

## MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL



<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Environment and Commercial Services – Geoff Field
<b>Submitted to:</b>	Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee – 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2019
<b>Subject:</b>	Health and Safety and Wellbeing Annual Assurance Report

**Summary**

<b>Proposed decision(s)</b>
Executive to approve 2019/2020 plans for improving Health and Safety and Wellbeing in Middlesbrough Council.

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Key decision:</b>	<b>Confidential:</b>	<b>Is the report urgent?</b>
Information, discussion and decision	The decision could affect all wards within Middlesbrough Council	No	No

<b>Contribution to delivery of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan</b>		
<b>Business Imperatives</b>	<b>Physical Regeneration</b>	<b>Social Regeneration</b>
Health and Safety and Wellbeing is a statutory requirement for Middlesbrough Council and the development of Health and Safety and Wellbeing Plans is an effective tool in driving business efficiencies and demonstrating the councils commitment to Health, Safety and Wellbeing.	The Health and Safety Wellbeing Plans will support all activities relating to the physical regeneration within Middlesbrough Council.	The Health and Safety and Wellbeing Plans will contribute to improvements in living standards of Middlesbrough Council staff and residents.

<b>Ward(s) affected</b>
All wards in Middlesbrough Council could be directly affected by the proposals set out in this report.

## **What is the purpose of this report?**

1. The aim of this report is to provide the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee with an annual review of the corporate approach to the management of Health and Safety and Wellbeing within the Council. It will also provide details of the proposed action plans in the year ahead.

## **Why does this report require a Member decision?**

2. The role of the Assurance Committee is to oversee corporate governance within the Council. This Annual Assurance Report supports this process and provides details of the planned activities to improve the Council's health, safety and wellbeing arrangements over the next 12 months. An agreement by the committee to support these activities will allow work to continue, which on completion, will contribute to achieving the Mayors Vision and Strategic Plan.

## **Report Background**

3. Health and Safety Management is the collective responsibility of all elected members and officers of the Council.
4. The Health and Safety Policy:-
  - defines the Council's legal duty;
  - outlines the requirements of the Health and Safety Management System;
  - details specific roles and responsibilities of Elected Members; LMT, Managers, Employees and the H&S Unit in relation to health and safety.
5. In addition to this policy the Corporate Health and Safety Committee meets on a quarterly basis to discuss health and safety performance. A quarterly report is produced to for discussion within this meeting, which is chaired by an Executive Member.

## **Health and Safety Action Plan (2018 – 2019)**

6. The Health and Safety Unit are making good progress against their 2018/2019 Health and Safety Action plan which is detailed below:-
  - A health and safety gap analysis has been produced and inputted into the covalent system in order to prioritise and formulate next year's action plan.
  - A Directing Safety Training Course has been produced and delivered to the Mayor, the Mayors Executive Committee, the CEO and LMT to inform them of their corporate responsibilities.
  - Health and safety is now a regular agenda item on LMT, DMT and service area team meetings.
  - Various health and safety awareness courses are now available in my induction within Middlesbrough Learns and all staff are required to complete this on commencing work with Middlesbrough Council.
  - The front end of the online Middlesbrough Incident Management System has now been fully developed. Further work is required on the back end of the

system to enable users to extract statistical data. Once this work is completed the system will be ready to roll out. To support this initiative a corporate Incident Management Procedure and an Incident Investigation Training Course has been produced with the aim of supporting management in undertaking more detailed investigations.

- The new generic H&S role has been implemented within the H&S Unit, with all H&S Advisors supporting each other to develop new skills to enable them to undertake their new roles and responsibilities.
- Two generic H&S Advisors have attended a five day Fire Risk Assessment Course at the Fire Service College and the NEBOSH Fire Certificate to enable them to complete basic fire risk assessments. Continuous professional development events have been planned in to provide ongoing support in carrying out their new roles and responsibilities.
- A new Fire Risk Assessment schedule has been introduced to bring assessments in date with their required inspection frequency.
- A new fire risk assessment template has been developed and is now in use.
- Building Managers have been identified for all Central Campus Buildings who have attended various meetings informing them of their responsibilities towards fire safety in the workplace. Building Managers in these areas are now aware of their responsibilities.
- The H&S Auditing system has been reviewed and is in date with the required inspection frequency.
- A Service Level Agreement (SLA) for health and safety has now been produced and circulated to academies. As this service has not been offered in the past, many academies have chosen alternative providers. Work is ongoing to further improve the SLA and attract business back to the Council.
- The profile of the H&S Unit consists of one H&S Manager, one full time H&S Advisor and three part time H&S Advisors. The third part time role is still vacant, however a full time H&S Apprentice has now been appointed over a two year period.
- The Health and Safety Unit have 100% attendance at the Corporate Induction / market stall holder events.

### **Health and Safety Action Plan (2019 – 2020)**

7. The 2019/2020 Health and Safety Action plan is detailed below:-

- Implement the new Incident Management Procedure and upload it onto the Intranet.
- Implement the new online Middlesbrough Incident Management System once fully developed and provide incident investigation training to managers and relevant others.

