

# **East Herts Council Report**

## **Human Resources Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** 5 November 2020

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

**Report title:** Health and Safety Quarterly Review (Q2) – July 2020 to September 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 2 (July 2020 to September 2020).

#### **2.0 Background**

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

#### **3.0 Safety Committee**

3.1 Safety Committee reconvened 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 and consulting with UNISON to work up agreed risk assessments and share best practice.

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

4.1 There was one accident reportable under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR).

On investigation it was confirmed that this was not caused by a procedural or operational failure but was the result of an unfortunate misstep whereby the officer slipped down an embankment sustaining a severe injury resulting in hospitalisation.

The Health and Safety Officer completed the required report form which was submitted to the Health and Safety Executive. There have been no non reportable work related accidents recorded during the period 1 July 2020 to 30 September 2020, compared to the same period in 2019 in part this reduction will have been affected by more staff working from home or away from the office.

## 2019 Accident Totals – For Comparison

Site	July	August	September	TOTAL
Hartham	9	4	4	17
Fanshawe	2	1	5	8
Leventhorpe	1	0	1	2
Grange Paddocks	9	4	7	20
Ward Freman	0	0	1	1
Employees	0	1	0	1
Contractors	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>49</b>

4.2 Accident reporting had been postponed in line with the temporary closure of leisure centres. It has now resumed with accident totals received from the five leisure centres/swimming pools.

## Non Reportable Accidents – July, August, September 2020

(as reported there were no non-reportable employee accidents in Q2)

Swimming Pool & Gym	July*	August	September	TOTAL
Hartham	0	2	1	3
Grange Paddocks	0	1	3	4
Leventhorpe	0	0	0	0
Ward Freman	0	0	0	0
Fanshawe	0	0	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0*</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>

\* No reports due to facility closure arising from Coronavirus Pandemic

4.3 There were no accidents from Leisure 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 There was no further action or intervention required in respect to the three reported accidents as they were individual isolated

incidents (swallowing water x 2 and a slip) and not part of any pattern.

## **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 monitored/reported and relevant action is being taken (when required) to Safety Committee, Leadership Team and Human Resources Committee.

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

The following updates should be noted:

### **5.2 Buntingford Service Centre**

5.2.1 Fortnightly depot user group meetings now takes place via zoom to ensure consistent and clear communication between the contractors occupying the depot. The depot user group is chaired by the Health and Safety Officer to avoid one tenant acting as the chair and making decisions that impact disproportionately on the other (shared site) contractors.

5.2.2 The purpose of the group is to discuss onsite operational matters, safety concerns or issues and is attended by contract managers and at least one member of the Property Team.

5.2.3 The Health and Safety Officer can report that all contractors on site have robust Covid secure operating procedures in place. Urbaser are the designated lead and contact for co-ordinating

Covid secure measures and appropriate covid safe signage is being displayed.

## **6.0 Parking Enforcement Contract**

6.1 There are no health and safety concerns to report this quarter. Parking Enforcement is also outsourced, the Health and Safety Officer can confirm that effective COVID secure practices are in place and being managed by the Contract Manager.

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

7.1 The Health and Safety Officer and Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Leisure) provided support to Sport and Leisure Management who have now re-opened all five of the Councils swimming pools. SLM have implemented extensive covid secure measure to make the facilities safe for customers and these have been consulted upon with the Health and Safety Officer who can report that these are working well in practice.

7.2 Health and Safety monitoring by the contract manager (supported by the H&S Officer) will continue to be undertaken to verify that compliance continues.

7.3 There are no areas of H&S concern or intervention action required to report this quarter.

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

8.1 All parks, open spaces and play areas were successfully re-opened in July with ongoing use being monitored by East Herts Operations team, supported by grounds maintenance contractor Glendale.

Measures that were undertaken prior to the re-opening include;

- Inspection of all play equipment
- Deep clean of all play equipment and hard surface areas.
- Information signs and notices regarding good practice and covid safety
- Removal of some equipment to ensure social distancing can be maintained
- Inspection and monitoring by Glendale as part of the contract delivery service.

## **8.2 Waytemore Castle Project:**

8.2.1 The Health and Safety Officer and Risk and Insurance Business Advisor are providing advice and guidance on the Waytemore Castle heritage improvement project which aims to open the historic ruins in a safe and sympathetic fashion. Due to the heritage status it is not possible to install conventional safety controls so innovative ways have been discussed and it was agreed that relevant safety information can be conveyed using the information signs at the base of the site.

8.2.2 The Health and Safety Officer and Insurance and Business Advisor will be scheduling a site visit in due course.

## **9.0 Office/Reception Re-Opening – Covid-19 Secure**

### **9.1 Wallfields Re-opening**

9.1.1 The Health and Safety Officer has continues to work closely with the Corporate Property Services Manager, Facilities Team and Leadership Team and Human Resources colleagues on maintaining workplace covid secure measures this includes;

- Reviewing Covid-19 Secure Workplace Risk Assessments with teams
- Reviewing Office Safety Protocols

- Attending site two days a week to carry out visual reviews
- Updating the RA's where appropriate: The Wallfields RA has been updated to allow the sandwich seller to return with appropriate controls in place

### 9.1.2 **Council Chamber Re-opening**

9.1.3 The Health and Safety Officer has worked closely with the Corporate Property Services Manager to bring the council chamber back into controlled use to allow larger face to face socially distanced meetings to be held. Numbers are limited to 23 in main chamber plus 8 in the public gallery. However, following the recent change in guidance on 2/10/2020 the planned return to holding face to face committee meetings where this could be accommodated has been postponed in line with working from home where possible.

