

Agenda item: OC 80/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on the hire of meeting places.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee notes the report.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic we saw ourselves forced to close our community centres which had an adverse effect on our income. We were able to reopen our centres with restrictions in place on 2nd August 2020.

With the new lockdown now in place, it is likely that many of the bookings that we saw returning will cease again – the only exceptions to this will be the pre-schools who may also choose to close.

The impact of the closures both with the first and now the new lock downs will be considerable – early indications suggest that we will potentially lose £60K worth of income, if not more and this will not be close to being met by the furlough and grants received.

This is an area which is very unclear and the full impact will not be known until year end – if the lock down results in everything re-opening fully in December, this situation will be better, but if restrictions remain in place (which is likely) then worst case scenario is a significant loss of both income and regular hirers.

Our income has been severely hit, the closure of community centres and further restrictions held on capacities and events means we are still having some difficulty in this area, we have around 80% to make up before the end of the year to ensure our revised target of £10,000, down from £65,000 forecasted for a normal functioning business year. September figures only gave us around a month of 'new normal' functioning sat at circa £2000 for a month of community centre use. Additional income has been amended from £50,000 to £40,000 however we are showing at 50% for this which is the standard expected for mid-point through the year. Bank and investment is down by 95% and this will need to be reflected in next year's financial budget as the target set is not realistic and was changed from £6000 to £500.

For the year currently based on the September revision we are circa - £29,000 off target for revised income, therefore we *need* to hit all of our income targets to balance this figure. Unfortunately, we received news from the UK government on Saturday 31st October 2020 which means we are due into another national lockdown

from Thursday 4th November 2020 to be reviewed on December 2nd. After reviewing the criteria, it looks as though we have to cancel all of our community centre bookings with the exception of our nursery provisions which can continue (albeit on a part-time basis at the moment due to the effects of Covid.) and only if they choose to operate, as aforementioned.

It seems again, we are in an uncertain and controversial time when it comes to our income and any assistance we may qualify for. The effect of this second lockdown on the budget will depend on timescales and how long it may take for bookings in a group setting to be reinstated by the Government. Until then it will be a case of constantly reviewing our expenditure to try and 'buffer' our further losses that comes with this second lockdown, and upon lifting of restrictions we will be able to review the loss and the budget and report on our new financial position. As it stands at the moment, every month of closure is losing us around £2000 with the restricted groups we could cater for after the second lockdown. We were hoping to see restrictions easing by this point in the year with more bookings being facilitated and using our centres, it seems increasingly evident this will not be the case for the next month with the potential for this to continue over the coming winter months, into early next year.

Constant revision of Government advice, restrictions and our budget will be taking place regularly.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Higher deficit than expected at half year review of circa -£32,000 but exact figures are not easy to forecast at this moment in time.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Samone Winsborough – RFO.

Agenda item: OC 81/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To provide a first draft of the proposed Terms of Reference for the Woughton Business Forum and proposed membership.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the committee**
 - a. agrees to the proposed Terms of Reference for the group OR**
 - b. makes adjustments to the Terms of Reference prior to agreement**
- 3. That the committee agrees to the proposed initial membership of the group.**
- 4. That the initial membership agrees to meet in early 2021 to formulate an action plan for the group.**
- 5. That this Forum becomes an item within the Service Plan for 2021/22 with an allocated budget of £1000.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

At the previous meeting of this committee, there was significant discussion around the proposed Business Forum for Woughton, that included ideas for what the group might do, the need for a structure to work within and an agreement that the Council Manager would create some Terms of Reference and consideration of membership of the group. This paper provides the first draft of these two issues for consideration and ratification by the committee.

Terms of Reference:

- The purpose of the Woughton Business Forum ('The Forum') is to provide guidance, support, and oversight to promote business within the parish of Woughton.
- For the purposes of this Forum, 'businesses' will be considered as a broad definition and will include charities, social enterprises, schools and education providers.
- The Forum is NOT a formal committee, but shall report to the Operations Committee of Woughton Community Council, working as a 'Working Group'.
- Membership of the committee shall include councillors, officers and representatives from local businesses and organisations including, but not limited to, businesses, schools and education providers, charities and social enterprises based within the parish or that operate within the parish.

- The Forum shall have a management committee that includes a minimum of six (6) members and a maximum of twelve (12) members, including no fewer than three (3) members of Woughton Community Council.
- The Forum shall meet a minimum of four (4) times per year either in person or virtually, via online conferencing facilities (e.g. Zoom, MS Teams).
- The Forum shall be allocated a budget each year for operating costs, to be decided within the Operations Committee and budget setting process.
- The Forum will have a responsibility to:
 - o Support local businesses to thrive and develop
 - o Support new businesses wishing to set up within the parish
 - o Provide training, development and collaboration opportunities to members and the wider business community
 - o Any other business that fits within the overall ethos and aims of the Forum
- Working within the financial regulations of the council, the Forum will be enabled to spend the allocated budget and bid for additional funding for specific projects or initiatives on an annual basis.

