

Audit Committee – 22nd January 2009

## 10. Health, Safety and Welfare – Annual Report

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### Purpose of the Report

In order to keep members informed of health, safety and welfare issues relevant to SSDC activities and undertakings, the Safety Adviser provides an annual report for the Audit Committee.

The report contains an overview of health and safety matters and/or concerns, details of new or recent Health & Safety legislation and comments on other health, safety or welfare matters considered likely to have some impact on Council activities.

This report covers the period 1st January – 30th November 2008.

### Recommendation

That members note and comment on the report.

### Report

#### Accidents

DEPT/SECTION	NO. OF ACCIDENTS	DAYS LOST	COMMENTS
Transport	2	0	None
Streetscene	18	25	1 RIDDOR report
Sport, Art, Leisure	3	5	1 RIDDOR report
Horticulture	4	1	None
Community, Heritage & Tourism	12	0	All minor incidents
Volunteers	6	N/A	As above
Offices	21	0	As above
Contractors	2	N/A	As above
Members of public	5	N/A	1 RIDDOR report plus minor incidents
Others	3	0	Pest officers, Car park inspectors, Cem/Crem.etc.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76 (67 during 2007)</b>	<b>31</b>	

Number of accidents reported under R.I.D.D.O.R. (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) = 3 (2 during 2007)

**Note:** For detailed report on 2008 accidents see appendix at pages 76 - 79.

### Legislation

The following Health & Safety related legislation came into effect during 2008:-

**Corporate Manslaughter** – Came into force in April 2008, the main points have been sent to Management Board, Senior Management Forum and Members via a briefing note. (see Safety Advisers report November 2007).

**Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005** – Came into full force in April 2008 (there was a two year transitional period for the entertainment industry see Safety Advisers report November 2007).

**The Health Safety (Offences) Act 2008** – Will come into force in April 2009, the new law increases the maximum fine in lower courts from £5,000 to £20,000 and provides the option of handing down a custodial sentence (up to 12 months) in addition to a fine. In the past a custodial sentence was only possible if the case went to Crown Court (unlimited fine and up to two years in prison).

## ***Radon***

During 2008, the Safety Adviser (in conjunction with Somerset Scientific Services) carried out a risk assessment of all the properties owned or managed by SSDC in respect of the risks arising from exposure to Radon Gas. A number of the sites were considered very low risk due to the type, construction or use and others were tenanted and therefore the responsibility for the risk assessment lies with the tenant. Only 18 sites needed further action and this took the form of passive monitoring for three months, the results showed that all but one site had Radon readings well below the first action level, the one site where the readings were high was in a locked and unused basement and the findings will be recorded and the activities monitored. No further action will be required unless there are any changes to the buildings or their use. A copy of the risk assessment and monitoring results has been sent to Property Services.

## ***Work Related Death Protocol***

This document was produced to assist staff when dealing with an incident that involves a fatality or major injury to an SSDC employee or other persons on an SSDC worksite. It provides detailed guidance on how to manage the first 48 hours of the incident including who to contact, when, in what order and the personnel and resources needed for effective control and investigation of the incident.

## ***Safety Panel***

The Safety Panel has met four times during 2008 and continues to be an effective forum for the discussion and promotion of effective Health & Safety management and good practice. It is particularly gratifying to report the continued support from Management Board and Senior Management Forum representatives on the panel.

## ***Health & Safety Training***

Management Board has made funds available (£10k p.a) for specific Health & Safety training. The budget is administered by the Safety Adviser and bids for training are put to the Safety Panel for approval.

## ***Work/Life Balance Survey***

In order to re-assess the extent of work related stress being experienced within SSDC a second confidential survey was carried out during 2008. The results have been presented to Management Board, Senior Management Forum and the Safety Panel. An action plan has been drawn up and managers have been asked to take up the report

findings with their services. The process includes the use of informal discussions, focus groups, training and guidance. A follow up session will be arranged for early 2009 to assess the progress of the interventions.

### ***Potentially Violent Register***

I.S. and Community Safety are now close to having a fully computerised system for the recording of a range of incidents that will help protect our lone workers. The system allows any employee who has experienced threats, abuse or harm to report the incident and provides an opportunity for action to be taken as necessary. It is also a useful database of incidents that will allow lone workers to check unfamiliar areas, sites, addresses for risks prior to visiting.

### ***Traffic Management***

A system of traffic controls have been put in place at Brympton Way, including a “pinch point” on the entrance road, speed ramps on both entrance and exit roads and bollards outside the new reception entrance. The measures are designed to slow vehicles down on entering and leaving the site and to prevent parking right outside the building entrance in order to improve pedestrian safety.

### ***Air Quality Surveys***

As a result of a petition sent to UNISON the air quality has been tested at the Brympton Way offices. The results confirmed that the air quality was within the required standards and an additional microbiological test was carried out that confirmed the “bug count” inside the building was lower than that outside. It is the latest of several checks of the air handling system and confirms that although it is not the latest technology it is still serviceable.

### ***Priorities For 2009***

The following items have been identified as priority issues to be addressed during 2009:

**Stress:** Actions arising from latest audit

**Lone Working:** Completion of incident reporting system

**Background Papers:** *None*

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## **11. Date of Next Meeting**

<i>Head of Service</i>	<i>Ian Clarke, Head of Legal and Democratic Services</i>
<i>Lead Officer</i>	<i>Andrew Blackburn, Committee Administrator</i>
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The next scheduled meeting of the Audit Committee will be held on Thursday, 26th February 2009 at 10.00 a.m. in the Main Committee Room, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil.