

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE
14 APRIL 2009

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

1 SUMMARY

1.1 This report covers the period between 1st January and 31st March 2009

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Human Resources Committee:

2.1 note the information in this report; and

2.2 approve the alterations to the Health and Safety Strategy timings in relation to reviews for health surveillance, management of stress and management of manual handling operations.

3 REPORT

3.1 INCIDENT STATISTICS AND OUTCOMES

The injury, dangerous occurrence and occupational ill health statistics for this period re attached at appendix 1.

3.1.1 Incident statistics are presented on a report generated by a new database. The report shows number of occurrences and days lost for incidents by type over the current and previous three years. However, previous data has yet to be entered into the database and consequently only the figures for 2009 are shown.

3.1.2 The report also displays other useful statistics, and is supported by a summary of the incidents that occurred in the reporting period.

3.1.3 The Committee should be aware that incident numbers and time off statistics can increase after the reporting period as late reports are filed and employees return to work following a related absence.

3.1.4 Causes for immediate concern include slippery / uneven surfaces and trip hazards, manual handling and unsafe acts.

3.1.5 Slippery / uneven surfaces and trip hazards mainly relate to incidents involving non-employees adjacent to sheltered schemes that occurred

during the icy weather in January and February. Further investigation into these incidents is being carried out by the Health and Safety team, and the number of incidents occurring will be continually monitored.

- 3.1.6 Manual Handling incidents account for the largest number of incidents and time off work so far this year. It is therefore proposed to bring forward the planned review of manual handling in the Health & Safety Strategy. Please refer to item 5 of this report.
- 3.1.7 Unsafe acts primarily refer to the ongoing problem of residents throwing items out of windows at high rise buildings. The Health and Safety team is continuing to work with Housing Services to identify resolutions to this problem.
- 3.2 Statistics relating to on insurance claims are now provided by Nottingham City Council's Insurance and Risk Management service. Annual trend summaries are shown at appendix 2.
 - 3.2.1 A Risk Management meeting is being set up between NCC's Insurance & Risk Management service and various teams within Nottingham City Homes, including the Health and Safety team, so that the statistics provided can be analysed and appropriate action taken to reduce exposure to insurance risks.
- 3.3 Violence statistics are no longer collated by the Health and Safety team as violent incidents are managed elsewhere in the organisation. Statistics are produced by Nottingham City Council and are reproduced at appendix 3.

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 4.1 Progress continues to be made against the Company's Health and Safety Strategy 2008 - 2011, upon which the service's service improvement plan is based. A copy of the current service improvement plan is attached at appendix 4. This service improvement plan is yet to be agreed.
 - 4.1.2 One of the requirements of the Health and Safety Strategy is that a 6 monthly action plan is produced to support the implementation of the Strategy. This has, however, been replaced by the corporate requirement for a service improvement plan, and the strategy needs to be amended accordingly.
 - 4.1.3 Some alterations to the timing of items in the Health & Safety Strategy are necessary in response to events and statistics referred to elsewhere in this report. Items to be brought forward are:
 - i. a review of the company arrangements for health surveillance. This is brought forward to tie in with the appointment of a new occupational health consultant.

- ii. a review of the company's arrangements for the management of stress. This is brought forward to correlate with the Human Resources team's service improvement plan and because of the number of days lost to stress.
- iii. a review of the company's arrangements for the management of manual handling operations. This is brought forward as a response to the current incident and lost time rate for manual handling injuries.

4.1.4 In order to offset the additional work that these alterations will cause, it will be necessary to reprogramme some of the items in the Health & Safety Strategy until later in the 2008 - 2011 period. The items identified to be re-programmed are:

- i. The development of a health & safety procedures manual.
- ii. The implementation of Health & Safety Commission guidance for directors.
- iii. Identification of ways to improve the format of the Health & Safety Policy.
- iv. A review of current policies and procedures for the provision of Personal Protective Equipment.
- v. The implementation of formal reviews of individual employees' health and safety performance.

5 HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE

5.1 Significant H&S incidents

5.1.1 There were two significant incidents within the reporting period:

5.1.2 The first is that an employee of Nottingham City Homes has been diagnosed with mesothelioma, which is an asbestos related disease. This is the second similar diagnosis within the last 12 months. A diagnosis of mesothelioma will usually relate to repeated past exposure to asbestos, typically 15 - 40 years before symptoms appear. This case has been referred to our Occupational Health provider and will be notified to the Health and Safety Executive when full diagnosis details are available. A review of current asbestos management procedures is under way as detailed later in this report.