These Terms of Reference give a road overview of the purpose of the Forum. The initial meetings of any management committee will enable more specific workplans to be developed that may include some of the ideas previously noted:

- Advertising and publicity.
- Collaborations.
- 'Discount' schemes.
- Training and development programmes.
- Promotion of the local economy (the 'Woughton Pound' staying within the parish).

Membership of the 'Management Committee' should include, in the first instance, the Council Manager and / or RFO, the Leader and / or Chair of the Council, a representative from the Operations Committee (preferably the Chair) and up to two (2) other councillors. In addition, it is recommended that representatives from local businesses are invited to nominate themselves or others to join the group – this may be targeted at those that are felt most appropriate, but it is recommended that this includes someone from an education setting, a charity representative, and members from small, medium and larger enterprises within the parish.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There will need to be a small budget allocated to enable publicity and creation of the Forum, alongside some ongoing funding to enable effective and engaging events and activities. It is unclear without the development of a workplan, how much this might be but it is suggested that at this point, it is limited to no more than £1000 for the initial year.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

It will be necessary for some administrative support and potentially for an officer, probably the Council Manager / RFO in the first instance, to support the creation and

establishment of this forum. It is likely that as the Forum becomes more established, it will become self-managing and officer time will reduce.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 82/20 a)

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee of amendments made to the sickness management procedure.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the Committee notes the report.
2. That the Committee agrees to the changes, so the new policy can be uploaded to Bright pay.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

After reviewing current procedure, I felt it prudent to add a level of monitoring controls to ensure we are efficient with sickness/absence issues.

Therefore, I have decided to incorporate using the Bradford factor scoring system with sicknesses. The following extract has been included in the Sickness management policy.

“Woughton Community Council uses the Bradford Factor scoring system to assist us with managing sickness and absence levels within the council. The Bradford Factor score system considers number of days absence, over the number of occurrences had. There will be benchmarks known as ‘trigger points’ if you hit one of these trigger points with us, further action may be taken.

The Trigger points are as follows:

22	Some concern – An informal discussion will take place
45	Action required – Stage 1 of the sickness management procedure will commence.
100	Potential for disciplinary – Disciplinary procedures may commence.
900 +	Serious Disciplinary likely – Potential dismissal.

We will always do our best to manage and best support our staff, however any absence that becomes unmanageable or damaging to the council will be monitored. The Bradford factor scoring system is on Brightpay for you to refer to at any time.”

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Sickness & Capability Policy – October 2020.

AUTHOR

Samone Winsborough

RFO

Capability and Sickness Management Procedures

These procedures are provided for information only and do not form part of your contract of employment, although these procedures may be referred to in your Contract of Employment (or Terms and Conditions).

1. Capability Procedure

The primary aim of this procedure is to provide a framework within which managers can work with employees to maintain satisfactory performance standards and to ensure improvement where necessary.

It is our policy to ensure that concerns over performance are dealt with fairly and that steps are taken to establish the facts and to give employees the opportunity to respond at a hearing before any formal action is taken.

This policy is used to deal with poor performance. It does not apply to cases involving genuine sickness absence or misconduct. In those cases reference should be made to the appropriate policy or procedure in this Handbook namely the Sickness Management procedure and the Disciplinary procedure.

Identifying performance issues

In the first instance, performance issues should normally be dealt with informally between you and your line manager as part of day-to-day management. Where appropriate, a note of any such informal discussions may be placed on your personnel file but will be ignored for the purposes of any future capability hearings. The formal procedure should be used for more serious cases, or in any case where an earlier informal discussion has not resulted in a satisfactory improvement. Informal discussions may help:

- Clarify the required standards;
- Identify areas of concern;
- Establish the likely causes of poor performance and identify any training needs; and/or set targets for improvement and a time-scale for review.

Employees will not normally be dismissed for performance reasons without previous warnings. However, in serious cases of gross negligence, or in any case involving an employee who has not yet completed their probationary period, dismissal without previous warnings may be appropriate.

If we have concerns about your performance, we will undertake an assessment to decide if there are grounds for taking formal action under this procedure. The procedure involved will depend on the circumstances but may involve reviewing your personnel file including any appraisal records, gathering any relevant documents, monitoring your work and, if appropriate, interviewing you and/or other individuals confidentially regarding your work.

Disabilities

Consideration will be given to whether poor performance may be related to a disability and, if so, whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to your working

arrangements, including changing your duties or providing additional equipment or training. We may also consider making adjustments to this procedure in appropriate cases.

If you wish to discuss this or inform us of any medical condition you consider relevant, you should contact your line manager or the Head of Business Support.

Confidentiality

Our aim is to deal with performance matters sensitively and with due respect for the privacy of any individuals involved. All employees must treat as confidential any information communicated to them in connection with a matter which is subject to this capability procedure.

You, and anyone accompanying you (including witnesses), must not make electronic recordings of any meetings or hearings conducted under this procedure. You will normally be told the names of any witnesses whose evidence is relevant to your capability hearing, unless we believe that a witness's identity should remain confidential.

Notification of a capability hearing

If we consider that there are grounds for taking formal action over alleged poor performance, you will be required to attend a capability hearing. We will notify you in writing of our concerns over your performance, the reasons for those concerns, and the likely outcome if we decide after the hearing that your performance has been unsatisfactory. We will also include the following where appropriate:

- A summary of relevant information gathered as part of any investigation;
- A copy of any relevant documents which will be used at the capability hearing;
- A copy of any relevant witness statements, except where a witness's identity is to be kept confidential, in which case we will give you as much information as possible while maintaining confidentiality.

We will give you written notice of the date, time and place of the capability hearing. The hearing will be held as soon as reasonably practicable, but you will be given a reasonable amount of time, usually 2 to 5 working days, to prepare your case based on the information we have given you.

Right to be accompanied at hearings

You may bring a companion to any capability hearing or appeal hearing under this procedure. The companion may be a work colleague or trade union representative. You must tell the manager conducting the hearing who your chosen companion is, in good time before the hearing. Your companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up your case, but will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during the hearing.

A companion is allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay but no-one is obliged to act as a companion if they do not wish to do so.

If your choice of companion is unreasonable we may require you to choose someone else, for example:

- If in our opinion your companion may have a conflict of interest or may prejudice the

- hearing; or
- If your companion works at another site and someone reasonably suitable is available at the site at which you work; or
- If your companion is unavailable at the time a hearing is scheduled and will not be available for more than 5 working days.

Procedure at capability hearings

If you or your companion cannot attend the hearing you should inform us immediately and we will usually arrange an alternative time. You must make every effort to attend the hearing, and failure to attend without good reason may be treated as misconduct in itself. If you fail to attend without good reason, or are persistently unable to do so (for example, for health reasons), we may have to take a decision based on the available evidence.

The hearing will normally be held by your line manager or a more senior manager and may be attended by the Council Manager or a member of the Councillor Group (usually Chair of Operations, Chair of Council or Council Leader) if available.

You may ask relevant witnesses to appear at the hearing, provided you give us sufficient advance notice to arrange their attendance. You will be given the opportunity to respond to any information given by a witness. However, you will not normally be permitted to cross-examine witnesses unless, in exceptional circumstances, we decide that a fair hearing could not be held otherwise. The aims of a capability hearing will usually include:

- Setting out the required standards that we believe you may have failed to meet, and going through any relevant evidence that we have gathered;
- Allowing you to ask questions, present evidence, call witnesses, respond to evidence and make representations;
- establishing the likely causes of poor performance including any reasons why any measures taken so far have not led to the required improvement;
- Identifying whether there are further measures, such as additional training or supervision, which may improve performance;
- Where appropriate, discussing targets for improvement and a time-scale for review.

If dismissal is a possibility, establishing whether there is any likelihood of a significant improvement being made within a reasonable time and whether there is any practical alternative to dismissal, such as redeployment.

A hearing may be adjourned if we need to gather any further information or give consideration to matters discussed at the hearing. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the hearing is reconvened. We will inform you in writing of our decision and our reasons for it, usually within 5 working days of the capability hearing. Where possible we will also explain this information to you in person.

Stage 1 hearing: first written warning

Following a Stage 1 capability hearing, if we decide that your performance is unsatisfactory, we will give you a first written warning, setting out:

- The areas in which you have not met the required performance standards;
- Targets for improvement;
- Any measures, such as additional training or supervision, which will be taken with a view

- to improving performance;
- A period for review;
- The consequences of failing to improve within the review period, or of further unsatisfactory performance.

A first written warning may be authorised by a manager.

The warning will normally remain active for 12 months from the end of the review period, after which time it will be disregarded for the purposes of the capability procedure.

Your performance will be monitored during the review period and we will write to inform you of the outcome:

- If your line manager is satisfied with your performance, no further action will be taken;
- If your line manager is not satisfied, the matter may be progressed to a Stage 2 capability hearing; or
- If the manager feels that there has been a substantial but insufficient improvement, the review period may be extended.

Stage 2 hearing: final written warning

If your performance does not improve within the review period set out in a first written warning, or if there is further evidence of poor performance while your first written warning is still active, we may decide to hold a Stage 2 capability hearing. We will send you written notification as set out above.

Following a Stage 2 capability hearing, if we decide that your performance is unsatisfactory, we will give you a final written warning, setting out:

- The areas in which you have not met the required performance standards;
- Targets for improvement;
- Any measures, such as additional training or supervision, which will be taken with a view to improving performance;
- A period for review; and
- The consequences of failing to improve within the review period, or of further unsatisfactory performance.

A final written warning may be authorised by a senior manager.

A final written warning will normally remain active for 12 months from the end of the review period. After the active period, the warning will remain permanently on your personnel file but will be disregarded in deciding the outcome of future capability proceedings.

Your performance will be monitored during the review period and we will write to inform you of the outcome:

- If your line manager is satisfied with your performance, no further action will be taken;
- If your line manager is not satisfied, the matter may be progressed to a Stage 3 capability hearing; or
- If the manager feels that there has been a substantial but insufficient improvement, the

review period may be extended.

