

Health and Safety Group Meeting

30 June 2022

Present: Kelland Dickens, HR Manager
Geraint Harries, Countryside Manager
Daisy Hughes, Visitor Services Manager – South
Tegryn Jones, Chief Executive
Andrew Muskett, Building Projects Manager
Liz Rooney, Unison Representative
Libby Taylor, Ranger Service Manager
Sharron Thomas, Administrative Assistant - DM

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Dyfan Evans, Woodland Supervisor. Geraint Harries attended in his absence.

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

Future agendas and minutes will all be saved to the HR / Health & Safety public folder on the shared F drive.

Further feedback was requested from the Group regarding the up-and-coming Health & Safety Annual Plan.

Kelland Dickens shared the subject headings which would be included in the report to be produced for the Audit & Corporate Services Committee.

It was reported that the A&CS Committee had requested an updated Terms of Reference for the H & S Group, and this would be included in the Annual Plan.

Kelland Dickens would draft a new ToR, sending a copy to the Group for comment prior to submission to Committee.

Kelland Dickens agreed to circulate, to the Group for comment, a copy of the subject headings for the report.

Andrew Muskett commented that a Radon update should be added to the Plan - particularly for Castell Henllys.

Kelland Dickens agreed to include a Radon update in the Annual Plan.

Libby Taylor requested an update be provided on Visitor Safety. Kelland Dickens commented that this had also been requested by Dr Rachel Heath-Davies.

Kelland Dickens agreed to include Visitor Safety in the Annual Plan.

Kelland Dickens confirmed that he would start drafting up the Annual Plan and would send an email out to all relevant staff to ensure it captured a thorough review of the previous 12 months' progress against the Authority's Health & Safety agenda.

3. HAVS

As Steve Davies was unable to attend the meeting, Kelland Dickens provided a progress update on HAVS.

New equipment and software to measure exposure to hand arm vibration, had been purchased by the Authority.

Steve Davies had commenced roll-out, and testing had been completed on the vibration output of machinery in the South and North. A date had also been agreed to commence an assessment of equipment in the West.

Geraint Harries commented that the work was comprehensive and would provide a good pattern of magnitude and exposure points once completed.

Tegryn Jones commented that HAVS had appeared on the HR Committee report the previous day, and that Members were focused on this area, and it was anticipated that future updates would be expected.

Kelland Dickens commented that certain HAVS conditions are RIDDOR reportable, and the Authority was under a duty to report cases and had started doing so recently.

Kelland Dickens confirmed that HAVi Technologies had provided training dates on the software, which would be used to measure exposure levels for individual staff.

Kelland Dickens confirmed he would circulate training dates to Libby Taylor, Phil Lees, Geraint Harries and Steve Davies.

Libby Taylor commented that machine testing needed to cover the full sample of machines across the Authority, and that this should include those owned by the Ranger team.

Kelland Dickens confirmed that he would ensure the work was coordinated and that all machines detailed on the Asset Register were included.

Kelland Dickens commented that as the Rangers were subject to Occupational Health HAVS reviews, they would be included in the monitoring exercise for staff using vibrating machines.

Kelland Dickens said he would ensure Steve Davies briefed Libby Taylor so that she could test the machines belonging to the Ranger team.

Geraint Harries commented that there were machines at Castell Henllys that would also need to be tested.

Kelland Dickens confirmed that until all machines were individually tested, an average score would be used for machines and that this was accepted practice, advised by HAVi Technology and supported by advice taken from HSE.

Geraint Harries confirmed that the scores he had seen for the new Brush-cutters were very accurate against the average scores provided in the manufacturer's documentation. He said it gave him confidence, but scores for older machines showed a significant difference. Geraint said the age of the machine was something

that the Authority needed to be very aware of and so far, the Authority had been through a programme of replacing older machines to mitigate HAVs.

Kelland Dickens asked if Liz Rooney could provide him with a list of all electrical machines, following a point raised at the HR Committee, who were keen to understand the Authorities position on using electric battery-operated machines.

Kelland Dickens asked the Group for further feedback on the HAVs policy and said he would circulate this once more as he had not had any feedback from the Group.

He confirmed the Policy had been circulated to Audit and Corporate Service Committee and HR Committee and once the Group had commented it would be presented for approval at NPA.

Andrew Muskett asked to ensure that Machine Asset List included the lawn mower and other machines used by the Llanion Caretaker team.

4. Accidents and Incidents

Libby Taylor suggested that it would be helpful to break the statistics down and separate accidents involving staff and/or members of the public, to provide further insight.

Kelland Dickens agreed to separate the figures out in future reports.

Tegryn Jones asked for further clarity on the incident statistics, which included Covid-19; noting that Covid-19 statistics were already captured in the Absence statistics.

Kelland Dickens responded that separating out Accidents and Incidents involving members of the public would answer the question, because the Incident involved a member of the public who had collapsed at Carew, in which the Ambulance Crew suggested it may have been caused by Covid-19.

Kelland Dickens commented that the Authority had fallen behind on training due to Covid-19, although refresher training was now taking place. It was reported that an audit would be undertaken the following week to check if there were any further gaps and training dates had already been identified, if any gaps did exist.

Kelland Dickens confirmed that the HR Advisor role identified as a necessity following consultation on the restructure, had been approved. This role would provide a focus to Health and Safety and Training; and recruitment had already commenced.

