

**REPORT TO:** SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RESOURCES, EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL  
**Date of Meeting:** Scrutiny Committee Resources – 17 September 2014  
Executive – 7 October 2014  
Council - 14 October 2014  
**Report of:** Assistant Director Environment  
**Title:** Health and Safety at Work Update

**Is this a Key Decision?**

No

**Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Council

**1. What is the report about?**

This quarterly update forms part of the Corporate Health and Safety Management System and is designed to provide Members with an all-round briefing on the 'state of play' in corporate health and safety.

More detailed information on the items raised can be obtained from Robert Norley, Assistant Director Environment and Paul Barton, Principal Health and Safety Officer.

**2. Recommendations:**

1. That Members note the quarterly update in Appendix I, the revised Council Health and Safety Policy at Appendix II and the Annual Health and Safety Report 2013 / 2014 at Appendix III; and
2. That the Executive recommends to Council the approval of the changes to the Council's Health and Safety Policy as set out in Appendix II to the report.

**2. Reasons for the recommendation:**

To provide the Council with a quarterly update on strategic health and safety at work matters and help ensure that Members are aware of key health and safety considerations affecting the Council.

The quarterly update may also assist and advise Members of priority remedial actions needed to control risks arising from workplace hazards, and the implications of such mitigations in terms of resources and change management.

**3. What are the resource implications including non financial resources.**

For the purposes of this information report, there are no financial implications.

**4. Section 151 Officer comments:**

As per above, there are no financial implications contained in this report. However the report forms an important part of the Council's plans to mitigate financial loss through insurance claims citing negligence on behalf of the Council.

5. **What are the legal aspects?**

This report informs Members of the organisation's systems for health and safety at work, in compliance with the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. The Council's Health and Safety Policy at Appendix II is a requirement of section 2(3) of the Act.

6. **Monitoring Officer's comments:**

The Monitoring Officer has no issues to raise on the content of this report.

7. **Report details:**

The following matters of importance are highlighted from Appendix I, Appendix II and Appendix III:

- Minor amendments to the Council's Asbestos Policy are detailed in Appendix I;
- The Council's Health and Safety Policy has been revised to reflect changes in organisational structure. It is attached at Appendix II. The Policy Statement signed by The Chief Executive Officer and The Leader dated September 2013 remains valid and does not require updating. The key changes in the policy concern organisational structure:
  - ❖ Joint Consultative Group is now merged with Key Partners for Health and Safety Group to consolidate meeting time and reduce paperwork;
  - ❖ Lead officer with the key responsibility for asbestos safety moves from AD Housing and Contracts to AD Environment
  - ❖ Lead officer with the key responsibility for water hygiene safety (Legionella risk management) moves from AD Housing and Contracts to CM Property Services.
- The Annual Health and Safety Report for the year 2013 / 2014 is attached at Appendix III;
- Use of 'AssessNET' modular safety management system has been extended to cover Display Screen Equipment Assessment and training of managers and supervisors is in progress;
- Accident and injury trends show no unusual patterns across the services, although a Street Scene employee was physically assaulted on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2014. The incident was reported to the police and some of it captured on CCTV;
- Noise risk assessment reviews for Parks and Open Spaces and the MRF are planned for the Autumn / Winter of 2014/ 2015.

**9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?**

To help maintain a safe and healthy city, and run an efficient Council.

**10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

The Council's health and safety management system examines risks and prioritises mitigation of these risks.

**11. What is the impact of the decision on equality and diversity; health and wellbeing; safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults, community safety and the environment?**

This report informs Members of the Council's health and safety management system, which contributes to health & wellbeing. There are no impacts on the other criteria.

**12. Are there any other options?**

Not applicable to this report

**Paul Barton - Principal Health and Safety Officer**  
**Robert Norley - Assistant Director Environment**

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None



## APPENDIX I

### Corporate Health and Safety – August 2014

#### **Revitalising Health and Safety: ‘AssessNET’**

As part of the Revitalising Health and Safety Programme, the Council procured ‘AssessNET’, a modular safety management system that monitors compliance in Workplace Safety Inspection, Workplace Safety Audit and Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Risk Assessment. The Council has recently extended this modular system to include Display Screen Equipment Assessment monitoring. Managers and Supervisors are in the process of being trained in use of the system.

#### **Health and Safety Training**

The revised ‘Health and Safety Training and Competency’ policy document has been submitted to HR for comment prior to consultation. The policy revitalises general guidelines on employee health and safety training, giving clear indication of intervals for refresher training in health and safety. The current e-learning programme, Learning Pool, is to be replaced by Nexus as a cost saving to the e-learning aspect of health and safety training.

#### **Accident and Incident Monitoring**

Accident and injury trends show no unusual patterns across the services.

#### **Key Partner Group for Health and Safety**

The Key Partner Group for Health and Safety (the Group) is the Council’s main staff side and union side health and safety committee. The Group meets on average once a month. Topics currently being reviewed include arrangements for lone worker safety, with each service providing an update, with recommendations as necessary, on their risk assessment of lone worker safety.

#### **Annual Health and Safety Report 2013 / 2014**

The Annual Health and Safety report is produced at Appendix II. The report provides a synopsis of key facts from the year and key tasks for the coming year.

#### **Annual Asbestos Health and Safety Policy Review**

There are two minor amendments to the Asbestos Policy this year: it notes the change in the approved code of practice for six monthly reviews of management plans to change to twelve monthly reviews (inserted into section C, page 7) and provides guidance in the event that employees or other people become exposed to asbestos fibres when working in Council premises (inserted into section 5.5, page 10). The full revised policy is available from the Safety and Asbestos Officer and will be placed on City Net during the first week of November 2014.

#### **Employee Health and Wellbeing**

Monitoring of vibrating workplace equipment is ongoing using the HAVS meter acquired for the purpose. Fleet keep test results on a database. Where employees’ exposure is at or above the action level health surveillance is also undertaken in conjunction with occupational health.

#### **Risk Assessment Review: Noise at Work**

Noise risk assessment reviews in this financial year are planned for Parks and Open Spaces, Cemeteries and the MRF.

#### **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health**

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Plans of work on non-licensable work with asbestos, including task risk assessments, were found to be insufficient for a number of contractors working in Council properties. The result places a vicarious liability on the Council. The Safety and Asbestos Officer (SAO) has formatted a clear template to assist contractors with their plans of work, including cross-reference throughout to relevant sections of the regulations. The SAO has sent the template to contractors with a letter advising them to produce suitable and sufficient plans of work for tasks in Council properties.

