



## Health and Safety Committee Minutes

**31 October 2024**

### **In Attendance:**

Kate Christie

Pip Mackie

Mark Pocock

Colin Simpson

Beccy Stanton

Alan Smith

Emma Stewart

### **Review of minutes and previous actions**

1. Minutes reviewed as per action log, and outstanding actions carried forward. Key points are:
  - a) It seems most staff have now done the lone working and Accident and Incident Reporting move to SharePoint training. KC to follow up with PD if a log was kept of attendees and is there any requirement for mop-up training
  - b) Active Travel Risk Assessment to be posted onto Eolas – KC to action
  - c) Trailer training has commenced – CM and BS have done it. Further training to be arranged for key identified staff – PM to action
  - d) Discussed if 4x4 training a prerequisite for trailer training. Agreed this wasn't necessary. 4x4 training is provided for staff traversing tricky terrain, but any member of staff could use the 4x4 without having first to do training.
  - e) BS said that the storage unit for the trailer is on a ramp and therefore difficult and dangerous to get the trailer in / out. The facilities unit is not on a ramp so Colin and Jonathan are scheduled to help facilities move kit out their unit, so that their unit can be used for the trailer.

### **Driving at work policies and procedures**

2. KC explained that there had been a couple of incidents over the summer that promoted this policy revision, as follows:



- a) A couple staff had expressed some concern about the driving skills of a colleague, and the policy wasn't particularly clear about how this should be handled.
  - b) Another situation involved identification on a Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) form of six points, which meant enhanced information was required by our insurers which we weren't aware of.
  - c) A situation where a staff member was reluctant to provide us with a copy of their DVLA certificate. KC explained that the DVLA certificate is a Path Authority procedure that ensures staff are fit to drive and is therefore a requirement for use of pool cars and also personal vehicles if used for the discharge of work.
3. There was discussion around the following points about the policy:
- a) Care to be taken to ensure someone is not considered "guilty" before being given the right to reply.
  - b) Need to ensure that a conversation is held with the offending driver quickly after the complaint.
  - c) Importance of letting offending driver know if decision made that no further action required.
  - d) Conclusion that there may be occasions where offending driver cannot be permitted to drive pending further action. In these circumstances every attempt will be made to respect the sensitivity of the situation, but key priority is the safety of staff, passengers and other road users.  
PM to implement policy changes as above and circulate tidied policy to Health and Safety Committee for final comment prior to policy sent to Senior Management Team (SMT) for sign off.
4. The recommendation was for the implementation of a "new staff driver log" whereby new staff are required to provide us with key information (insurance documents, DVLA certificate, copy of driver's licence) before they are permitted to drive for work. This log to be signed off by driver, line manager, facilities and HR. Health and Safety Committee approved this log, which will be implemented for all new staff going forward. PM to ensure this is part of new joiner's procedures.
5. There was a paper recommending the consideration of mandatory driver training for key roles. Health and Safety Committee agreed that all seasonal rangers and the peatland team should get Advanced Driver Training, on the basis that the most dangerous activity they engage in is driving, and that these staff in particular are required to drive frequently, and on rural and remote locations, with significant



hazards. OMG to consider if there are any other roles that due to frequency and nature of driving should also undergo Advanced Driver training

6. "Driving at Work" training is available for any staff where there may be concerns about their driving, and if this is deemed appropriate for them.
7. Where OMG identify mid-risk-level roles, they could do the 60-minute group on-line course recommended.
8. It was agreed that the pre-season ranger briefing should include a section about driving, and the importance of driver safety, as well as thorough understanding of the policy – AS and LF to action

## **Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

9. KC explained that there has been changes to the Equality Act which imposed on employers the duty to proactively prevent sexual harassment in the workplace. She explained that the Dignity at Work policy had been revised with a specific section on sexual harassment. The policy already has very clear reporting procedures in place. Staff training on Electronic learning Management System (ELMS) will be launched shortly. The remaining action was to review the risk assessments and identify key risk areas and amend accordingly. KC will review overarching corporate risk assessment. AS to review risk assessments for rangers, volunteer rangers and green health workers to ensure all relevant risk assessments take account of the risks and identify appropriate mitigation, to also consider as part of this process potential implications when buddying up staff, and also trainee rangers who are typically young (noting power imbalance concern)
10. ES did not consider the risk to be high for peatland team – mostly male project officers working on remote sites with little/no contact with others

## **Accident and Incident Reports**

11. Health and Safety Committee reported that new system of having Accident and Incident Reporting on SharePoint working well. Health and Safety Committee have their own teams' channel and Accident and Incident Reports are also highlighted on this channel. Agreed that going forward, a member of the committee will volunteer to investigate and Accident and Incident Reports, but KC will have oversight and will nominate someone as investigating officer if no-one volunteers.



