
CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2008/2009

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Audit Committee to review performance on health and safety. The report details both progress and future actions associated with implementation of the Council's plans for health and safety management.

Summary

2. The report highlights that the approach to occupational health and safety adopted by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit has to date proven to be effective with the continuing year on year reduction in accidents and lost time as a result of accidents across the authority.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the progress to date and key planned actions for 2009/10, be noted.

Reasons

4. The recommendation is supported to provide the Audit Committee with evidence to reflect on the Council's approach to health and safety.

Paul Wildsmith
Director of Corporate Services

Background Papers

No background papers used in the preparation of this report.

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| S17 Crime and Disorder | Some actions and information highlighted in the report support reduction of crime and disorder. |
| Health and Well Being | The report addresses improved health and safety across the authority. |
| Sustainability | No specific sustainability issues arising from this report. |
| Diversity | Diversity issues are incorporated into Health and Safety managers. |
| Wards Affected | All wards equally. |
| Groups Affected | Employees and pupils in schools. |
| Budget and Policy Framework | This report does not affect the budget and policy framework. |
| Key Decision | This is not a key decision. |
| Urgent Decision | For the purposes of the “call-in” procedure this does not represent an urgent matter. |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | Action detailed in the report supports the Healthy Darlington aspect of the SCS. |
| Efficiency | The report outlines a continuing year on year reduction in lost time as a result of accidents across the Council. |

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Reviewing Initiatives set for 2008-2009

5. A number of issues have been tackled during the period under review. The major focus has remained predominantly in schools and Community Services.
6. The most notable achievement is the continued downward trend of reportable accidents with a further reduction over the last financial year. It is also worth noting that since 2003/04 the Authority has seen a reduction of 73% in accidents reported to the health and safety executive. A breakdown is provided in **Appendix 1**.
7. Slips Trips Fall's and Manual Handling continue to be the main type of reportable accidents. However, the route cause is predominantly as a result of human error rather than a systemic or premises fault. A break down is provided in **Appendix 2**.
8. The Health and Safety Team are continuing to work very closely with individual school and departmental management teams on initiatives to progress a continuous improvement approach to health and safety management.
9. Five of Darlington's schools have achieved the RoSPA safety award which brings the total to eight achieving the award over the last two years.
 - (a) 2008/09

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| Reid Street | Silver |
| Education Village | Silver |
| Harrowgate Hill | Silver |
| Heighington | Bronze |
| Branksome | Bronze |
 - (b) 2007/08

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|--------------|--------|
| Carmel | Bronze |
| Hummersknott | Silver |
| St George | Silver |
10. However, perhaps the most significant achievement is the growing lines of effective communication between the schools and the Safety Unit. It is this effective dialogue which is steadily helping to improve the overall health and safety culture of the schools. This communication is being delivered at all levels from Governor down to individual departments and teachers, via training sessions, school visits and audits.

11. Community Services implemented the Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) 18001 across Building Services. Both Building Services and Environmental Services now comply with the OHSAS 18001, 2007 standard. In addition to this both services were awarded the RoSPA Gold Safety Award.
12. The OHSAS 18001 certification is based upon the implementation of the Corporate and Departmental Health and Safety Policy. The policy is based around everybody's commitment to health and safety. The language in the policy is user friendly, without weakening the requirement to identify duties and responsibilities of senior staff and Directors.
13. Darlington Borough Council continues to operate satisfactory health and safety standards, with some sections operating at a very high standard.
14. The Authority has again remained free from action by the Health and Safety Executive.
15. Lost time as a result of accidents has decreased over the last financial year. Since we began benchmarking in 2003/04 we have seen an overall reduction of 78%. A break down is provided in **Appendix 3**.
16. The Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intent has been updated to include a section on occupational road risk and will shortly be on display throughout the Authority.
17. A review of the risk assessment procedure has been carried out to consider behavioural aspects as part of the selected control measures.
18. We have successfully delivered five Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) Managing Safely training courses in-house. The course is for managers and supervisors in any sector. It is designed to bring managers up to speed on the practical actions they need to take to handle health and safety in their teams. The eight modules cover:
 - (a) Introducing managing safely
 - (b) Assessing risk
 - (c) Controlling risks
 - (d) Understanding your responsibilities
 - (e) Identifying hazards
 - (f) Investigating accidents and incidents
 - (g) Measuring performance
 - (h) Protecting our environment
19. The Corporate portable appliance testing arrangement has been updated to include a pro forma for managers to record equipment and frequency of tests and checks. A training course has been developed which will raise awareness and provide managers with the knowledge to ensure they fulfil the requirements of the arrangement.

Brief outline of key objectives for 2009-10

20. Continue to embed/reinforce health and safety management systems across the Authority.
21. Continue to work with the Corporate Project Board to ensure health and safety competence is addressed for all Council projects.
22. Continue to undertake audits across the Authority to ensure compliance with health and safety management systems.
23. Continue to further encourage near miss reporting throughout the Authority.
24. Continue working with the well being strategy team.
25. Continue working with Workforce Development Team delivering a programme of bespoke health and safety training across the Authority.
26. Following the success of IOSH Managing Safely we aim to introduce two further IOSH training courses.
 - (a) **IOSH Working Safely:** Working Safely is a one-day course for staff from any service with no supervisory or managerial responsibility. It provides grounding in the essentials of health and safety – everyone at work should have an understanding of why they must ‘work safely’ and this course offers exactly that. Working Safely introduces a completely new approach to health and safety training and offers all the basics in a high impact interactive package. It focuses primarily on health and safety culture. The first course is to be delivered in September 2009.
 - (b) **IOSH for Senior Executives:** A need has been identified to provide a health and safety course for senior management, in order to reinforce duties and responsibilities. The programme will discuss the moral, legal and financial reasons for managing health and safety, with a particular emphasis on Leadership and the role of Senior Management within the organisation. This short programme will also include an overview and interpretation of legal responsibilities along with the application of cost effective strategies for accident prevention and loss control.

Outcome of Consultation

- 24 There was no formal consultation undertaken in production of this report.