Stage 3 hearing: dismissal or redeployment

We may decide to hold a Stage 3 capability hearing if we have reason to believe:

- Your performance has not improved sufficiently within the review period set out in a final written warning;
- Your performance is unsatisfactory while a final written warning is still active; or
- Your performance has been grossly negligent such as to warrant dismissal without the need for a final written warning.

We will send you written notification of the hearing as set out above.

Following the hearing, if we find that your performance is unsatisfactory, we may consider a range of options including:

- Dismissing you;
- Redeploying you into another suitable job at the same or (if your contract permits) a lower grade;
- Extending an active final written warning and setting a further review period (in exceptional cases where we believe a substantial improvement is likely within the review period);
- Giving a final written warning (where no final written warning is currently active).

The decision may be authorised by the Operations Manager, Council Manager or, in exceptional circumstances, a member of the Council.

Dismissal will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice, unless your performance has been so negligent as to amount to gross misconduct, in which case we may dismiss you without notice or any pay in lieu.

Appeals against action for poor performance

If you feel that a decision about poor performance under this procedure is wrong or unjust you should appeal in writing, stating your full grounds of appeal, to the Operations Manager or Council Manager within 5 working days of the date on which you were informed in writing of the decision.

If you are appealing against dismissal, the date on which dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of the appeal. However, if your appeal is successful you will be reinstated with no loss of continuity or pay.

If you raise any new matters in your appeal, we may need to carry out further investigation. If any new information comes to light we will provide you with a summary including, where appropriate, copies of additional relevant documents and witness statements. You will have a reasonable opportunity to consider this information before the hearing.

We will give you written notice of the date, time and place of the appeal hearing. This will normally be 2 to 5 working days after you receive the written notice.

The appeal hearing may be a complete re-hearing of the matter or it may be a review of the fairness of the original decision in the light of the procedure that was followed and any new information that may have come to light. This will be at our discretion depending on the

circumstances of your case. In any event the appeal will be dealt with as impartially as possible.

Where possible, the appeal hearing will be conducted by a more senior manager who has not been previously involved in the case. The Council Manager, Operations Manager or another Service Manager, where available, and/or the manager who conducted the capability hearing will also usually be present. You may bring a companion with you to the appeal hearing (see above).

A hearing may be adjourned if we need to gather any further information or give consideration to matters discussed at the hearing. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the hearing is reconvened. Following the appeal hearing we may:

- Confirm the original decision;
- Revoke the original decision; or
- Substitute a different penalty.

We will inform you in writing of our final decision as soon as possible, usually within 5 working days of the appeal hearing. Where possible we will also explain this to you in person. There will be no further right of appeal.

2. Sickness Management Procedure

This Sickness Management Procedure sets out our procedures for the management of sickness absence in a fair and consistent way. This procedure covers all our employees. Sickness absence can vary from short intermittent periods of ill-health to a continuous period of long-term absence and have a number of different causes (for example injuries, recurring conditions or a serious illness requiring lengthy treatment).

We wish to ensure that the reasons for sickness absence are understood in each case and investigated where necessary. In addition, where needed and reasonably practicable, measures will be taken to assist those who have been absent by reason of sickness to return to work.

Woughton Community Council uses the Bradford Factor scoring system to assist us with managing sickness and absence levels within the council. The Bradford Factor score system considers number of days absence, over the number of occurrences had. There will be benchmarks known as 'trigger points' if you hit one of these trigger points with us, further action may be taken.

The Trigger points are as follows:

22	Some concern – An informal discussion will take place
45	Action required – Stage 1 of the sickness management procedure will commence.
100	Potential for disciplinary – Disciplinary procedures may commence.
900 +	Serious Disciplinary likely – Potential dismissal.

We will always do our best to manage and best support our staff, however any absence that becomes unmanageable or damaging to the council will be monitored.

The Bradford factor scoring system is on Brightpay for you to refer to at any time.

Disabilities

We are aware that sickness absence may result from a disability. At each stage of the sickness absence meetings procedure as set out in this policy, particular consideration will be given to whether there are reasonable adjustments that could be made to the requirements of a job or other aspects of working arrangements that will provide support at work and/or assist a return to work.

If you consider that you are affected by a disability or any medical condition which affects your ability to undertake your work, you should inform the Operations Manager or your line manager.

Unauthorised absence

Cases of unauthorised absence will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure. Absence that has not been notified according to the sickness absence reporting procedure will be treated as unauthorised absence.

If you do not report for work and have not telephoned your line manager or other manager to explain the reason for your absence, your line manager or senior manager will try to contact you, by telephone and in writing if necessary. This should not be treated as a substitute for reporting sickness absence.

Please also refer to the Sickness Policy which details actions taken if absent without notice.

Keeping in contact during sickness absence

If you are absent on sick leave you should expect to be contacted from time to time by your manager and / or any relevant person who may be working together with you on specific tasks or projects in order to discuss your wellbeing, expected length of continued absence

from work and any of your work that requires attention. Such contact is intended to provide reassurance and will be kept to a reasonable minimum.

If you have any concerns while absent on sick leave, whether about the reason for your absence or your ability to return to work, you should feel free to contact your manager at any time.

Returning to work from long-term sickness absence

We are committed to helping employees return to work from long-term sickness absence. As part of our sickness absence meetings procedure we will, where appropriate and possible, support returns to work by:

- Obtaining medical advice;
- Making reasonable adjustments to the workplace, working practices and working hours;
- Considering redeployment; and/or
- Agreeing a return to work programme with everyone affected.

If you are unable to return to work in the longer term, we will consider whether you are entitled to any benefits under your contract and/or any insurance schemes we operate.

Sickness absence meetings procedure

We may apply this procedure whenever we consider it necessary, including, for example, if you:

- Have been absent due to illness on a number of occasions;
- Have discussed matters at a return to work interview that require investigation; and/or
- Have been absent for more than 10 working days.

Unless it is impractical to do so, we will give you 2 to 5 working days written notice of the date, time and place of a sickness absence meeting. We will put any concerns about your sickness absence and the basis for those concerns in writing or otherwise advise why the meeting is being called. A reasonable opportunity for you to consider this information before a meeting will be provided.

The meeting will be conducted by your manager and will normally be attended by the Operations Manager or another Service Manager, as available and practical. You may bring a companion with you to the meeting.

You must take all reasonable steps to attend a meeting. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct. If you or your companion are unable to attend at the time specified you should immediately inform your manager who will seek to agree an alternative time.

A meeting may be adjourned if your manager is awaiting receipt of information, needs to gather any further information or give consideration to matters discussed at a previous meeting. You will be given a reasonable opportunity to consider any new information obtained before the meeting is reconvened.

Confirmation of any decision made at a meeting, the reasons for it and of the right of appeal will usually be given to you in writing within 5 working days of a sickness absence meeting

(unless this time scale is not practicable, in which case it will be provided as soon as is practicable).

If, at any time, your manager considers that you have taken or are taking sickness absence when you are not unwell, they may refer matters to be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

Right to be accompanied at meetings

You may bring a companion to any meeting or appeal meeting under this procedure.

Your companion may be either a trade union representative or a fellow work colleague. Their identity must be confirmed to the manager conducting the meeting, in good time before it takes place.

Employees are allowed reasonable time off from duties without loss of pay to act as a companion. However, they are not obliged to act as a companion and may decline a request if they so wish.

Some companions may not be allowed: for example, anyone who may have a conflict of interest, or whose presence may prejudice a meeting. Companions should not normally work at another site, unless no-one reasonably suitable is available at the site at which you work.

A companion may make representations, ask questions, and sum up your position, but will not be allowed to answer questions on your behalf. You may confer privately with your companion at any time during a meeting.

Stage 1: first sickness absence meeting

This will follow the procedure set out in paragraphs on the arrangements for and right to be accompanied at sickness absence meetings. The purposes of a first sickness absence meeting may include:

- Discussing the reasons for absence;
- Where you are on long-term sickness absence, determining how long the absence is likely to last;
- Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, determining the likelihood of further absences;
- Considering whether medical advice is required;
- Considering what, if any, measures might improve your health and/or attendance;
- Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting under the sickness absence procedure.

Stage 2: further sickness absence meeting(s)

Depending on the matters discussed at the first stage of the sickness absence procedure, a further meeting or meetings may be necessary. Arrangements for meetings under the second stage of the sickness absence procedure will follow the procedure set out in the paragraphs on the arrangements for and right to be accompanied at sickness absence meetings. The purposes of further meeting(s) may include:

- Discussing the reasons for and impact of your ongoing absence(s);
- Where you are on long-term sickness absence, discussing how long your absence is

likely to last;

- Where you have been absent on a number of occasions, discussing the likelihood of further absences;
- if it has not been obtained, considering whether medical advice is required. If it has been obtained, considering the advice that has been given and whether further advice is required;
- Considering your ability to return to/remain in your job in view both of your capabilities and our business needs and any adjustments that can reasonably be made to your job to enable you to do so;
- Considering possible redeployment opportunities and whether any adjustments can reasonably be made to assist in redeploying you;
- Where you are able to return from long-term sick leave, whether to your job or a redeployed job, agreeing a return to work programme;
- If it is considered that you are unlikely to be able to return to work from long-term absence, whether there are any benefits for which you should be considered;
- Agreeing a way forward, action that will be taken and a time-scale for review and/or a further meeting(s). This may, depending on steps we have already taken, include warning you that you are at risk of dismissal.

Stage 3: final sickness absence meeting

Where you have been warned that you are at risk of dismissal, we may invite you to a meeting under the third stage of the sickness absence procedure. Arrangements for this meeting will follow the procedure set out in paragraphs on the arrangements for and right to be accompanied at sickness absence meetings. The purposes of the meeting will be:

- To review the meetings that have taken place and matters discussed with you;
- where you remain on long-term sickness absence to consider whether there have been any changes since the last meeting under stage two of the procedure; either as regards your possible return to work or opportunities for return or redeployment;
- To consider any further matters that you wish to raise;
- To consider whether there is a reasonable likelihood of you returning to work or achieving the desired level of attendance in a reasonable time;
- To consider the possible termination of your employment.