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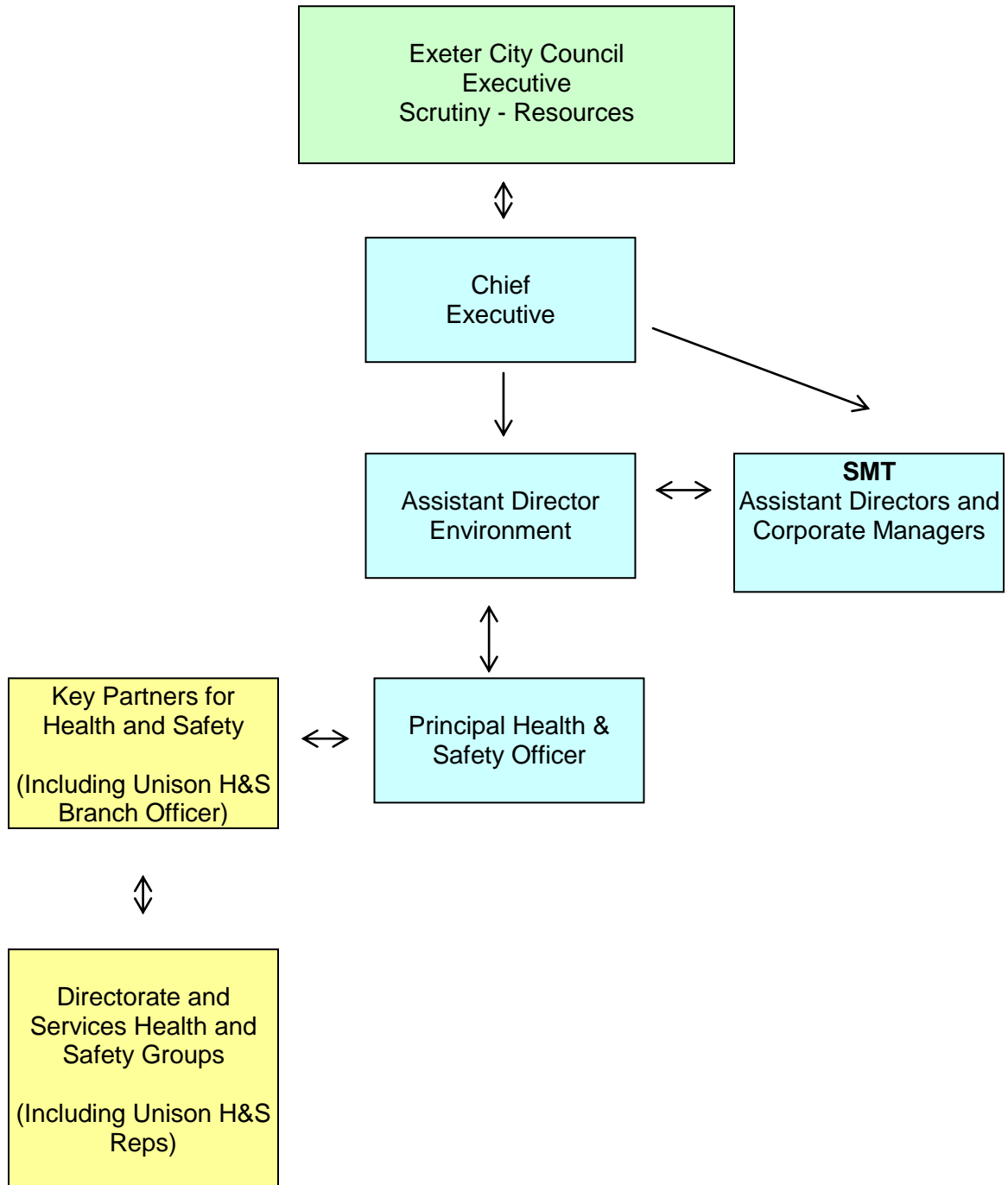
## **EXETER CITY COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

1. The law requires that ultimate responsibility for health and safety rests with the highest level of management. The Council must comply with the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. In practice the Chief Executive with other key staff, are responsible to the Council for ensuring successful management of the Council's health and safety policy. Key staff responsibilities are set out in this policy and are reflected in job descriptions. A structure chart shows the line of management.
2. The Council's health and safety obligations and responsibilities fall within the terms of reference of its Executive Committee.
3. The Chief Executive is responsible for the implementation of the Council's Health and Safety Policy and ensuring compliance with the Council's legal duties.
4. The Assistant Director Environment is responsible to the Executive Committee for:
  - (a) Advice on the Council's duties under the Act; and
  - (b) Ensuring that the Health and Safety Policy is being implemented.
5. The Assistant Director Environment is responsible for advising the Executive Committee on the personnel aspects of advice and policy implementation under 4 above.
6. Assistant Directors are responsible to the Chief Executive for ensuring compliance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy within their Directorate including at all buildings, sites and activities for which they are responsible.
7. Corporate Managers and Business Managers are responsible to the Deputy Chief Executive for ensuring compliance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy within their services including at all buildings, sites and activities for which they are responsible.

8. The Corporate Manager Democratic & Civic Support is also responsible in the Civic Centre for compliance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy throughout the parts used in common, and for the communal building services.
9. The Assistant Director Environment will advise on the measures necessary to manage asbestos, and the Corporate Manager Property will advise on measures for the control of Legionella bacteria in water systems.
9. Each Assistant Director, Corporate Manager and Business Manager is responsible for ensuring that the Council's Health and Safety Policy is implemented within their own service area.
10. The Principal Health and Safety Officer acts as the Corporate Health and Safety Adviser.
11. The Building Control Manager will provide technical assistance with the fire risk assessment process and help verify the adequacy of assessments.



## HEALTH & SAFETY - ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE





## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - THE COUNCIL

The Executive Committee has responsibility for:

1. Ensuring the health, safety and welfare at work of all Council employees.
2. Taking all proper steps to ensure that no one else is exposed to risks to their health and safety, arising from any activity of the Council.
3. Ensuring that where the Council exercises control over any non-domestic premises, made available to anyone else as a place of work, they are safe and without risks to health. This includes access and exit pathways and any plant or substance supplied for use.

