

## NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

HUMAN RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE  
13 JANUARY 2009

### REPORT OF HEAD OF HEALTH AND SAFETY

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

#### 1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report covers the period between 1<sup>st</sup> October and 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008
- 1.2 This report replaces the health and safety information previously provided in HR Performance Reports. It is now presented as a separate report to reflect the amount of information provided and to improve accessibility to this information.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the HR Committee note the information in this report.
- 2.2 That the HR Committee approve the format and content of this report.
- 2.3 That the HR Committee approve the amendments to the Health and Safety Strategy as detailed at item 4.4

#### 3 HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

##### 3.1 Significant H&S incidents

3.1.1 There were two significant incidents within the reporting period:

3.1.2 The first involved the collapse of an external glass carrying rack on one of the new fleet vehicles, causing broken glass to be scattered across the highway. The glass was quickly cleared, and the glass carrying racks on all vehicles have since been modified by the manufacturer. Neither the police nor the Health & Safety Executive were involved in the incident.

3.1.3 The second significant incident was a fire in a factory in Basford. Although the fire did not directly affect any Nottingham City Council assets, nearby homes were evacuated and asbestos debris was spread widely across the area, including Fenton Court. The City Council has co-ordinated the clear up of the asbestos waste.

##### 3.2 Fire risk assessments

3.2.1 Fire risk assessments of high rise buildings were reviewed by the NCH Health & Safety team in October / November, and further assessments of sheltered schemes and other flats have been carried out by Savills, working for the Asset Management team, who will manage remedial work programmes.

3.2.2 Many of the recommendations made within the fire risk assessments carried out by Savills relate to the management of fire risks, including preparation of procedures and regular inspections and audits within workplaces and higher risk domestic properties.

### 3.3 Vacancy for Fire Safety & First Aid Officer

3.3.1 Interviews for a Fire Safety and First Aid Officer took place in December, and the successful candidate is expected to start in late January / early February 2009.

3.3.2 The post holder will be responsible for developing and implementing fire management procedures and carrying out assessments, inspections and audits as recommended in the assessments referred to in paragraph 3.2.1.

3.3.3 This post replaces the vacant post for an additional generic Safety Adviser, and represents a saving as the new post attracts a lower salary.

### 3.4 Health & Safety Survey

3.4.1 A health and safety survey of employee preferences was carried out during October 2008. This was supported by the GMB trade union, who donated twenty seats in their VIP box at the Nottingham Arena to see a Nottingham Panthers ice hockey match, and a signed ice hockey stick. 342 employees completed the survey, and prizes were awarded after a draw in November.

### 3.5 Health & Safety Committee

3.5.1 The Health & Safety Committee is the forum for consultation on health and safety matters between the company's management and employee representatives. The H&S Committee continues to meet regularly (once every 6 weeks).

3.5.2 A sub group of the Committee has been formed to discuss options to improve accessibility to and attendance at Committee meetings. The subgroup is also exploring ways to make the Committee more effective and to increase its visibility to company employees.

### 3.6 Control of Legionellosis

3.6.1 Water hygiene (legionella) assessments have now been carried out in company workplaces (i.e. Hounds Gate, Harvey Rd and Area Housing Offices) and further assessments are planned for other buildings with communal water supplies (i.e. sheltered schemes).

3.6.2 Water monitoring log books have been redesigned to make them more user friendly and effective. These have been issued to workplaces and persons responsible for completing the log books have been identified.

### 3.7 H&S intranet site

3.7.1 The H&S Team has redeveloped the information to be displayed on the health and safety area of the company's intranet. The new site is much more user

friendly, and all information is up to date. The new site also includes links to useful external internet sites such as the Health & Safety Executive, Fire & Rescue Service and Environment Agency.

- 3.7.2 The new intranet site will be available in 2009 after the design elements of the site have been developed by the company's Marketing & Communication Team.
- 3.7.3 A new Health & Safety Team service standard will be published at the launch of the new intranet site. This standard includes targets for dealing with requests for assistance and investigating accidents, and commits to the provision of a proactive service that meets the needs of its users.

### 3.8 Vehicle and pedestrian safety at Harvey Rd

- 3.8.1 The recent relocation of maintenance operations from three sites to the one site at Harvey Road has resulted in vehicle congestion both on site and on the road leading to site. This is exacerbated by school traffic to two schools for which Harvey Road is the only means of access.
- 3.8.2 Although there has not been any serious injury or damage reported in this location, there has been a marked increase in the number of reported minor collisions, and a more significant accident is likely in these conditions.
- 3.8.3 A traffic management group has been set up to identify and implement measures to reduce the risks to vehicles and pedestrians at Harvey Rd. The group has already identified additional off site parking, and will trial a 'managed time' procedure early in 2009 that will restrict the times when vehicles are allowed into the site. The group is also liaising with the school management and looking at other options to increase the number of parking spaces and reduce the number of vehicles using site.

## 4 **HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY**

- 4.1 The NCH Health and Safety Strategy is a matter reserved for board. The current strategy (2008-2011) was adopted by Board in September 2008.

- 4.2 Items that were to be completed by December 2008 are:

- 4.2.1 **Item 1.1 - Health & Safety Team: A full review of the role, responsibilities and activities of the health and safety team** - "We shall review the health and safety team's structure, purpose and activities, and shall produce a service standard for the team so that its customers know what to expect from the team."

