

## Report to Resources Committee

25 February 2014




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**Title:** Health and Safety Update

**Report of:** Support Services Manager

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### Purpose of Report

1. To provide the committee with a report on the company's health and safety activities for the period October to December 2013.

### Background

2. The Safety, Health and Environmental Team ("SHE Team") are responsible for a number of activities designed to eliminate, reduce and mitigate accidents in the workplace and to ensure, safety of residents and members of the public who access our services and premises.
3. In addition to this the team act in an advisory role to ensure company wide compliance with a number of statutory and regulatory requirements including: -
  - Occupational Health and Safety
  - Health and Safety Training
  - Occupational Hygiene
  - Environmental Management
4. They also have responsibility for ensuring the company's compliance with statutory regulatory requirements as follows: -
  - Water Management - Risk assessments and water testing.
  - Electrical Safety - Cyclical electrical testing, fixed wire testing, portable appliance testing and emergency lighting testing.
  - Fire Safety - Risk assessment, maintenance, repair and testing of fire alarms and fire appliances.
  - Passengers Lifts Operations - Lift Repairs, maintenance, refurbishment and upgrade to DDA standard.
5. They are also responsible for the coordination and monitoring of health and safety on construction sites including:
  - CDM Coordination (Construction, Design, Management) and Control of Contractors

- Site Waste Management Plans

### **Policy, Procedure and Safe Systems of Work Update**

6. In the previous reporting period, we reviewed the corporate risk assessment process and developed with service users a simplified assessment process. The initial review process has been completed for Neighbourhood Services and we are now reviewing Property Services and Corporate Services.
7. During this reporting period, we have reviewed our SharePoint training and delivered this to users in Sheltered Housing.
8. We are in the process of reviewing the SharePoint sites used in caretaking services and Housing Offices. As the review is completed we will deliver training to the users.
9. We have developed a draft Health and Safety Audit Plan to cover all areas of activity for the company. Performance against the audit plan will be reported periodically to the committee.
10. In consultation with managers and employees we have reviewed the training matrix and carried out a gap analysis. We are now in a position to identify training priorities for employees and managers for the period 2014 to 2015.

### **Partners Activity Update**

11. In the period October to December 2013 we have monitored and review all asbestos incidents. We continue to work closely with Mears Safety Advisors for continued compliance and safe systems of working.
12. During the period October to December 2013 the following joint Health and Safety site visits have taken place with Mears:
  - Two joint visits to; Marion court, Portobello, Vigo, Wrekenton, Pleasant Place 1-24 and Harrison Court to monitor the safety arrangements on the external painting project 2013 – 2014.
  - Three planned site visits covering responsive repairs, gas safety inspection, electrical testing, joinery works, painting and roof line repairs.
  - One site visit to inspect temporary structures safety.
13. There were no significant areas of weakness identified on the site visits. A number of minor recommendations and areas for improvement were identified and arrangements have been made to implement the recommendations.

### **Accident Reporting**

14. There has been an increase in accidents reported in the period October to December 2013 from Contractors working on our construction sites. This is a result of increased awareness through effective joint working with Partners in the reporting of all accidents.
15. We are closely monitoring the impact of changes to RIDDOR 2013 as it is envisaged we will see an increase in reported workplace injuries as a result of the simplified mandatory reporting.

## **Accidents / Incidents near misses TGHC Employees**

16. In the period October to December 2013 there were seven minor accidents and no major accidents reported as follows:-
- One employee suffered minor contusions as result of door falling on her during a site inspection.
  - One employee suffered whiplash as result of car accident during working hours.

## **Accidents / Incidents near misses to 3<sup>rd</sup> Party / Subcontractors**

17. In the period October to December 2013 there has been one major accident and nine minor accidents as follows:-
- One operative tripped and fell down stairs sustaining cuts to the head, bruises to shoulder and ribcage. This accident was reported to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013
  - One operative suffered minor back injuries from lifting a bag of waste from a bin
  - One operative suffered a minor bruise to the lower limb as a result of a fall during refurbishment
  - One operative suffered a laceration to their hand as a result of misuse of a stanley knife.
  - One operative suffered a minor eye injury as a result of dust ingress.
  - One operative tripped over a scaffold under construction sustaining minor bruising.
  - One operative was bitten by a cat suffering a minor puncture to their hand.
  - One operative was bitten by a dog suffering minor puncture to their lower limb.
  - One operative sustained minor bruises to their hand from a falling hand tool
  - One operative suffered minor contusion from a flying object to their head
  - One operative fell through ceiling boards with no injuries sustained.
18. In the period October to December 2013 there have been reported three near misses:
- Two alleged CO poisoning requiring attendance at hospital.
  - One reported gas escape caused by tenant misuse. The Dangerous Occurrence was reportable to the HSE under RIDDOR 2012.
19. In the reporting period of October to December 2013 there has been the following reported Violence and Aggression to TGHC Employees;
- One case of physical assault
  - Eighteen cases of verbal abuse
  - Six cases of threatening behaviour
20. In the period October to December 2013 the following 3<sup>rd</sup> Party/Subcontractors Violence and Aggression has been reported:
- Seven cases of verbal abuse
21. All accidents and reported violent incidents have been investigated and follow up action taken to include a review of safe systems of work and support provided to individuals.

