

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE - 4TH JULY 2005

SUBJECT: CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY UNIT UPDATE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the current activities of the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Corporate Health and Safety Unit's primary objective is to develop a comprehensive strategic framework to ensure full legal compliance and a consistent, coherent approach to health and safety management across the Authority.
- 2.2 One of the first tasks facing the Corporate Health and Safety Unit was to prepare a Revitalising Health and Safety Strategy for the Authority. The strategy had been approved by the Corporate Health and Safety Committee, CMT and Cabinet, and is the roadmap for improving health and safety standards across the Authority. The strategy is supported by a 5-year action plan to convert the aims of the strategy into meaningful objectives and targets. In addition to this an annual action plan further focuses the Unit's attention on the priority areas.
- 2.3 The Unit has identified gaps in policies and as a result have been writing and revising all corporate health and safety policies. Policies have been approved on Latex and Fire Safety and are at the approval stage for Lone Working, Contractors, Mobile Phones and Driving and DSE. Policies in progress include Young Persons, Risk Assessment, Accident Investigation, Homeworking, Noise and reviews of both the Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement and the Asbestos Management Policy.
- 2.4 The Corporate Health and Safety Unit have also prepared corporate procedures to ensure a transparent and structured approach to dealing with health and safety issues across all Directorates. Procedures adopted include procedures for dealing with letters/notices from South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, Audit Procedure and Consultation Procedure.
- 2.5 The Corporate Health and Safety Unit recognise that policies often need to be supported by guidance, and have launched a new health and safety area on the Intranet. This includes guidance and frequently asked questions on a wide variety of health and safety subjects. It is recognised that the Intranet is not accessible to all employees however the new pages provide a comprehensive and easily accessible source of health and safety information to a wide cross section of employees.
- 2.6 The Corporate Health and Safety Unit appreciate their role includes auditing compliance with both the law and corporate policies. As a result they have developed auditing protocols and a framework for audit reports. Audits are risk prioritised and audit areas chosen in consultation with Directorate Health and Safety Officers. Over 130 audits have been completed to date on a variety of topics including asbestos management, fire safety, risk assessment and DSE. The findings of these cross Directional audits has helped identify the priorities outlined in the Unit's 5 year action plan and has resulted in an increase in resource from CMT to address the

issues raised.

- 2.7 The Unit also continues to work on projects as required. To date this has included No Smoking Day, Men's Health Day and participation for 4 weeks at Crucial Crew. Planned initiatives include a new poster to raise awareness of the changes on the legislation regarding working at height, and a noise awareness campaign during European Health and Safety Week.
- 2.8 The Unit continues to work closely with Directorate Health and Safety Officers both to progress specific areas of concern e.g. Glazing, Asbestos and Fire Safety and to provide advice, support and assistance on specific issues where requested. The Unit remains committed to working in partnership to improve and promote high standards of health and safety across Caerphilly County Borough Council.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the contents of the report be noted

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