

# **East Herts Council Report**

## **Human Resources Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** 26 May 2021

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

**Report title:** Health and Safety Quarterly Review (Q4) – January 2021 to March 2021

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

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### **Summary**

#### **RECOMMENDATION FOR HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE:**

**(a) To consider the Health and Safety Quarterly Review (Q4) – January 2021 to March 2021 and provide comments to the Head of HR & OD and the Health and Safety Officer.**

#### **1.0 Proposal**

1.1 This report sets out the collation of Health and Safety (H&S) Management Statistics and service updates for Quarter 4 (January 2021 to March 2021).

#### **2.0 Background**

2.1 The Health and Safety Officer reports to the HR committee each quarter. This report also been reported to the safety committee (27/4/21) as part of the quarterly meeting and then considered by the Leadership Team, who reviewed the report before it is submitted to the HR Committee. (This report will also be shared with the Executive for information to continue to

raise the profile of Health and Safety.)

### **3.0 Safety Committee**

- 3.1 Safety Committee met via zoom on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- 3.2 Contract managers and contract project managers are invited to attend to provide feedback on the main and capital projects.

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

- 4.1 There were no reportable accidents under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) for the period 1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021.
- 4.2 There have also been no non reportable work related accidents recorded during the period 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2021; this reduction was due to staff working from home or away from the office.
- 4.3 Due to the last lockdown swimming pools and gyms were forced to close.

### **Non Reportable Accidents – January, February, March 2021**

(as reported there were no non-reportable employee accidents in Q4)

<b>Swimming Pool &amp; Gym</b>	<b>January</b>	<b>February</b>	<b>March</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Hartham	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Grange Paddocks	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Leventhorpe	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Ward Freman	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Fanshawe	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Employees	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Contractors	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

- 4.4 The Health and Safety Officer met with the Leisure & Parks Development Officer, Building Surveyor (Property) and the Contract Manager and Centre Manager (Hartham) (SLM) on Thursday 08<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to discuss the re-opening of the Swimming Pools and Gyms in response to the Governments roadmap for easing out of lockdown.

Ward Freman, Leventhorpe and Fanshawe swimming pools and gyms re-opened on the 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021 under full covid secure guidelines.

Grange Paddock swimming pool and gym also re-opened as work continues on the build of the new centre.

Hartham swimming pool remains closed as work commences on the redevelopment of the centre but the gyms have re-opened under covid secure guidelines.

- 4.5 SLM have maintained all statutory checks in respect to water sampling and legionella testing, temperature checks, pool chlorination and sanitising in addition to maintaining pool plant throughout the covid pandemic.

## **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.
- 5.2 The Operations Area Inspections Team continue to carry out district inspections and have noted an increase in fly-tipping

across the district.

The following updates should be noted:

### 5.3 **Buntingford Service Centre**

5.3.1 Site re-lining was undertaken and completed in December 2020, however due to a defective batch of line marking paint the surface material lifted this was at first thought to be an isolated incident but was later attributed to the same failure at one of the Councils pay and display car park with a further failure on a site outside of East Herts. The company have undertaken to prepare and reline the two sites.

5.3.2 The Health and Safety Officer, submitted premises safety documents to Hertfordshire Fire and Rescue Services County Fire Protection and Safety Team for consideration and these have been approved. The documents will be installed in a Premises Information Box (PIB), this is a weather and tamper proof box that is fitted to the exterior of a building and contains safety information pertinent for the use by the Fire Service, it contains the details of the building layout, site layout, location of hazardous chemicals and materials, position of nearest fire hydrant and mains water and electricity and gas supplies. Once finalised these will be placed in the premises information box and the documents will be used as the template for additional Premises Information Boxes to be installed at Wallfields, Charringtons House, Hertford Theatre, Hillcrest and Rectory Hall Hostels.

5.3.3 The Health and Safety Officer can report that all contractors on site are maintaining robust Covid secure operating procedures on site and in the public domain. Urbaser are the designated lead and contact for co-ordinating Covid secure measures at Buntingford 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.
- 6.2 The Health and Safety Officer receives monthly site inspections from the Service Development Manager and Parking Contract Manager on the overall performance of the contract and it can be reported that there have been no health and safety related issues or concerns requiring investigation.