12. It was agreed that Grant Moir and David Cameron should have access to the Accident and Incident Report log, As CEO, Grant is the Accountable Officer, and so should have awareness of all health an safety matters. Appropriate also for David as Deputy CEO.
13. The following incidents were reported and actioned:
  - a) There was an incident involving a staff member getting a tick bite while outdoors for work. Staff member became unwell and was on antibiotics. Investigating Officer reported that staff member had been advised that tick resistant clothing could be purchased as PPE. Staff member reminded of importance of checking themselves after laying in the grass, which they had not done. Information about ticks is circulated to staff seasonally, but we will review to ensure still fit for purpose. The team involved is already well versed on tick identification, and it was due to their existing knowledge that the staff member was able to identify need to seek medical attention. Closed.
  - b) There was an incident where a staff member had traversed a drain in rear car park, causing drain to be damaged which in turn caused damage to their vehicle. Investigation identified that bollards had been placed on the drains at suitable intervals as a sign to staff not to traverse them, and accompanying photos of the site verified this. No further action.
  - c) Incident erecting gazebo at an event, which caused facial injury as strut hit out due to not being fully extended. No first aid required. Going forward team advised to have a risk assessment for erecting gazebo, to be included in a document they are already producing on how to erect the gazebo, and to include advice that someone needs to take overview role.
  - d) Incident where a piece of wood flew off a passing lorry and hit a car used by staff member. Investigation identified this could not have been avoided – person was driving appropriately to conditions. No further action
  - e) Incident where a three staff were on site visit but took a short cut and then got into difficulty as they stepped into a bog and submerged with water to knees/waist. No injury occurred or damage to property. Investigation identified need to amend site visit risk assessment to state not to take short cuts if route unknow, and to ensure they allow adequate time for the visit to avoid temptation to seek short cuts.
  - f) Incident where member of staff fell up the step from bike shelter to rear car park at number 16. Incurred some injury. Was wearing chunky boots, so accident could



not have been avoided but a yellow grit pad has now been installed on the step to alert users of it. Closed.

## **Green Health Safeguarding Process**

14. We have two staff who are link workers referred by GPs or self-referred. They typically meet with vulnerable people, usually in public places eg GP surgery but in rare occasions they may have to meet with an individual in their home. So safeguarding is critical. This risk management plan sets out emergency procedures and mechanisms to keep our staff safe. Key risk is when they are in someone's home, but there is strict guidance about using the lone working device in these circumstances, and of course not to enter a home if they don't feel comfortable or have not previously met that person in their home. Health and Safety Committee discussed the following:
- a) Importance of considering unintended consequences for our staff dealing with vulnerable people or people in crisis. AS assured committee that there are mechanisms in place to monitor and support the mental health of our key workers.
  - b) It was raised that there may be greater risk from self-referrals, as the element of GP monitoring is missed. AS explained that the team are well versed on and frequently do "dynamic" risks assessments.
  - c) PM highlighted the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) training on going into people's homes and committee agreed this would be a good course for our key workers. PM to share details of this course with AS.
15. Committee flagged that the new sexual harassment rules will need to be considered, and risk mitigation included in this risk management plan. AS to action with the Green Health team

## **Peatland team matters**

16. ES reported that the Garmin devices had not been working effectively over the last month, with regards to the map tracking service. She reported this to Garmin this week and noticed today that it is working so this issue has hopefully been rectified. She will keep an eye on it but reported that the team are very good about ensuring communications in other ways.



## Facilities matters

17. Fire alarms in the sheds. BS reported that we now have fire alarms set up in the sheds. If a call point or smoke detector is activated, the alarm will sound outside only and not in the main building, although it will be heard in the main building. It was set up this way as dust can set off the alarm, so it may go off regularly and we did not want to disrupt users in the main office too much. The evacuation proposal is that if the alarm activates, the fire marshal should investigate, and if there is no issue. No further action is required. But if there is a fire the fire marshal should come into the main building and press the call point which will prompt evacuation. Health and Safety Committee agreed this seemed a reasonable approach. BS to notify fire marshals of this approach; BS to let staff know that a single outside alarm does not prompt an evacuation, but the main building alarm does; BS to arrange four-weekly testing of shed fire alarms.
18. Storage of fixed blade sheath knives. Volunteer rangers require use of the knives. The “safe system” of storage is that they are locked in a box, which is stored in a locked shed. The key to the box is then located in the main building. Health and Safety Committee felt this was reasonable but requested that there is a risk assessment in place for this kit. AS will discuss with volunteer ranger managers