In order to meet these responsibilities the Committee shall:

1. Ensure there is an effective overall policy for the health, safety and welfare of employees and the health and safety of others.
2. Ensure that the policy is reviewed, at least every three years, sooner if there is a need, due to changes of law, guidance or activity.
3. Ensure that suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks to the health and safety of employees and others are made, recording the significant findings of the assessments.
4. Ensure that the preparation of additional topic specific policies and guidance, as appropriate to ensure effective health and safety management.
5. Ensure an annual Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan is approved by April each year.
6. Ensure that staff are fully consulted and informed on Health, Safety and Welfare matters.
7. See that reasonable steps are taken to investigate reported adverse events, e.g. accidents, incidents, reportable dangerous occurrences and reportable disease, and that the findings are taken into account in revising relevant risk assessments.
8. Ensure that appropriate health and safety information is included in an annual published report on the Council's activities and performance. Performance is to be assessed by a programme of monitoring and audit.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Growth Director)**

The Chief Executive, as head of the paid service and Growth Director, will:

1. Be directly responsible for the implementation of the City Council's overall health and safety policy and topic specific policies.
2. Ensure that the Deputy Chief Executive, the Assistant Directors, The Corporate Managers and Business Managers fulfil their responsibilities for health, safety and welfare.
3. Ensure that the responsibilities for health, safety and welfare are properly allocated and accepted at all levels.
4. Plan for adequate staffing, finance and resources to meet the Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan.
5. Promote a positive 'health and safety culture' by taking a direct interest in the Corporate and Directorate Action Plans, and lend support to the people carrying them out. Aiming to reflect the 'Exemplar' status expected of the Council.
6. Ensure that appropriate liability insurance is put in place.
7. Review at least annually the implementation of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and agree an annual action plan.
8. Ensure that reasonable steps are taken to investigate reported adverse events, e.g. hazards, accidents, reportable dangerous occurrences and reportable disease, and that the findings are taken into account in revising relevant risk assessments.
9. Ensure that appropriate health and safety information is included in an annual published report on the Council's activities and performance.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES – DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (Run the Council Well)

As System Lead Run the Council Well the Deputy Chief Executive will:

1. Actively promote a positive 'health and safety culture', by setting an example to others in all health and safety matters, at all times.
2. Be directly responsible to the Chief Executive for the implementation of the Corporate Health and Safety Policies.
3. Put systems into place to ensure that all Assistant Directors, Corporate Managers and Business Managers receive adequate training to enable them to co-operate in carrying out policies, and understand their own duties under the Act. Training will cover the purpose of 'risk assessment' and the need for and how to apply safe systems of work e.g. 'safe working practices' and 'permit to work'.
4. Ensure consultation takes place with the Principal Health and Safety Officer and the relevant appointed health and safety representative before the introduction of a new or revised health and safety management strategy.
5. Ensure that an annual health and safety action plan is prepared for the Directorates reflecting both the needs of the Corporate Plan and of the individual Directorates, each year.
6. Take positive action when it can be demonstrated that health and safety rules have been broken. Disciplinary procedures should be considered in all cases.
7. Ensure that adequate first-aid provision is available to all staff across their service areas. This can take into account provision within other directorates.
8. Take an active part in the review of Council's Health and Safety Policies, as they affect the operations carried out within, or under the control of, their Directorate.
9. Ensure that there is appropriate evaluation of all reported adverse events e.g. hazards, incidents, accidents, and reported ill-health, involving work activity, in their Directorate where they involve actual or potential injury, health risks, loss or damage to City Council property, and risks to the public, ensuring that the findings are taken into account in revising any relevant risk assessment. Besides an evaluation by the Head of Service for each

reported event, a review of adverse events should take place at regular intervals by the relevant Directorate Management Team Meeting.

10. Ensure that Assistant Directors have implemented written safe systems of work e.g. 'safe working practices' and 'permit to work' in those areas of work where the 'risk assessment' indicates that a significant risk of injury or ill health will still be present despite existing controls.
11. Appoint 'key partners' from the directorates to work with the Principal Health and Safety Officer towards successful health and safety and risk management.
12. Submit information where necessary to contribute towards the preparation of an annual report on the Council's health and safety activity and performance, for publication to the Principal Health and Safety Officer.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES – ASSISTANT DIRECTORS, CORPORATE MANAGERS and BUSINESS MANAGERS**

Assistant Directors, Corporate Managers and Business Managers will:

1. Actively promote a positive 'health and safety culture', by setting an example to staff in all health and safety matters, at all times.
2. Be directly responsible to the Chief Executive (Assistant Directors) and Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate and Business Managers) for the implementation of Health and Safety Policies and appropriate guidance, contributing to fulfilment of the Directorate action plan in so far as it affects their Service.
3. Execute annual action plans for health and safety for their service(s) in consultation with the Chief Executive (Assistant Directors) or Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate and Business Managers)
4. Ensure that they and all other staff within their service(s) receive adequate information, instruction and training, to enable them to carry out their job without risks to their own and others health and safety. Training will enable staff to understand the purpose of 'risk assessment' and the need for and how to apply safe systems of work e.g. 'safe working practices' and 'permit to work'.
5. Ensure that there is a systematic approach to carrying out suitable and sufficient assessments of risks to health and safety of staff and others, for the purpose of identifying measures to comply with the requirements imposed by law. Risk Assessment is to be applied to all activities in the Service.
6. Initiate, as necessary, the preparation of written safe systems of work e.g. 'safe working practices' or 'permit to work' are prepared and implemented in those areas of work where the 'risk assessment' indicates that a significant risk of injury or ill health will still be present despite existing controls.
7. Consult with the Principal Health and Safety Officer and relevant appointed health and safety representatives before the introduction of a new or revised safe system of work.
8. Take positive action when it can be demonstrated that health and safety rules have been broken. Disciplinary action should be considered in all cases.

9. Evaluate all reported adverse events, i.e. hazards, incidents, accidents and reported ill health, involving work activity, within their Service where they involve actual or potential injury, health risks, loss or damage to City Council property, and risks to the public. Ensure that any findings are taken into account in revising any relevant risk assessment. Sign off all completed internal ECC Accident/Incident Report forms within their service(s) to demonstrate this has been done.
10. Ensure that a completed internal ECC Accident/Incident Report form is given to the Principal Health and Safety Officer, without delay, in all cases of adverse events, e.g. hazard, accident, ill health or incidents, arising in the course of Council activities in the Service.
  - i. A full procedure for reporting adverse events using the ECC Accident / Incident Report form is set out in CityNet Health and Safety pages. There is also a flow chart displayed on the wall of all Council buildings adjacent the Health and Safety Policy Statement.
  - ii. In the case of a fatality, 'dangerous occurrence' or 'major injury', arrange immediate contact with the PHSO, and with an appointed health and safety representative – trade union or non-union).
11. Ensure that the contractors they engage work safely and comply with health and safety legislation, policies and procedure. (A 'Health and Safety Code of Practice' for Contractors is available on City Net page 4682 or from the Principal Health & Safety Officer).
12. Contribute, as requested, towards the preparation of an annual report on the Council's health and safety activity and performance, for publication.
13. Additionally cooperate with the Internal Audit Manager in audits to check for compliance with health and safety legislation, council policies, etc.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT**

The Assistant Director for Environment will, in addition to normal responsibilities as an assistant director, be responsible for:

1. Implementing a programme of monitoring, based on risk, of all the City Council operational premises, sites and activities.



