

MINUTES OF THE SAFETY COMMITTEE HELD ON

27 April 2023

10.00 - 11.12 am

PRESENT

Committee Members

Norah Nolan (Chair)
Donna Beechener
Jackie Davies
Rory Davies
Graham Jarvis
Wendy Makepeace
Kim Taylor
Scott Merry
Stuart Moseley
Katie Seymour
Angela Street
Natasha Terrell

Officers

Hannah Marriott, Governance Support Officer
Nicole Parker, Corporate and Governance Support Admin Assistant

82. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from John Harty and Gemma Maxwell.

83. **MINUTES OF LAST MEETING HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2022**

Agreed.

84. **MATTERS ARISING - ACTIONS COMPLETED**

Jackie Davies advised that, with regard to the "Contact Harlow Abuse" telephone extension line, it was informed that this system would only be suitable for teams who record their telephone conversations. However, there is scope for teams to set up another extension, with an adapted recorded message, that may be appropriate. Managers to follow up if required within their specific teams.

Graham Jarvis advised that the updated PEEP assessment and templates had been published on the Kaonet.

85. **HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

a) Attendees at Safety Committee

Norah Nolan advised that Safety Committee meetings to return to quarterly meetings and suggested that if officers cannot attend the meeting, they should arrange for a representative to attend on their behalf.

The next meeting of the Safety Committee would take place on 20 July 2023 and a date for an October meeting would be agreed shortly.

Natasha Terrell agreed to speak to the Unison Representative to see if they would also attend Committee meetings.

b) Accident Statistics

Jackie Davies advised that there were no trends to report to Committee.

c) Aggressive Incidents - Contact Harlow

Kim Taylor advised that she had put a report together with statistics on aggressive incidents in Contact Harlow. Kim advised that there had been full-time security in place since the start of the year. There had been 25 incidents which required security intervention and the incidents are generally still serious in nature. Kim also advised that Contact Harlow officers were also experiencing more aggression during telephone calls.

Kim advised the Committee that whilst Contact Harlow only serves around 50 people per day face to face (in comparison to around 500 per day before lockdown) the levels of aggression remained the same.

Kim suggested that some causes for the aggressive incidents included; Contact Harlow having a lack of support from officers in the building and officers refusing to meet residents face to face in reception to help diffuse situations, Contact Harlow finding it difficult to get hold of officers on the phone and officers not responding to enquiries within target dates with some teams being several months behind. All of these issues were causing frustration for residents.

Kim advised that, in order to reduce aggressive incidents, the Council needed to address work place practices and reconsider how it used the large empty space in reception.

The Committee noted that Epping Forest Council has a partnership hub in its reception which allows residents to speak to a number of partnership agencies face to face.

Norah Nolan agreed to add this item to the Wider Leadership Team agenda. Overall, the Committee emphasised that officers have the right to work in a safe environment.

d) Training Matrix

Norah Nolan confirmed that the new training matrix would be used to record health and safety training across the Council. It would be the responsibility of each manager to decide what training would be needed for their team.

The Committee noted that the training matrix may not be relevant for the majority of staff. Natasha Terrell advised that there would be the opportunity for managers to meet with the Health and Safety team once the training matrix was rolled out to explain how to use it.

Graham Jarvis confirmed that the Health and Safety team would save the matrix locally for the entire council.

Norah Nolan agreed to take the matrix forward to the Wider Leadership Team for approval.

e) Health and Safety Review Inspections

Graham Jarvis advised that the Health and Safety Team will return to carrying out reviews throughout the year. The team would attempt to complete 12 reviews across various teams in the Council. The Committee noted that the reviews would be pre-planned and would be broad in scope rather than deep.

f) Martyns Law

Norah Nolan advised that a briefing paper had already gone to the Wider Leadership Team. When the law comes into place a further briefing will be carried out.

g) Standing Item Reminder - Team RA's

Jackie Davies advised that the standing item was a reminder for all managers to update their risk assessments.

The Committee noted that the regular Health and Safety update newsletters were no longer circulated. Norah Nolan would speak to Becca Farrant about re-introducing these.

86. **STATUTORY TESTING POLICIES - HOUSING (SET ITEM)**

Wendy Makepeace advised she would provide the Committee with a written update after the meeting.

87. **FIRE SAFETY UPDATE - HOUSING (SET ITEM)**

Wendy Makepeace advised she would provide the Committee with a written update after the meeting.

88. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Donna Beechener raised concerns about how officers know which fire marshalls and first aiders are in the building as most officers are hybrid working. Jackie Davies confirmed that the first aid lists in each kitchen are regularly updated. Kim Taylor also advised that the security officer in Contact Harlow would typically be first aid trained. The Committee discussed the possibility of the security officer being a fire coordinator as they would always be in the building. The Committee agreed for this to be a standing item on the agenda.

Scott Merry advised that the fire doors within the Civic Centre would start to be updated in the next couple of weeks.

89. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meetings will take place on Thursday 20 July 2023 at 10am and Thursday 12 October 2023 at 10am.

CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE