

## North York Moors National Park Authority Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

28 May 2019

### Health and Safety

#### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update Members regarding Health and Safety activity so far during 2019/20 and to update on progress made on the Health and Safety work programme.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 At the March NPA meeting, Members agreed the health and safety work programme for the coming year. The purpose of the regular papers to this Committee is to update Members on progress made on the work programme, review accident/near miss information and to raise other health and safety matters

#### 3. Accidents and Near Misses 2019/20

- 3.1 At the time of writing this report a total of 5 accidents to staff/volunteers have been reported since the March NPA update. No lost time has been recorded as a result and all accidents were minor in their nature, involving slips or trips.
- 3.2 During the same period, 3 near misses were reported. All have been followed up and minor remedial action taken as a result.

#### 4. Progress on the 2019/20 Health and Safety Action Plan

- 4.1 The focus of work for the Health and Safety Group each year is the Health and Safety Action Plan approved by Members. Please see below for a summary of progress made to date;

- Developing a consistent approach to driver training with an accompanying policy;

*A trial system has been fitted to one of the pool cars to provide data about driver safety with regard to speed, braking and cornering. Information is being fed back to drivers and the effectiveness of the system is being monitored before extending the trial.*

- Ensuring that lifting and moving training is more appropriate and effective;

*Consideration is being given to training staff to be able to deliver this in-house as a way of ensuring that training is delivered effectively and quickly.*

- Developing a formal register of relevant health and safety legislation and stating (briefly) how the Authority is complying with it;

*No progress to date, but this will be progressed during the summer.*

- Organising appropriate health and safety refresher training for members;

*Included in the Members' training programme for 2019/20*

- Consider updating the format used for risk assessments to make them more effective and more easily usable;

*New format has been agreed and this is being rolled out as risk assessments are reviewed.*

- Continue to focus on developing health and safety training for those who lead volunteers.

*Staff in the Volunteering Team undertake supportive spot checking of task day leaders (staff and volunteers) to ensure that safety briefings are undertaken to the required. Task day leader training and refreshers continues to emphasise the health and safety aspects of the role.*

## 5. **Sickness Absence**

5.1 As Members will recall, in 2018/19 Officers initiated a number of measures (health screening, mental health first aid training, access to private counselling and a wide range of health related information), designed to encourage staff to look after their own health. While this is clearly important in itself, there is also a financial calculation that the cost of any measures to reduce sickness absence effectively pay for themselves if a reduction is achieved.

5.2 The Authority's has a long term target of no more than 4 days sickness absence per full time person which continues to compare favourably with other National Parks as well as the rest of the public sector. Despite several long term absences, the absence rate in the year to the end of March 2019 was 3.8 days per person.

5.3 Out of the total of 471 days sickness absence, 2 members of staff unfortunately had significant long term illnesses that totalled 124 days absence. Members have previously been made aware of the way in which one of these absences was managed in relation to a terminal illness. The other absence involved an apprentice who developed serious mental health issues. A number of creative measures were put in place to enable him to have the time and assistance needed while still completing his apprenticeship.

- One to one support from several Officers;
- Contact with his parents and involvement in meetings with his mental health support team;
- Time off to attend medical appointments, with the flexibility to attend work before and after these;
- His apprenticeship was extended to give him time to recover when his illness was at its most severe;
- When he was ready to return to work, he did so in a managed way, working one to one until he was fit enough to resume full time work with the wider team.

The positive outcome from all this was that the apprenticeship was successfully completed and he has now left us and found full time employment in a countryside craft.

## 6. **Health and Safety Policy**

6.1 The Authority's Health and Safety Policy is currently being rewritten in the way that Officers indicated at the March NPA meeting and a draft will be presented to Members for approval at the June NPA.

7. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

7.1 There are no significant additional financial or staff issues related to the contents of this report. Budgetary provision is sufficient to pay for all appropriate Health and Safety training and personal protective equipment.

8. **Recommendation**

8.1 That Members;

- Note the work undertaken since the February FRASC and March NPA on health and safety

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**Background documents to this report**

**File ref.**

NPA Reports, December 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019

FRASC Reports 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019