Termination will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Appeals

You may appeal against the outcome of any stage of this procedure and you may bring a companion (as referred to above in this procedure) to an appeal meeting.

An appeal should be made in writing, stating the full grounds of appeal, to the Council Manager, or a person more senior to the person who facilitated the sickness absence meetings, within 5 working days of the date on which the decision was sent to you.

Unless it is not practicable, you will be given written notice of an appeal meeting within 1 week of the meeting. In cases of dismissal the appeal will be held as soon as possible. Any

new matters raised in an appeal may delay an appeal meeting if further investigation is required.

You will be provided with written details of any new information which comes to light before an appeal meeting. You will also be given a reasonable opportunity to consider this information before the meeting.

Where practicable, an appeal meeting will be conducted by a person senior to the individual who conducted the sickness absence meeting.

Depending on the grounds of appeal, an appeal meeting may be a complete rehearing of the matter or a review of the original decision.

Following an appeal the original decision may be confirmed, revoked or replaced with a different decision. The final decision will be confirmed in writing, if possible within 5 working days of the appeal meeting. There will be no further right of appeal.

The date that any dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. However, if the appeal is successful, the decision to dismiss will be revoked with no loss of continuity or pay.

Last review date:	22nd October 2020
Next review date:	October 2022
Lead:	Operations Manager
Overseeing Committee:	Operations
Approved:	
Review cycle:	2 yearly and/or as per legislation

Agenda item: OC 82/20 b)

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee of amendments made to the Health and Safety Policy.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the Committee agrees to the changes, so the new policy can be uploaded to Bright pay.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

After reviewing the current policy, I have made some slight amendments. Most of these are just rewording, but I have also added some bits about RIDDOR and COSHH. Some of the responsibility of areas have been amended to include No95 and Community Services team activities.

Ongoing reviews will be taken and any further amendments will be notified at the appropriate times.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Health & Safety Policy – November 2020.

AUTHOR

Ian Tegerdine

Landscape and Environment Manager/Health and Safety Officer

Woughton Community Council

Health and Safety Policy

2020

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Woughton Community Council are committed to provide adequate control of the Health and Safety risk arising from all our work activities. To consult with our employees on matters affecting their Health and Safety. To provide and maintain safe plant and equipment. To ensure the safe handling and use of substances under current legislation of COSHH. Provide information, instruction and supervision for employees. Ensure that all employees are competent to do their tasks and to give adequate training. Prevention of accidents and cases of work-related ill health. To maintain safe and healthy work conditions and to revise this policy accordingly at regular intervals.

Responsibilities

The employer has overall responsibility for Health and Safety. The responsibility for day to day tasks can be delegated to someone else e.g manager or supervisor. The employer needs to be kept informed about Health and Safety matters as the matters concerning Health and Safety are still the overall responsibility of an employer. Specific tasks can be delegated to the individuals in the organization, by workplace area by topic. Responsibilities should be clearly set out so that if there are any Health and Safety concerns, they can be reported to the right person.

1. Overall responsibility for Health and Safety is that of the Council Manager.
2. Day to day responsibility for ensuring this policy is put into practice lies with the delegated Health and Safety Officer.
3. To ensure Health and Safety standards are maintained/improved, the following people have responsibilities in the following areas.
4. Woughton Community Council Office – Health and Safety Officer (Ian Tegerdine and Steve McNay).
5. Meeting Places - Operations Manager (Samone Winsborough).
6. Fishermead Landscape Depot – Health and Safety Officer (Ian Tegerdine).
7. No 95 Jonathans, Coffee Hall – Lead Youth Manager (Tash Darling).
8. Community Services Activities – Community Services Manager (Sean Perry).

All employees must:

- Co-operate with Health and Safety Officer and managers on Health and Safety matters.
- Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard their Health and Safety.
- Take reasonable care of their own Health and Safety.
- Report all Health and Safety concerns to the Council Manager or Health and Safety Officer.

Health and Safety Risks Arising from Work Activities

Risk assessments will be undertaken by Health and Safety officer.

The findings of the risk assessments will be reported to Operations Committee.

Action required to remove/control will be approved by Operations Committee.

Committee and Health and Safety Officer will check that the implemented actions have removed/reduced the risks.

Risk assessments will be reviewed every 6 months or when work activity changes, or following an incident, accident or near miss.

Consultation with Employees

Consultation with the staff will be provided by the Council Manager/Health and Safety Officer.

Safe Plant and Equipment

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers within their teams will be responsible for identifying all equipment/plant needing maintenance.

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers within their teams will be responsible for ensuring effective maintenance procedures are drawn up.

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers within their teams will be responsible for ensuring that all identified maintenance is implemented.

Any problems found with plant /equipment should be reported to the Council Manager, Health and Safety Officer or Manager responsible for the defective plant/equipment.

Health and Safety Officer and other line managers in conjunction with contractors will check that new plant and equipment meets Health and Safety standards before it is purchased.

Safe Handling and Use of Substances

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for identifying all substances which need COSHH assessments.

