

**REPORT TO: POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 27 JUNE 2011**

**REPORT ON: OPERATING MODEL RE-DESIGN - REVIEW OF HEALTH & SAFETY FUNCTION**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTE CHIEF EXECUTIVE (SUPPORT SERVICES)**

**REPORT NO: 297 - 2011**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of the review was to investigate the current operating arrangements for health and safety and to determine if a centralised model would be more efficient. This report summarises the findings from that review.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that:
- 1. A new centralised operating model, as outlined in **Option B** below, is implemented by 1st July 2011.
  - 2. One Health & Safety Officer post is deleted.
  - 3. A standard job description and person specification is drawn up for Health & Safety Officers and an agreement made on the level of professional qualification required.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Adopting the preferred centralised model, re-aligned to the new organisational structure, will realise an estimated cash saving of around £40,000 per annum in salary costs (by the deletion of 1 Health & Safety Officer Post).

**4.0 THE 'AS IS' POSITION**

4.1 The Council as an employer has a duty to protect the health and safety of all employees and those affected by their work activities. Accordingly, the principal aim of the Council's Health & Safety Policy is to provide and maintain a health and safety culture in which the opportunities for accidents and occupational ill-health are eliminated.

**Health & Safety at the Corporate Level**

4.2 The policy states that a Chief Officer should be appointed to champion and lead health and safety and to allocate roles and responsibilities for health and safety performance within the Council. That Chief Officer is the Head of Personnel. Reporting to him is a Corporate Health & Safety Section staffed as follows:

<b>Job Title</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Health & Safety Co-ordinator	1
Senior Health & Safety Adviser	1
Health & Safety Adviser	1
Health & Safety Assistant	1
Clerical Assistant	0.57

4.3 This corporate section has 5 key objectives (taken from the Annual Health & Safety Report 2009/10):

- to lead the Council forward by providing health and safety policies and guidance that provides clear support and direction to achieve best practice, recognising legal compliance as a minimum standard;
- to ensure that all levels of management, and employees, are sufficiently competent to discharge their duties with due regard for health and safety;
- to facilitate the integration of health and safety considerations into the Council's decision making process, so as to ensure that resources are appropriately and effectively allocated by all levels of management;
- to promote and co-ordinate the development and implementation of health and safety plans to improve standards, and their implementation, for the benefit of all who may be affected by the Council's work activities;
- to monitor and evaluate the health and safety performance to motivate management to take effective measures to reduce health and safety losses and improve performance.

4.4 This section also develops and delivers corporate health and safety training for all Council staff. They delivered training to over 700 employees in 2009/10: an increase of just over 10% compared to the previous year. This demand was met by a corresponding reduction in the amount of time spent by the team auditing health and safety performance in individual departments.

4.5 The Council Health & Safety Co-ordinator (and team leader) attends the Operational Council Management Team on a monthly basis to provide a corporate overview of health and safety performance, including the study of accident and occupational ill-health incidents/statistics/audit reports and to update them on policy issues and implementation of the corporate health and safety action plan. He is also responsible for the production of the Council's Annual Health & Safety Report.

4.6 There is also a Corporate Health & Safety Committee, with Trade Union representation, which meets quarterly. The Committee is consulted with regard to the development of corporate policies and guidance. The specific functions of the Committee are to study accident and occupational ill-health incidents/statistics and audit reports and to assist in identifying the need for safe systems of work.

#### **Health & Safety at the Departmental/Operational Level**

4.7 At an operational level each Director has responsibility for Health & Safety Policy implementation within their department. Departments are required to actively monitor and undertake inspections of their own workplaces to identify and address matters that could give rise to accidents or occupational ill-health. They must make certain continued attention is given to ensuring that risk controls are developed and implemented using the Council's approved risk assessment process and that clear systems and procedures are in place for training employees in health and safety matters.

