

Health and Safety Sub-Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Health and Safety Sub-Committee** held on **Monday 21 October 2019** at **4.00 pm** in **Conference Chamber East, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

Present:

Chair Ian Houlder (Employer's side)

Vice Chair Paul Goodspeed (Employees' side)

Councillors (Employer's side)

Trevor Beckwith

Ian Houlder

John Smith

Cliff Waterman

Staff Representatives (Employees' side)

Nigel Dulieu

Paul Goodspeed

Stephanie Grayling

David Green

In attendance:

Carol Bull, Cabinet Member for Governance

10. **Substitutes**

No substitutions were declared.

11. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Karen Richardson and from Lance Alexander and Gary Quilter.

12. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

13. **Minutes of the Meeting of West Suffolk Health and Safety Group held on 27 August 2019**

The Sub-Committee received and **noted** Paper No: HSS/WS/19/003, which were the notes of the Suffolk Health and Safety Group meeting held on 27 August 2019.

14. **Employee and Members of the Public Incidents**

The Sub-Committee received Report No: HSS/WS/19/004, which provided statistics relating to accidents/incidents involving West Suffolk Council employees and members of the public from 1 April 2019 to 31 August 2019.

The Service Manager (Health and Safety) drew relevant issues to the attention of the Sub-Committee, including providing details of the types and locations of accidents/incidents of employees and members of the public during the reporting period. He then reported the amount of days lost due to workplace accidents/incidents covering the same period.

In response to a question raised, the Sub-Committee was informed that incident trends were monitored over a monthly period.

In response to a question raised regarding body cameras, the Sub-Committee was informed that since they were introduced with the car park attendants there had been a drastic reduction in verbal abuse.

There being no decision required, the Sub-Committee **noted** the contents of the report.

15. **Amendments to the Health and Safety Policy**

The Sub-Committee received Report No: HSS/WS/19/005, which set out amendments which had been made to the Health and Safety Policy, attached at Appendices A – F to the report, these being:

- Appendix A: Health and Safety covering sheet
- Appendix B: Instruction 6 – Violence at work
- Appendix C: Annex C – Violence at work
- Appendix D: Annex U – Customer alert list
- Appendix E: Instruction 14 – Lone workers
- Appendix F: Annex V – Lone worker guidance and example risk.

The Service Manager (Health and Safety), went through each of the appendices and provided detailed explanations as to why changes were being made.

The Sub-Committee considered the report in detail, and asked a number of questions to which the Service Manager (Health and Safety) provided comprehensive responses. In particular detailed discussions were held on the customer alert list; Skyguard My SOS; the testing of panic buttons; and the example risk assessment.

In response to a question raised regarding the wording of the “high risk” in the example risk assessment, the Sub-Committee was informed that the following additional wording could be included, as follows, “...or stop work”. However, it was explained that this related to risks identified before an event took place.

Councillor Cliff Waterman then proposed the recommendation, this was duly seconded by Councillor Ian Houlder, and with the vote being unanimous, it was:

RESOLVED

That the amendments to the Health and Safety Policy, as set out in Appendices A – F, attached to Report No: HSS/WS/19/005, be approved.

16. **Christmas Fayre 21-24 November 2019 Event Safety Plan**

The Sub-Committee received Report No: HSS/WS/19/006, which presented the Event Safety Plan for the Bury St Edmunds Christmas Fayre, which this year, was being held between 21 -24 November 2019.

The Sub-Committee noted the background to the Fayre, including that it was now in its sixteenth year of operation, and had become more and more popular over the 3½ days.

