A number of changes had happened which may have resulted in the increase. The Streetscene Health & Safety Adviser had now been in post for 18 months and was having a positive impact on the accident reporting culture. Additionally, the new EARS accident reporting system had been launched which was much simpler to use and was embedding well.

Training had continued to be delivered during Quarter 2, with the following courses taking place:-

- Fire Warden training x 1 session with 16 attendees. All those invited had attended the training
- Health and Safety Awareness for Caretakers x 1 session. The employee invited from Bolsover had attended the training

In relation to safety inspections, the Health & Safety Manager highlighted that all sites would be visited every six months, spread over the four quarters and that there was nothing to report at this moment in time. It was intended to provide regular safety inspection updates from April 2023.

A Unison representative thanked the Health & Safety Manager for the report and commented that the union had been involved in discussions regarding training and the safety inspection programme.

A Member requested that the safety inspection updates only provide details of any problems.

The Health & Safety Manager mentioned that discussions had been taking place with Human Resources regarding training and it had been suggested that additional administration support be recruited to manage training across the Council.

The Assistant Director of Streetscene mentioned that Streetscene Operatives would be encouraged to attend any mandatory training during the winter months when some services had been suspended.

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Maxine Dixon
RESOLVED that the report and comments be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10:32 hours.