9.1.4 Other meeting rooms have been re-opened where appropriate with capacity and controls processes in place.

### 9.1.5 **Wallfields Reception**

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 planned re-opening of Wallfields Reception following government guidelines. Wallfields reception reopened on 05 October 2020, re-opening was initially delayed due to the time required to receive the Acrylic Screens which were prioritised to the NHS. Further delays have been caused by the time to set up the IT booking system and adjustments in line with emerging guidance.

These measures considered include;

- Bookable access only
- Introduction of one way entry and exit system

- Acrylic screens for reception desks
- Removal of seats to promote social distancing
- Signage displayed to remind customers of good practice
- Enhanced cleaning
- Removal of surplus seating units to prevent customers from breaking social distancing measures (no waiting area)
- Information and signage in place to explain measures.
- Barrier at front entrance to close off payment kiosk from those using reception.
- Signage for no more than 2 people in reception at any one time. Controlled queuing floor stickers in place.
- PPE for relevant officers as appropriate
- The re-opening was delayed due to difficulties obtaining the acrylic screens as resources were being target focused on NHS services.
- A decision was taken to prevent the use of the payment kiosks in the interests of public and staff health to prevent multiple contacts touching the screens and to prevent the risk of congestion in the entrances and potential transmission of covid-19.
- The Customer Services Team and Health and Safety Officer will keep the arrangements under review.

#### **9.1.6 Charringtons House Reception**

9.1.7 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 planned re-opening of Charringtons House Reception following government guidelines. Charringtons reception reopened on 05 October 2020. These measures considered include;

- Bookable access only
- QR codes for track and trace on display
- Introduction of one way entry and exit system
- Acrylic screens for reception desks
- Removal of seats to promote social distancing



- Signage displayed to remind customers of good practice
- Enhanced cleaning
- Removal of surplus seating to prevent customers from breaking social distancing measures (no waiting area)
- Information and signage in place to explain measures.
- Barrier at front entrance to close off payment kiosk from those using reception.
- Signage for no more than 2 people in reception at any one time. Controlled queuing floor stickers in place.
- PPE for relevant officers as appropriate

9.1.8 In addition to these measures interview rooms 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be repurposed as pre-bookable single use workspaces for officers who need to be on site to support customers. Meeting rooms A and B will be portioned to allow for small (social distanced) meetings as required with clear signage over capacity levels.

## **10. Hertford Theatre**

10.1 The Front of House Manager, supported and advised by the Health and Safety Officer developed and delivered new protocols for the re-hiring of the River Room and Dance Studio and has further updated the procedures for the socially distanced cinema viewing the new protocols and procedures were validated by Unison and these remain under live review for the duration and in response the Government guidance.

10.2 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 continues to be exemplary.

## **11.0. Lone Worker Devices – Guardian 24 Update**

11.1 The Health and Safety Officer is waiting for an update from Stevenage Borough Council on the option of a joint procurement process for the lone worker service provider and will be contacting the Corporate Procurement Manager to discuss options. The current contract has been extended for another year (the re-tendering was due to be progressed at Lockdown but was postponed and years extension sought to ensure coverage). The extension ensures EHC to not lose continuity of service and there is time for the procurement to be made and coverage to be maintained.

## **12.0 Contract and Development Support for Leisure Development Projects / Capital Programmes**

12.1 The Health and Safety Officer continues to liaise with the Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Leisure) on the progress of the improvement programmes.

- Hartham swimming pool and gym – The Health and Safety Officer participated in a zoom meeting to review tender documents for the pool development.
- The Health and Safety Officer will be participating in the SQ scoring stage of the contract on the 06 November 2020.
- The Health and Safety Officer attended a site meeting and tour of the Grange Paddocks development in September with the Project Manager and is pleased to report that the site is very managed and organised with clear evidence of good safety management and covid secure processes in place. I can further report that work is proceeding well despite logistical obstacles posed by the current covid pandemic.
- The Health and Safety Officer has engaged with the Project Managers responsible for the Northgate End and Old River Lane Developments to ensure health and safety compliance, good practice and monitoring are part of the scope of the development including covid secure risk assessments, these

have been obtained for review and the Health and Safety Officer will also be seeking to arrange observation site visits as the projects evolve.

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

13.1 The Health and Safety Officer will be reviewing and refreshing the content of the health and safety modules for Skillsbuild the Council's e-learning platform. Revised versions will be rolled out in November 2020

13.2 As lockdown restrictions are eased the Health and Safety Officer will work closely with the OD and HR Co-ordinator who leads on the Council's development programme to review future training provision and how this can be delivered in an effective and meaningful way, e-learning and limited capacity face to face learning will be considered. Future H&S refresher/new starter events to be rescheduled include:

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

### **14.0 Options**

N/A

### **15.0 Risks**

15.1 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.

### **16.0 Implications/Consultations**

#### **Community Safety**

As covered by the report the measures or controls put in place will

impact positively on community safety e.g. re parks and open spaces or reception re-opening to the public.

**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

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

N/A

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