2. Ensuring that the Principal Health and Safety Officer effectively undertakes Health and Safety activities.
3. Advising the Chief Executive on the health and safety implications of any unsatisfactory work practices or working conditions that affect staff or others that are not remedied as required.
4. Effective liaison with the Health and Safety Executive and occupational health advisers, as required.
5. Ensuring a report to the Health and Safety Executive of all reportable injuries, dangerous occurrences and cases of ill health.
6. Assisting the Business Manager HR in provision of training for all staff on Health and Safety issues, in particular with the review of the Health and Safety Training Policy.
7. Ensuring that there is a systematic approach by managers to carrying out suitable and sufficient assessment of risks to the health and safety of staff and others, for the purpose of identifying measures to comply with requirements imposed by law.
8. Evaluating all reported adverse events e.g. hazards, accidents, incidents and reported ill-health, arising from the work activities of the Council where they involve injury, health risks, loss or damage to property, and risks to the public; ensuring that the findings are effectively communicated to others and that proposals to strengthen the risk control systems are made where necessary.
9. Advising on the content and review of Health and Safety Policies, action plans, and appropriate guidance.
10. The preparation of an annual report, for publication, covering the Council's health and safety activity and performance.
11. Advising the Council of the measures necessary to ensure successful management of asbestos containing materials within buildings owned or occupied by the Council and on land owned or occupied by the Council. This includes the content of any policy and the organisation and arrangements necessary to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable,

that the activities are conducted without risks to the health and safety of employees, customers and others.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES – BUSINESS MANAGER HUMAN RESOURCES**

The Business Manager Human Resources, in addition to the normal responsibilities of Business Manager, will be responsible for:

1. Advising the Council on the implications of its Health and Safety Policy in so far as they relate to personnel and training matters.
2. Consultation and negotiation with representatives of the staff on those aspects of the Policies affecting the staff and their conditions of employment.
3. The provision of suitable training for staff in Health and Safety matters in accordance with a Health and Safety Training Policy.
4. Contributing to an annual report on the health and safety activities and performance of the Council by supplying statistical data. This will include total employee days lost due to all causes of workplace injury, physical and mental illness, disability or other health problems, and assistance in data for total cost calculations.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES – CORPORATE MANAGER PROPERTY**

The Corporate Manager Property, in addition to the normal responsibilities of Corporate and Business Managers, will be responsible for:

1. Advising the Council of the measures necessary to ensure successful control of Legionella bacteria and similar organisms in water systems within buildings owned or occupied by the Council and on land owned or occupied by the Council. This includes the content of any policy and the organisation and arrangements necessary to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the activities are conducted without risks to the health and safety of employees, customers and others. These duties are to be carried out in consultation with Principal Health and Safety Officer and the Safety and Asbestos Officer.

## KEY RESPONSIBILITIES - PRINCIPAL HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

The Principal Health and Safety Officer (PHSO) will be responsible to the Head of Environmental Health Services, to:

1. Prepare the Council's overall Health and Safety Policy, other topic specific policies and guidance, monitoring arrangements to implement them.
2. Keep the policy and implementation arrangements under review, assess effectiveness and recommend changes as necessary to discharge the Council's duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
3. Promote suitable and sufficient assessments of risk to the health and safety of staff and others to identify the measures needed to eliminate or control risk, and to comply with health and safety law.
4. Advise Management at all levels on the Council's duties under the Act, including those for induction training.
5. Assist others in the risk assessment process, when necessary, and carry out proactive and reactive assessments over a range of Council activities to monitor the effectiveness of the management of health and safety.
6. Advise on preparation and implementation of risk control systems.
7. Carry out workplace inspections, at the request of (and with) appointed health and safety representatives (both union and non-union), to identify unsafe plant, premises or working conditions.
8. Consider a direction to anyone undertaking work for the Council, to stop work in extreme circumstances where there is an imminent risk of serious personal injury, or a dangerous occurrence ('extreme circumstance' means where in the opinion of the PHSO, an enforcement officer would consider service of a Prohibition Notice). Immediate contact will then be made with the appropriate Assistant Director, Corporate Manager or the most Senior Officer available in the Directorate for them to take control of the situation.
9. Advise on the safety, design and use of plant, equipment and materials.

10. Advise on the selection of protective clothing and all equipment.
11. Arrange for the reporting, recording and analysis of all reported adverse events, e.g. hazards, accidents, incidents, cases of ill health and relevant incidents arising in the course of Council activities; evaluating the report, investigating the circumstances, as necessary; ensuring the findings are effectively communicated to others and that proposals to strengthen risk control systems are made where necessary. Reporting includes forwarding statutory RIDDOR 2013 reports to the HSE.
12. Promote a health and safety awareness programme, to include training of staff and accident prevention techniques in conjunction with the Business Manager Human Resources.
13. Audit systems to monitor and evaluate the health and safety performance of prospective contractors and those employed by the Council on a proactive and reactive basis.
14. Give advice on standards, methods of work to be specified in contracts.
15. Advise Members and Strategic Management Team via a quarterly report, with a monthly report table of outstanding health and safety actions from the Performance Monitoring Table spreadsheet.
16. Promote proper arrangements to carry out risk assessment required by fire legislation, fire training and practical evacuations, engaging the Building Control Manager in the direct provision of technical advice regarding Council owned or occupied buildings and sites.
17. Collate the available information necessary for and prepare an annual report for publication on the Council's health and safety activities and performance.

## **KEY REPONSIBILITIES – BUILDING CONTROL MANAGER**

The Building Control Manager will in addition to his normal responsibilities provide:

1. Technical assistance to fire risk assessors to enable assessment of the adequacy of fire precautions in Council owned or occupied buildings and sites. This will take account of the Fire safety risk assessment guides - Department for Communities and Local Government publications, as well as specific legal requirements.

2. Verify that the assessments are suitable and sufficient to meet the requirements of the law.

These duties to be carried out in consultation with Principal Health and Safety Officer.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY 'KEY PARTNER' GROUP**

Each Assistant Director and Corporate Manager will appoint one or more of their service(s) managers to act as a 'Key Partner' to assist in the review of and implementation of Health and Safety Policy and good risk management practice. Aiming to promote the 'Exemplar' health and safety practice status expected of Councils.

Each 'Key Partner' will:

- meet with the Principal Health and Safety Officer from time to time and effect liaison within their Directorate
- establish ownership of responsibility for health and safety and risk management in the Directorate, to assist in drawing up implementation plans for health and safety policy and risk management initiatives
- advise on the allocation of tasks and duties in the Directorate
- monitor progress in implementation of policies, good practice and initiatives

They may also, from time to time, be asked to assist other managers, towards achieving our goal of successful management of health and safety and good risk management practice.

The 'Key Partner' Group will:

- prepare an annual health and safety action plan including detail of specific areas for review for reference in the Corporate Risk Register, in agreement with Directorate Management Teams
- receive and monitor reports from Units regarding progress in their health and safety, relevant risk management and insurance challenges. In particular in respect of high risk health and safety topics e.g. required annual tasks, risk assessments,
- receive and address health and safety, relevant risk management, insurance issues,

- Report to the Directorate Management Teams any health and safety and risk management issues considered to be possible Corporate Risk register entries.

