

ANGUS COUNCIL

ITEM No 15

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 19 JUNE 2001

REVIEW OF HEALTH AND SAFETY 2000/2001

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

ABSTRACT

This Report advises Members of the Health and Safety related activity carried out within the Department of Law and Administration during 2000/2001 and outlines areas that will be taken forward during 20001/2002.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee notes and approves the contents of this Report.

2. INTRODUCTION

The Law and Administration Department's Health and Safety Policy Statement was drawn up in 1997 and issued to all members of staff on 20 August 1998. Since then, the Policy Statement has been kept under review and an on-going programme to implement fully the requirements of the Policy has been undertaken. This has included the following action:-

- identified Managers have received training in risk assessment procedures and a programme developed to ensure all operators and work stations are subject to evaluation, including COSSH Regulations where appropriate.
- all defined display screen equipment users have received vision testing.
- fire evacuation procedures have been implemented at County Buildings, Bruce House and St James House.
- appropriate improvements have been made within the accommodation currently available to meet reasonable standards for staff safety and comfort.
- a noise survey was carried out within the Print and Design Unit in 1998 and action taken in accordance with the findings.
- portable appliance testing of electrical equipment by Technicians from the Education Department has been undertaken as part of the overall Council programme.
- due cognisance has been taken of the current HSE advice on New and Expectant Mothers at work.

3. REVIEW OF ACTIVITY DURING 2000/2001:

Report 721/00, which was considered by the Committee in June last year, identified the particular health and safety activities which the Department intended to carry out during 2000/2001. These were as follows:

Review of Departmental Health and Safety Policy

Following a presentation to the Chief Officer's Management Team on 12 June 2000, meetings were held with the Council's Safety Manager from the Personnel Department to discuss the Department's Health and Safety Policy Statement and related issues. The areas highlighted during the review of our Policy and which required attention were - inadequate information and the need to highlight resources, the absence of a "family tree" showing the structure and reporting lines within the Department; and a need to expand the arrangements for first aid, manual handling, DSE, etc. As a result of this review, a Revised Health and Safety Policy Statement has been drafted in conjunction with the Personnel Department's Health and Safety Manager with a view to satisfying the issues identified during the review. The Statement is in the course of finalisation and will be the subject of discussion at one of our periodical Line Managers' meetings in due course.

Address any outstanding issues arising from Risk Assessments

A full programme of DSE Risk Assessments has been undertaken, following special training of operators and managers, which has resulted in appropriate measures being taken, e.g. adjustments to work stations, purchase of appropriate furniture, provision of wrist pads and anti glare screens, etc.

Continued Programme of Fire Drills at HQ Buildings

Six monthly fire drills were carried out at St James House, Bruce House and County Buildings and any issues arising from these drills have been recorded and resulted in amended or clarified procedures.

Continued Programme of Staff Training on Health and Safety Issues

This has been carried out in accordance with the Department's Staff Development Plan which was drawn up following a training needs analysis of each employee. The Departmental Training Co-ordinator and the Projects Assistant have developed appropriate records of such training and these are available when required.

Show that every member of staff has access to all necessary information in Health and Safety Matters.

The Central Services Manager is the main source of information for Health and Safety matters and he has available the necessary documentation for inspection or reference on request. As mentioned above, all Line Managers will be made aware of the revised Health and Safety Policy Statement through one of our regular meetings with them and relevant information cascaded to staff through Team Meetings. In addition, the Department is developing a "Bulletin Board" on the Council's Intranet and consideration has been given to including the Health and Safety Policy Statement within that to allow all staff to access it electronically.

4. AUDITS/INSPECTIONS

The Central Services Manager participates in the Council's Composite Safety Committee and he has overall responsibility for Health and Safety issues and initiatives within the Department. He also co-ordinates safety inspections and audits as is felt necessary and this year his work has concentrated on display screen equipment.

As was mentioned in last year's Report, in pursuance of advice and instruction from the Composite Safety Committee, the use of multi-gang connectors has now been totally dispensed with and additional fixed sockets were provided by the December 2000 deadline set by the Property Services Department.

5. ACCIDENT STATISTICS

In 2000/2001, one entry was recorded in the accident book (1999/2000:2) involving a member of Print and Design staff who suffered muscle damage to a hand whilst carrying out a hand tightening operation on the printing press. This accident did not require reporting to Health and Safety Executive.

6. **PLANNED ACTIVITY 2001/2002**

During 2001/2002, the Department will focus on the following areas:

- training and developing Line Managers to ensure that their Health and Safety responsibilities are clearly understood to enable preventative action to be taken.
- ensuring that robust arrangements exist in relation to Headquarters Buildings and that sound co-ordinated arrangements are in place with occupying Departments.
- continuing the programme of staff training in Health and Safety Issues and ensuring that new members of staff received appropriate training (eg manual handling for Mailing/Caretaking staff).
- continuing to contribute positively to the work of the Composite Safety Committee.
- continuing the programme of fire drills at Headquarters Buildings.
- liaising with the Personnel Department Safety Section when appropriate.
- completing and publishing a revised Policy Statement.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this Report.

8. **HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

There are no Human Rights Implications arising from the recommendation contained in this Report

9. **CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, the Director of Finance and Acting Director of Personnel have been consulted in the preparation of this Report.

10. **CONCLUSION**

The Law and Administration Department places a very high priority on Health and Safety matters. We are committed to ensuring that all staff work in a safe environment and that the members of the public who visit the Department's premises can do so safely. It is hoped that this will be demonstrated in the revised Departmental Health and Safety Policy Statement and by the planned activity during 2001/2002. The Department hopes to maintain, and, where appropriate, enhance, the level of commitment to health and safety matters in the future.

Catherine A Coull
Director of Law and Administration

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing this Report.