## Action log

Actions from this meeting 30 October 2024

Action	Responsible person and status
Follow up with PD if a log was kept of attendees and is there any requirement for mop-up training	KC
Active Travel Risk Assessment to be posted onto Eolas	KC
Outstanding trailer training to be arranged	PM
Agreed Driving at Work policy changes to be implemented and tidied policy circulated to Health and Safety Committee for final comment prior to policy sent to SMT for sign off	PM
New Driver Log to be added to HR new joiner procedures	PM



consider if there are any other roles that due to frequency and nature of driving should also undergo Advanced Driver training	OMG
Pre-season ranger briefing should include a section about driving, and the importance of driver safety, as well as thorough understanding of the policy	AS and LF
Corporate Sexual Harassment risk assessment to be undertaken	KC
Ranger team sex harassment RA to be undertaken, and also to be included in Green Health Key Workers Safe Systems procedures	AS and LF
NSPCC training on going into people's homes to be shared with AS	PM
Notify fire marshals of shed for alarm approach; let staff know that a single outside alarm does not prompt an evacuation, but the main building alarm does; arrange 4-weekly testing of shed fire alarms.	BS/facilities team
Check that there is a risk assessment for volunteer ranger knives	AS

Actions from previous meeting – 30 July 2024

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible person and Status</b>
The PPE policy should be updated to reference bike kits	MP - done
Update the Active Travel risk assessment in line with Health and Safety Committee comments and then circulate to staff Needs added to list of corporate RAs users can select as relevant on individual RA form	CS – done. Needs to go on to Eolas. (KC)
Update lone working policy should be adjusted to reflect general rule that during office hours, buddy should be a work colleague.	KC - done
To advise staff that the lone working and A&IR systems training is mandatory	PD – done. To check who missed it.



Deliver above training accordingly.	PD and BS – done
Demo/training to be delivered to SMT	PD - done
Amend AIR form to provide detail about what to do/who to contact in the event of a serious incident.	PD and AS - done
Ensure the corporate Accident and Incident Reporting form captures any additional information that the rangers form provides and then the rangers will use the same form.	PD and AS - done
Health Walks incidents to be transcribe onto the new corporate form.	AS and MW – not yet completed
Develop specific forms for 1) vehicle damage identified but not while driving and 2) document to capture key points from a road traffic incident while vehicle in use for then being transcribed onto Accident and Incident Reports on SharePoint form. And to also provide this information at the training.	BS - done
Find out at OMG who trailer users will be so that HR can arrange that they do the training and also so that BS can communicate with them the key user points	KC – done. BS to publicise on Eolas trailer and training process for those who want to use it

Actions from meeting 18 April 2024

<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible person and Status</b>
Fire extinguisher training	BS
Display Screen Equipment (DSE) actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research to see if WFH DSE opt-out is acceptable</li> <li>• How long should we retain the DSE forms</li> <li>• Quarterly report of DSE issues to be tabled at Health and Safety Committee meetings</li> <li>• DSE timeframes to be investigated</li> </ul>	In hand and on-going



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Amend wording re line manager awareness of DSE issues</li> <li>Add wording about seeking medical advice</li> <li>DSE homeworking form to be circulated</li> <li>DSE to be migrated to SharePoint</li> <li>Office based DSE to be considered and brought back to Health and Safety Committee</li> </ul>	
Consideration is vehicle reg plates can be bolted onto vehicles	Facilities
Report back to Health and Safety Committee incident on Health walk	AS

Outstanding Actions from – 11 January 2024

Action	Responsible person and Status
Develop a schedule of rolling review of Health and Safety policies.	KC
Check with Paul if there was a function whereby staff could be asked to sign that they had read the policy, and also if reminders could be set up	BS

Actions outstanding from longer standing meetings

Meeting Date	Action	Responsible person
28/09/23		
	Green Health Link Workers standard operating procedure to come back to Health and Safety Committee	Done at 2024 Q4 meeting
19/07/22	Additional lock mechanism for main door extension to be investigated	On going



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19/03/19	Ballater Panic alarm - the alarm is to be moved to the Park Authority office when the office is reconfigured. A peep hole will be put in the internal door of the office, as currently staff are not able to see who is at the door if the knock	MP (on hold pending work to commence reconfiguration of office). MP to get a quote anyway to hold on record.
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