A list of current members is available on City Net page 2617 or from the Principal Health and Safety Officer on extension 5456.

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APPENDIX III



**Exeter City Council**

# **Internal Health and Safety Report 2013 – 2014**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "R. Norley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Robert Norley  
Assistant Director (Environment)

Author: Paul Barton, Principal Health & Safety Officer  
Issue Date: July 2014

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- II Accidents and Incidents at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014: Notification by detail



## INTRODUCTION

This document is Exeter City Council's Internal Health & Safety Report for the financial year 2013-2014.

The Council's management of health & safety at work during this period is examined via the components of successful health & safety management as determined by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE)<sup>1</sup>.

### I. KEY FACTS

- Following a review of the Council's Health and Safety Management System in 2012-2013 a decision was made by the Senior Management Team to 'Revitalise' Health and safety Management
- The Council was acquitted at Crown Court on a charge of breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc. 1974 section 3. The Jury were sent out after failing to reach a unanimous verdict and returned the following day with a not guilty verdict in majority.
- One injury was reportable under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR 2013) that kept staff off work for more than seven days as a direct result of the injury and two diagnosed occupational diseases were reportable under the same regulations. This is half the number of RIDDOR reports made last year (i.e. six reports last year).
- There were ninety-four safety incidents reported during the year compared to last year's count of one hundred and twenty-four and these are detailed in section 3.3.
- This year no members of the public were conveyed to hospital from the scene of an accident on Council property.

### II. KEY TASKS

- The Corporate Health & Safety Action Plan is driven by the 'Revitalising Health and Safety' drive. Progress to date is shown in table 1 of this report.
- Further key tasks of a proactive nature were identified throughout this period and these appear on the Health & Safety Monitoring Matrix, which is sent via email to all managers throughout the Council on a quarterly basis.
- Tasks of a reactive nature that have arisen during the period covered by this report are also shown on the Health & Safety Monitoring Matrix.
- Key tasks are discussed in detail in Section 3, 'CHECK'.
- Key tasks for the forthcoming year, 2014 / 2015, are summarised as follows:
  - Maintain commitment to the Corporate Health & Safety Action Plan via the 'Revitalising Health and Safety' drive
  - Reduce the incidence of accidents & injuries through ongoing risk assessment & safety management commitment

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<sup>1</sup> HSE Guidance HSG65 refers.

- Review work at height safety throughout the organisation
- Review fire risk assessor competence throughout the organisation in line with new certification for competencies in this field
- Complete noise at work risk assessment reviews throughout the organisation
- Continue close monitoring of contractors to ensure their compliance with health and safety regulation and with particular regard to the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

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## **SECTION 1 – PLAN**

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL POLICY**

- 1.1.1 The Council's Statement of General Policy and the organisation & arrangements necessary to carry it out are available for viewing on the Council's websites – external internet page <http://www.exeter.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4833> and intranet link on <http://intranet/index.aspx?articleid=2629>.
- 1.1.2 The Statement of General Policy is dated 2012 but is to be reviewed in September 2014 to reflect recent restructures. The organisation and arrangements to carry out the policy were revised in August 2012 to reflect the change of senior management structure, but a further review is necessary in September 2014 to reflect further recent organisational restructures.

### **1.2 PROCEDURES**

- 1.2.1 Procedures are identified through various risk control measures, some of which are detailed in Safe Working Practices that are in place throughout the Council. Risk control measures, including Safe Working Practices (SWP), are arrived at through risk assessment.
- 1.2.2 A Corporate Risk Assessment 'register' is operated through City Net, our on-line intranet system and trained Risk Assessors are in place across services.
- 1.2.3 All employees following SWPs within their respective services must sign the SWP with their line manager. A list of current SWPs is also found on City Net, our on-line intranet system.

### **1.3 PLANNING FOR ACTIVE MONITORING**

- 1.3.1 Team Health & Safety reviews take place as part of the active monitoring process and are carried out by the Principal Health and Safety Officer (PHSO) and the Safety and Asbestos Officer (SAO). Reviews during year 2013 / 2014 have focussed on noise at work compliance within selected services, use of display screen equipment in Customer Services, manual handling of loads in the Bulky Collection Service, a

review of telephone headset users throughout the Council, a Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) review of Graffiti Cleaning Services and machinery vibration monitoring.

- 1.3.2. Reviews planned for next year intend to focus on continued monitoring of noise at work risk assessment and work at height.
- 1.3.3. Health & Safety audits are carried out by Internal Audit and planned into their work schedule accordingly.
- 1.3.4. The ECC Contractors Code of Practice was brought into force to ensure contractors comply with health and safety in ECC sites and projects.

#### **1.4 PLANNING FOR EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

- 1.4.1 A programme of low key health surveillance for the Materials Reclamation Facility (MRF) employees is ongoing. A schedule of health monitoring includes lung function tests (lower level), a general health questionnaire and hand skin health inspection. This is led by the Environment Directorate.
- 1.4.2 Ongoing monitoring of radon gas takes place at the Underground Passages, with the Facilities Manager trained as a Radon Protection Supervisor. Detailed records are kept of employee time spent in the Passages and Visitor Centre and an information briefing is handed to all contractors that visit to work in the Passages regularly or for 'one-off' contracts. This is led by the Economy Directorate.
- 1.4.3. Parks and Open Spaces and Fleet continue to lead on risk control of hand arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) with monitoring equipment procured last year to keep accurate record keeping of machine ratings and, if necessary, monitor individual employees identified as potentially vulnerable through health surveillance questionnaire returns to Occupation Health. Full use of the monitoring tool is being realised as the ongoing programme is applied to machines in Parks, Cemeteries and Street Scene. The database for the equipment record keeping is controlled by the Fleet Office. This is jointly led by the Public Realm Directorate (Parks, Cemeteries and Street Scene) and the Environment Directorate (Fleet).
- 1.4.4 Under the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 Council employed tradesmen will be undergoing health surveillance from April 2015 in relation to certain non-licensed work with asbestos that must nowadays nonetheless be notified to the Health and Safety Executive. The Safety and Asbestos Officer (SAO) has arranged for an approved physician to undertake the health surveillance in readiness and approval has been obtained from their line manager. This is jointly led by the Environment Directorate and the Corporate Manager Property Services.

