

# Item 7

## REPORT TO CABINET

29 September 2005

## REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

Resource Management and  
Welfare and Communications Portfolio

### **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SAFETY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND SYSTEM**

#### **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the details of, and proposes the introduction of an Occupational Health and Safety Management Strategy and System to promote health, safety and welfare, which must become the fundamental cornerstones of all the Council's occupational health and safety activities and processes.
- 1.2 The management system will provide the framework for managing Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) responsibilities and is based on the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) HSG65 (*Successful Health and Safety Management*) and other internationally recognised standards, which measure performance and ensure the achievement of continuous improvement and compliance with current and future legislation.
- 1.3 The benefits of the introduction of an Occupational Health and Safety Strategy are:
  - Potential reduction in the number of accidents
  - Legal and regulatory compliance
  - Demonstration to Political Management, Executive, Employees, Stakeholders and other interested parties of the authority's commitment to health and safety.
  - Demonstration of an innovative and forward thinking approach
  - Better management of health and safety risks, now and in the future
  - Potential reduction in public and employee liability costs
  - Improved health, safety and welfare arrangements
  - More productive and healthy workforce
  - Greater protection and care for the general public

#### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Cabinet considers and approves the following;

- 2.1 The Occupational Health and Safety Management System and Strategy (Appendix 1) as the basis for a structured approach for introducing and managing occupational health, safety and welfare, across the council.
- 2.2. The current baseline position reflected in the Gap Analysis Improvement Action Plan (Appendix 3)
- 2.3 The proposed Occupational Health and Safety Hierarchical Communication System at (Appendix 4).

2.4 The proposed Future Occupational Health and Safety Work Programme (Appendix 5), which specifically identifies the key actions necessary for progressing the occupational management system, and improving the public's health and safety.

2.5 The proposed reporting arrangements (Appendix 6).

### 3. **DEVELOPING HEALTH AND SAFETY**

#### **Background Information**

#### 3.1 **Health and Safety Importance**

To achieve the corporate ambitions and values set out in the Corporate Plan **to achieve excellence throughout its operational activities** and to be recognised as attaining world class status in this field the Council needs to:

- Move away from re-active performance measurement and introduce pro-active measures that identify foreseeable hazards and risks that are notified as non-conformances and subject to corrective action reports, which must be closed out in acceptable time limits.
- Adopt a quality based focussed approach, using risk management techniques such as root cause analysis. *(A powerful risk management tool used to identify, record and visually represent the possible causes of a problem)*
- Develop risk assessments that cover all operational aspects, work activities and processes that are suitable and sufficient and consider all hazards and risks associated with those activities.
- Develop a continuous improvement ethos, and innovative partnerships, to achieve the principles of pro-active management of health risks, and to ensure compliance with health and safety regulations throughout the organisation.
- Raise awareness, train, and stimulate all sectors of the organisation by working with others - employees, trade unions, management, insurers, loss adjusters to achieve provision of good occupational health and safety.
- Train all personnel in all aspects of health and safety and make clear that effective health and safety management is a collective responsibility in which individuals must play their part.
- Regularly report and monitor the success of safety performance by producing recommended action and improvement plans, and defined programmes with clear milestone achievements.
- Adopt new legislation as and when published by the Health and Safety Commission and Health and Safety Executive (HSC/HSE) or other legislative bodies and disseminate the information to all appropriate employees within the Council.
- Adopt and promote the health of employees by encouraging exercise, healthy eating and other activities that improve the quality of life, welfare and well being,

and improve individual and organisational performance of all personnel employed by the Council.

- Use the information and knowledge gained from re-active information in pro-active ways, by ensuring adequate control parameters are in place to prevent re-occurrence.

### 3.2 Links With The Corporate Strategy

The pro-active and effective management of occupational health and safety contributes significantly and directly to the Councils Corporate Values. It will enable the Council to:

- *Be open, accessible, equitable, fair and responsive*  
The Occupational Health and Safety Management system is a transparent (computer based) system that is accessible to all Managers and employees. In time it will contain Health and Safety information on all Council activities
- *Consult with service users, customers and partners*  
The whole foundation of the Occupational Health and Safety Management system success is based on consultation with all stakeholders.
- *Invest in our employees*  
The Occupational Health and Safety Management system invests in our employees by raising health and safety, welfare, and awareness, both upwards and downwards in the organisation structure. It also allows for the identification of specific training needs of employees.
- *Be responsible with and accountable for public finances*  
The Occupational Health and Safety Management system ensures adequate control parameters are in place resulting in potential reduction in public and employee liability costs.
- *Achieve continuous improvement and innovation in service delivery*  
The Occupational Health and Safety Management system is predominately a pro-active system that monitors performance and effectively and routinely leads to innovation and continuous improvement in the services provided to the general public.
- *Take account of sustainability, risk management and crime and disorder*  
The Occupational Health and Safety Management system format incorporates the use of risk management techniques as the basis of achieving its primary objectives.