The Service Manager (Health and Safety) provided details on the following topics:

- **General crowd management:** how the area covering the Fayre had been divided into a total of 23 zones to assist with crowd management through the use of CCTV, zone leaders and stewards; and where additional coverage was required in particular zones.
- **Abbeygate Street (Zone 6):** how this zone presented specific crowd management challenges, which could necessitate the implementation of the walk round plan at peak periods to maintain crowd control. The operation of this system was explained and illustrated to the Sub-Committee.
- **Abbey Gate (Zone 12):** this was the main route for pedestrians connecting Angel Hill to the Abbey Gardens (Christmas Fayre market areas). Due to the narrow width of this area it was deemed necessary to implement a one-way in and out system. If at any time the entrance to the gate became overcrowded, then a queuing system would be introduced. The operation of this system was explained and illustrated to the Sub-Committee.
- **Counter terrorism strategy:** each year the Council worked closely with stakeholders, including Suffolk Constabulary and the Police and Counter Terrorism Unit. Over the years procedures had been developed in the event of an act of terrorism i.e. being vigilant, additional CCTV, Hostile Vehicle Mitigation (HVM), and procedures for bomb threat.

The Sub-Committee considered the report. In particular discussions were held on access to the Angel Hill surgery; the knock-on effect of adverse parking, and issues around parking dispersal, to which the Service Manager (Health and Safety), duly responded.

There being no decision required, the Sub-Committee **noted** the proposed Event Safety Plan and commended officers and partners involved for ensuring the safety of organisers and visitors.

17. **Health and Safety Corporate Update and Wellbeing (Verbal)**

The Service Manager (Health and Safety) updated the Sub-Committee on the following health and safety corporate updates, which included wellbeing as follows:

- 10 health and safety audits had been completed.
- 14 fire risk assessments had been completed.
- 15 wellbeing events had been held.

Wellbeing events were organised, with the purpose of ensuring staff were able to access information that would benefit them in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Wellbeing champions were launched in October, with one for each department. This would allow direct assess by staff to their wellbeing champion to put ideas and suggestions forward for future topics as well as aid in the running of future events.

In November 2019, Men's Health would be launch at the new West Suffolk Operational Hub, with talks taking place on prostate, mental health (stress and anxiety), diabetes and money with information on West Suffolk We Save and Neyber.

In response to a question raised by the Chair, Councillor Ian Houlder as to whether members could attend these events, the Service Manager (Health and Safety) stated there was no reason why members could not attend the lunch and learn sessions.

There being no decision required, the Sub-Committee **noted** the verbal update.

18. **Legislation Updates (Verbal)**

The Service Manager (Health and Safety) informed the Sub-Committee that there had been no changes made to legislation since it last met on 24 June 2019.

19. **Health and Safety Lessons Learnt (Verbal)**

The Sub-Committee received a verbal report from the Service Manager (Health and Safety) on the following health and safety lessons learnt:

- 1) Health and Safety Executive (HSE): Ms Sarah Albon, the former Inspector General and Chief Executive of the Insolvency Service, joined The Insolvency Service in February 2015, implementing its strategy to improve service to its customers, lower its costs, and further strengthen the UK's insolvency regime. On 1 September 2019, she replaced outgoing Acting Chief Executive David Snowball, who had held the post since June 2018 and would be retiring from HSE at the end of the year.
- 2) Stress: The HSE had issued new criteria for investigating cases of work-related stress, saying that it would investigate if it received evidence that a "number of staff were experiencing work-related stress or stress-related ill health, i.e. that it was not an individual case".

- 3) Death of a tree surgeon: The HSE found that workers should have been trained in chainsaw use and in working with saws in trees. Work should also have been properly planned with competent workers using the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) for operating the saws and climbing the tree.
- 4) Hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS): A Devon based firm which provided services in rock drilling, cliff stabilisation and rock anchors had been fined after three workers were diagnosed with HAVS. The HSE found the company's risk assessment did not identify the actual exposure to vibration and had used out of date vibration data. Its investigation also found there had not been any health surveillance until 2016. Employees had not been made aware of HAVS and its symptoms.

He then provided an overview of fines, which had been issued since January 2019.

The Sub-Committee considered the verbal update and did not raise any issues.

20. **Date(s) of Future Meetings**

The Sub-Committee **noted** the date(s) for future meetings, as listed below. All dates were Mondays starting at 4.00 pm and would be held in the venues, as indicated:

- 10 February 2020 at the District Offices, Mildenhall

The meeting concluded at 5.32pm

Signed by:

Chair