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for COSHH assessments.

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all actions identified in the assessments are implemented.

Health and Safety Officer will be responsible for ensuring that all relevant employees are informed about the COSHH assessments.

Health and Safety Officer/Caretaker Manager will check new substances can be used safely before they are purchased.

Assessments will be reviewed every 6 months or when the work activity changes, or following an incident, accident or near miss.

COSHH (Control of Substances Harmful to Health)

All chemicals and cleaning products that are currently in use by Woughton Community Council must have a relevant Technical Data Sheet provided. Any product not having these data sheets will not be used. These data sheets are kept in the Health and Safety folder located in the Hub Office. These data sheets contain the risk of harm of the product and treatment and control measures required, what PPE requirement that should be in place.

Information, Induction and Supervision

The Health and Safety Law poster are displayed in the Hub, Fishermead Landscape Depot and No 95, Jonathans, Coffee Hall.

The Health and Safety information is available from:

HSE Infoline 0845 345 055.

HSE website www.hse.gov.uk

HSE direct www.hsedirect.gov.uk

Health and Safety Officer and line managers within their teams are responsible for ensuring that our employees at locations under our control are given Health and Safety information.

RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) is the law that requires employers, and other people in charge of work premises, to report and keep records of:

- work-related accidents which cause deaths.
- work-related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries).
- diagnosed cases of certain industrial diseases; and
- certain 'dangerous occurrences' (incidents with the potential to cause harm).

If any of these accidents or incidents occur these must be reported to the HSE within 15 days of the accident or incident occurring.

Competency for Tasks and Training

Induction for all employees by Health and Safety Officer or by line manager.

Job specific training will be provided by line managers.

Specific jobs requiring training are recognised within individual teams (e.g youth, community and landscape teams).

Training records are kept at Woughton Community Council Offices by Operations Manager.

Training will be identified, arranged, and monitored by Operations Manager Health and Safety Officer or line managers.

Accidents, First Aid and Work-Related Ill Health

Health surveillance is required for employees doing the following jobs:

- Cleaning Premises
- Patrolling Estates
- Landscaping

Health surveillance records will be kept at Woughton Community Council Office by line managers or Health and Safety Officer.

The first-aid boxes are kept in:

- Main Office
- Youth Building

- Vehicles

The appointed first aiders are:

All accidents and cases of work-related ill health are to be recorded in the accident books provided in the Main Office, Youth building and Landscape depot.

Council Manager/Health and Safety Officer are responsible for reporting accidents, diseases and dangerous occurrences to the enforcing authorities (HSE or local authority depending upon work arrangements).

Monitoring

To check our working conditions, and to ensure our safe working practices are being followed we will:

- Complete and review our risk assessments every 6 months or following an incident, accident or near miss.
- Implement necessary changes to lower the risks.
- Implement and update Health and safety Policy according to changes in legislation.
- Provide necessary training to all our staff.

Council Manager and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for investigating accidents.

Council Manager and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for investigating work-related causes of sickness absences with support from Operations Manager.

Council Manager and Health and Safety Officer are responsible for acting on investigation findings to prevent a recurrence.

Emergency Procedures – Fire and Evacuation

Health and Safety Officer is responsible for ensuring the Fire Risk Assessments are undertaken and implemented.

Escape routes are checked every 6 months.

Fire Extinguishers are maintained and checked by:

Complete Detection Systems Ltd (CDS)
The Old Rectory
46 Leicester Rd
Narborough
Leicestershire
LE19 2DF
01162 750177

Emergency evacuation will be periodically. Usually these will occur every 6 months. The fire assembly point situated in front of Christ the Vine Church next to the memorial. The nominated fire warden will ascertain that all staff have evacuated the building, if not this will be reported to the lead Fire officer when they arrive.

Last review date:	October 2020
Next review date:	October 2021
Lead:	Health and Safety Manager
Overseeing Committee:	Operations
Approved:	
Review cycle:	Annually and/or as per legislation

Agenda item: OC 83/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on internal procedure for contract review.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Committee notes the report.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Now more than ever it is crucial to ensure best value for money, it has been a work in progress over the last few years to look into our current contracts and ensure we are in contracts that provide favourable contract terms, payment terms and suppliers who fit with our ethos and culture as an organisation that provide us with best value.

There is a current working document being formulated which will detail all of our current suppliers, the contract terms and review dates for said contracts to ensure we either renew favourably, or should we need to source other options we are able to use the tendering process effectively prior to the contract terminating or automatically renewing.

This should allow us to effectively manage our contract reviews in a timely manner to consistently review best value.

The Operations manager/Council manager are currently reviewing, insurance, accounting software and mobile phones, however this is not at a stage to report or forward for tender.

As and when tendering or contract variations/changes are needed the Operations manager will bring to the attention of the Operations committee for decision.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Samone Winsborough

RFO

Agenda item: OC 84/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on the re-opening of The Hub.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the Hub remains closed until 2021, except for the Community Fridge.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The Hub has remained closed to the public since March. There has been access to essential services via the Community Fridge and for specific, booked sessions where regulations have allowed.

