

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 21ST FEBRUARY 2011

SUBJECT: RECENT HSE UPDATES

REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of recent updates in Health and Safety information, advice and guidance.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 A number of cases have been brought by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) which can have an impact on the Authority.

- Cheshire East Council has been prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) after a maintenance worker suffered a permanent loss of movement to his hands caused by regular use of heavy-duty vibrating equipment, including pneumatic drills and hand-held grinders. He now has difficulty picking up small objects, such as coins, and his hands become very painful in cold weather.

The Council was fined £5,300 and ordered to pay £5,860 towards the costs of the prosecution.

Work is ongoing within high risk areas of the authority to address vibration risks.

- West Lothian Council has been fined £80,000 after a 90 year old fell through an access hole in her hallway floor which had been left uncovered by council employees working on her property. Council employees were carrying out gas repair works as part of a programme to upgrade the central heating systems in all of the council's domestic properties. The work involved fitting new radiators, pipework, a boiler and electrical control systems. As the pipework runs under the floors, the floorboards were lifted in order to do the job.

- 2.3 The Health and Safety Executive have launched the new Occupational Safety and Health Consultants Register (OSHCR), recommended in Lord Young's review of health and safety report published in October 2010. The OSHCR provides details of safety and health consultants who have proven to their respective accrediting body their competence in specific fields of expertise and are required to abide to a code of conduct to provide sensible and proportionate advice and maintain professional skills and knowledge.

Although registration is voluntary for consultants, where external consultants are required it is strongly advised only those registered on the OSHCR be considered.

- 2.4 The Health and Safety Executive have published proposals for amendments to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) for consultation. Again this is due to recommendations contained within the Lord Young report. The consultation period expires 9th May 2011.

Further information, and the consultation document, is available on the HSE website:
www.hse.gov.uk/consult/condocs/cd233.htm

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That the contents of the report be noted.

Author: Andrew Wigley, Health and Safety Officer
Consultees: Nigel Barnett, Deputy Chief Executive
Gareth Hardacre, Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development
Councillor Allan Pritchard, Cabinet Member for Human Resources, Legal, Policy and Governance
Donna Jones, Health and Safety Manager
Karen Rogers, Senior Health and Safety Officer