



NORWICH City Council

Committee name: Cabinet

Committee date: 05/02/2025

Report title: Interim transfer of health & safety responsibilities

Portfolio: Councillor Packer, Cabinet member for planning and regulatory services

Report from: Head of planning and regulatory services

Wards: All wards

Purpose

To consider the interim transfer of health and safety responsibilities from the vacant Executive Director of Development and City Services post to the Executive Director for Resources and Executive Director of Communities and Housing until such time as the post is recruited to.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the interim transfer of these responsibilities.

Policy framework

The council has five corporate priorities, which are:

- A prosperous Norwich.
- A fairer Norwich.
- A climate responsive Norwich.
- A future-proof Norwich.
- An open and modern council.

This report meets the A prosperous Norwich and A fairer Norwich corporate priorities.

This report helps to meet the requirements of the adopted Corporate Health and Safety policy of the Council

Report details

Introduction

1. The Council's Health & Safety Policy identifies the responsibilities for managing

health and safety across the council and all council activities. In addition to responsibilities held by all employed workers, there are some specific responsibilities held by key post holders, specifically those in senior positions.

2. Until the postholder's departure in September 2024, the overall management of health & safety was monitored and overseen on behalf of the Chief Executive, by the Executive Director for Development and City Services.
3. There is now a requirement to transfer those corporate health & safety responsibilities previously held by this post to other posts until such time as a new postholder is recruited.
4. It is proposed that the Executive Director for Resources and Executive Director of Communities and Housing Services assume these responsibilities, until such time as the vacant Executive Director for Development & City Services post has been filled and the incumbent is ready to assume these responsibilities.
5. The position of Chair for the Health & Safety Board has been formally passed, via the Chief Executive, to the Executive Director for Resources, who will stand as the executive lead for health and safety across the Council.
6. The remaining responsibilities, as defined in the Health and Safety Policy, will be split between the Executive Director of Resources and Executive Director of Communities and Housing as follows:

7. Executive Director of Resources

a - ensuring that regular reports are prepared on the council's agreed targets for reducing the number of injuries at work and the incidence of work-related injuries,

b - appointing one or more competent persons to provide guidance and advice on health and safety matters,

c - ensuring that the council's health and safety policy, performance standards and procedures are reviewed as required,

d - chairing the health and safety board meetings,

8. Executive Director of Communities and Housing

e - ensuring that strategic management of building safety takes place across the Council's portfolio of commercial and operational properties,

f - ensuring that there are sufficient employees and financial resources in place to maintain effective management of health and safety across all Council owned commercial buildings,

g - ensuring that services delivering the waste contract, street cleansing contract and the Council's responsibilities for trees and park and open spaces are run safely, and within the legislative requirements for health & safety management,

h - ensuring that play areas are inspected at programmed intervals by competent persons.

9. In addition, previously associated responsibilities, as identified in the Policy and held by the corporate health & safety team, to manage the investigation of all incidents and accidents reportable to the HSE and other incidents/accidents, as agreed with the Executive Director of Development and City Services, will now be referred to and investigated in agreement with the Executive Director for Resources.
10. The existing corporate health & safety team responsibility for monitoring the implementation of any recommendations from health and safety audits, within the specified timescale and raising any likely failures to achieve the improvements, will be raised with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, Health and Safety Board and the Executive Director of Resources instead of the Executive Director of Development & City Services.

Implications

Financial and resources

11. Any decision to reduce or increase resources or alternatively increase income must be made within the context of the council's stated priorities, as set out in its community-led plan "We are Norwich" and budget.
12. There are no proposals in this report that would reduce or increase resources or income.

Statutory considerations

Consideration	Details of any implications and proposed measures to address:
Equality and diversity	No Equality Impact Assessment is necessary. There is no impact or effect on any person based on their protected characteristics, because of the delegated responsibilities identified in this report.
Health, social and economic impact	There is no health, social or economic impact.
Crime and disorder	There is no crime or disorder impact.
Children and adults safeguarding	There is no Children or Adult Safeguarding impact.
Environmental impact	There is no Environmental impact, based on these delegated responsibilities.

