

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, 2nd February, 2023, at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Andrew Joesbury in the Chair

Councillor Maxine Dixon

UNISON: Chris McKinney and Liz Robinson

Officers: Bronwen MacArthur-Williams (Health & Safety Manager), Peter Wilmot (HR Business Partner), Jayne Stokes (Corporate Health & Safety Adviser), Paul Gozzard (Street Services Manager), Ian Clay (Health & Safety Adviser – Housing), Oliver Fishburn (HR & Payroll Manager), Ailsa Kipling (Corporate Property Manager) and Lindsay Harshaw (Governance & Civic Officer)

SAF15-22/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Wayne Carter (Head of Leisure Services) and Jessica Clayton (UNISON).

SAF16-22/23 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to be considered.

SAF17-22/23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

SAF18-22/23 MINUTES – 3RD NOVEMBER, 2022

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Councillor Maxine Dixon **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of a Safety Committee meeting held on 3rd November, 2022, be approved as a correct record.

SAF19-22/23 SICKNESS ABSENCE – QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2022)

The HR & Payroll Manager presented the Sickness Absence report for Quarter 3 (October – December 2022) and highlighted that the average number of days lost per employee was 2.27 days and the average number of days lost per

SAFETY COMMITTEE

employee, if COVID related symptoms were discounted was 1.89 days. The 2022/23 forecast figure for the average number of days lost per employee was 8.76 days. The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2023 was 8.5 days.

It was noted that the top three service areas proportionately experiencing the highest levels of sickness were:-

- Performance
- Housing Management
- Streetscene

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

- The overall average days lost due to sickness had increased to 2.27 in Quarter 3; this had increased from Quarter 2 but was marginally lower than Quarter 1
- 160 days had been lost in Quarter 3 due to Covid19 symptoms (employees unfit for work) compared with 157.5 days lost in the last quarter
- The short term sickness had increased from Quarter 2, however, long term sickness had slightly reduced
- There were 6 cases of absence due to Stress/Depression during Quarter 3, one of which was work related and 5 were not work related
- There were 16 long term cases in this quarter, 7 were due to physical health ailments and 1 was related to Stress/Depression (work related), appropriate support and assistance had been provided to facilitate support for those who had returned to work and those planning to do so. 7 had returned to work and 2 had chosen to resign (the absence was not work related)

The HR & Payroll Manager reported that the North East Derbyshire District Council Payroll function would be returning to North East Derbyshire District Council in March 2023 and that from 1st April the Council will just have its own HR and Payroll function. Discussions were ongoing regarding the reporting of sickness absence for ICT and Environmental Health.

A Union representative welcomed the counselling arrangements being offered to staff experiencing mental health problems and queried whether a survey had been undertaken regarding the effectiveness of the programmes that were being offered. The HR Business Partner advised that he was not aware of any surveys being undertaken, but generally the support had been well received.

A Member asked that a survey be considered further as it would be useful to see if the support provided was being well received. It was also suggested that other local authorities be contacted to see what was offered to their employees who were experiencing mental health problems.

The HR Business Partner commented that Stress/Depression was a consistent feature in the sickness absence statistics as in most organisations and that

SAFETY COMMITTEE

cases were being managed based on their circumstances. A number of developments had been introduced to try and assist employees, e.g. mental health awareness sessions and health and wellbeing bulletins.

A Union representative referred to Covid19 sickness absence and queried whether updated guidance had been circulated to staff as referred to in the Minutes of the last meeting (SAF13-22/23 refers). The HR Business Partner advised that no further guidance had been issued to staff at that time, due to the ever changing Government guidance. A Member asked that consideration be given to updating staff on the Council's requirements in relation to Covid19.

A Member queried the arrangements for staff absence due to Covid19. The HR Business Partner stated that a record was still being kept of Covid19 related staff absence and employees had been asked to work from home or report in as sick if they were unwell. A Union representative referred to Covid19 and requested that updated guidance be reissued to employees for information.

A Member queried whether a loan scheme was available for staff to purchase bicycles. The HR Business Partner advised that a scheme was already in place and employees were able to apply under the Council's Cycle to Work Scheme to purchase a bicycle from a local retailer up to the value of £2,000. This scheme had proved to be of real benefit to those employees who had utilised the initiative.

The HR Business Partner mentioned that discussions would take place with North East Derbyshire District Council regarding the future reporting of sickness absence information in relation to IT and Environmental Health.

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Andrew Joesbury
RESOLVED that (1) the report be noted,

(2) Covid19 guidelines be reissued to staff for information, and

(3) other local authorities be contacted for details of mental health support offered to employees.

(HR and Payroll Manager/HR Business Partner)

SAF20-22/23 HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE – QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2022)

The Health & Safety Manager presented the Quarter 3 (October – December 2022) Health and Safety update.

It was noted that the total number of accidents reported involving members of the public was 30 and that none of these were RIDDOR reportable.

Quarter 3 of 2022/23 had seen 11 employee accidents which had taken place in the following service areas:-

SAFETY COMMITTEE

- Streetscene – 4
- Housing – 3
- Property Services – 2
- Leisure – 2

None of the above 11 accidents were RIDDOR reportable and 8 lost time days had been recorded.

There had been a total of 3 near misses/hazards reported during the quarter.

Training had continued to be delivered with the following courses taking place:

- Asbestos Category B Refresher (half day)
- Caretaker Training
- Fire Safety Awareness
- Emergency First Aid
- 2 Day First Aid Refresher
- Ladder and Stepladder Training
- Legionella Responsible Person
- Legionella Awareness

A total of 97 Bolsover District Council employees had been trained in this quarter.

There were no failed attendees or lost costs incurred from the Bolsover attendees.

The Inspection Programme schedule was highlighted in the report and it was noted that future reports would only include Bolsover inspections.

The Health & Safety Manager reported that discussions were taking place regarding health and safety procedures/inspections for Dragonfly Development Ltd. It had been suggested that health and safety reports where work was undertaken on behalf of the Council, would be submitted to Safety Committee for information.

A Member referred to Dragonfly Development Ltd. and stressed the importance of monitoring and reporting any issues of concern in relation to health and safety. He also asked that Sub-Contractors be requested to report any health and safety issues to Bolsover District Council.

Moved by Councillor Andrew Joesbury and seconded by Liz Robinson
RESOLVED that the report and comments be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10:35 hours.