

## **STIRLING COUNCIL**

**MINUTES of MEETING of the HEALTH AND SAFETY PANEL held in the COUNCIL CHAMBERS, OLD VIEWFORTH, STIRLING on MONDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2019 at 2.00pm**

### **Present**

Councillor Danny GIBSON (in the Chair)

Councillor Douglas DODDS

Councillor Alasdair TOLLEMACHE

### **Trade Union Representatives**

Frankie McCallum, UNITE

Abigail Robertson, UNISON

Ann Skillen, EIS

Brian Wilson, GMB Branch Secretary

Lorraine Thomson, UNISON Branch Secretary

### **Officers**

Lorna Cameron, Chief Officer – Housing

David Crighton, Roads & Operations Service Manager (Environment & Place)

Janice Fanning, Facilities Management Service Manager (Environment & Place)

Pamela Forsyth, HR Business Partner and Team Leader (HR & OD)

Dawn Fyfe, Assistant HR Business Partner (HR & OD)

Kristine Johnson, Chief Officer - HR & OD

Kirsty Leishman, HR Business Partner (HR & OD)

Drew Leslie, Infrastructure Delivery Manager (Infrastructure)

Kevin McCormick, Waste Services Manager (Environment & Place)

Amie McIntosh, Assistant HR Business Partner (HR & OD)

Norman McLeod, Health & Safety Team Leader (HR & OD)

George Millar, Health & Safety Co-ordinator (HR & OD)

Tracey Mills, Asset Compliance & Strategy Team Leader (Infrastructure)

Aileen More, Education Team Leader (Schools & Learning)

Scott Ross, Transformation, Policy & Performance Manager (Communities & Performance)

Karen Swan, Committee Officer (Governance) (Clerk)

### **HS50 APOLOGIES & SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Graham Houston, Steven MacDonald, Service Manager – Economic Growth, Culture Tourism & Events and Barry Spence, Insurance Officer.

### **HS51 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **HS52 URGENT BUSINESS BROUGHT FORWARD BY THE CHAIR**

There were no items of urgent business.

## **HS53 MINUTES – 3 JUNE 2019**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Safety Panel held on 3 June 2019 were submitted for approval.

### **Decision**

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Health and Safety Panel held on 3 June 2019 were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

## **HS54 CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE: SEPTEMBER 2019**

A report submitted by the Chief Officer – HR & OD provided the Health and Safety Panel with an update of the Corporate and Services' progress since the last Health and Safety Panel.

In response to the Panel noting a rise in the number of incident reporting numbers, the Health & Safety Team Leader confirmed that the all services had been reminded of the reporting mechanisms, which he expected had increased reporting.

The Panel were made aware that any near misses that involved moving vehicles were reported back to supervisors and line managers who then made the service aware to allow staff to implement any preventative action for the future.

Following concerns by Unison that a number of near misses had not be followed up in how they had been evidenced and recorded, the Health & Safety Team Leader would update the near misses incident form to include specific actions and what, if any, could be done to prevent in the future.

**ACTION: Norman McLeod**

The Panel agreed that a percentage of completed incidents reports would be reviewed to ensure that relevant processes had been adhered to and report back to the next Health & safety Panel.

**ACTION: Norman McLeod**

Following an enquiry on the number of Children & Families incidents reported, the Health & Safety Team Leader would seek clarity on the amount and advise the Members of the Health & Safety Panel accordingly.

**ACTION: Norman McLeod**

He also updated the Panel that the lone working devises were back on track. He confirmed that new phones included the relevant application. It was noted that it was still the requirement of the service to update the application to make staff aware of the markers, which supports staff who go out to constituents.

Following discussion about Old Viewforth reception, the Asset Compliance & Strategy Team Leader advised the Panel that a panic alarm and telephone line had been incorporated into the side room at reception. It was also noted that CCTV and a new reception desk would also be installed along with security features on the meeting

rooms and basement doors. The Infrastructure Development Manager confirmed that clarity would be sought on whether Council buildings CCTV's could be aligned into one monitoring system and advise the Chair of the Panel.

In response to the Unions concerns that staff that cover Council receptions (holiday cover) were not properly trained, the Chief Officer – HR & OD confirmed training would be completed to ensure that all staff were trained appropriately.

**ACTION: Kristine Johnson**

The Asset Compliance & Strategy Team Leader responded to the Chair's enquiry about asbestos within schools following the recent school fire in Fife. She advised that 24 schools within the Stirling Council area had small amounts of asbestos, which the Council manage and inspected regularly. Should a fire break out at any of these locations, the Council would be in communication with the Fire & Rescue Service to make them aware to allow for any precautionary measures to be taken.

The Health & Safety Team Leader would also clarify to Members of the Health & Safety Panel the RIDDOR facilities that were recorded within appendices to the submitted report.