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

- 7.1 The five facilities re-opened on the 12<sup>th</sup> April, SLM are continuing to maintain the five sites and covid secure measures remain in effect.
- 7.2 Health and Safety monitoring by the contract manager (supported by the H&S Officer) continues to be undertaken to verify health and safety compliance across the service.
- 7.3 There are no areas of H&S concern requiring 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 remain open and available to the community and monitoring and inspection continues to be undertaken by East Herts Operations team, supported by grounds maintenance contractor Glendale.

### **8.2 Hartham Play Area**

- 8.2.1 Despite delays due to weather and the delivery of some play equipment arriving from Germany and Belgium as a result in

changes to import regulations due to Brexit in addition to the specification requiring surfacing such as sureset and tiger mulch which are in high demand it is expected that the project will be completed late Spring.

8.2.2 The health and safety Officer undertook a visit to the site on 08<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to review progress and observe working practices. Significant progress has taken place since a previous visit with some pieces of the new play equipment installed. The area is well organised, tidy and secure with good health and safety observance being undertaken by contractors.

## **9.0 Rectory Hall, Stanstead Abbots**

9.1 Rectory Hall, Stanstead Abbots, formerly Thele House has undergone extensive upgrades and improvements to bring it in line with regulations governing temporary residential accommodation. New fire safety equipment has been installed with a new fire detection system, the boilers have been replaced and the water storage tanks have been replaced. The adjoining Annexe and Cedar Cottage have also undergone extensive remodelling for use by highly vulnerable homeless persons with high dependency issues, mental health needs etc. In order to ensure privacy the two buildings have been fenced in order to prevent children from disturbing residents. The garage/store has been converted into an office for the Hostel Officer who can access both buildings.

9.4 The Health and Safety Officer, Corporate Property Services Manager, Property Services Team accompanied by the Homeless Services Manager and Service Manager have carried out site visits throughout the development to identify snagging issues and resolve these.

9.5 The development consists of ;

- 11 Apartments in Rectory Hall
- 4 Rooms in the Annexe
- 2 Rooms in Cedar Cottage
- An office and meeting room for the onsite Hostel Officer.

## **10.0 Lone Worker Contract Update**

- 10.1 The Health and Safety Officer would like to advise the Committee that the joint procurement for the Lone worker Solution contract is continuing, Stevenage Borough Council were able to participate in the exercise having initially withdrawn.
- 10.2 The Health and Safety Officer hosted meetings with 4 suppliers registered on the Procurement for Housing Framework on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> March. The meeting was attended by stakeholders from East Herts and Stevenage Borough Council to review the product options and services offered by the suppliers.
- 10.3 A zoom meeting with the Health and Safety Officer, Procurement Manager, Stevenage Borough Councils lead officer and Procurement for Housing took place on the 21<sup>st</sup> April to discuss the next stage of the procurement process.

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

- 11.1 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 redevelopment. Work commenced on site on March 29<sup>th</sup> 2021.
  - The Health and Safety Officer continues to receive updates and attends a meeting of the Leisure Officers working group on the progress of the Grange Paddocks development. On

the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 The Health and Safety Officer, Leisure and Parks Development Officer and Project Manager visited the site to review progress and were given a tour of the facility by the developers. The group had an opportunity to view the pool hall, changing facilities, plant room and the gymnasium and finally a viewing from the roof.

- The site is managed professionally and is fully covid secure with sanitiser stations, booking in and out and temperature checking before entry. Excellent health and safety practices are observed by all contractors on site.
- The Health and Safety Officer is providing support to the Hertford Theatre Team when they decant to the ground floor in the old building at Wallfields as work commences on the redevelopment of the Theatre. The Health and Safety Officer will continue to liaise with the team as they develop plans for the provision of public events.

## **12.0 Police and Crime Commissioner and County Council Elections**

12.1 The Health and Safety Officer supported the Elections Team in preparations to get polling stations and the elections count centre covid secure. The Health and Safety Officer acting as Polling Station Inspector (Health and Safety) provided support to develop site risk assessments and identify measures to ensure the election process took place with as minimal disruption as possible.

