

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 16 October 2023** at **4.00pm**

Present: **Councillors**

Members (employer's side)

Peter Armitage
Mike Chester

Andy Neal
Phil Wittam

Staff representatives (employees' side)

Nigel Dulieu
Stephanie Grayling

Gary Quilter

In attendance

Gerald Kelly, Cabinet Member for Governance and Regulatory

130. **Substitutes**

No substitutions were declared.

131. **Appointment of Chair: 2023 to 2024**

It was proposed by Councillor Peter Armitage, seconded by Councillor Mike Chester and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Phil Wittam be elected as Chair of the Health and Sub-Committee for 2023-2024.

Councillor Phil Wittam then took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

132. **Appointment of Vice-Chair: 2023 to 2024**

It was proposed by Nigel Dulieu, seconded by Gary Quilter and with the vote being unanimous, it was

RESOLVED:

That Stephanie Grayling be elected as Vice-Chair of the Health and Sub-Committee for 2023-2024.

133. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Janne Jarvis and from Sylvia Bayford (staff representative).

Councillor Ian Houlder was also unable to attend the meeting, along with Lance Alexander (staff representative).

134. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2023 were confirmed as a correct record by the Chair.

135. **Declarations of interest**

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

136. **Minutes of the meeting of West Suffolk Health and Safety Group: 31 August 2023**

The Sub-Committee received and **noted** report number: HSS/WS/23/003, which were the minutes of the West Suffolk Health and Safety Group meeting held on 31 August 2023.

137. **Health and Safety Presentation**

[Councillor Andy Neal joined the meeting at 4.29pm during the consideration of this item].

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

- Introduction
- Health and safety statistics
- Legislation updates and other news
- Training.

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 to July 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 then reported the number of days lost due to workplace

accidents/incidents and compared them with statistics from the past three-years.

Legislation updates:

The Health and Safety Manager advised that the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 received Royal Assent on 29 June 2023. The Act would automatically revoke or "sunset" a list of around 600 Retained EU Laws by the end of 2023. However, there were a few pieces of legislation relating to health and safety in civil aviation; maritime; nuclear industry and football matches but nothing relation to mainstream health and safety. There was currently no immediate impact on the council regarding the future of health and safety law.

The Health and Safety Manager reported the council was compliant with all changes relating to the Building Safety Act 2022 (Section 156).

Also on 1 October 2023, new fire safety legislation in addition to the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 and Fire Safety Act 2021 was introduced. The new fire safety legislation applied to:

- All non-domestic premises and non-domestic parts of multi-occupied residential buildings, for example communal corridors, stairways and plant rooms.
- Responsible person must record their fire risk assessment and fire safety arrangements for their premises.
- Responsible persons must co-operate/co-ordinate with other responsible persons in shared buildings.
- FRA's appointed by responsible person must be suitably trained and competent.

The council was complaint with the new changes to fire legislation.

Other news:

- Work related fatality figures for 2022 to 2023 had recently been published. The three most common causes of fatal injuries to workers were:
 - o Falls from heights (40)
 - o Being stuck by a moving object (29)
 - o Being stuck by a moving vehicle (20).

The highest number of deaths were found to be in the construction industry.

- Following the coroner's report over the missing Airman Corrie McKeague, the LGA had reminded local authorities of the guidance provided by the Waste Industry Safety and Health forum on managing access to large waste and recycling bins. As a reaction to this the

Operations Team had recently communicated a “look before you lift” procedure to all its operators.

- RAAC (reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete): Recent concerns of RAAC failing in school and NHS buildings had highlighted the likelihood of RAAC having a much wider presence in local authority premises. This was investigated by Property Services with specialist engineers over the past two years and confirmed that currently there was no RAAC materials in any of the council’s buildings.
- Protect Duty (Martyn’s Law): Still no guidance produced by Government and no regulator had been announced. The lead time for implementation now envisaged was 2025. The council would continue to attend regular official government update webinars.

Training:

The Health and Safety Manager updated the Sub-Committee on the following health and safety training updates:

- 1) First aid training was ongoing.
- 2) Health and safety mandatory modules had been added to the I-Learn training platform.
- 3) Additional job specific health and safety modules had been reviewed and were being added to I-Learn for specific departments, for example risk assessments; COSHH; working at height.
- 4) The Fire Risk Assessors training course had been completed by the Health and Safety Manager and Senior Advisor.
- 5) Event safety management training had been rescheduled from December to 2023 and would now take place in January 2024 to ensure specific employees who were involved with events on council property had suitable knowledge and training to carry out their supervisory roles and provide an internal support network.

The Sub-Committee considered the presentation and asked questions. In particular discussions were held on the various incident statistics and whether weather conditions were taken into consideration; fire risk assessments at parish councils; and whether alternative suitable work was offered to employees when they had sustained an injury to which comprehensive responses were provided.

At the conclusion of the meeting the Sub-Committee agreed for the presentation to continue to be attached to future agendas

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

138. **Dates of future meetings**

The Sub-Committee noted the date(s) for future meetings, as listed below. All date(s) were Mondays starting at 4pm and would be held via MS Teams, as indicated:

- 26 February 2024

The meeting concluded at 4.42 pm

Signed by:

Chair