4.8 The Health & Safety Policy places significant emphasis on the importance of effective departmental Health and Safety Committees and nominated Health & Safety Co-ordinators. The work of the departmental committees is akin to that of the corporate committee. The role of the nominated Health & Safety Co-ordinators is to promote and facilitate health and safety communications through the departments' senior management teams. Co-ordinators also act as link person between their department and the Corporate Health & Safety Section. Co-ordinators spend on average (based on information collected from departments) no more than 10% of their full time workload on health and safety work. They are not required to have any health and safety qualifications.

- 4.9 The Council Health & Safety Co-ordinator meets with the departmental Co-ordinators on a quarterly basis in a bid to develop a consistent approach to compliance with Council policies, to consider accident trends and to identify and discuss training issues.
- 4.10 The following departments also employ dedicated Health & Safety staff, who in some cases, but not all, are also their department's Health & Safety Co-ordinator:

<b>Dept</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Social Work	Health & Safety Officer	1
Leisure & Communities	Health & Safety Officer	1
Waste Mgt	Health & Safety Officer	1
Education	Health & Safety Officer	1
Education	Health & Safety Assistant	1
DCS	Health & Safety Officer	1

- 4.11 These appointments have been made by Directors, based on the level of perceived health and safety risks within their departments. Each officer has a unique department focussed job description although their main responsibilities are the same, i.e. to support their director to implement the Health & Safety Policy, enabling their department to be fully compliant with health and safety legislation.
- 4.12 Officers have generally built up a high degree of department/service specific expertise in health and safety matters and they have a range of qualifications, including NCs, NVQs, Diplomas and NEBOSH Certificates in Occupational Health & Safety.
- 4.13 These Officers report to a line manager within their respective departments. They maintain a professional link to the corporate team through quarterly meetings and by liaising with them ad-hoc on matters of policy and guidance. They can call on the corporate team at any time for assistance and advice and the team have provided cover in the event of long term absence of departmental health and safety staff. The Council Co-ordinator has no management responsibility for these departmentally appointed staff.

**5.0 BUSINESS CASE FOR A NEW OPERATING MODEL**

5.1 From the information gathered for the purposes of this review there is no evidence to suggest that the current operating model is 'broken' nevertheless the review has raised two key few questions:

- Are the risk factors on which it was decided that certain departments required a full time Health & Safety Officer still relevant?
- Would a centralised operating model be more efficient?

5.2 Since commencing this review a revised organisational structure for the Council has been agreed by Committee. The specific changes which will have implications for the current operating model are the creation of:

- a new Dundee Leisure and Culture Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and the transfer of the appropriate staff into that organisation and
- a new Environment Department that will include Dundee Contracts, all ground maintenance, waste management and environmental services.

5.3 The following table provides an estimate of the proportion of the Health & Safety Officer's workload within the current Leisure & Communities Department and where this work will lie in the new organisational structure:

Leisure & Culture SCIO	18%
Corporate Services (Communities Division)	27%
Environment Department	40%
General Admin	15%

- 5.4 The new Environment Department will, in addition to the 40% of the Leisure & Communities Department's current health and safety activities, assume responsibility for all health and safety activities previously managed by Dundee Contracts Services and the Waste Management Department.
- 5.5 The Health & Safety Officers in both the Leisure & Communities Department and Dundee Contracts Services have applied but been deferred for Voluntary Early Retirement. The officer in Waste Management has not applied. The post-holder in Dundee Contract Services has particular skills and knowledge of the very specialist construction regulations which must be complied with.
- 5.6 The following table shows the level of dedicated health and safety staff assessed as required in each of the revised departments:

Department	Level of Risk	Dedicated Health & Safety Staff Required
Corporate Services	Low	None
Education	Medium	1 Health & Safety Officer 1 Health & Safety Assistant
Social Work	Medium	1 Health & Safety Officer
City Development	Low	None
Environment	High	2 Health & Safety Officers
Housing	Low	None
Dundee Leisure & Culture SCIO	Medium	None *

\* The current Leisure Trust has a contract in place with an external provider for the supply of specialist health & safety advice and a Service Level Agreement with the Corporate Health and Safety Section.