### 3.3 Health and Safety Commission Strategy

The proposed Occupational Health and Safety Strategy (Appendix 1) complements the actions and visions of the Health and Safety Commission (HSC) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in their published document **A Strategy For Workplace Health and Safety in Great Britain to 2010 and Beyond.**

### 3.4 **Baseline Assessment of Current Status**

The Council at this moment in time does not have a formal management system or structured approach in dealing with occupational health, safety and welfare. The basis and mission of the management system is to allow organisations, employees, and employees' representatives to protect people's health and safety by ensuring that risks in the changing workplace are properly controlled and managed.

The current informal/unstructured system does not allow for the analytic measurement of performance in this field. The Occupational Management System (OMS) is based on standards which monitor and measure performance, and specifies a process of achieving continuous improvement and constant innovation and importantly complies with current legislation.

### 3.5 **Occupational Gap Analysis Report**

An Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) pre-assessment survey or commonly known as the Gap Analysis report was conducted in September 2004, to determine the Council's position, set against HSG65 (Successful Health and Safety Management) and the internationally recognised occupational health and safety management standard OHSAS 18001 (Occupational Management System) and the British Standard BS8800 (Occupational Management System).

The survey's findings were published in October 2004 and covered the following modules:

- Policy and Organisation
- Employee Consultation
- Information, Instruction and Training
- Performance Monitoring and Review
- Risk Assessments
- Occupational Health and First Aid
- Work Equipment
- Safe Systems of Work
- Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Workplace

The graph at Appendix 2 (Health and Safety Management Review 2004) indicates the percentage score achieved by the Council in the various modules

Each section that failed to reach a best practice score of 80% was then subject to an action priority coding.

These codings range from:

- Priority 1** – Recommendations that are critical and should receive management attention or planning within 3 months. Where action cannot be commenced, an action plan must be written with clear stages and expected completion dates and times.
- Priority 2** – Recommendations that are important and must receive management attention with a view to completion within 6 months time.

- **Priority 3** – Recommendations that are desirable and must be completed within 12 months, but which do have the potential to cause substantial impact.

This survey formed the basis of the action improvement plan Appendix 3. (Gap Analysis Action Improvement Plan)

### 3.6 Internal Health and Safety Audits

The survey's findings indicated the clear and urgent need for a monitoring and investigation regime that included a closed-loop non-conformance and corrective action reporting audit procedure.

This procedure was instituted as a matter of priority. Audits are now conducted by health and safety personnel, non-conformance and Corrective Action Reports (CAR) are raised and the responsibility for closing these actions lies with the immediate manager, who has responsibility for the process activity.

### 3.7 Escalation Procedure

Failure to close out the CAR report within the 3 month period now results in the escalation process being instituted, the process is as follows:

- Auditee (Line Manager/Supervisor or person with immediate responsibility for the activity or process) must close out the report within 3 months of report issue date.
- Auditee failed to close out CAR, it is then escalated to Head of Service (HS), and it then becomes the responsibility of the HS to close out that report.
- Head of Service failed to close out CAR, it is then escalated to the department Director, and it then becomes the responsibility of the Director to close out the report.
- Director failed to close out CAR, it is then escalated to Chief Executive, and it is then the responsibility of the Chief Executive to ensure the report is closed out.

The whole basis of the escalation procedure, which reflects recognised best practice, is to ensure collective and accountable responsibility.

### 3.8 Risk Assessments

The Gap Analysis report also indicated a score of 60% for all associated regulations requiring risk assessments to be carried out. This score is below the recognised best practice (See Appendix 2) and requires review of the current arrangements for carrying out and recording risk assessments to ensure that they are suitable and sufficient and are acted on.

This can be achieved by training appropriate personnel and by the creation of an aspects register within the management system that identifies and includes every departmental activity, process, and service, requiring an associated risk assessment.

### **3.9 Occupational Health and Safety Hierarchical Communication System**

The proposed Occupational Health and Safety Hierarchical Communication System (Appendix 4) clearly defines the lines of communication from departmental safety groups up to Cabinet. It is proposed that;

- Cabinet approves Occupational Health and Safety policies, and the Cabinet Member – led Corporate Strategy and Performance Improvement Strategic Working Groups monitor progress against it.
- Management Team helps to refine policies and closely monitors performance via detailed statistical and graphical analysis of the related work programme and accidents.
- The Risk Management Group develops policies and manages the practical application of occupational health and safety through a series of department safety groups.
- Finally, key occupational health and safety issues are consulted upon via the Council's recognised trade union consultation framework.

In designing and refining this arrangement via the Council's Risk Management Group, consideration was given as to whether or not there should be a specific Safety Committee that covers all of the operational aspects of the Council as opposed to the present system of departmental safety groups.

Following careful consideration it was agreed that the current system of department safety groups with representatives from those departments on the Risk Management Group, negates the need for a Safety Committee and offers more value in that they discuss issues which are pertinent to their specific operational and work activities. They also provide an excellent vehicle for debating and developing policy prior to Cabinet consideration and approval. The system also allows for transparency and for both upwards and downwards communication.