## SECTION 2 – DO

### 2.1 RISK PROFILE – IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES

#### 2.1.1. FIRE RISK MANAGEMENT

Fire remains the risk with greatest likelihood of killing the most number of people in the shortest space of time in a workplace. The severity remains high but the likelihood has been greatly reduced over many decades by improvements to buildings design, fire protection systems, and fixtures and fittings standards. Notwithstanding, fire safety training remains a mandatory requirement for all employees. Different levels of training are required for different levels of fire safety management responsibility – for example, a Building Manager's fire safety training is more extensive than that of a Customer Services Officer and so on. Fire evacuation drills constitute a part of mandatory training for all employees. A list of fire and emergency evacuation drill compliance dates during 2013 – 2014 for Council buildings containing employees is given in Table 2.

#### 2.1.2. ASBESTOS

Asbestos is a risk if its fibres are released into the air. Past exposure to asbestos currently kills around 4,000 people a year and this number is expected to go on rising at least until 2016. There is no cure for asbestos related diseases (*HSE INDG 223, 2013*). Many Council buildings contain asbestos. To manage the risks associated with asbestos fibre release a number of key officers have received training to help services manage asbestos in their buildings, as well as to coordinate and monitor the work of contractors in Council premises where asbestos is present. A series of incidents in Housing relating to asbestos release have occurred this year. A meeting took place between the Council and the main contractor for Housing Repairs and Maintenance. Improvements to training of their operatives and their Plans of Works and Risk Assessments were required. A general letter reiterating this requirement and providing a template example was sent to all contractors engaged in asbestos work for the Council that is not licensed or not licensed but must nonetheless be notified to the Health and Safety Executive. Spot checks of contractors working on Council premises, especially social housing stock, should remain a priority during the forthcoming year. The Safety and Asbestos Officer (SAO) is the corporate lead adviser on asbestos related matters and able to provide Council services with a mobile site response advisory service during weekday office hours.

#### 2.1.3. MACHINE SAFETY

##### 2.1.3.1

Safety reviews and inspection prompted a review of lift motor rooms in Council buildings this year, with particular emphasis on guarding of hazardous machine parts such as rotating wheels and belts. Recommendations to improve guarding of machinery in some lift motor rooms have been made.

### 2.1.3.2

Noise risk assessments were reviewed in Waste Operations and Street Scene in relation to work with Refuse Collection Vehicle noise (Drivers and Loaders) and Mechanical Sweeping Machine Operatives. Minor changes were made to one of the Applied Sweeping Machines as a result

## 2.1.4. NEEDLESTICK AND OTHER SHARPS INJURY

There were four needle stick injuries (inoculation injuries) during this twelve-month period. This year saw the introduction of the Health and Safety (Sharp Instruments in Healthcare) Regulations 2013. These regulations put greater responsibility on healthcare employers to ensure safe management of sharps. Although Exeter City Council has no 'healthcare workers', it does have Clinical Waste and other Waste Collection services, including Street Sweepers and Car Park Cleaners, that collect sharps as a regular part of their job. Increased discarding of needles by drug users in the City has increased risk of inoculation injury. Although safe working practices have largely eliminated the need to pick up objects by gloved hands, needles and other potentially contaminated sharps carelessly discarded are occasionally found secreted in a variety of places that may cause injury.

## 2.1.5. TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT PLANS UPDATE

The Transport Management Plan for Exton Road (Oakwood House and MRF Site) was reviewed and resulted in some alterations to signage to ensure improved safety segregation between pedestrians, refuse collection vehicles, articulated lorries, mechanical sweepers and large goods and the JCB telescopic-loader.

## 2.1.6. DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT USAGE

A series of requests for detailed workstation assessments in Customer Services prompted a review of this service and followed on from last year's headset health and safety survey. The review concentrated on use of shared workstations and recommendations were made for minor alterations to shared workstations. Training in postural health and awareness was made available to all Customer Services employees.

## 2.2 ORGANISE AND IMPLEMENT ACTIVITIES AND PLANS

### 2.2.1. MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS (REVITALISING HEALTH AND SAFETY)

In June 2013 the Senior Management Team committed to 'Revitalising Health and Safety' within the organisation. 'Revitalising Health and Safety' details a 'roadmap' to successful health and safety management across the organisation via ten key compliance proposals:

- Policy and Communications;
- Organisational Planning;
- Control and Competence;
- Performance Management;
- Governance Arrangements;
- Political Engagement;
- Formulation of Priorities;
- Investment in Infrastructure;
- Internal Regulation; and
- The Role of Audit.

The key compliance proposals are ongoing into next financial year (2014 / 2015) and an Action Plan provides progress at monthly intervals to the Key Partners Group for Health and Safety. Table 1 details progress to date with 'Revitalising Health and Safety'.

**Table 1: 'Revitalising Health and Safety'. Our progress to date**

<b>Revitalise (Organise / Identify controls)</b>	<b>Implementation to Date</b>
Policy and Communications	<p>Terms of reference for Key Partners for H&amp;S revised to reflect new link to SMT for issues overdue for action.</p> <p>Monthly report to SMT on overdue H&amp;S actions.</p> <p>Improved dedicated notice boards in ECC buildings displaying regularly updated information for staff and visitors (contractors) to obtain advice and guidance from.</p> <p>Draft revisions to H&amp;S Training Policy and Alcohol and Drug Policy.</p>
Organisational Planning	<p>Programme of reviews in key health and safety risk areas: Noise at Work risk assessment review; Health surveillance for NNLW workers completing the main Asbestos Policy Review from last year (2012 / 2013). Shadowing Operatives and Officers – Street Scene, Environmental Protection, Housing Visiting Officers.</p> <p>AssessNET allows for advanced scheduling of active monitoring tasks. (see 2.2.2 below)</p>
Control and Competence	<p>A Buildings Survey is being undertaken by Property Services with assistance from Audit and Health and Safety to ascertain the levels of control and competence exercised</p>

	<p>by our various Buildings Managers or others with building services and control responsibilities. This exercise will be completed in the next financial year.</p>
Performance Management	<p>The Corporate Health and Safety Performance Matrix is sent quarterly to all SMT Members, relevant Council Officers, Trade Union H&amp;S Reps and Key Partners for H&amp;S on a quarterly basis. Outstanding actions are brought to SMT for scrutiny on a monthly basis.</p> <p>A quarterly report is submitted to the Scrutiny Resources Committee for information only via SMT.</p> <p>AssessNET allows for performance mapping across all existing modules within the licence (Safety Audit, Safety Inspection, COSHH Assessment and DSE Assessment).</p>
Governance Arrangements	<p>Merging of Unison H&amp;S representatives meeting (JCG) with Key Partners for H&amp;S (non-union H&amp;S representatives) ensures more direct arrangements and improved .</p>
Political Engagement	<p>Meetings with Portfolio Holder and other Elected Members as necessary. Minutes from Key Partners for H&amp;S copied to the Modern Government portal.</p>
Formulation of Priorities	<p>Priorities are identified via risk assessment. The key document driving these priorities is the H&amp;S Performance Matrix, which is tabled at SMT monthly performance meetings.</p> <p>The mitigation actions in response to the priorities are the H&amp;S Plan, so that although the Plan may change from month to month as actions are completed and new actions identified, the focus of the H&amp;S Plan will be on corporate health and safety priorities.</p>
Investment in Infrastructure	<p>In terms of the Capital Programme, where there is a clear health and safety risk to address, then information on risk rating in terms of corporate (health and safety) is used to prioritise the required work in terms of any risk posed to health and safety, and also identify other options to mitigate</p>