This action is complete - all members of the Health & Safety Team now have specific delegated tasks and areas of responsibility, and the vacant position has been filled, subject to medical clearance. A service standard has been developed and will be published on the company's intranet site early in 2009.

- 4.2.2 **Item 7.1 - Emergency contacts booklet: A booklet containing contact details for key persons and organisations for use in emergencies** - "We shall develop, circulate and maintain a booklet that identifies key persons and organisations for dealing with emergencies and their contact numbers."

This action is complete - an emergency contact booklet has been developed and circulated to Executive Management Team and to Nottingham on Call, who manage contacts in an emergency. The booklet will be published on the company's intranet site early in 2009.

4.3 There are a further 16 items in the H&S Strategy that commenced in 2008. All these items are in progress and are on target to be completed within the timescales allocated within the strategy.

4.4 There are two proposed amendments to the strategy as follows:

4.4.1 Amend item 7.2 'Emergency Procedures Manual' to 'Emergency Procedures and Business Continuity Manual' so that business continuity plans are developed and included in the manual, and extend the target date from June 2010 to June 2011 to accommodate the additional work.

4.4.2 Add a new item 13.9 'Work at Height' so that the company's current arrangements to ensure safe work at height are reviewed.

## **5 NEW LEGISLATION**

5.1 The new **Health and Safety Offences Act 2008** comes into force in January 2009. The effect of the legislation is to increase the level of health and safety fines and length of prison sentences that can be imposed at the Magistrate's court without indictment to Crown Court.

5.1.1 There are no new duties on NCH as a result of this legislation.

## **6 NEW CORPORATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

6.1 A new incident reporting and investigation procedure is currently being developed. This procedure will be submitted to Executive Management Team for approval after consultation with management and employee representatives, and should be ready for implementation by April 2009.

6.1.1 The draft procedure will be operated alongside the existing procedure for the period January - March 2009 to test its operability.

6.1.2 This procedure is intended to:

- make incident reporting easier.
- improve the quality of incident investigations.
- ensure that the relevant senior managers and other stakeholders are aware of the outcome of incident investigations.
- monitor incident investigation targets.
- improve health & safety representative involvement.
- improve the quality of incident reports and statistics.
- move the management of violence and vehicle damage reports to the appropriate divisions within the company.

6.1.3 This procedure is also being used to demonstrate our new corporate H&S procedure and H&S forms formats.

## **7 HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTIONS AND OUTCOMES**

- 7.1 A new Health & Safety Inspection schedule will be launched in January / February 2009.
  - 7.1.1 This inspection schedule includes all workplaces, high rise buildings and sheltered schemes.
  - 7.1.2 Inspection teams must include a member of the Health & Safety Team and the Manager responsible for the area being inspected. However, Board and Executive Management Team members, employee representatives and residents will also be invited and encouraged to take part as appropriate.
  - 7.1.3 Significant outcomes of inspections will be included in future HR Committee reports.

## **8 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING STRATEGY**

- 8.1 A health and safety training strategy will be developed in 2009, incorporating a review employee training needs.
- 8.2 E-learning courses have been developed for manager safety responsibilities, fire safety, office health and safety inductions and safe working with computers. These are accessible to all employees who use computers at work, and are being rolled out across the company in 2009. options to extend the relevant training to non computer user will be explored once the programme has successfully been implemented.

## **9 INJURY STATISTICS AND OUTCOMES**

- 9.1 Injury statistics for the period October 1st - December 31<sup>st</sup> 2008 are attached at appendix 1.
  - 9.1.1 These statistics show decreases in the number of reported incidents in all services and most incident classifications compared to the same period in 2007. There has been an overall decrease of nearly 50% compared to the same period in 2007.
  - 9.1.2 Further information about specific incidents can be requested from the Head of Health & Safety.
- 9.2 A new in-house incident statistics database is being developed by the Health & Safety Team as part of the new procedures referred to in item 6.1. This will improve the quality of the statistics presented to the HR Committee, while significantly reducing the amount of time collating and preparing information. An example of how statistics would be presented by the new system will be demonstrated at the HR Committee meeting

## **10 PERSONAL INJURY CLAIMS**

- 10.1 Personal injury claims are managed by Nottingham City Council's Insurance & Risk Management Service.

10.2 Statistics and commentary are not yet available from NCC, but an agreement has been reached so that they will be available in future HR Committee health and safety reports.

## **11 FINANCIAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The appointment of a Fire Safety & First Aid Officer (item 3.3) represents a saving of approximately £2500 p.a.

11.2 The use of off site parking at Harvey Rd (item 3.8) will cost approximately £9,100 p.a. Additional costs are required for the implementation of the trial traffic management system.

11.3 Costs arising from all other items in this report are to be determined or are within existing resources and budgets.

## **12 IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES**

12.1 Management of health & safety is essential to all of the Company's objectives as it will affect the health, safety and wellbeing of all the Company's stakeholders and customers.

## **13 VALUE FOR MONEY & EFFICIENCY ISSUES**

13.1 The appointment of a Fire Safety & First Aid Officer (item 3.3) represents a saving of approximately £2500 p.a.

13.2 The development of a new incident database (item 9.2) will save approximately 16 hours administration per month.

## **14 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 No Equality & Diversity issues have been identified at this stage

## **15 BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT**

15.1 The Health and Safety Offences Act 2008

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