Risk management

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
Compliance and Legal	Failure to appoint suitable lead for oversight of health & safety, resulting in health & safety across NCC being unmanaged with no strategic direction to drive positive safety culture.	Suitable leads identified. Adoption of this interim transfer of responsibility will ensure strategic leadership to drive safety culture. Senior Management awareness and monitoring of health & safety across the organisation, ensuring effective strategic oversight. Health & Safety is seen to be led from the top, helping to drive forward a positive safety culture.

Other options considered

13. An alternative option, would be to do nothing and leave the policy as written; these specific responsibilities would remain delegated to a vacant post meaning there would be no designated oversight of Corporate Health & Safety across Norwich City Council.

Accountability for Health & Safety would however remain with the Chief Executive Officer by default.

Reasons for the decision/recommendation

14. Cabinet is recommended to approve the interim transfer of the health and safety responsibilities of the vacant post of Executive Director of Development and City Services to the Executive Director of Resources and Executive Director of Housing and Communities to ensure comprehensive oversight of the management of health & safety across the organisation.
15. Clear roles and responsibilities support a positive safety culture.
16. Strategic monitoring and oversight of health & safety management ensures compliance with legislative requirements and a safe and supportive environment of work for workers and visitors.

Background papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Addendum identifying revisions to Corporate Health & Safety Policy

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Appendix 1

Addendum to Health and Safety Policy October 2024

Page	Current Text	Reason for change	Change to
Title Page	Executive Director for Development and City Services	Post Vacant	Chief Executive Officer
Page 11	Executive Director of Community Services	Post Title Change	Executive Director of Communities and Housing
Page 12	Executive Director of Corporate and Commercial Services	Post Title Change	Executive Director of Resources
Page 11	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>Executive Director for Development and City Services</p> <p>Responsibilities a – h listed in the Health and Safety Policy</p>	Post Vacant	<p>Responsibilities</p> <p>In the absence of the Executive Director for Development and City Services, the Executive Director of Resources will act as the Executive Lead for health and safety at the Council.</p> <p>In the absence of the Executive Director for Development and City Services, their defined responsibilities in the Health and Safety Policy will be split between the Executive Director of Resources and Executive Director of Communities and Housing as follows:</p> <p>Executive Director of Resources</p> <p>a - ensuring that regular reports are prepared on the council’s agreed targets for reducing the number of injuries at work and the incidence of work-related injuries,</p> <p>b - appointing one or more competent persons to provide guidance and advice on health and safety matters,</p> <p>e - ensuring that the council’s health and safety policy, performance standards and procedures are reviewed as required,</p> <p>f - chairing the health and safety board meetings,</p> <p>Executive Director of Communities and Housing</p> <p>c - ensuring that strategic management of building safety takes place</p>

			<p>across the Council's portfolio of commercial and operational properties,</p> <p>d - ensuring that there are sufficient employees and financial resources in place to maintain effective management of health and safety across all Council owned commercial buildings,</p> <p>g - ensuring that services delivering the waste contract, street cleansing contract and the Council's responsibilities for trees and park and open spaces are run safely, and within the legislative requirements for health & safety management,</p> <p>h - ensuring that play areas are inspected at programmed intervals by competent persons.</p>
Page 13	<p>Corporate Health and Safety Advice Team are responsible for:</p> <p>b - managing the investigation of all incidents and accidents reportable to the HSE and other incidents/accidents as agreed with the Executive Director of Development and City Services,</p>		<p>Corporate Health and Safety Advice Team are responsible for:</p> <p>b - managing the investigation of all incidents and accidents reportable to the HSE and other incidents/accidents as agreed with the Executive Director of Resources</p>
Page 13	<p>e - monitoring the implementation of any recommendations from health and safety audits, within the specified timescale and raising any likely failures, to achieve the improvements with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, Health and Safety Board and Executive Director of Development and City Services,</p>		<p>e - monitoring the implementation of any recommendations from health and safety audits, within the specified timescale and raising any likely failures, to achieve the improvements with the Head of Planning and Regulatory Services, Health and Safety Board and Executive Director of Resources.</p>