## **13.0 Agile Working Programme/COVID Protocols**

13.1 The Health and Safety Officer has been working with Leadership Team and Heads of Service in the development of the Agile Working Trial that commenced on the 19<sup>th</sup> April.



- 13.2 In order to maintain covid security desks are bookable using Skedda a system used by Launchpad to book a desk. Authorised users log onto Skedda and can select a desk from the floor plans and allocated desks displayed, this controls bookings and provides data on use. Staff fully based in the office still have a desk/workstation allocated, all other workstations designated need to be booked per day with before and after use cleaning protocols in place.
- 13.3 Workstations have supplies of hand sanitiser and hard surface wipes to allow users to clean desks before and after use.
- 13.4 Users that require workstation modifications, adapted furniture, equipment and chairs will not participate in the first trial. The trial will be used to determine the viability of the programme and how users with specific needs are accommodated.
- 13.5 There continue to be strict coronavirus protocols that must be adhered to such as one way systems, restricted limits on numbers in shared rooms, use of the kitchens and toilets and entering and leaving the building, these were reviewed and strengthened for the trial and to deal with increased use. A key development in line with the Government's roll out of Lateral Flow Testing (LFT) has been added with the use of twice weekly LFT by staff who are accessing the office or working away from home. The intranet (Wallfields Risk assessment, Office Protocols and Reporting Symptoms/positive LFT) has been updated as well as shared with relevant staff through a briefing. Other risk assessments have been updated to incorporate twice weekly LFT as appropriate e.g. for staff who visit customers (Planning Officers, Outside Officers, Environmental Health Officers etc.)
- 13.6 Public access to Wallfields will continue to be controlled, an appointment system is place for reception/face to face appointments. Public attendance in large numbers is currently

not permitted. The Council chamber social distancing measures remain in place at 2 meters with limited numbers as to reduce this would then require all attendees to wear a face mask or screens being put in place because of the reduced distance between participants required. Now that virtual meetings are no longer allowed this will be reviewed and plans put in place. All meetings except full council should be able to be accommodated in the chamber, alternatives are being considered for full council alongside further mitigation that could be used to reduce to 1m social distancing in the Wallfields chamber to accommodate full numbers including the public. The Chamber has been being used for postal votes as part of the election work with COVID measure including screens in place.

#### **14.0 Enforcement and Licensing Interviews**

14.1 The Health and Safety Officer assisted the Area Environment Inspection Officer to reconfigure interview room 3 at Wallfields to allow for the undertaking of interviews under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) and the Regulatory and Investigative Powers Act (RIPA). The room has been made covid secure with a dividing screen between the officers and the interviewees and allows for the recording of interviews in accordance with the acts.

14.2 The room can also be used by the Licensing Enforcement Teams for interviews as well as the Revenues and Benefits Teams and by making these changes the Council avoids the costs of hiring an interview room at the local police station.

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

15.1 The Health and Safety Officer reviewed and updated the e-learning health and safety content for Skillsbuild the Council's e-

learning platform. Revised versions were launched in December 2020.

15.2 The following training sessions have been delivered virtually;

14 January 2021 – Asbestos Awareness

26 January 2021 – Project Risk Management

02<sup>nd</sup> February 2021 – Legionella Risk Management

15.3 The first of the First Aid at Work 2 day refresher courses have been booked for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May 2021 in accordance with the Health and Safety Executives guidance and training directive.,

15.4 As lockdown restrictions are further 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, Future H&S refresher/new starter events to be rescheduled include:

- First Aid at Work (Qualifier) 3 day certification course
- Defibrillator Awareness and Refresher
- Evacuation Chair Operator

## **16.0 Options**

N/A

## **17.0 Risks**

17.1 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.

## **18.0 Implications/Consultations**

N/A

### **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**

Yes - Health and Safety practice, reporting and monitoring is in place

to comply with legal requirements and the report has been reviewed by LT which includes the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

**Specific Wards**

No

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

N/A

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