

# **East Herts Council Report**

## **Human Resources Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** 5 August 2020

**Report by:** Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

**Report title:** Health and Safety Quarterly Review – April 2020 to June 2020

**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

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### **Summary**

#### **RECOMMENDATION FOR Human Resources Committee:**

**(a) That the report be noted**

#### **1.0 Proposal**

1.1 This report sets out the collation of Health and Safety (H&S) Management Statistics and service updates for Quarter 1 (April 2020 to June 2020).

#### **2.0 Background**

2.1 The Health and Safety Officer reports to the HR committee each quarter. This report will also be sent to the Executive and the Leadership Team for information along with minutes of the Safety Committee.

### **3.0 Safety Committee**

- 3.1 Due to the Coronavirus pandemic Safety Committee had been temporarily suspended, the next meeting will be held via zoom on Monday 03 August 2020.
- 3.2 During this period the Health and Safety Officer has been working closely with Leadership Team, Heads of Service and Service Managers and the Recovery of Service Group, Corporate Property Services Manager and the Facilities Team to support the preparation of risk assessments, covid secure working arrangements, protocols and procedures. The Health and Safety Officer has attended Leadership Meetings as required and has been liaising with UNISON to share best practice and risk assessment content.

### **4.0 Work Related Accident Reports**

- 4.1 There have been no work related accidents recorded during the period 1 April 2020 to 30 June 2020.
- 4.2 There have been no accidents at the five swimming pools and gyms for the period 01 April 2020 to 30 June 2020 due to the closure of the venues as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 4.3 There were no accidents reportable under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) or any accidents or incidents that required investigation or intervention during this reporting period.
- 4.4 The Health and Safety Officer has completed the analysis of the responses from the benchmarking survey distributed by the East of England Local Government Association. 6 Responses were received from the 50 member authorities of the EELGA. Full details of the survey have been included in the Health and Safety Annual Report.

## **5.0 Contract Management and Compliance**

5.1 In order to fulfil its duty of care, all contracts are overseen by a contract manager who is responsible for ensuring the contract is being delivered safely and the contractor has the appropriate safety procedures in place. The Health and Safety Officer works with the service contract managers to improve the information reporting processes and to ensure pertinent information is being reported and relevant action is being taken (when required) to Safety Committee, Leadership Team and Human Resources Committee. The following updates should be noted:

### **5.2 Buntingford Service Centre**

5.2.1 Shared Waste Services Contractor Urbaser re-instated Brown bin collections for garden and food waste on Monday 11 May.

5.2.2 Following recommendations from the Government, Urbaser have been putting crew members into fixed teams to control the risk of transmission, where possible these teams do not change unless it is absolutely and operationally necessary.

5.2.3 On the 1 May a small fire started in the tipping hall at Buntingford, the smoke and fire were caught on the CCTV cameras and the crews in the hall used fire suppression equipment to douse the fire. On investigation it is believed that the forks of the waste loading vehicle hit a discarded household battery buried in the waste pile. The fire alarm did not activate due to the small size of the fire and the prompt response of the operatives in the hall. Following the incident EHC Property Services Team instructed Eastern Fire and Security to undertake a full check of the fire detection system this identified no faults in the system, in addition Property Services arranged an update of the Fire Risk Assessment undertaken by Total Fire Protection.

5.2.4 The Health and Safety Officer and the Insurance and Risk Business Advisor attended the site on 6 May to review site operations and view the location of the fire. The building was undamaged and overall management was good.

5.2.5 The Corporate Property Services Manager has asked for quotes for adequate additional flame detection sensors at the right height and locations so that the whole shed is covered for small fires in any part of the building. The sensors will trigger the alarm should the temperature increase by 3 degrees in a minute. The current CCTV system will be enhanced by the addition of audio warning to complement existing controls.

### 5.3 **Parking Enforcement Contract**

5.3.1 There are no health and safety concerns to report this quarter.

5.3.2 East Herts Parking Services reviewed APCOA's Covid-19 Risk Assessments for the Parking Enforcement Inspectors and has confirmed its use.

### 5.4 **Sport and Leisure Management Contract – Covid-19**

5.4.1 The Health and Safety Officer and Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Leisure) have visited Hartham Swimming Pool and Gym and Grange Paddocks Swimming Pool and Gym to discuss and review the arrangements Sports and Leisure Management have been putting into place to allow the re-opening of both facilities.

