



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF SERVICE DELIVERY**

**to
PERFORMANCE, GOVERNANCE AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
23 SEPTEMBER 2021**

REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY - QUARTER 1

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on health and safety statistics and activity during Quarter 1 (Q1) (1 April 2021 to 30 June 2021) and to update Members on activities commenced during Quarter 2 (Q2) (July to September).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) To note the accident and incident statistics;
- (ii) To note the work underway during Quarter 2 on health and safety activities.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 Quarter 1 (Q1)

3.1.2 There was 1 accident and 2 near misses during Q1: -

- a building control officer was bitten by a dog whilst on a site visit;
- a member of the Parks Team cut an electricity cable whilst mowing the grass in Promenade Park, nobody was hurt;
- sudden movement of dredging equipment whilst shellfish sampling, nobody was hurt. The risk assessment was reviewed, and further safety instructions were issued to officers who undertake shellfish sampling.

3.1.3 There were 2 incidents of unacceptable behaviour: 1 incident involving waste crews, and another was a referral via Environmental Health.

3.1.4 The first aid procedure has been reviewed and updated to reflect current arrangements.

3.1.5 There has been no progress with the health and safety action plan (**APPENDIX 1**) due to other commitments during Q1 however progress is being made in Q2 as detailed below.

3.2 Quarter 2 (interim update)

3.2.1 Members are advised there was an accident in the Council Chamber following a stumble and fall: the member of staff sprained their ankle and were absent from work for 4 weeks. As a result of this, signage warning of the split-level flooring has been

increased in the area along with compliance measures to ensure that the rope barriers in that area are in place. In addition, revised information was provided to members as part of their agenda pack prior to meetings.

- 3.2.2 The Resources Facilities team is seeking quotes to make further adjustments to the Council Chamber to further decrease any risk of accident including possible further reduction of the split-level flooring.
- 3.2.3 The work mentioned above is in addition to the previous work undertaken which involved a low level stud wall which was built and a split level floor removed, two retractable barriers which were fitted to seating, and rope barriers which were fitted to step areas.
- 3.2.4 Recognising the need to progress the Health and Safety Action Plan, an Interim Health and Safety Lead Officer has been engaged for a 3-month period. The Officer is based within the Service Delivery Directorate and will work closely with Our Senior Specialist (Environmental Health) and other Managers to identify priorities, seek assurance or action any improvements. This work will be reported in more detail during the Q2 update to Members in due course.
- 3.2.5 As part of the reopening of the Splash Park in 2021 specialist consultants have been appointed to improve processes and operations to improve resilience. This work is ongoing and will ensure the facility is able to operate more effectively next season. Separately the need has been identified for additional officers to be trained to provide technical oversight of the splash park. This season a combination of sickness in staffing (Covid & non Covid related) coupled with mechanical problems has meant the 2021 season has been cut short. The work described above also includes reviewing method statements, risk assessments and general safety arrangements at the splash park. The Health and Safety Lead Officer mentioned in 3,2,2 above will have oversight of all recommendations and incorporate them into the action plan.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 There were very few accidents, near misses and incidents of unacceptable behaviour during Q1.
- 4.2 There has been no proactive work on the health and safety action plan this quarter, however, it is anticipated work will start on the new policy and other items are now progressing via an Interim Health and Safety Lead Officer.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 Managing health and safety helps protect the workforce and wider community who may be affected by the Council's activities ensuring that communities stay safe and healthy.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Good health and safety management reduces the number of accidents and injuries to both customers and employees alike. Reduced staff absence resulting from work related injuries or ill health ensures a better service is provided to customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.

- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Poor management of health and safety can lead to accidents, injuries, occupational ill health or dangerous occurrences. This may result in avoidable sickness absence and these incidents may be investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This could result in prosecution with fines or custodial sentences and an award of costs if found guilty by the courts. In addition, the HSE has adopted a “Fee for Fault” policy in which it recharges the cost of investigations if liability is identified. Civil claims by individuals could lead to significant pay outs which in turn could lead to increased insurance premiums. It can also lead to poor publicity, reputational damage and impacts on staff morale.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – No additional resources required, however, by managing health and safety, there should be less impact on financial resources as identified in (iii) above.
- (v) **Impact of Resources (human)** – No additional resources are required, however, by preventing accidents and ill health, there should be less impact on human resources.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – Good health and safety management of the workplace, for example, management of asbestos and legionella, helps provide a safer and healthier environment in which to live and work.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** - None

Background Papers: accident and incident reports (data protected)

Enquiries to: Gill Gibson, gill.gibson@maldon.gov.uk