

Report To: Performance Scrutiny

Date of Meeting: 1st May 2014

Lead Member / Officer: Julian Thompson Hill / Hywyn Williams

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Title: Health, Safety Annual Report

1. What is the report about?

This report provides an update on Health and Safety management within DCC as seen from the perspective of the Corporate H&S team.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To provide information regarding an annual update on H&S management in DCC

3. What are the Recommendations?

The committee review the report and comment on the activities and observations of the CH&S team.

4. Report details

4.1 Summary

4.1.1 During the past year we have seen some positive changes in the safety culture within DCC. This has been particularly noticeable in the Social services areas where we have had many requests for training, support and advice. There has also been a real change within Highways initially driven by the fatality in Conwy in September 2013 and the associated investigation by the HSE.

4.1.2 There has been a step change in the amount of training and workplace monitoring that has taken place and this in turn has made the CH&S team more visible and less feared by those who have encountered us. One of the more difficult tasks has been to convince people that we are there to help them and that we are advisors and facilitators, not regulators.

4.1.3 In general DCC is seen by the HSE as having a developing positive safety culture and on some specific occasions what we have done has been held up as good practice e.g. our Strong Leadership methodology, our asbestos management process in housing and our open water management processes. Regardless of this positive message we must continue to focus on driving a positive safety culture, we must provide managers with the tools to help them fulfil their statutory duties and ensure that all our people remain safe whilst in work.

4.1.4 A significant none planned element of our work continues to be reactive where we respond to incidents and requests for support. This is an important element of what we do and is also a significant drain on our resources.

4.1.5 Although we have seen significant improvements in H&S management we continue finding weaknesses in local management systems. We must continue to drive and support the H&S management improvement process.

4.2 Background

4.2.1 In 2011 the six North Wales Local Authorities were tasked by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to make H&S management improvements through a process called "Strong Leadership". The focus of the process was to ensure compliance with regulation 5 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (MHSWR) which requires that *"Every employer shall make and give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the nature of his activities and the size of his undertaking, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of the preventive and protective measures"*.

4.2.2 DCC planned, developed and implemented a process to fulfil the requirements of this specific regulation. HSE feedback of our methodology and progress has been positive and shared with the other LA's in North Wales.

4.2.3 The DCC process began with a hazard and Gap analysis of the H&S risks faced at corporate, service, school and team levels. Information from the analysis was used to drive a new way of working for the CH&S team that is more supportive of line managers and their teams which in turn is supporting the development of a positive H&S culture throughout DCC. Appendix 1 shows an example hazard and Gap analysis

4.2.4 The main outcomes of the analysis have been the planning and development of a H&S web page, a significant in-house H&S training program, visibility through monitoring activities and site visits.

4.2.5 Information provided during the hazard and Gap analysis enables the CH&S team to plan some of its work load. Appendix 2 shows the team's forward work and training plans for 2014

4.3 Training 2013 \ 2014

4.3.1 Before 2013 a significant amount of H&S training was bought in. Although this professional training usually comes with nationally recognised accreditation it is costly (circa £950 per day) and tends to be generic. CH&S team members are at the same professional level to external training providers so on the basis of this we now provide the majority of H&S training from our own resources. This change has enabled us to make the training DCC and team specific as well as offering a substantial cost saving. The only compromise with this method is that the training does not carry national accreditation however we do align how we train to recognised standards and we display the DCC logo on our certificates

4.3.2 A significant amount of driving advice and driver training is carried out by our Road Risk advisor. The main focus of this support is fleet drivers however support is offered wherever it is requested.