5.4.2 Measures being implemented are;

- Full water treatment and testing prior to re-opening
- Pre-bookable appointments which also supports Track and Trace
- Acrylic screens around service counters
- One way systems throughout the facilities for swimming pool

and gym users

- Enhanced cleaning regimes between session
- Whole room sanitisation fogging procedures
- Installation of hand sanitiser stations throughout the facilities
- Reduced swimming programmes and withdrawal of public seating areas
- Withdrawal of the use of inflatables
- Removal of gym equipment to promote social distancing
- Social distancing measure in changing areas

5.4.3 As previously reported SLM will continue to manage Legionella risks during the Coronavirus situation in partnership with their consultant Kingfisher.

5.4.4 Health and Safety monitoring will continue to be undertaken to verify that compliance is in place.

5.4.5 There are no areas of concern or intervention action required to report this quarter.

## 5.5 **Parks and Open Spaces Management Contract – Covid-19**

5.5.1 The Health and Safety Officer has been working closely with the Operations Team responsible for overseeing the re-opening of parks, play areas and open spaces. Work to re-open started in May with an anticipated opening date of the 4 July however new guidance received on the 1 May meant that the measures suggested needed further evaluation.

5.5.2 The Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Open Spaces) has provided the following summary of current services being operated by Glendale and Groundworks.

5.5.3 Glendale services are continuing to deliver the contract as normal. They are currently supporting the work on the re-opening of the parks, play areas and open spaces carrying out detailed inspections of equipment, ensuring that the areas are

litter free and installing Covid-19 awareness signage. Glendale continues to operate the delivery of the grounds maintenance contract ensuring that crews operate within guidelines.

5.5.4 Two projects are currently on hold as a result of the Coronavirus situation, Hartham Play area has halted just after the contract was awarded to DH Honour. Parsonage Lane is 90% complete but has stopped due to being unable to obtain materials for the foreseeable future.

5.5.5 The Operations team are continuing with site inspections and carrying out service delivery audits as usual.

## **6.0 Office Re-Opening – Covid-19**

### **6.1 Wallfields Re-opening**

6.1.2 The Health and Safety Officer has been working closely with the Corporate Property Services Manager, Facilities Team and Leadership Team and Human Resources colleagues on implementing covid secure measures for the eventual re-opening of the Wallfields Offices. This has included;

- Developing the Covid-19 Secure Workplace Risk Assessment,
- Office Safety Protocols
- Symptoms Reporting Protocols
- Track and Trace measures for entry and exit to Wallfields
- Enhanced cleaning regime
- Controlling the use of desk space and meeting rooms

### **6.2 Wallfields Reception**

6.2.1 The Health and Safety Officer has worked closely with the Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy and the Customer Service Team Leaders on measures to enable the eventual re-opening of Wallfields Reception following government

guidelines. These measures considered include;

- Introduction of one way entry and exit
- Acrylic screen for reception desks
- Removal of seats to promote social distancing
- Signage displayed to remind customers of good practice
- Enhanced cleaning
- Remove modular seating units to prevent customers from breaking social distancing measures (no waiting area)
- Floor stickers and signage in place to make this clear.
- Barrier at each front entrance to separate customers who use kiosk from those using reception.
- Signage for no more than 2 people in reception at any one time. Controlled queuing floor stickers in place.

### **6.3 Launchpad – Charringtons House**

6.3.1 The Health and Safety Officer supported and advised the Business Engagement Manager and the Co-working Facilities Manager on the measures to re-open Launchpad. The process required the production of a Covid-secure Risk Assessment and the measures introduced include;

- Pre-bookable space, this will also support the Track and Trace system
- Redesigned layout to promote social distancing
- Enhanced cleaning and sanitiser points
- Screens
- Signage and advice

Launchpad re-opened on Monday 6 June.

### **6.4 Hertford Theatre**

6.4.1 The Health and Safety Officer supported, advised and assisted the Front of House Manager to develop the covid secure Socially Distanced Cinema Risk Assessment for the anticipated

re-opening on the 16 July.

6.4.2 The Front of House Manager has also developed and delivered training on new measures for cleaning and operating the cinema offer that includes;

- New and enhanced cleaning procedures and colour coded cleaning equipment
- Pre-bookable seating that supports Track and Trace
- Designated seating plan for family groups, individuals or couples etc.
- Routes of travel in the building
- Information and signage
- New checklists and procedures

6.4.3 The Health and Safety Officer will continue to support, advise and assist all services in measures to ensure service delivery is maintained across the council and is pleased to report that the response, time, resource and effort taken by colleagues to keep East Herts services functioning and remobilised has been exemplary.

