

Report to	<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>
Date	<b>19 September 2017</b>
By	<b>Human Resources Manager and Safety Officer</b>
Title of Report	<b>Annual Health and Safety Report for the year 2016/17</b>

**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to note the report and the continuing improvements in the overall safety management of SDNPA, and to endorse the proposals for further priorities and actions.**

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report is the key vehicle through which the Policy and Resources Committee and thereby South Downs National Park Authority, will receive suitable assurances that Safety Management is being performed satisfactorily and is continuously improving.
- 1.2 This report includes:
- An overall appraisal of health and safety performance for the SDNPA through the previous year
  - Examples of continuously improving competencies linked to formal training and by the provision of new and reviewed information
  - Further references to efficiency cost savings in sharing the development and output of safety management
  - A summary of visits and outcomes undertaken by the Safety Officer during the previous year
  - Recommendations for continuing and future priorities and actions in 2017/18.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 This is the fifth Annual Health and Safety Report prepared for the Policy and Resources committee (previously prepared for the Governance Committee). Previous reports can be found at the end of this document under background documents.
- 2.2 An agreement drawn up with the Peak District National Park (PDNPA) Authority to work with their Health and Safety Advisor, Jon Wayte, in 2012 was renewed in April 2017. Jon also provides health and safety services to a number of other National Park Authorities. This has ensured that we receive advice that is relevant to the way that we work and that we can share good practice with other National Park Authorities.
- 2.3 This arrangement continues to be very effective, with significant progress made in many aspects of health and safety.

## **3. Health and Safety Performance**

- 3.1 The day-to-day routine management of health and safety matters is performed by staff and supervised by managers. Through a planned programme of audit and inspection visits to principle workplaces and through routine meetings with staff and the Health and Safety Committee, the Safety Officer makes a judgement of how well that happens. During these visits opportunities arise to recognise and endorse good practice, respond to instances

where some improvements are necessary and to further coach staff, enhancing their competence. At the Health and Safety Committee meetings matters such as: incident, accident and near-miss reports, follow-up actions are considered, new guidance and policies agreed and performance of various safety management issues discussed.

3.2 During 2016/17 the Safety Officer has carried out further visits to most principal work sites:

- Singleton – 13 September 2016
- Queen Elizabeth Park – 8 March 2017
- Empshott Grange 8 March 2017
- Bepton Depot – 13 September 2016
- South Downs Centre – 7/8 March 2017
- Stanmer Park 15 June 2016

3.3 There have, for 2016/17, been no serious matters requiring immediate action by the Safety Officer or escalation to SMT for their action.

3.4 It is anticipated that a programme of visits, audits and inspections will continue to be performed by the Safety Officer with a continuing focus on visiting staff 'at work'. Further visits to Area Offices in 2017/18 have been planned for September and December. A member of SMT is expected to attend some of these visits from September 2017.

3.5 Routine workplace visits typically take account of:

- Safety related documentation. Good documentation is an essential component part of any safety management system. Use of and compliance with these documented systems is key to our overall success in implementing, maintaining and demonstrating good safety management. Key documents include: safety policies and associated procedures, safe working method statements and risk assessments, incident reports/records and follow-up/action reports. Many risk assessments have been reviewed and updated during 2016. These documents, including many risk assessments and core safety policies are becoming more consistent across all NPAs allowing much more efficient and timely review, replacement and referral.
- Physical conditions and work activities – including: work spaces, access and egress (safety and fire), building conditions, work equipment and the use of PPE (personal protective equipment). Specific matters addressed in 2016/17 include fire safety reviews at all operational centres.
- Risk assessments – a continuing improvement in the completion, use and a thorough review of risk assessments has been evident through 2016/17. The process of risk assessment review has driven an improvement in the understanding of risk for several matters including for example lone-working and work near highways. Use of risk assessment formats used at other National Parks has made future review simpler and helped to ensure that these assessments are current, valid and consistent with the standards adopted elsewhere. All reviewed risk assessments are available on the intranet. The Safety Officer will continue to focus on risk assessments and the use of controls identified by these assessments, as key evidence that safety is being properly considered and well managed.
- Resources and competencies – closely allied to the production and use of risk assessments is the understanding and use of these resources. There has been significant development of the Health and Safety Committee in 2016, which provides a still developing enhanced resource. Additional Planning and Countryside and Policy Management representatives were sourced to better reflect the new organisational structure. Representatives have received training in their expanded role which is clearly defined and incorporated in a reviewed Health and Safety Policy. The Committee has a more structured forward work-plan which is supported by and consistent with work carried out by the Safety Adviser. Sub groups have been formed to meet in between the quarterly meetings to ensure that actions are moved in quickly. All representatives are also focussing in improving communication channels with the teams they represent.

