

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE - 31 MARCH 2011

HEALTH , SAFETY AND WELLBEING SERVICES – UPDATE

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to update Employment Committee on the progress made to date in relation to the review of Health, Safety and Wellbeing Services.

Background

2. The review of Health, Safety and Wellbeing was agreed by the People Strategy Board and the Corporate Management Team (CMT) in September 2009.
3. Following that decision it was agreed that each department would be audited individually by the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager (CHSWM) and a report was presented to CMT in September 2010 detailing the findings.
4. The Corporate HR Manager and CHSWM then met with managers from each department to discuss their requirements from a new service. During the meetings with the Environment and Transport and Corporate Resources departments, it became clear that it was also necessary to consider the role of their current Compliance functions and their relationship with HS&W.
5. On 21 October 2010, a report was submitted to CMT detailing the new HS&W service and proposed structure. The proposed model brought all elements of the strategic and advisory health and safety function under the direct management of the CHSWM and was consistent with the agreed Organisational Change Principles and the Target Operating Model.

Implementation of the action plan

6. Consultation commenced with affected staff across the Council on 16 November and ended on 23 December 2010. The selection process to posts was completed at the end of February 2011 and as the review had determined a reduction in the numbers of staff required three members of staff have been made redundant, two voluntary redundancies and one compulsory redundancy.

New Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service

7. A chart is attached at **Appendix 1** which provides details of the new structure.
8. Work is currently underway to complete the transition to the co-located single service and the new service will be launched across the Council at the end of April.
9. The new service will ensure that the County Council is best placed to ensure legislative compliance, implement a pro active approach and develop a function that is fit for purpose and best placed to adapt to future.
10. One of the key themes in the People Strategy 2010-2013 is Employee Health and Wellbeing and the service will be instrumental in delivery of the relevant objectives over the next four years.
11. The new service will be characterised by:
 - A more strategic role for HS&W, enabling the Council to plan more effectively for the future;
 - More effective relationships between HS&W and departments, enabling HS&W to understand key relationships with partners and the market in which departments operate;
 - An ethos of customer service, performance management and continuous improvement;
 - A new relationship with managers, providing solution based advice and support which enables them to manage health and safety issues and risks within their areas of responsibility;
 - Modern and consistent policies and procedures which support the strategic objectives of the Council;
 - Generic roles across the teams which will enable the service to work as efficiently as possible and address the inconsistency in the approach of current Health and Safety team.
12. The new way of working will implement a significant change from a reactive to pro-active service. This change has been trialled in more than 50 schools and the comments from the schools have been overwhelmingly positive. Each Senior Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor has developed an agreed audit plan. This will result in managers being made aware of some of the issues to be addressed. Once the audit has been agreed with the manager an action plan will be developed to address the issues with a detailed timescale.

13. Whilst auditing is an essential part of health safety and wellbeing there are many other areas of work that we are developing, these include:

- Centralisation of the accident reporting system
- Development of health and safety policies, standards and guidance, in compliance with current legislation and best practice
- Training calendar of a wide range of health and safety courses to improve the knowledge and understanding of manager and staff
- Provide professional advice and guidance on all aspects of health, safety and wellbeing to managers and staff
- Ensure that an effective workplace inspection programme is in place to cover all workplaces within managers areas of responsibility, which will include the development of action plans of recommendations for continuous improvement
- Assist managers in identifying significant risks within teams, roles and activities
- Produce statistical reports to departmental management teams on the performance of the department against agreed performance standards

Recommendations

14. Employment Committee is asked to note the completion of the review of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service and endorse and support the launch of the new service and the extensive work that is planned to be undertaken.

Background Papers

Employment Committee – 15 April 2010 – Review of the Health and Safety.

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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Equal Opportunities Implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment was developed as part of the review of the service.

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Health, Safety and Wellbeing Structure Chart