

Health and Safety Sub-Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Health and Safety Sub-Committee** facilitated by Microsoft Teams virtual meetings platform on **Monday 26 February 2024**

Present: **Councillors**

Chair Phil Wittam (employer's side)

Vice Chair Stephanie Grayling (employees' side)

Members (employer's side)

Peter Armitage

Mike Chester

Ian Houlder

Janne Jarvis

Staff representatives (employees' side)

Nigel Dulieu

Gary Quilter

Substitutes attending for a staff representative (employees' side)

Paul Goodspeed

In attendance

Gerald Kelly, Cabinet Member for Governance and Regulatory

139. **Substitutes**

The following substitution was declared:

Paul Goodspeed substituting for Sylvia Bayford (staff representative)

140. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Sylvia Bayford (staff representative).

Councillor Andy Neal (employer's side) was also unable to attend the meeting, along with Lance Alexander (staff representative).

141. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 were confirmed as a correct record.

142. **Declarations of interest**

Members' declarations of interest are recorded under the item to which the declaration relates.

143. **Minutes of the meeting of West Suffolk Health and Safety Group: 16 January 2024**

The Sub-Committee received and **noted** paper number: HSS/WS/24/001, which were the minutes of the West Suffolk Health and Safety Group meeting held on 16 January 2024.

144. **Health and Safety Presentation (attached)**

The Sub-Committee received a presentation provided by the Health and Safety Manager, which covered the following areas:

- Introduction:

This set out the purpose of the Health and Safety Sub-Committee and its role.

- Health and Safety Statistics

The presentation provided statistics relating to accidents/incidents involving West Suffolk Council employees and members of the public from April 2023 through to December 2023.

The Health and Safety Manager drew relevant issues to the attention of the Sub-Committee, including providing details of the types and locations of accidents/incidents for employees; public and contractors during the reporting period. He also reported on the number of days lost due to workplace accidents/incidents which were compared with statistics from the past three years.

- Legislation updates

There were no updates to report on this occasion.

- Other News

- Protect Duty (Martyn's Law) – The Home Office had launched a further consultation period of six weeks and the consultation would now close on 18 March 2024. Therefore, there was still no guidance (ACOP) produced by the Government and currently no regulator had been announced. The lead time for implementation was still envisaged as 2025. The Council's Health and Safety Team attended regular government update meetings with the National Protective Security Authority (NPSA) and would communicate any changes to ensure that the Council remained compliant.
- Electric vehicle (EV) charging points in multi-storey car parks - In response to recent Government and Suffolk Fire Service safety guidance, the Council were in discussions to remove/relocate their current EV charging points within its multi-storey carparks in Bury St Edmunds (Parkway) and Newmarket (Guineas). This was in the interest of fire safety.

- RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete): Provincial House, Haverhill - Intrusive investigations, as part of the phase three refurbishment package, had identified RAAC in two contained areas on the second floor. These areas were not occupied and had no public access. Partners and the main tenant had been informed and access had been limited to all concerned. Further investigations had been undertaken, with a full engineer's report on the condition of the RAAC panels expected within the next few days. A suitable action plan would be put in place following the report recommendations. Extensive works were being undertaken on the site and any required remedial action would now form part of the project and it was not envisaged at this stage that the vision for the site was compromised. A reactive statement had been prepared should there be any media interest.
- New Health and Safety System - A new health and safety system (Work Wallet) was now operational via the Council's intranet. Training had started to be delivered to the users of the system. The new system would allow for:
 - Improved accessibility (App based/cloud system)
 - Improved user experience
 - Improved visibility of incidents reported, investigations and actions carried out
 - Ability to grow the system for other aspects of the business, if required
 - Reduced annual cost

Two new issue reporting categories had also been added:

- Safety Observations. This included the subcategories of Safety Suggestions, Unsafe Acts and Unsafe Conditions. This was to encourage early reporting/actioning of any health and safety issues before they became a near miss or accident/incident.
 - Site Security Issue. This included Unauthorised Access, Social Media Auditor, Media News Concern, Protect and Other. This was to improve our visibility of any incidents and shortfalls.
- Training
 - Continuation of First aid training – The register of first aiders had been reviewed/risk assessed to ensure that suitable cover was in place throughout the Council's premises/workplaces following the introduction of agile working.
 - Additional job specific health and safety modules had been reviewed and added to I-Learn (risk assessments, COSHH, working at height etc). These were not part of the Council wide mandatory modules.
 - Event safety management training – this had been carried out to ensure specific employees involved with events on Council properties (such as Abbey Gardens, Nowton Park, Brandon Country Park, Apex, Markets etc) had suitable knowledge and training to carry out their supervisory roles and to provide an internal support network. The Health and Safety Team would continue to work with individual

services to ensure that suitable training (internal and external) were carried out and documented.

The Sub-Committee considered the presentation and asked questions. In particular Officers provided further information on the employee incident statistics; RAAC investigations at Provincial House, Haverhill.

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

145. **Dates of future meetings**

The Sub-Committee noted the dates for future meetings, as listed below. The dates had yet to be confirmed, but would be held on Mondays starting at 4pm:

- June 2024
- October 2024
- February 2025

The meeting concluded at 4.30 pm

Signed by:

Chair
