

NOTTINGHAM CITY HOMES

HUMAN RESOURCES
COMMITTEE
14 JULY 2009

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report covers the period between 1st April and 30th June 2009

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Human Resources Committee:

- 2.1 note the information in this report.
- 2.2 approve the proposal for a Board H&S Training day as detailed at paragraph 4.1.5
- 2.3 approve the proposal to appoint a consultant to prepare a gap analysis and report against the Institute of Directors Guidance "Leading Health and Safety at Work" as detailed at paragraph 4.1.6

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 The number of incidents shown are from 1st January 2009 only, as this is when the current database came into use. We (H&S Service) hope to have entered data from previous years for comparative purposes by the end of this year.
- 3.1.2 The most common incident is a fall at ground level, although this is split into two separate causations codes (02 "Slippery / uneven surface" and 03 "trip hazard / housekeeping"). This is mainly due to the cold weather earlier this year, and because this is the type of injury most commonly reported by tenants and residents. The Health & Safety team investigate incidents reported by tenants and residents when the company may have been at fault.
- 3.1.3 The most common workplace incident causation ,and the cause of the most lost time, is manual handling within the Property Services division.

This has been referred to the Project Managers meeting, and a review of manual handling tasks is being carried out to identify areas of significant risk.

- 3.1.4 The ejection of articles from high rise buildings continues to be an area for concern. The H&S team is working towards a resolution with Housing Services and NCC CCTV Control Centre, although this remains a very difficult area to enforce.
- 3.2 Violence statistics are produced by Nottingham City Council and are reproduced at appendix 2.
- 3.3 Statistics relating to on insurance claims are now provided by Nottingham City Council's Insurance and Risk Management service. These are produced annually and so there has not been any update since the previous HR Committee report.
- 3.4 The HR Committee asked for a description of the reporting process at their last meeting. This is attached at appendix 3.

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

- 4.1 The HR Committee asked for a copy of the current H&S Strategy at their last meeting. The 2008-2011 Strategy is attached at appendix 4. Note that there are two versions - revision 1 (January 2009) is the strategy that is currently published; revision 2 (July 2009) is revised to take into account changes in service priorities. The H&S team service improvement plan 2009-10 is based on revision 1 of the strategy, and will need to be updated to reflect the changed schedules in revision 2.
 - 4.1.2 The HR Committee asked for details of the health and safety legislation that applies to NCH and status report at their last meeting. This is provided as a separate report.
 - 4.1.3 The HR Committee asked about the health and safety implications of Decent Homes at their last meeting. The major implications are :
 - 4.1.3.1 Contractor competence - NCH has a duty to provide only competent contractors. This is addressed in item 12.2 of the Health & Safety Strategy. A new questionnaire has been developed that is completed by contractors tendering for works awarded through the procurement service. This is then reviewed by the CDM Co-ordinator, who makes recommendations to the project manager. Serious concerns will be raised at this stage. A new national database is under construction to streamline this process, and the new CDM Co-ordinator will review whether or not this will be suitable for use at NCH upon appointment.
 - 4.1.3.2 CDM regulations - the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations are the most significant health and safety regulations

relating to construction. By working closely with the Decent Homes team, we (H&S Service) know that the regulations are observed within Decent Homes projects. However, there are few formal written procedures, and these will be developed as part of the formal review that is item 12.1 of the H&S Strategy. Formal training for Project and Maintenance Managers will be carried out when the procedures are developed and agreed.