- Upload the near miss report form onto the Intranet and encourage reporting of near miss incidents in order to identify safety issues and reduce the likelihood of future accidents.
- Implement the new Risk Assessment Procedure and upload it onto the Intranet.
- Produce and distribute a premises risk assessment template to ensure Building Managers are aware of their health and safety responsibilities.
- Produce and deliver a short course to managers and LMT on the premises risk assessment and the aims of the Corporate Landlord Model.
- Undertake annual premises H&S audits to ensure premises risk assessments are being completed and regularly reviewed.
- Incorporate the premises H&S audit template into the TF system so that audits can be completed online and actions tracked to ensure compliance, subject to system capabilities.
- Implement the new Fire Safety Procedure throughout the council and upload it onto the Intranet.
- Produce a half day Fire Safety Manager Course and deliver this to LMT, Building Managers and relevant others to provide them with information on how to comply with their responsibilities towards fire safety.
- Incorporate the fire risk assessment template into the TF system so that fire risk assessments can be completed online and associated actions tracked, subject to system capabilities.
- Implement the Dynamic Lockdown Procedures and provide training to ensure arrangements are in place within all Middlesbrough Council buildings. Incorporate requirements of the Lockdown Procedure into the annual premises H&S audit to check the arrangements within lockdown plans.
- Develop a template to assist Service Area Managers in producing robust plans to further develop their health and safety management systems.
- Produce a template for auditing Service Area health and safety management systems.

### **Health and Well Being Action Plan (2018 – 2019)**

8. The Council's Managing Health, Attendance and Wellbeing policy and procedures were revised and republished in 2018 and provide the framework for the range of health and wellbeing services currently offered to employees which consist of:-
- Counselling which is accessed by self-referral and is a completely confidential service currently provided by Alliance Psychological Services.
  - Physiotherapy which employees can request if this has been recommended by their GP and there is undue delay via the NHS. Services currently provided by Sano Physiotherapy.

- MRI scanning can be provided if recommended by GP or Specialist Medical Practitioner and there is undue delay via the NHS. This service is currently provided by Alliance.
  - Occupational Health Services which are currently delivered by Durham County Council Occupational Health Team.
9. The projected outturn for sickness absence rates in 2018/19 is estimated at around 9.48 FTE. This is a reduction on the 2017/18 figures which were 10.96 FTE days lost. The highest reason for absence is stress and mental health related issues, second highest reason is musculoskeletal and the third highest reason is infections.
10. The Council signed up to the Extra Life initiative in 2017 and has continued through 2018 in seeking to address health inequalities in Middlesbrough, increase life expectancy rates and offer health improvement opportunities aimed at reducing preventable, long term illnesses through a wide range of health and wellbeing activities and promotions for its workforce.
11. As an employer, the Council has achieved the 'Continuing Excellence' standard in the North East Better Health at Work Awards and is seeking to improve the health and wellbeing offer for its employees.

### **Health & Wellbeing Activities in 2018/19**

12. The HR Team are making good progress against their 2018/2019 Health and Wellbeing Action plan which is detailed below:-
- Lunchtime activities such as Tai Chi and Pilates are now offered on a Tuesday and Thursday at 1200 hours at the Live Well Centre.
  - Additional physical activities have been added to the programme with Yoga for beginners on Wednesday lunchtime and Metafit offered on Tuesday evenings after work at 1715-1745 hours.
  - Mental Health First Aid training (full 2 day programme) was delivered by Teesside Training Hub and a total of 60 people are now trained and have formed an in-house network.
  - 1 day Mental Health First Aid training is now in progress as a rolling programme for the Middlesbrough Manager group with 34 trained to date and will continue throughout 2019/20.
  - Health and wellbeing stands were displayed in the Old Fire Station area and Courtyard at the Living our Values event on 24<sup>th</sup> September. This attracted a footfall of approx. 1096 employees on the day who participated in a wide range of initiatives such as BMI checks by Slimming World, the inflatable goal challenge from MFC Foundation, blood pressure checks and information stands by Alliance Psychological Services, Cancer UK, Sano Physiotherapy, Mind Recovery Connect College, Newlands Dental Practice (Sugar Smart promotion), Virgin Care sexual health clinics and internal stands such as Mental Health First

Aiders, Health Champions and the 'Mocktail' bar which offered alcohol free and low-sugar options in the colours of the new values.

- Health Champions/Advocates recruitment continues under the Extra Life and Better Health at Work initiatives (from 8 to 18 total) with plans to increase this in 2019 as further training dates become available.
- The Council were awarded with 'Carer Friendly Employer' status by Carers Together on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2018. An event took place in the Fire Station of the Town Hall on 14<sup>th</sup> June in association with The Junction, who exhibited photos representing young carers across Teesside and local groups held information stands. On 30<sup>th</sup> November the Council celebrated Carers Rights Day at the Independent Living Centre and the Carers Network now holds regular quarterly meetings.
- Campaigns such as Stoptober, Love to Ride – Cycle challenge and Be Clear on Cancer were promoted throughout 2018.
- An initial Men's Health Event was held at the Transporter Bridge to celebrate Movember and promote alcohol awareness. The Middlesbrough Recovering Together Team attended along with a coffee cart and also a member of our Public Protection Team served 'mocktails' and promoted sign-ups for 'Dry January' and raised awareness of alcohol issues. Approximately 50 male employees attended this event which is a really positive response.
- Mental Health First Aiders held a stand at the recent Social Work Development Week conference on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November where at least a 100 social workers/team members attended to promote stress awareness, self-care and alcohol awareness as part Alcohol Awareness Week. Complimentary holistic therapies were also made available to staff during the development week and were seen as motivational and a conversation starter to self-care, relaxation and good sleep management.
- HR Team are now regularly attending all Induction (Market Place events) there are plans to increase attendance by Mental Health First Aiders and Health Champions in 2019.
- Winter Health programme with 300 flu vaccines provided to staff.