Importantly all group meetings are attended by the Resources Officer (Safety and Policy) who passes on information and guides the group in legislative requirements, practices and procedures.

### **3.10 Future Work Programme**

Appendix 5 summarises a future work programme over and above the Gap Analysis Improvement Action Plan referred to in Appendix 3. This programme considers the implications of new or proposed legislation and its effects on the Council's activities and processes, highlighting future policies and strategies that need to be developed in the coming 12 months.

In accordance with the proposed communication system, each of these documents will be presented to Management Team before formal Cabinet approval is sought.

### 3.11 Management Team Occupational Reporting Arrangements

To ensure that Management at the highest level is aware of the actual impact of the proposed Occupational Health and Safety Management System and Strategy, it is proposed that Management Team receives quarterly statistical Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare reports on the following key activities:

- Employee accident trends analysis
- Public accident trends analysis
- Audit status, Closed Out trends analysis
- Health and Safety Improvement Plan status
- Future Work Programme status

### 3.12 Employees/General Public

The Council is committed to being open about what it does to ensure that employees and the general public are kept informed about health and safety at work.

The Council accepts, as a primary factor, that reducing risks protects people; it therefore re-assures the general public that risks from the Council's work activities are properly controlled.

The approach set out in the Occupational Health and Safety Strategy and work programme will contribute directly to reducing the numbers of members of the general public suffering injuries and ill health from the Council's work activities.

Specifically, it is anticipated that the work carried out under these programmes will also reduce the risks to members of the general public in areas such as, construction, legionella, domestic gas installations, slips and trips, and the use of the Council's leisure facilities.

Over the next twelve months, specific risks to the general public will be identified and reduced through proactive risk assessments and reduction activities. In doing so it is proposed that the Council will adopt the following principles:

- Be transparent and open about what we do, why and how, sharing what we know with others;
- Work to develop new relationships with those who we have not traditionally reached, to secure their engagement and participation in improving health and safety;
- Consider information and views received about health and safety;
- Report on incidences, accidents and dangerous occurrences at work where it is clearly in the public interest, for example:
  - Where an accident gives rise to general public or local alarm leading to a need for explanation;
  - Where we need to satisfy the public that the matter has been thoroughly investigated and all avenues for further action identified; and
  - Where lessons for improving health and safety have been learnt and widely circulated.

An action plan to address this important area will be developed in the next six months

#### **4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The introduction of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System and Strategy is not expected to result in any additional direct costs to the Council. However the management of the system could be further strengthened by aligning it to the existing safety personnel who currently work within departments and can operate as autonomous units and in isolation of the corporate centre. These personnel are key to the integrated approach set out in this report's recommended reporting structure and arrangements.

These actions would not require departmental safety officers to do anything different from their current workload requirements. However it would ensure that the Council has a co-ordinated integral system for the management and control of documents and safety audit procedures.

#### **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The Occupational Health and Safety Management system is still being developed and refined to ensure the Council has a structured approach in place, capable of dealing with and developing new ways to establish and maintain an effective health, safety and welfare culture in a changing work environment, so that all the Council's employees take their responsibilities seriously, and are fully involved and associated risks are properly managed.
- 5.2 To this end consultation has taken place at each development stage involving discussions with key officers and consideration/approval at Risk Management Group meetings.
- 5.3 The Health and Safety Executive and Zurich Municipal were also sent copies of the Health and Safety Strategy and invited to comment, however, under their normal protocols they were unable to give any formal feedback.

#### **6. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 The Occupational Health and Safety Management strategy is a live document that requires regular input of information to take effect in an ever-changing work and regulatory environment. The input of this information will allow for the effective performance measurement of health, safety and welfare activities and processes that exist and operate within the Council's scope of influence.
- 6.2 In developing and improving a positive culture of openness, the Council will consult and work in co-operation with the general public, providing information on health and safety policies, procedures, guidance, work instructions, risk assessments and other related documents which have, or may have, an effect on members of the general public.

#### **7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS**

None at this stage.

#### **8. LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Occupational Health and Safety Strategy



- Appendix 2 – Health and Safety Management Review 2004
- Appendix 3 – Gap Analysis Action Improvement Plan
- Appendix 4 – Occupational Health and Safety Hierarchical Communication System
- Appendix 5 – Future Work Programme
- Appendix 6 – Occupational Reporting Arrangements

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**Ward(s)** Not ward specific

**Key Decision Validation** Not a key decision

**Background Papers**

HSG 65 Successful Health and Safety Management  
 OHSAS 18001 Occupational Management System  
 BS 8800 Occupational Management System  
 A Strategy For Workplace Health and Safety in Great Britain To 2010 and Beyond (HSC)  
 Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 and its associated Regulations

**Examination by Statutory Officers**

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Not Applicable</b>
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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