	<p>any risk. Any decision to prioritise funding, or otherwise, can then be properly informed and justified. An example of this in practice thus far includes the resurfacing of Leighton Terrace Car Park before winter 2013/2014.</p>
Internal Regulation	<p>A corporate procedure has been devised which requires a response within a reasonable timescale to any health and safety deficiencies identified, with an escalation process for non-compliance.</p> <p>This is driven through the H&amp;S Performance Matrix, the SMT Monthly report and the Quarterly Report to Scrutiny Resources.</p> <p>AssessNET allows for the monitoring of regulatory compliance through the Safety Audit Module. Use of this tool will be increased throughout the coming year. The longer term plan is to use this tool as the predominant medium for internal regulation, replacing the Performance Matrix spreadsheet, which is controlled by one person.</p> <p>The Principal Health and Safety Officer (PHSO) and Safety and Asbestos Officer (the two 'internal regulators') retain their collaborative approach to workplace assessments, but any assumptions there may be that the compliance recommendations are optional are being gradually being removed.</p>
The Role of Audit	<p>Internal Audit continue to review health and safety systems and processes. Their role in supporting the work of the PSHO has been further strengthened by involvement in the revision of new systems, such as AssessNET, and in auditing the operation of such.</p>

### 2.2.2 'ASSESSNET': OUR NEW COMPLIANCE MONITORING TOOL

'AssessNET' is a modular health and safety compliance system. The Exeter City Council licence for AssessNET went live in July 2013. Other public sector organisations on the AssessNET client portfolio include the Houses of Parliament and The Met Office. Nearly all of our Health and Safety Management System can be run through AssessNET. Data is owned by Exeter City Council but stored and backed up remotely. The plan is to add further modules of AssessNET to the corporate licence,



should this be acceptable to the Council. This is discussed further in this report under section 4 'Act'.

### 2.2.3. WORKER INVOLVEMENT

During this year our Join Consultative Group was merged with our Key Partners for Health and Safety Group. The merger was done under the 'Revitalising Health and Safety' drive with the intention of bringing trade union and non-trade union representatives together on health and safety matters as one group. The merger met with approval from both the Unison Health and Safety Branch Officer and Local Health and Safety Representatives (union and non-union) that sit on the Key Partners Group. The minutes of the Key Partners Group for Health and Safety are available on the Modern Government portal

### 2.2.4 LOCAL IDENTIFICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTROL MEASURES

Local meetings in higher risk services take place to review and implement control measures. The meetings serve both active and reactive monitoring. An example of active monitoring includes 'risk mapping' as part of risk assessment review and an example of reactive monitoring is examination of accidents to look into ways of preventing recurrence. Other topics include examination of health and safety aspects of new workplace equipment by a variety of employees of all grades, the PHSO, Trade Union Safety Representatives and non-union Workplace H&S Representatives. The meetings take place quarterly and the current groups are 'Cleansing, Waste and Recycling' and 'Waterways'. A recommendation to add another group, 'Parks, Open Spaces and Cemeteries' has been made. Others such as 'Housing' may follow.

## SECTION 3 – CHECK

### 3.1 CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE MONITORING MATRIX

3.1.1. The Corporate H&S Performance Monitoring Matrix (the Matrix) is sent to the Deputy CEO, Assistant Directors, Corporate Managers, Unison and relevant Middle Managers every quarter throughout the year. Entries onto The Matrix are primarily arrived at through the health and safety audit and review process. This is termed 'active monitoring'. Other types of 'active monitoring' reach the Matrix via routes such as Key Partner Group for Health and Safety or the Quarterly Service Health and Safety Meetings. Similarly, an Assistant Director or a Corporate / Team Manager may identify (usually through risk assessment) a safety control measure that requires action to eliminate or reduce risk. If the PHSO concurs with the risk control measure then this too may appear on the matrix under active monitoring.

3.1.2 Conversely, some entries arrive onto the Matrix through accidents, incidents and near misses. These are termed 'reactive monitoring'. Reactive monitoring will usually seek to implement risk management measures to prevent recurrence of an accident, or provide a target date for investigation into a particular trend in accident or injury patterns.

3.1.3. A copy of the Matrix at all four quarter stages during 2013/2014 is available from the PHSO. The final quarter Matrix for the year 2013/2014 contains sixty-eight entries, ten of which were new entries during the quarter. Thirty-five entries were fully completed during the final quarter. The column indicating whether entries were 'reactive monitoring' or 'active monitoring' was removed this year on request from SMT.

3.1.4. Team Managers, Corporate Managers and Assistant Directors are encouraged to use the matrix as a support mechanism in their health and safety management. Timely confirmation to PHSO of actions that have been completed, in part or whole, help to demonstrate 'at a glance' the current corporate status of health and safety management within the Council.

## 3.2 ACCIDENT & INCIDENT MONITORING AND INVESTIGATION

3.2.1 The accident and incident spreadsheets at Appendix I for notifications by type<sup>i</sup> and Appendix II for notifications by detail. The spreadsheets show that there were ninety-four safety incidents reported during the year, compared to one-hundred and twenty-four last year. Of the total ninety-four, three were reportable to HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) compared to six last year.

3.2.2. The three RIDDOR reportable incidents comprised of two cases of a reportable occupational disease and one injury that caused an employee to be absent from work for over seven days. This year there were no injuries to members of the public in which they had to be conveyed to hospital from the scene of an accident on Exeter City Council premises or land. Table 2 provides details.

**TABLE 2: A BREAKDOWN OF THE RIDDOR INCIDENTS 2013-2014 AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE**

RIDDOR Classification	Injury	Employment Group	Date	Location details &	Remedial Action / Response
Occupational Disease	Symptoms of HAVS	Public Realm: Parks and Open Spaces	Diagnosed 26/09/2013	HAVS confirmed by OH	Restricted use of machinery to below 100 points per day and increase in ongoing health surveillance from annual to six monthly check ups.
+7	Haematoma in right leg	Public Realm: Street Sweeper	26/09/2013	Missed footing when stepping up onto kerb, stumbled and fell to the ground. Landed on right	No defect in footway, full PPE was being worn. No indication of any health problem at the time of the fall. Operative had received training into trip and fall hazards that may be present during the normal course of

RIDDOR Classification	Injury	Employment Group	Date	Location details &	Remedial Action / Response
Occupational Disease	Symptoms of HAVS	Public Realm: Parks and Open Spaces	Diagnosed 18/03/2014	foot and elbow. HAVS confirmed by OH	street sweeping. Restricted use of machinery to below 100 points per day and increase in ongoing health surveillance from annual to six monthly check ups

3.2.3. Manual handling injuries increased slightly this year (twenty-six this year, compared to twenty-two previously), but slips-trips-fall injuries significantly reduced to twenty, compared to twenty-nine last year. The number of incidents involving contractors and asbestos fell from ten to eight. Injuries involving members of the public dropped from fifteen to ten.