5.1.3 The second significant incident was a reported case of legionnaire's disease in a property managed by Nottingham City Homes. The tenant recovered from the illness and continues to live in the same property. The water system has been inspected and chlorinated, although it is likely in this case that the legionella bacteria was able to grow because the flat had not been used regularly by the tenant for a number of

months, and the water in the cold water tank had therefore been allowed to stand. This does not affect neighbouring properties, and no further action is required in this instance.

5.2 Harvey Road Travel Plan

5.2.1 Improvements to the travel arrangements at Harvey Road are continuing, and this has reduced the amount of private vehicles parking on the concourse, in turn freeing more room for company vehicles to park.

5.2.2 A new procedure that limits the amount of company vehicles that are allowed access to the Harvey Road concourse at any one time is being tested. Approximately half the fleet is taking part in this trial, and if it is successful it will be extended to the full fleet.

5.2.3 The most noticeable immediate improvement is that visibility has improved significantly for vehicles leaving the Harvey Road site because it is no longer impaired by company vehicles parked on the road immediately outside the site.

5.3 Asbestos Clearance at Rani Road

5.3.1 It was reported at the last Committee that a large factory fire in December 2008 had caused the spread of asbestos materials over the neighbouring area, including at Fenton Court. The clear up of these materials is being co-ordinated by Nottingham City Council.

5.3.2 Although most of the debris was cleared quickly, some debris remains in difficult to access areas such as grassed areas and gutters. The Council has now appointed a licenced contractor to remove the remaining debris, and letters have been sent to residents in the area to ensure that access is available for the debris to be cleared.

5.4 Fire Risk Assessment

5.4.1 It was reported at the last Committee that Savills had been appointed to carry out fire risk assessments at sheltered schemes and other flats under the direction of the Asset Management team.

5.4.2 Savills have since been requested to carry out additional assessments, including high rise buildings where necessary. The consultant is working closely with our new Fire Safety and First Aid Officer, who will develop a management plan in consultation with Property and Housing Services to implement the recommendations of the assessments as they are completed.

5.5 Training Strategy

5.5.1 The Health & Safety team is developing a health and safety training strategy in consultation with the Organisational Development and

Change Management service. The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that employees receive appropriate health and safety training for their roles.

5.5.2 Priority health and safety training for 2009/10 includes:

- i. Lone worker training.
- ii. E-learning for employees with access to computers.
- iii. Manual handling training.
- iv. Asbestos awareness training.
- v. Insurance investigation training for officers likely to carry out investigations.

5.6 Inspection Programme

5.6.1 Regular health and safety inspections are now carried out at Harvey Road and Houndsgate. These inspections are carried out by the Health & Safety team and service area managers. Board members, senior officers and trade union representatives will be encouraged to take part where possible.

5.6.2 Dates for inspections of area housing offices will be available shortly, followed by dates for the inspection of the communal facilities in high rise buildings and sheltered schemes.

5.7 H&S Intranet and Internet Sites

5.7.1 The Health & Safety intranet site has been redeveloped, and is more informative, user friendly and fun than before.

5.7.2 Information that would be most useful for NCH customers is being collated for a health and safety section of the internet. This will include information about fire, legionnaire's disease, gas and electricity, asbestos and home safety.

5.8 Asbestos Management

5.8.1 A series of meetings has been held with Property Services and trade union safety representatives regarding the management of asbestos. These have coincided with the programmed review of asbestos management arrangements within the Health and Safety Strategy.

5.8.2 The review of procedures has mainly related to training and information for employees, and the passage of information from the company's asbestos database to employees who may accidentally be exposed to asbestos fibres. Improvements have been agreed in these areas and work is ongoing to implement the agreed improvements over the 2009/10 period.

6 STAFF UPDATES

6.1 Fire Safety and First Aid Officer

6.1.1 An appointment has been made to this position in February 2009. The new postholder, Clark Hall, is an experienced officer who has previously worked at a senior level in Glasgow and Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Services, and has most recently been employed in a similar position at Mansfield District Council.

7 OTHER OPTIONS

7.1 None.

8 FINANCIAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS

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

9 IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES OBJECTIVES

9.1 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.

10 VALUE FOR MONEY AND EFFICIENCY ISSUES

7.1 Items in this report, unless otherwise stated, meet the efficiency criteria E3, improved outcomes for no additional resources.

11 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

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

12 BACKGROUND MATERIAL AND PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

12.1 None.

Contact officers: Ian Rabett
Head of Health & Safety
14 Hounds Gate, Nottingham. NG1 7BA
0115 9157236
ian.rabett@nottinghamcityhomes.org.uk

Date: 7 April 2009