- 5.7 This level of assessed risk has the effect of:
- reducing the required staffing complement by 1 full-time Health & Safety Officer i.e. the post presently in the Leisure & Communities Department and
  - reviewing the Service Level Agreement to ensure the Corporate Health and Safety Section can provide advice and support for the functions which will transfer to the new Dundee Leisure & Culture SCIO.

**5.8 Would a centralised operating model be more efficient?**

Two options for a centralised model were considered:

**Option A:** Transfer the departmental Health & Safety Officers to the Corporate Health & Safety Section from where they are line-managed by the Corporate Health & Safety Co-ordinator.

**Option B:** Transfer the departmental Health & Safety Officers into the Corporate Health & Safety Section and out-post them to their current/reconfigured departments where an assessment has concluded that a dedicated Health & Safety professional is required. Day to day line management would be provided from the department to which they are out-posted but their professional management and development would be managed by the Corporate Health & Safety Co-ordinator.

- 5.9 An options appraisal of both models was carried out and compared to the status quo. The particular strengths of **Option B** are as detailed below:

- This would strengthen the role of the Corporate Health & Safety Section and support a stronger corporate overview.
- This would allow corporate health and safety priorities to be better managed.
- The current departmental Health & Safety Officers would benefit from having a manager from within their profession to guide their professional development.
- Health and safety expertise would be maintained in departments to ensure that health and safety provision is not adversely affected.
- Health & Safety Officers would maintain links with operational staff within linked departments.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 From the information gathered there is little doubt of the value of dedicated Health & Safety Officers to those departments at high or medium risk. The current post-holders have developed a high degree of departmental specific expertise in health and safety matters and this is greatly valued.
- 6.2 Adopting a more centralised operating model would however support a stronger corporate overview. Option B would allow for this without diminishing either the responsibilities held by Directors for health and safety or the specialist expertise that has been developed within departments. It is therefore recommended that Option B is adopted as the preferred operating model.
- 6.3 This would involve:
- deleting one Health & Safety Officer post i.e. that presently in the Leisure & Communities Department ;
  - transferring all of the remaining departmental health and safety staff into the Corporate Health & Safety Section, and subsequently;
  - out-posting them to their current/re-configured departments.
- 6.4 In accordance with the level of risk assessed in each of the new departments 2 Health & Safety Officers should be out-posted to the Environment Department; 1 Health & Safety Officer and 1 Assistant to the Education Department and 1 Health & Safety Officer to the Social Work Department.
- 6.5 Day to day line management of the out-posted staff would continue to be provided from the department to which they are out-posted but their professional management and development would be managed by the Corporate Health & Safety Co-ordinator.
- 6.6 A standard job description and person specification should be drawn up for all Health & Safety Officers and an agreement made on the level of professional qualification required for each post.
- 6.7 The success of the proposed arrangements should be reviewed after 12 months to determine if resources have been adequately allocated in proportion to the expected levels of risk.

## **7.0 TIMESCALES AND TRANSITION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 7.1 To ensure a successful transition to this model by 1st July 2011, the date of implementation of the new organisational structure, a detailed implementation plan has been drawn up. This includes:
- consultation with the relevant trade unions;

- consideration for voluntary early retirement or redeployment of one Health & Safety Officer;
- reviewing the Service Level Agreement to ensure the Corporate Health and Safety Section can provide advice and support for the functions which will transfer to the new SCIO;
- preparation of a standard job description and person specification for the post of Health & Safety Officer.

## **8.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

An equality impact assessment has been carried out and will be made available on the Council website <http://www.dundee.gov.uk/equanddiv/equimpact/>. There are no major issues.

## **9.0 CONSULTATIONS**

The Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services) and Director of Finance have been consulted in preparation of this report.

## **10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

Patricia McIlquham, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services)      13 May 2011