

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 18TH OCTOBER 2006

SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDITS

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 recent audits carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 Auditing is part of the remit of the Corporate Health and Safety Unit and is necessary to ensure that the Authority is meeting its obligations under health and safety law. The Corporate Health and Safety Unit have a target of 210 audits for 2006-07.

2.2 Audit topics are risk based and focus on key areas of concern for the Authority or areas of HSE priority. All audit areas and topics are chosen in consultation with Directorate Health and Safety Officers.

2.3 The first quarter's audits (April-June) covered a variety of topics including risk assessment, display screen equipment, lone working, fire, housekeeping, COSHH, manual handling and latex. Re-audits were also carried out on previous audits undertaken on COSHH and manual handling.

2.4 As part of the audit programme all Directors have been provided with a quarterly report on audits carried out to date, action plans received by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit, and outstanding action plans.

2.5 It is recognised that workload constraints often make follow-up of audits difficult for Directorate Health and Safety Officers. As a result, meetings have taken place between Directorate H&S Officers and the Corporate Health and Safety Unit, to ensure that Directorates receive support in following up audits where appropriate, and that audits fit into the Directorate Health and Safety Work Plan.

2.6 Auditing is an essential part of any health and safety management system. Directorate and Corporate Health and Safety Officers will continue to work together to use audits as a tool to identify gaps in health and safety performance, and to improve health and safety standards across the Authority.

2.7 The following number of Audits have been completed by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit during the first quarter of 2006-07:

Directorate	Number of Audit's Completed	Number of Action Plans Outstanding from Managers *
Chief Executive's	17	0
Environment	13	0
Social Services	16	0
Education & Leisure	10	2

* As detailed in DMT reports submitted during June 2006.

2.8 The Corporate Health and Safety Unit and Directorate Health and Safety Officers are working closely with Managers to ensure that where health and safety issues are identified, that they are addressed promptly.

2.9 The Corporate Health and Safety Unit will re-audit a percentage of these audits after twelve months to ensure that action has been taken where required. It is planned to increase the number of re-audits carried out to ensure that actions are completed and that this results in improved health and safety standards and practise.

2.10 A health and safety audit procedure has been developed and agreed by managers across the authority which the Corporate Health and Safety Unit follow when undertaking such audits. A copy of this procedure is contained within appendix 1.

3. RECOMMENDATION

3.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

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Councillor Paul Ford, Cabinet Member

Appendix: Audit Procedure