3.2.4 There were fewer incidents of personal threats to employees this year: ten, down from last year's nineteen. There was one physical assault on a Council Officer.

3.2.5 No voluntary workers were injured this year.

3.2.6. Six workers were injured when working under contract for Exeter City Council and seven workers were exposed to a substance hazardous to health when working under contract for Exeter City Council. In all of the seven latter cases the substance hazardous to health was asbestos.

3.2.7 Exeter City Council incidence rate for over-seven day injuries is 155.03 and significantly below the national average of 233.1 per 100,000 employees<sup>2</sup>. However, because of the two HAVS diagnoses during this year, our incidence rate for 'ill health [diagnosed] by doctors and specialist physicians' is at 310 per 100,000 employees, which is higher than the national average of 130 per 100,000 employees. These figures are based on our full time equivalent employee establishment of 645 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

3.2.8 All accidents and incidents are investigated and risk assessments are reviewed following accidents and incidents. Where risk assessments and safe working practices are reviewed, all employees involved must be consulted on any changes proposed to reduce risk. Indeed, employees are often the most valuable source of information on how tasks are progressing and are best placed to contribute ideas for improvements in safety.

### 3.3 FIRE AND EMERGENCY ACTION DRILL COMPLIANCE

All buildings that are places of work are required to exercise at least one fire evacuation drill a year, preferably a minimum of two. In certain Exeter City Council buildings evacuation drills are problematic and where this is the case other measures to ensure training and awareness of what to do in the event of a fire are implemented. Table 3 details dates of compliance and other information.

<sup>2</sup> HSE Annual Statistics Report for Great Britain 2012 /2013 (NB 2013 / 2014 is not available at the time of writing)

**Table 3. Fire evacuation drill returns during financial year 2013 / 2014**

<b>Building</b>	<b>Evacuation / Evacuation Drill Date</b>	<b>Comments / Observations</b>
Belle Isle Depot	26/03/2013	
Bridge Rd Tractor Depot	See comments	Less than 5 at any one time. All briefed on separate fire procedure. Fire action plan displayed
Civic Centre	28/03/2014	All clear in 2 min 37 seconds
MRF	15/07/2013 27/09/2013	Other drills carried out as well. The two listed were small fires.
RAMM Queen St	02/01/2014 (x2)	
RAMM Ark	23/01/2014	
RAMM St Nix	July 2013	
The Guildhall	31/07/2013 28/02/2014	
Underground Passages & Tourist Information Centre	10/09/2013 11/03/2014	Land Securities control planning of fire drills and control the main panels.
Quay House Visitor Centre	10/06/2013	Includes adjoining commercial.
Multi Storey and Underground Car Parks	See comments	Extensive drills carried out during 2012 / 2013. Awaiting review of fire action plans as CEOs have become County Council employees on a different radio network.
The Corn Exchange	26/09/2013 06/03/2014	Thanks again extended to the Dance Club that helps to make the drills realistic in terms of evacuee numbers.
The Matford Centre and the Livestock Centre	15/05/2013	
Oakwood House	13/12/2013 February 2014	February was a genuine activation
Glencoe STA	29/07/2013	
Exeter Business Centre	26/06/2013	
Workshop Exton Rd	See comments	Less than 5 at any one time. All tradesmen briefed in fire procedure. Fire action plan displayed

Older and Vulnerable Persons Accommodation (Faraday House, Rennes House, Russet House, Weirfield House)	See comments	Procedures under review in terms of stay-put policy or autonomous evacuation – NB most buildings have visiting Wardens or Housing Officers and no permanent Warden on site.
Higher Cemetery Staff Room	See comments	Less than 5 at any one time. All operatives briefed in fire procedure. Fire action plan displayed
Exwick Cemetery Staff Room & Sweeper Shed	See comments	Less than 5 at any one time. All Operatives briefed in fire procedure. Fire action plan displayed

## SECTION 4 – ACT

### 4.1 INTERNAL AUDIT

4.1.1 Internal Audit completed an investigation into the Display Screen Equipment Assessment (DSE) System. Their report published in October 2012 contained recommendations that are anticipated to achieve completion with the full introduction of the AssessNET DSE module.

### 4.2 INSURANCE

4.2.1 Zurich Insurance undertook a risk survey of the Council in October 2012. Elements of this pertained to health and safety management. A training presentation on liability awareness was held in which an emphasis on correct and timely workplace safety inspection was highlighted. The introduction of the AssessNET system this year facilitates a uniform corporate approach to workplace safety inspection. All building managers are to be trained in use of AssessNET for workplace safety inspections during 2014 / 2015.

### 4.3 TOWARDS OHSAS 18001

4.3.1 OHSAS 18001 has been developed to be compatible with the ISO9001 (Quality) and ISO 14001 (Environmental) management systems standards. This was developed in order to facilitate the integration of quality, environmental and occupational health and safety management systems into organisations, should they wish to attain this accreditation.

4.3.2 The specification gives requirements for an occupational health and safety management system that enables an organisation to control its health and safety risks and improve its performance. It does not state specific performance criteria, nor does it give detailed specifications for the design of a management system.

4.3.3 Should the Council wish to gauge its current health and safety culture, the Council may choose to seek an external audit in order to attain RoSPA gold/silver/bronze or the British Safety Council Five Star rating; by the end of 2017, the Council would then be in a position to decide whether to proceed with external audit for OHSAS 18001.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSION**

4.4.1 One aim of the Health and Safety Management System is to ensure a more consolidated centralised approach to protect the Council and its employees alike. Comparative data from the previous three financial years is available from the PHSO.

4.4.2 Clear improvements are noted in areas like accident and incident trends. However, this should be kept in perspective when considering the reduction in the employee full-time equivalent establishment from that of last year and may signify no real change.

4.4.3 The Council over the last three financial years has achieved a good reporting culture and a good proactive management culture in health and safety. This is reflected in the minutes of the key health and safety committee: Key Partners for Health and Safety Group. The 'Revitalising Health and Safety' drive has forged a stronger link to Senior Management ensuring they have a broad overview of the health and safety risks and priorities for the Council. The 'Revitalising Health and Safety' drive will continue into the next financial year.