4.3.3 Examples of internally provided courses

- Managing safely in DCC. A two day course for managers, supervisors and staff
- H&S awareness. The principles and practice of safety management for any employee
- Risk assessment. A one day practical workshop type course for any employee
- Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) for professional drivers
- Fire safety awareness. A course for building managers, school site mangers
- Manual Handling of objects. A short 2 hour course for any employee
- Corporate induction. As part of the corporate induction process

- Care home safety management.
- Hazardous substances, confined spaces, construction safety, short courses

4.4 Monitoring by CH&S

4.4.1 Regulation 5 of the MHSWR requires organisations to monitor how H&S is actually managed. Below are some examples of monitoring activities carried out by the CH&S team in 2013 \ 2014 based on priorities developed from the analysis

- Independent care homes in support of Adult and Business Services
- Emergency rest centres in support of the joint emergency planning unit.
- Control of Legionella bacteria in water systems in social housing
- Property Services “control of Legionella bacteria in water systems”
- Managing Cryptosporidium in DCC swimming pools.
- Cefndy Healthcare general factory safety arrangements
- Asbestos management in housing refurbishments. This area was later inspected by the HSE who provided very positive feedback.
- Open water safety management (Following a fatality in Flintshire). DCC again received positive feedback from the HSE
- Lone worker systems in social Services. A significant finding of the Hazard and Gap analysis was that lone worker management controls need to be more robust at local team level, this is driving a review of the Social Services Lone Worker “Guidance and Procedures” supported with training and team focussed support

4.4.2 Monitoring at the corporate level is only one element of the monitoring process. Senior managers and line managers are advised that they must continue to monitor activities under their control.

4.5 Fire safety

DCC has an internal fire safety management team in place that carries out fire risk assessments (FRA's) on all DCC facilities. A flexible program of FRA reviews is in place. The flexibility of the program enables us to respond reactively to requests from the regulator or other sources. Feedback from the Fire Service as the regulator continues to be positive.

4.6 HSE

4.6.1 We have regular contact with HSE inspectors. Although HSE Has provided us with positive feedback on a number of occasions we must not become complacent. A single failing with a significant outcome could undo all the positive work.

4.6.2 It should be noted that the HSE now operates a “fee for intervention” process. From the moment a material breach of H&S legislation is identified a charge is levied on the offending organisation. This cost is currently £124 per hour

4.7 Staff protection register

This is a process for enabling the flagging up of individuals or addresses where there is considered to be a significant H&S threat to DCC workers.

The new intranet based Staff Protection Register has been installed on the DCC system and will soon go live. This new system and supporting process is compliant with data protection legislation.

4.8 Accident / Incident Reporting

4.8.1 The DCC electronic accident and incident reporting form is accessed via the intranet. The process is managed by the CH&S team, all data is stored electronically in the EDRMS system.

- Our current statistical reporting capability is weak. CIVICA have been working with ICT to develop our full reporting capability for some time. The accident statistics for the financial year April 2013 to March 2014 are shown as appendix 3

4.9 Schools

4.9.1 The unusual status of schools with regard to H&S poses a disproportionate risk to DCC for the risk level present. Schools are able to use their remote management structures and delegated budgets in a way that reduces centralised influence. We attempt to mitigate the risks to people in schools and to DCC corporately by providing a range of training courses, guidance documents, personal support and site visits. E.G. we recently carried out a H&S awareness training program for catering staff.

4.9.2 The team works closely with the business managers for the clusters and we investigate any RIDDOR level (Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) incidents reported by schools.

4.10 CH&S Team structure

During the past year the CH&S team structure was reviewed and modified. The main reasons for the changes were to offer cost savings, provide development opportunities and help us with staff retention whilst maintaining a professional service. This has been achieved although the formal HR processes are not yet completed.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

The information contributes to the knowledge and understanding of the council about the arrangements in place for the management of Health and Safety.

6 What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

There is no additional cost identified with the information. The CH&S team support all services within DCC

7 What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?

This report is an information update on existing activities and has no adverse equality impact.

8 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

Consultation has been carried out with the Lead Councillor for H&S, Lead officer for H&S and Head of Service

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

This is an update report and has no direct financial impact.

10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

This report indicates the council's progress on minimising H&S risk

11 Power to make the Decision

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Section 2 requires amongst other things the sharing of H&S related information and a review of H&S measures.