

Health, Safety & Welfare – Annual Report 2016-2017

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Purpose of the Report

In order to keep Members informed of health, safety and welfare issues relevant to South Somerset District Council activities and undertakings, an annual report is presented to the Audit Committee.

This report covers the period from April 2016 – September 2017.

The report contains an overview of health and safety matters and /or concerns, details of any new or impending Health & Safety legislation and comments on other health, safety or welfare matters that may have some impact on Council activities.

Recommendation(s)

(1) That member's note and comment on the report.

Report

Health & Safety Management

Following the last report to Member's I am pleased to be able to report that there has been progress in a number of areas of health & safety management.

Safety Panel

As Members will recall in 2015 the Safety Panel was relaunched, with members from all services taking an active part. The panel now looks in more depth at specific issues in a 'spotlight' section; recent items have included Lone Working, Working at Height & Driving at Work. The standing items include accidents and incidents, legislation changes, recent prosecutions & fire risk matters. Future Safety Panel meetings will spotlight Service risk assessments and provide support and advice to Managers. The panel has also discussed the Transformation Programme and how that will affect Health & Safety at Work.

Health & Safety Audit Report

Recently SWAP has carried out a Corporate Health & Safety Report. The report offered a reasonable assurance that most of the areas they investigated were adequately controlled. Several recommendations were made that have been agreed. The Civil Contingencies manager will give a verbal update to Members on progress at the meeting.

Health & Safety Management System

The TEN Health & Safety Management System is regularly used by all services to enter and update risk assessments and to enter incident reports. There are now over 1000 operational risk assessments spread across the Councils services, entered onto the system. There are also a significant number of

COSHH assessments that have been entered onto the system. However, the SWAP audit did raise a number of questions around the TEN systems and as part of the Transformation programme we are looking to replace the TEN H&S system.

Annual Health & Safety Inspection's

All Council Offices have been inspected this year, and Property services have an action plan of works or modifications that are required. A programme of Fire Risk Assessments on all Council Offices has been carried out, and an action plan for each building will be compiled.

Accidents Statistics

Period covered April 2016 – September 2017

Service	No of Reported Accidents	Days Lost	Comments
Streetscene	11	24	Mainly minor accidents
Development Control	2	0	Minor accidents
IT	2	0	Minor Accidents
Yeovil Innovation Centre	3	0	Minor Accidents
Revenues & Benefits	2	Over 6 months	One person with a continuing problem*
Countryside	1	-	Minor accident
Arts & Entertainment	2	-	Minor accidents
Property & Engineering	1	-	Minor accidents
Print Room	2	0	Minor Accidents
Environmental Health	4	0	Minor Accidents
Housing & Welfare	1	0	Minor Accidents
Total	31	204	

Incident Statistics

Period covered April 2016 – September 2017

The Civil Contingencies Manager will give a verbal update on the incident statistics at the meeting.

Health & Safety & Transformation

The Transformation project and the subsequent new ways of working have some implications for Health & Safety Management. The issues we are currently looking at with the Transformation Project Sponsors are:

- Training for New Managers
- Lone Working Solutions
- Innovative IT solutions

Priorities for 2017-2018

Review all Health & Safety policies in line with the Transformation Project

Procure a new Health & Safety system

Annual Health & Safety Inspection of all Council Offices

Review Case Law and how that may affect Council operations

Manage & Chair Safety Panel

Recent Cases:

Company fined after worker fell from height

Date:

31 July 2017

Fruehauf Limited has been fined after a worker sustained fatal injuries after falling from a cherry picker at a factory in Grantham.

Lincoln Magistrates Court heard how on 18 February 2016, the 64-year old worker fell while climbing from the basket of a cherry picker onto an overhead travelling crane to repair it. The court heard that the work was not properly planned and carried out without suitable harnesses and fall arrest equipment.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Fruehauf Limited failed to provide and enforce a safe system of work for accessing the overhead cranes in the factory; The company did not have appropriate management arrangements in place for controlling, monitoring and reviewing the safety of maintenance tasks and the activity was not properly risk assessed.

Fruehauf Limited pleaded guilty to being in breach of Regulation 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and Regulations 3(1) and 5(1) of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The company was fined £200,000 and were ordered to pay costs of £5,622.

Speaking after the hearing HM Inspector Martin Giles said: "Those in control of work have a responsibility to devise safe methods of working and to provide the necessary information, instruction and training to their workers in the safe system of working.

This incident could have been prevented had Fruehauf Limited provided appropriate supervision and suitable fall arrest equipment for their workers to wear and use.

Source: HSE Website

Engineering firm fined after exposing workers to Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS)

Date:

11 July 2017

An engineering firm has been fined for failing to control the risk to employees using hand held power tools from Hand-Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS).

Manchester and Salford Magistrates heard how Newfield Fabrications Co Ltd (NFCL) failed to ensure the risks to its employees from exposure was adequately controlled. The company also failed to ensure its employees were given sufficient information, instruction and training on the effects of working with vibrating hand tools.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that sometime towards the end of 2015, a welder who had been working at the company for a number of years had been given a job that involved a significant amount of grinding and polishing.

After a number of hours on the task, the worker began to experience numbness and tingling. He asked to swap with another worker but was told to carry on. Whilst his symptoms continued he was told by his supervisor to carry on using vibrating tools.

A few weeks later, a 20 year old apprentice welder also began to suffer from vibration-related symptoms from using similar tools.

Newfield Fabrications Co Ltd of Sandbach, pleaded guilty to breaching Regulations 6(1) and 8(1) of the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005. The company has been fined £120,000 and ordered to pay £7,241 costs.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Helen Jones said: "This is a case of the company failing to protect workers using vibrating tools. Exposure to hand arm vibration is a well-known risk which the company failed to adequately control.

"The company also failed to ensure workers were looked after when symptoms did arise leading to further exposure. This was wholly inadequate, and led to two employees suffering significant health effects."

Source: HSE Website

South West Water fined after death of employee

Date:

21 April 2017

South West Water has been sentenced following the death of 54-year-old Robert Geach.

Truro Crown Court heard Mr Geach, a catchment operator, was working on the sand filtration unit of the Falmouth Waste Water Treatment Works on 30 December 2013 when a colleague discovered him face down in water. He died at the scene having drowned.

Mr Geach was last seen working on the top of the unit several hours before he was found by his colleague who was responding to the lone worker system. An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found the company failed to identify the risk of drowning with the maintenance activity which was undertaken by Mr Geach and his colleagues on a regular basis.

South West Water Ltd of Peninsula House, Rydon Lane, Exeter pleaded guilty of breaching Section 2 (1) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, was fined £1.8million and ordered to pay costs of £41,607.71.

Speaking after the hearing HSE inspector Georgina Speake said: "This tragic case could have been prevented if the company had reduced the size of the hatch used to access the sand filters, and properly considered the hazards of the operation, including how close Mr Geach was to the water.

"Mr Geach was exposed to the risk of drowning which could have been easily been controlled if the task had been properly planned and simple measures adopted earlier which South West Water failed to do so adequately."

Source: HSE Website