## **7.0 Homeworker Display Screen Equipment and Workstation Assessments**

7.1 While there is no increased risk from DSE work for those working at home temporarily the Health and safety Executive relaxed the need to complete DSE assessments during this period, however we recognise the need to ensure employees are supported.

7.2 In June 2020 all employees were asked to complete an assessment questionnaire in order for us to assess the needs and identify issues or difficulties experienced.

- 7.3 The HSE also requires employers to provide workers with advice on completing their own basic assessment at home.
- 7.4 The Health and Safety Officer has published practical guidance and advice for colleagues on the Councils intranet on good practice linking this to the Councils Wellbeing Hub.
- 7.5 313 assessments were issued in June (the figure will vary based on starters and leavers and colleagues that do not work from home e.g. Caretakers, Post Room staff during this period) as of 15 July 209 assessments have been completed and returned.
- 7.6 Colleagues in Human Resources have been cross referencing the responses with the results of the Staff Wellbeing survey to identify colleagues with concerns or issues and will be working with the Health and Safety Officer to find solutions.

## **8.0 Lone Worker Devices – Guardian 24**

- 8.1 The Health and Safety Officer and the Corporate Procurement Manager agreed to extend the current contract with Guardian 24 as per the existing contract specification in order to maintain an unbroken continuity of service and lone worker protection.
- 8.2 The Health and Safety Officer will contact the Corporate Procurement Officer to discuss options going forward.

## **9.0 Contract and Development Support for Leisure Projects**

- 9.1 The Health and Safety Officer will continue to liaise with the Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Leisure) on the progress of the improvement programmes.
- Hartham swimming pool and gym - upgrade and refurbishment. (The Councils Planning Committee deferred the application pending a review of the designs.)

- Grange Paddocks swimming pool and gym - new build. Work proceeding well and on schedule with a completion date and handover scheduled for 21 October 2021. Work on site is advancing well with no reports of accidents or incidents.

9.2 The Health and Safety Officer is a member of the Leisure Officer Working Group for the project and continues to contribute to the health and safety elements of the construction programme.

### 9.3 **Ward Freeman Swimming Pool and gym - upgrade and refurbishment**

9.3.1 The Health and Safety Officer has been advised that work on the proposed refurbishment has not commenced at this time due to ongoing discussions with Hertfordshire County Council.

## 10.0 **Learning and Development – Partnership training and future events**

10.1 During the period 1 April 2020 and 30 June 2020 all group face to face training has been postponed due to lockdown.

10.2 The Health and Safety Officer will continue on developing additional e-learning modules for Skillsbuild the Council's e-learning platform.

10.3 As lockdown restrictions are eased the Health and Safety Officer will work closely with HR Colleagues to review future training provision and how this can be delivered in an effective and meaningful way. Future events to be rescheduled include:

- Asbestos and Legionella Awareness
- First Aid at Work (Refresher) 2 day
- Defibrillator Awareness (Charringtons House)
- Evacuation Chair User

## **11.0 Policy Development**

11.1 The Health and Safety Officer has reviewed all the arrangements in the Health and Safety Policy. A 3 year Policy Review Plan has been devised, developing a programme to support the continuation of this on-going policy review. The plan ensures the arrangements are revised in a timely manner, although there is flexibility in the programme to allow for any changes that may arise from legislative, regulatory, organisational or operational changes.

11.2 The Policy Statement of Intent and Policy arrangement for Organisational Roles and Responsibilities will be reviewed in order to ensure they reflect the current organisational priorities and where regulatory or legislative changes occur.

11.3 The scope of the Health and Safety policy is included in the plan; the scope involves determining and documenting a list of specific goals, deliverables, features, functions, tasks and deadlines. In other words, it is what needs to be achieved and the work that must be done to maintain the content of the policy.

## **12.0 Options**

N/A

## **13.0 Risks**

13.1 As stated in the report where health and safety risks have been identified appropriate assessment has been made with relevant controls or mitigation put in place.

## **14.0 Implications/Consultations**

### **Community Safety**

No

**Data Protection**

No

**Equalities**

No

**Environmental Sustainability**

No

**Financial**

No

**Health and Safety**

Yes – as described in the report

**Human Resources**

Yes – Health and Safety is part of the HR & OD Service

**Human Rights**

No

**Legal**

No

**Specific Wards**

No

**15.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

N/A

**Contact Officer**

Simon O’Hear – Head of HR and OD  
Contact Tel No. – 01279 502141  
[simon.o’hear@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:simon.o’hear@eastherts.gov.uk)

**Report Author**

Peter Dickinson – Health and Safety Officer  
[Peter.dickinson@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:Peter.dickinson@eastherts.gov.uk)