- 4.1.3.3 H&S inspections - although the Client and CDM Co-ordinator are not responsible for site inspections during construction works in normal circumstances, the fact that the Decent Homes programme mostly involves work in occupied domestic premises means that we have to make sure that on-site health and safety performance is satisfactory. This was addressed in item 12.4 of the H&S Strategy, and a target was set for our CDM Co-ordinator to inspect every Decent Homes project at least once per month. This target will be reviewed with the new postholder, who will be based at Beechdale Road with the Decent Homes Team.
- 4.1.3.4 Information for contractors - the CDM Regulations require that the Client pass information about significant risks to contractors. This includes information about asbestos and violent persons. All information held on NCH's asbestos database is now available to contractors over the internet, and it is anticipated that a similar arrangement will be available for information about violent incidents by the end of August 2009. These issues were addressed as part of items 13.3 and 13.4 of the H&S Strategy.
- 4.1.4 A review of the company's Health and Safety Committee terms of reference was discussed at the last HR Committee meeting. This review has been carried out by the H&S Committee, and recommendations have been prepared and will be made to Executive Management Team in July 2009. The purpose of the review and recommendations is to identify areas where the Committee and Safety Representatives can be more involved in the development and promotion of health and safety initiatives. This review is addressed in items 10.2 and 10.3 of the Health & Safety Strategy.
- 4.1.5 The HR Committee asked for an explanation of the Committee's health and safety role and responsibilities at their last meeting. As this is a complex area, it is recommended that the Head of Health and Safety develop a (one day) training course for Board members that explains their role and responsibilities in depth.
- 4.1.6 The Institute of Directors has produced guidance for directors on their health and safety responsibilities entitled "Leading Health & Safety at Work". It was envisaged that the H&S Team prepare a gap analysis against this document and identify recommendations to resolve any gaps that were identified (Health & Safety Strategy item 1.2). This activity has been delayed to accommodate other priorities, and re-scheduled to take place in 2010 (see appendix 5). However, rather than delay this activity

any further, it is recommended that a consultant be appointed to develop the gap analysis and make recommendations. This would have the added benefit of providing an independent assessment of current H&S governance procedures. This is likely to cost in the region of £2,500.

5 HEALTH & SAFETY UPDATE

5.1 Swine Flu

5.1.1 The incidence of swine flu continues to increase in the UK, and Nottingham and surrounding areas was declared a swine flu “hot spot” at the beginning of July.

5.1.2 The hot spot designation will have little, if any, effect on NCH's operations - the main outcome is the way that the condition is diagnosed and treated in the area. Nevertheless, articles have regularly been placed in the company's team brief to ensure employee awareness remains high, and advisory notices have been placed around workplaces. Stocks of antibacterial wipes have been procured to frontline service desks to allow staff to follow the hygiene advice that has been provided. Antibacterial hand wipes are also being procured for employees who carry out home visits.

5.1.3 Current predictions, based on previous flu pandemic patterns, are that a more virulent “second wave” of swine flu can be expected towards the end of Summer, with a worst case scenario that up to 50% of employees would be unable to attend work. Plans are being developed with frontline service directors to ensure that essential services can be maintained.

5.2 Health & Safety Executive Advisory Note on Asbestos

5.2.1 The Health and Safety Executive published an advisory note social housing organisations in June 2009. This has emphasised the importance of making good information about asbestos available to contractors in Decent Homes and Repairs & Maintenance works.

5.2.2 The advisory note refers to new asbestos surveying standards which are likely to come into force in November 2009. These introduce a new level of survey, which requires destructive sampling. These will be carried out in voids as far as possible and will be met from existing asbestos surveying budgets.

5.3 Fire in High Rise Building in London

5.3.1 A recent fire in a high rise building in London has made national headlines, and is likely to have implications for landlords of similar buildings across the country. This incident is under investigation at the time of writing. However, we will keep a close eye on any learning from this incident as the investigation continues.

- 5.3.2 As reported at the previous HR Committee meeting, fire risk assessments of high rise and sheltered scheme buildings managed by NCH were being carried out by an external consultant. These are now complete in draft form and have been returned to the consultant for clarification on certain specific matters. The completed assessments are expected before the end of July 2009.

6 STAFF UPDATES

6.1 Construction Health & Safety Officer

- 6.1.1 The post of CDM Planning Supervisor became vacant on 13th July due to the retirement of the postholder, although annual leave entitlements resulted in his leaving the company at the end of June.

- 6.1.2 The post has been re-designated as Construction Health and Safety Officer, and has been re-graded from SO1 to SO2. This is to reflect a change in responsibility due to changes in the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations.

- 6.1.3 Interviews for the post were held in June, and an appointment has been made. The new postholder will join NCH in August, and will be based at Beechdale Road so that she can work more closely with the Decent Homes Team.

7 OTHER OPTIONS

- 7.1 None.

8 FINANCIAL & RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Item 4.1.6 will cost in the region of £2,500. Other 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.

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