Daisy Hughes commented that she had a lot of new staff who had not had any manual handling training and that she had longer serving staff who had done training but would welcome refresher training.

Geraint Harries confirmed that some of the tickets had run out during Covid-19 because many training providers had stopped training. He commented that it was nice that several training sessions had now been advertised and were being organised by Human Resources.

Geraint also commented that (the employee) who had recently had a workplace accident was doing very well.

Tegryn Jones commented that training was paramount to protect the health and safety of the Authorities staff. He said that if we have reluctance from staff to participate in training, the Authority needs to highlight the benefits to their health and safety.

5. Absence Statistics

Kelland Dickens commented that the absence statistics had increased over the period, due to Covid-19 and that 'days taken' had reached 419 since January. He commented that there were no other trends.

6. Fire Safety

It was confirmed that the Fire Safety Policy was in place at Llanion, and an update was required for the other sites.

Andrew Muskett commented that only Carew and Oriel y Parc were still outstanding, and Andrew Muskett would take this forward through Rachel Perkins.

Kelland Dickens commented that an evacuation test had not been undertaken at Llanion for some months, due to staff not being in the office. He said that Fire Evacuation Training would commence in July and be carried out on a more regular basis due to staff numbers at Llanion being low and the need to cover all staff.

Kelland Dickens agreed to organise a series of Fire Evacuation Training at Llanion based on numbers present in the building on any given day to attempt to capture all staff.

Andrew Muskett commented that the Fire Marshalls had been trained but felt there was still no clarity on the role.

Kelland Dickens commented that the new policy set out roles and that the Fire Evacuation Training was also about instructing the Fire Marshalls on what their actual responsibilities were, by using a 'live' evacuation.

KD said he would firstly request all existing Fire Marshalls attend the Evacuations and secondly, due to a number of requests for flexible working, an extended list of Fire Marshalls was required.

It was confirmed that Fire Evacuation Drills were being carried out at the Centres and Cilrhedyn, as staff had been present on site, during Covid-19.

Geraint Harries requested further Fire Marshall training for Cilrhedyn staff and Daisy Hughes requested Fire Marshall training for Carew.

Kelland Dickens confirmed that additional training was being organised and would ask all the sites if they had other staff who required training.

7. First Aid

It was confirmed that Barbara Bevan had carried out an audit of First Aid boxes and supplies at Llanion and these were now 'in date'. It was reported that the Countryside Managers, Ranger Services Manager, Centre Manager had all carried out similar audits, replacing and replenishing old stock.

It was reported that only Cilrhedyn and Llanion's Defibrillators had yet to be fully registered and would be completed in July.

8. Training

Kelland Dickens confirmed the following training had now been completed:

- Chainsaw (full course and refresher)
- Power pole Pruning
- Clearing Saw
- Pedestrian and Ride-on Mower
- Abrasive Wheels
- CAT and Genny
- ISOSH Managing Safely
- Tree Surveys (Basic and Intermediate)
- Restraint Line Systems

Geraint commented that Off Road Vehicle Training needs to be sourced with new staff joining the Authority.

Kelland Dickens reported that an email had been sent to managers requesting a list of mandatory training for staff and commented that some managers were not fully engaged with providing the information and did not know what training was required. It was commented that Risk Assessments should and were being completed, so managers should understand what training was required.

Kelland Dickens suggested that some managers may require further training on carrying out Individual Risk Assessments.

Kelland Dickens confirmed he would include Off-Road Training (including Refresher) to the Training Matrix and organise future training dates.

Kelland Dickens agreed to send a further email out to Managers and would sit down with managers where necessary to help them understand their departments mandatory training requirements.

Geraint Harries commented that Risk Assessments needed to identify both Statutory and PCNPA Mandatory training requirements.

Tegryn Jones, referring to the recent recruitment challenges, wanted reassurance that managers were not taking any health and safety shortcuts.

Geraint Harries responded that training was being carried out and that no activities were carried out unless training had been undertaken. Daisy Hughes commented that it had been a challenge to fit in training during the busy summer months, but mandatory training was being carried out.

Daisy Hughes asked for clarification on the policy with regards to First Aid training for staff and said she needed to review how it worked in practice for Carew, with staff working shift patterns.

Kelland Dickens asked Daisy Hughes to review her rotas and notify Human Resources if any member of staff required further First Aid Training.

Libby Taylor requested a meeting to agree interval periods for Refresher Training. Kelland Dickens responded that this would be included in the Training Matrix and would organise a meeting to ensure manager views were captured.

Kelland Dickens commented that he would be capturing training requirements on the new Cezanne HR system so it could flag up to managers when an employee was near to a training expiry date, so that the Authority were always ahead of the curve.

9. Representations from staff and A.O.B.

Tegryn Jones commented that the Group is set up to be a representative group of departments across the Authority.

He commented that it was not an 'expert group' and that a few years previously a lot of work had been done to address Health and Safety Gaps referencing changes made within DM and the value of the DM H&S Group representative to those changes.

Geraint Jones commented that once the Annual Health and Safety Plan was published, it was likely to generate further feedback from staff.

Liz Rooney commented that things had been on hold within the Union due to Covid-19, so did not have any feedback from a union perspective.

Daisy Hughes asked if a copy of the minutes would be sent out. **Kelland Dickens would send a copy of the minute out for the Group members to check, before they were published on the shared drive.**

10. Date of Next Meeting

15 December 2022