

Minutes of Meeting
Lead H&S Officers Network Meeting
Gateshead Civic Centre
Tuesday, 19th November 2019

Present:

Gateshead MBC (GMBC) – Susan Smith (SS)
 Sunderland CC (SCC) - Geoff Scrafton (GS)
 Hartlepool BC (HBC) - Danielle Blake (DB)
 Middlesbrough Council (MC) – John Armstrong (JA)
 Durham CC (DCC) - Lynn Swinney (LS)
 South Tyneside MBC (STMBC) – Stephen Bell (SB)
 Stockton BC (SBC) - - Stuart Crocket (SC)
 Northumberland County Council (NBCC) – John Froud (JF)
 Newcastle City Council (NCC) – Katherine Chapman (KC)

Item	Discussion	Action
1	<p>Apologies:</p> <p>Darlington BC – Joanne Skelton (JS) Durham CC – Kevin Lough (KL) South Tyneside MBC (STMBC) - Tracey Gates (TG) Stockton BC (SBC) - Derek MacDonald (DM)</p>	
2	<p>Minutes from 3.9.19 and matters arising</p> <p>SS confirmed that the H&S and OH bench marking exercise had been completed and would be circulated to those Council's that had participated.</p> <p>Unitary benchmarking exercise – Action from previous minutes: Joanne Skelton to confirm that contact details have been forwarded to Kevin Lough.</p> <p>SS provided update on Residential Care evacuation process and staffing levels which were currently under consideration.</p>	JS
3	<p>Fires in Refuse Vehicles</p> <p>LS shared details of a recent fire in a trade waste refuse vehicle in DCC. The cause was thought to be batteries discarded by a manufacturer in their waste. The fire caused serious vehicle damage. DCC have developed a procedure for refuse vehicle fires, which involved depositing the load in a safe location. Mixed approach to</p>	

	<p>provision of fire extinguishers on refuse vehicles, some did/some didn't.</p> <p>Durham CC are starting a campaign on the safe disposal of batteries.</p> <p>Action: Councils to email LS with procedures for vehicle fires. Lynn.swinney@durham.gov.uk</p>	ALL
4	<p>Refuse Operatives Shorts</p> <p>The group discussed approached taken to permitting shorts to be worn when carrying out refuse collection. A mixed approach was represented by those present, some Council's permitted it in the summer months where waste was collected in containers/bins, other didn't stating that work wear trousers provided some limited measure of protection.</p>	
5	<p>Assets Teams visiting Vacant properties</p> <p>DCC have surveyors carrying out visits to vacant properties and asked Council's whether they have RAs for visiting asset Officers, covering physical and biological hazards, violence/lone working etc. Council's discussed the Risk Assessments & procedures they have in place for these teams.</p>	
6	<p>Drugs & Alcohol Testing policy/procedures and TU buy in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DCC & GMBC – policy implementation - progress currently slow • STMBC - policy implementation - progress currently slow. • NBCC – 'with cause' testing in place led by HR. • SCC - code of practice in place for 'with causing testing'. Carried out TU consultation from the outset, use Odelia Clarke. Not currently implemented for teachers. Don't currently have an HR Policy. • HBC have an A&D testing policy in place. 	
7	<p>Pupil Exclusion Policies (in Community Schools)</p> <p>DCC raised an issue about being asked to get involved in decision making processes for pupil exclusions.</p> <p>STMBC - H&S team get invited to take part in the decision-making process for pupil exclusions and involved in pupil RA and RA for staff in Community schools. Other Councils weren't involved in the decision-making process for pupil exclusions.</p>	
8	<p>Asbestos – HSE Visits to Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GMBC – 1 HSE visit – Are streamlining the ACM Management Plan template to improve clarity. • STMBC – 1 HSE visit – successful outcome • NCC – 2 HSE visits – successful outcome • HMBC – 1 visit – successful outcome 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SCC – HSE requested contact details for 2 schools but have not yet visited. • NBCC – No HSE Visits 	
9	<p>Intrusive Fire Risk Assessments</p> <p>NCC & SCC asked Council's to what extent they were conducting intrusive FRAs following attendance at recent FRA training provided by CS Todd Associates.</p> <p>SS raised this issue at IOSH branch meeting with the fire safety trainer (Graham Shiel – independent fire consultant), who said it wasn't required for routine/normal risk buildings, but where you had concerns get surveyors in to carry out an inspection of compartmentation.</p> <p>SS confirmed she's spoken to Colin Todd and the Managing Director from CS Todd who explained that the trainer had given the standards that his company operate to in relation to intrusive surveys, not a base line requirement.</p> <p>Consensus from those present was that where Councils had compartmentation concerns they were typically using surveyors to carry out inspections.</p> <p>Group had a discussion about numbers of staff provided overnight in residential care to facilitate evacuation. GMBC and MBC are both considering staffing levels in their FRA process for residential care.</p>	
10	<p>Transporting Children in the course of Work and Business Insurance</p> <p>DCC had a situation where an employee was charged more for business insurance for transporting vulnerable children in their own car. Hartlepool had a similar issue. There are different classes of business insurance for different drivers.</p> <p>Other Councils were aware of any issues being raised in relation to business insurance.</p>	
11	<p>Fees for Intervention</p> <p>None</p>	
	<p>Staffing Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateshead MBC - have an H&S Apprentice, assessor led, but trained in house and will put them through the NEBOSH certificate in year 2. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hartlepool MBC - have an apprentice, have recruited and now have a full staff complement. 	
712	<p>Any Other Business/GDPR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group had a discussion on employee protection registers and progress on development. • Ozone generator system used in a school. School closed due to a build-up of chemical. Clair Ozone generator system - POCS/400 model - used to control airborne viruses. • Policy on allowing service users to fall discussed. • Approach to Council's using defibrillators - recognised that it is a public health issue, rather than H&S issue, but are located in some Councils in Civic Centres, depots, leisure centres. • Medication Policies - DfE policy updated in relation to changes to medication. NBCC have updated their school medication policy to reflect the changes, school staff now permitted to administer over the counter medication, providing the container is fully labelled and the parent has provided written request and consent. 	
8	<p>Date of next meeting – Tuesday 11th Feb 2020.</p> <p>DB to investigate hosting the next meeting in Hartlepool.</p>	DB