- Incident reports, near-misses and follow-up action –reporting of incidents and near misses continues to improve. In 2016/17, 38 incidents were reported involving 16 employees and 22 volunteers. Most incidents were minor, indicating that good safety measures and risk assessments are in place. The incidents mostly involved minor injuries from cuts and slips/trips. There were 2 minor vehicle accidents, none of which resulted in injuries. 6 incidents resulted from insect stings and bites; 2 tick bites and 4 wasp / hornet stings. Some incidents of insect stings resulted in an allergic reaction which needed coordination of help via mobile phones; the batteries on modern mobiles run down quickly so phone chargers have been checked in all SDNPA operational vehicles. Cool packs have been provided in all first aid packs. Long sleeved tops have been provided as PPE. Communication has also been sent via the internet and intranet, providing information on tick bites and Lyme’s Disease. These are good examples of action being taken immediately following an incident report and the introduction of new safety measures.
- 3.6 Reporting of near misses has improved and 6 were recorded. In 2015/16 only 1 near miss was reported. This has resulted in reviews of risk assessments and implementation of additional safety measures.
- 3.7 SDNPA reported no RIDDOR incidents in this period.
- 3.8 In summary, the evidence of inspections and reports to the Health and Safety Committee suggests that health and safety is managed well and continuously improving at SDNPA and the Policy and Resources Committee can receive positive assurance of that by this report.
- 4. Training, information and supervision**
- 4.1 The provision of safety training and information continues to be a key function provided by the Safety Officer. In 2016/17 the Safety Officer has supported the development of the Health and Safety Committee and provided training for all representatives.
- 4.2 Further significant training takes place at a discreet level with individuals and teams to enhance the performance of key safety management tasks including, workplace audit and inspection, risk identification and assessment, risk controls hierarchy and implementation.
- 5. Health and Wellbeing**
- 5.1 HR proactively monitor the recording of sickness absence and contact managers monthly to ensure that accurate recording has taken place.
- 5.2 In 2016/17 the average number of sick days per FTE per annum (excluding long term sick) was 4.3, and shows no increase from the previous 2 years. This is in line with the average number of days across all sectors (according to the Office of National Statistics). It is however below the average of 5.7 days recorded by other National Park Authorities.
- 5.3 Detailed absence statistics are reviewed by the Health and Safety Committee and reported to OMT every 6 months and this will help inform the health and wellbeing support that the organisation may need.
- 5.4 Pre-employment medical screening and other occupational health services are carried out by Portsmouth Hospital and Brighton and Sussex University Hospital.
- 5.5 In October we introduced a Health Cash Plan to all staff and members. This provision still includes our existing Employee Assistance Programme but all offers a wide range of health and wellbeing benefits.
- 6. Efficiency / cost savings**
- 6.1 All new policies, procedures, risk assessments and training materials are now shared between all NPAs advised by the Safety Officer. This allows for significant efficiency savings in the production and delivery of these developments and ensures greater consistency of approach and execution of safety management.

*Good practice examples:  
Working on or near Highways*

## **7. Priorities and actions for 2017/18**

7.1 The Safety Officer will continue to perform an annual inspection programme, visiting all key premises and aiming to spend time observing staff 'at work'. Some visits will be accompanied by a member(s) of SMT.

7.2 Other priorities for 2017/18 include:

- Review of terms of reference of the Health and Safety Committee.
- Review of training needs of committee representatives and a focus on increasing internal knowledge of health and safety. All representatives received IOSH Managing Safety Training in June and SMT and the Health and Safety Committee Chair will attend IOSH Leading Safety Training in September 2017.
- Creation of a health and safety forward plan
- Recognising priorities for all public sector employers set by the HSE addressing: musculo-skeletal injury and ill-health: and, work related stress
- Raising the profile and awareness of Health and Safety, particularly in respect of lone working procedures and incident reporting – a standing item of health and safety on team meeting agendas
- Review of procedures to address issues of difficult callers
- Internal Health and Wellbeing Group to review current health and wellbeing provisions
- Audit of health and safety related procedures and documents to identify potential gaps
- Health and safety peer reviews
- Review of health and safety training during staff induction.

## **8. Recommendations**

It is recommended that good general safety management and continuous improvement at SDNPA are recognised and that proposals for further priorities and actions are endorsed.

## **9. Other Implications**

<b>Implication</b>	<b>Yes*/No</b>
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	No
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	The current shared health and safety services with Peak District NPA provides excellent value for money, in comparison with using another local authority or external consultant. It allows for significant efficiency savings in the production and delivery of these developments.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	There are no social value implications in this paper
Has due regard been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	There are no equality implications in this paper
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	There are no human rights implications in this paper

Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	There are no Crime & Disorder implications in this paper
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	The health and safety work that has been carried out and our future health and safety plans take into account the latest health and safety legislation.
Are there any Sustainability implications based on the 5 principles set out in the SDNPA Sustainability Strategy: 1. Living within environmental limits 2. Ensuring a strong healthy and just society 3. Achieving a sustainable economy 4. Promoting good governance 5. Using sound science responsibly	There are no sustainability implications in this paper

#### 10. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

11. There are no risks arising directly from this paper although an annual health and safety report to Policy and Resources Committee with recommendations is a mitigation in our corporate risk register.

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Appendices None  
SDNPA Consultees Chief Executive; Director of Countryside Policy and Management; Director of Planning; Chief Finance Officer; Monitoring Officer; Legal Services, Head of Business Services  
External Consultees Jon Wayte, Safety Officer for SDNPA and Safety Advisor for PDNPA.  
Background Documents [2012/13 Health & Safety Report submitted to the Resources and Performance Committee by the Director of Corporate Services in April 2013 \(Report RPC 08/13, page 6\).](#)  
[Appendix 1 of 2012/13 Health & Safety Report](#)  
[2013/14 Health & Safety Report submitted to the Governance Committee by the HR Manager in June 2014 \(Report GOV17/14, page 121\).](#)  
[2014/15 Health & Safety Report submitted to the Governance Committee by the HR Manager in July 2015 \(Report GOV20/15, page 207\).](#)

[2015/16 Health & Safety Report submitted to the Governance Committee by the HR Manager in Sept 2016 \(Report GOV24/16, page 91\).](#)