### **Health & Wellbeing Activities planned for 2019/20**

13. The 2019/2020 Health and Wellbeing Action plan is detailed below:-

- Review activities in March 2019 against action plans with programme of events to be drawn up for delivery in 2019/20. Make sure these are targeted to align with main reasons for sickness absence.
- Continue to develop the Carers Network and promote carers activities throughout 2019 in line with the Carer Friendly Employer Award.

- Increase the coverage of Mental Health First Aiders and Health Champions, especially in areas where there is no coverage within that workplace setting.
- Maintain the current number of Mental Health First Aiders (as a minimum of 60) and continue to hold quarterly network meetings to encourage participation.
- Mental Health First Aid (1 Day Session) will continue to be rolled out to Middlesbrough Managers across 2019-2020.
- HR attendance at 100% of all Induction (Market Place) events in order to promote Health & Wellbeing activities and secure employee engagement with further participation with Mental Health First Aiders and Health Champions/Advocates in 2019/20.
- Increase Men's Health awareness and target workplaces such as Resolution House due to commence in 2019/20 following on from the Living Our Values Event in September and Men's Health Event in November.
- Plans to tackle obesity related issues and improvement in physical activities will continue in Q4 of 2018/19 with themes continuing throughout 2019/20.

## **Conclusions**

14. The Health and Safety Unit have settled in well to their new generic roles whilst also completing new qualifications and learning new skills to complete basic fire risk assessments. This has contributed to significant progress in bringing fire risk assessments back in date with their required inspection frequencies.
15. Work on the new online Middlesbrough Incident Management System has also progressed which once fully implemented, will improve the standard of investigations and enable Service Areas to review their incident statistics when required.
16. Next year the H&S Unit will build upon this success and focus more on improving the ownership of Health and Safety across the Council, concentrating on premises and individual Service Areas by providing bespoke training and ongoing support to relevant managers.
17. The Health and Wellbeing activities have been well received by employees and take up of the various activities is encouraging.
18. The Health and Well Being offer will continue to be reviewed and aligned with the main reasons for sickness and absence and hard to reach groups within the workforce.
19. There is some evidence that the existing health and wellbeing initiatives are beginning to have a positive impact with a forecasted reduction in sickness rates in 2018/19.
20. The Health and Safety Unit will continue to work more collaboratively with HR on supporting appropriate health and wellbeing activities, including participation in the Extra Life Leadership Group.

## **What decision(s) are being asked for?**

21. That the Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee notes the outcome of the annual review and endorses the proposed action plans for 2019/2020.
22. That the Committee proposes for consideration any further recommendations to promote good practise in Health and Safety and Wellbeing.
23. The proposed action plans will ensure that Corporate Health & Safety and Human Resources provide the Council with guidance and advice to support Managers and Employees in taking responsibility for their own health and safety and wellbeing, in line with the Middlesbrough Manager model which is focussed on empowerment and self-service.

## **Why is this being recommended?**

24. To support the Committee in discharging its responsibility in relation to corporate governance, including Health and Safety and Human Resources.
25. An effective health and safety management system can protect the Council from various health and safety risks by implementing and monitoring systems to ensure legal compliance is achieved.
26. The Health and Wellbeing Service on offer provides initiatives which actively encourage staff and service users to lead healthier lifestyles.

## **Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended**

27. N/A

## **Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)**

### **Legal**

28. Council Members are collectively responsible for the governance of the Council. While it is full Council's responsibility to consider key corporate to consider.

### **Financial**

29. It is anticipated that all activities set out in this report are achievable within existing and planned budgets.

### **Policy Framework**

30. N/A

### **Equality and Diversity**

31. N/A

### **Risk**



32. The Council must comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure risks are appropriately managed to avoid accidents and HSE prosecutions (O7-026). The Council must also ensure all statutory maintenance requirements are complied with (O7-018). If the Council does not have an effective health and wellbeing plan this could result in high levels of sickness and absence resulting in inefficiencies and reduced outcomes (O8-026). By supporting staff and looking after their wellbeing the Council aims to reduce the risk of stress and retain staff within the organisation (O8-029).

### **Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)**

33. The Health and Safety and Human Resources Teams will continue with the work outlined in the report and as detailed in the relevant action plans.

### **Appendices**

34. There are no appendices attached within this report.

### **Background papers**

35. The Health and Safety and Wellbeing Annual Assurance Report 2018/19.

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