## **Asbestos Management**

22. Meetings have taken place with Northern Housing Consortium and Gateshead Council procurement in relation to the asbestos tender.
23. We have met with internal stakeholders to assess the initial specification requirements.
24. During the period October to December 2013 asbestos surveys have been requested for voids, gas servicing, maintaining decency, maintenance fire improvement works, lifts refurbishment, buildings electrical rewiring and aids and adaptations.
25. The following asbestos surveys have taken place for refurbishment and demolition (R&D) surveys:
  - 24 Surveys maintaining decency investment work
  - 20 Survey repairs and maintenance including gas servicing
  - 29 Surveys major works projects, such as fire or electrical improvement works.
  - 28 Surveys void properties and aids and adaptations.
  - 20 Air stage four test
  - 27 Re-inspection of know asbestos containing materials (ACM) in non-domestic buildings
  - 11 Bulk sampling
26. During the period October to December 2013, there were no reported incidents of accidental disturbance of ACM's.
27. HSE Inspectors are currently carrying out an investigation on two reported Asbestos Dangerous Occurrences with Mears and two reported Asbestos Dangerous Occurrences with LES.

## **Fire Safety Management**

28. Proactive monitoring of our Fire Safety strategy continues to take place through joint working and regular meetings with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS).
29. The work programme for the Sheltered Housing buildings is progressing with several schemes completed during the reporting period.
30. We continue with a review and update of fire risk assessments and evacuation strategies. On completion employees and residents will receive training with information on action to take in event of fire in the building.
31. During this reporting period, our state of readiness in event of minor and major incident has been tested by the industrial action taken by TWFRS. We have worked with Gateshead Council Resilience Planning Section and have reviewed and updated our contingency plans in response to the planed action.
32. There were no reported incidents during the period of industrial action by TWFRS.

## **Legionella Control**

33. Monthly meetings with our maintenance contractor are ongoing. No significant risks have been identified.
34. In the period October to December 2013 no positive tests were reported.
35. To date 66 out of 67 water hygiene risk assessments have been completed in High Rise Buildings, Sheltered Housing, Communal Lounges and Housing Offices. Schedule of proposed recommendations from findings have been considered and remedial works planned.

## **Cyclical Repair and Maintenance Update**

36. The periodical meetings with Gateshead Council Local Environmental Services and the Gateshead Housing Company are progressing with the monitoring of the delivery of the cyclical maintenance programme. Inspections to Fire alarms, emergency lighting systems, dry and wet risers have been completed in line the maintenance programme.
37. No immediate actions have been identified during this reporting period.

## **Lift Maintenance**

38. No relevant immediate actions in relation to breakdowns, maintenance and repairs have been reported during the period October to December 2013.
39. There were 2 reported lift entrapments in the period October to December 2013.
40. Passengers were released to our agreed service standard response time by the lift maintenance company.

## **Update on the Company Construction Related Activities**

41. There are twelve construction related projects ongoing with notifications to the HSE.
42. Works are ongoing on ten projects involving multiple sites as follows: -
  - Insulation works to non traditional properties in Springwell
  - Maintaining decency works covering various estates across the Borough
  - Planned painting works across various sites
  - Fire safety improvement works to Sheltered Housing across various sites.
  - Tunstall Telecare upgrades across the Borough
  - Lift replacement at Pleasant Place unit D
  - Lifts replacement at Priory, Park and Peareth
  - Barnes Close electrical upgrade works
  - Accessibly improvement works in Sheltered Housing across various sites.
  - Stoneygate conversion works
  - New Build development for 20 new properties

43. Minor non-compliances identified during the site visits have been discussed with the Principal Contractors and remedial actions agreed to mitigate the risk from construction related activities.

### **Update on Health and Safety Legislation Changes**

44. The following code of practices have been reviewed during this reporting period as follows:-
- Control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH) (L5). The sixth edition of this Approved Code of Practice and guidance provides practical advice to help duty holders comply with the requirements of the COSHH Regulations.
  - Asbestos (L143) This publication contains the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, the Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) and guidance for employers about work which disturbs, or is likely to disturb, asbestos, asbestos sampling and laboratory analysis. The Regulations set out your legal duties and the ACOP and guidance give practical advice on how to comply with those requirements. The Regulations give minimum standards for protecting employees from risks associated with exposure to asbestos.

### **Links to Values**

45. This report links to the following company values: -
- Being honest, accountable and transparent
  - Being motivated, trained and committed across the company
  - Being caring and respecting
  - A commitment to all our employees
  - Embracing equality.

### **Impact on Customers**

46. The improvements identified and actions carried out will help us to provide healthy and safe environments for employees, residents, members of the public and partners.

### **Risk Management Implications**

47. Not meeting the requirement of current and new Health and Safety legislation has been identified as an operational risk for the company.

### **Financial Implications**

48. The Head of Corporate Services confirms that a budget is available to support the activities mentioned in this report through revenue or capital budgets.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

49. Detailed Equality Impact Assessments are carried out on all Health & Safety policies and procedures to ensure that they do not adversely impact on any customers.

### **Value for Money Implications**

50. Value for money principles are followed in all health and safety activity.

### **Health Implications**

51. The company's approach to Health and Safety, embedded within everything that we do and the actions specifically mentioned within this report, ultimately will have a positive impact on people's health and overall wellbeing. By working to ensure that any services we provide meet the needs of the customers, partners and of employees and do not cause undue stress to either party.

### **Environmental Implications**

52. The work detailed in this report will be carried out to ensure we meet our ISO 14001 standards and principles. We will make choices that reflect our social responsibility to improve the environment in which we work and live.

### **Recommendation**

53. The views of the committee are sought on whether it is satisfied with the update on health and safety activities and developments.

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