**ACTION: Norman McLeod**

### **Decision**

The Health & Safety Panel agreed to: -

1. note the progress on the development and implementation of Health & Safety Improvement Plans, as set out at paragraphs 2.1 to 2.6 and at Appendix 1 to the submitted report;
2. note the contents of the statistical report on Health & Safety Incidents for the period stated with summary information at paragraphs 2.7 to 2.10 and at Appendix 2 to the submitted report;
3. note the recent relevant developments in terms of National Health & Safety legislation developments and Health & Safety cases in the public domain, relevant to all across Council, as set out at paragraphs 2.11 to 2.13 and at Appendix 3 to the submitted report;
4. note the other recent internal developments in Health & Safety activities within the Council, as set out at paragraphs 2.14 to 2.25 and Health & Safety Policy Sign Off summary at Appendix 4 to the submitted report;
5. note the information on the delivery of the planned programme of Health & Safety Compliance Audits from 1 Oct 2017 to 31 January 2019, including Major and Minor Non Conformity Reports (NCRs) identified in the course of those audit findings, as set out at paragraphs 2.26 to 2.33 and at Appendix 5 to the submitted report; and
6. note the information provided in the summary of the risk assessment status by service, which encompassed any required safe working methods (SWMs) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Guidance Form (PGF) associated with the risk assessments as set out in paragraphs 2.34 to 2.37 and at Appendix 6 to the submitted report.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer – HR & OD, dated 30 August 2019, submitted)

## **HS55 CURRENT STIRLING COUNCIL USE OF HERBICIDES IN SCHOOLS AND ACROSS THE WIDER OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT**

The Senior Manager – Environment & Place submitted a report that sought to inform on Stirling Council's use of herbicides containing glyphosate as an active ingredient. The context was in relation to a recent litigation case in the USA in 2018 concerning the manufacturer of the herbicide "Roundup" and in relation to the active ingredient glyphosate being suggested as a potential carcinogenic substance with a jury determining that "Roundup" caused a plaintiff's cancer. The briefing highlighted the glyphosate containing herbicides currently in use, the current situation in terms of continued approval and use of herbicides containing glyphosate in the UK and the alternative weed control options available in the maintenance of greenspace, streetscape environments and the Council's outdoor estate.

In response to discussion the Roads & Land Operations Service Manager confirmed that the school estate, through a private company, had weed killer applied twice a year in the summer and Easter holidays. Protective clothing was also worn as they were required to dilute the concentrated solution prior to it being sprayed in a diluted form.

Following discussion, the Panel reviewed the alternative methods as detailed in the report and it was explained that although these methods kill the weed, it does not penetrate down and kill the root.

It was noted that the decision (Recommendation 3 & 4 of the submitted report) should be for noting and was agreed by Councillor Gibson and Councillor Dodds. Councillor Tollemache advised he did not agree with use of the product and did not accept the recommendations.

### **Decision**

The Health and Safety Panel agreed to:

1. note the current use of glyphosate based herbicides and the available alternative weed control options with higher associated costs and limitations on effectiveness;
2. note the decision by the European Commission to renew the approval of glyphosate as a weed control herbicide for a period of 5 years from December 2017 and that glyphosate had been given Health and Safety Executive (HSE) approval and approval within the UK by relevant and appropriate scientists within government that it was safe to use;
3. note the continued use of glyphosate herbicides for weed control as the Council's main herbicide treatment, being the most effective in terms of performance and cost that was currently available on the market for amenity use; and
4. note that the Council would adhere to any further guidance by the European Union, UK Government, the Health and Safety Executive and the Scottish Government bodies.

(Reference: Report by Senior Manager - Environment and Place, dated 26 August 2019, submitted)

## **HS56 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH ACTIVITY REPORT**

A report by the Chief Officer – HR & OD was submitted that provided information relating to Stirling Council's Occupational Health (OH) provision.

Stirling Council provided a comprehensive Occupational Health Service to employees. The service provided included all aspects of job related Health Surveillance, pre-employment screening, medical referrals and reviews, counselling, physiotherapy and other employee wellbeing interventions such as cognitive behavioural therapy.

In response to Members' question, the HR Business Partner confirmed there were a number of reasons why employees had not attended their health surveillance appointment but they were working with services to ensure that employees attend.

The Panel also requested, if able to, the reason why employees attend Occupational Health Counselling and advise the Members accordingly.

**ACTION: Kristine Johnson**

Following discussion at the last meeting of the Health & Safety Panel on 3 June 2019, the Facilities Management Service Manager confirmed that she had sourced 2 products that were non allergic and would circulate to Managers to decide which product was needed for their offices.

### **Decision**

The Health and Safety Panel agreed to note the Occupational Health provision from April 2018 to March 2019 and April to July 2019.

(Reference: Report by Chief Officer – HR & OD, dated 21 August 2019, submitted)

## **HS57 TRADE UNION/WORKFORCE UPDATE – JTUC**

Unison updated the Panel that the Work Place Violence Charter was being developed with the expectation that it would be adopted.

The Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.20pm.