Following the announcement of a further 'lock down' that starts on 5th November, the Hub needs to remain closed and activities that have been taking place will reduce. This includes all non-essential staff returning to work from home, closure of youth services excepting those that remain allowed and to prevent damage and a hold on any activities and events that have been planned, with the exception of the 'activity packs' that can continue to be distributed via the community fridge sessions and via our partners within the community.

The lock down is in place until December and potentially beyond. Given this, it is felt unlikely that the Hub will re-open this year.

The Community Fridge, with the Covid compliance elements in place, can continue and will remain open for a minimum of 3 days per week, with the team currently exploring the potential for this to expand if possible (dependent on food deliveries, safety aspects and similar). We will reduce the numbers of volunteers involved, ensuring that all social distancing and safety measures are taken into account.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None for the Hub opening. Will impact on Community Centres.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

We will continue to investigate the best way to support our officers to remain engaged, undertake suitable work from home (where necessary) and stay safe and compliant. The new regulations are clear that people should stay at home where possible and this is the starting point for all services.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 85/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on Mental Health First Aid training.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the committee notes the report.**
- 2. That the committee agrees to Mind BLMK providing the initial training package for the 'Becoming mental health aware' half day course for 9 councillors plus any additional spaces being offered to officers and / or resident associations.**
- 3. That £500 is allocated to the delivery of this session(s) and that we aim to deliver this within the 2020 calendar year.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following previous discussions, a total of ten (10) councillors have expressed an interest in undertaking MKFA training, with nine (9) of them looking at the basic introduction one, with one councillor specifying that they would prefer the two day course.

The Council Manager has liaised with Mind BLMK who are able to provide this training, but who specified that they find it preferable to deliver face to face, in line with CV-19 guidance. Due to the recently announced second lock down, this will not be possible and so further clarification has been sought to ensure online is an option. The communication to this point has been that this IS possible but does involve both pre and post session work from participants.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost for a half day face-to-face was £400. It is anticipated that this will be a similar cost to the half day online option.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 86/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To discuss priorities for the Operational service plan 2021/22.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Committee notes the report**
- 2. That the Committee agrees to the priorities suggested for next year.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Due to the current circumstances, and uncertain times we have been faced with since March I recommend that we keep the service plan priorities to a 'necessity' level to ensure we are able to fulfil our operational targets for next year.

Therefore, as Operations Manager I recommend the following to be included in our service plan:

Business Forum (SMc as lead officer)

To make contact and build forces with local businesses within the Parish, to continue to develop a forum for local businesses and build stronger relationships between [local] businesses and the council.

Training (SW)

To continue to ensure suitable training and development is offered to officers and members, through ensuring the prioritisation and stringent following of 1:1 and appraisal systems. SW will predominantly work in terms of officer development SMc will predominantly focus on members opportunities.

Engagement and Communications (SW)

To continue to look at more ways to develop our reach in terms of engagement, to develop our communication channels (which could be assisted through the later mentioned CRM systems) to review, evaluate and analyse the ways we communicate and how we can reach further and obtain higher engagement.

Website usability (SMc/SW)

To continue with developing the website to ensure it is user friendly, and best allows users to access all functions.

Accounting systems and CRM (SW)

To research and tender for a new accounting (and potentially) booking system which is fit for purpose for the amount of spend and input we utilise it for. To look into/migrate to a system that works with our budget instead of against it. To provide better quality reports and make financial milestones more proficient and effective.

As above for a CRM system which allows us to have a 'central point' of cases for the Advice, wellbeing and safeguarding teams. To have a system that may be able to run text alerts and strengthen communications & engagement. A piece of software where a 'play by play' on caseloads can be picked up, tasks set and outcomes input for review and evaluation at year end.

Silver council accreditation (SMc)

To continue to put into place steps for ensuring we are silver quality council accredited, which has been delayed somewhat due to restrictions put into place as a result of COVID, national lockdown etc.

Gazette (SW/SMc)

To look into the development of the gazette to see if we can make it more interaction, to review suppliers and look into 'best value' with publishing/distributing of the gazette. Is the gazette receiving readership levels that outweigh the cost, and is it an effective means of communication.

Contract renewal (SW)

Have in place a working document and procedure for contract review, tender and renewals to ensure best value across the Council & Parish.

Paycales - JNC

To review and publish who we recognise in terms of paycales and unions.

Income Generation and long-term rentals

To work on any other income generation streams other than our community centres and cost out any potential ideas for review by the income generation group/the council.

To work on maintaining long term rental, and hirer loyalty to ensure our main stream of income is abundant.

Safeguarding

To take full responsibility of the safeguarding for the Council as specified in the terms of reference.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None Perceived

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Health & Safety Policy – November 2020.

AUTHOR

Samone Winsborough

RFO

Agenda item: OC 87/20

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations Committee

Monday 9th November 2020

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on website improvements and future plans.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the committee notes the report and actions to this point.**
- 2. That the Council Manager continues to work on the continuing changes necessary.**
- 3. That the committee receives a further update in March 2021.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The website has undergone a number of changes over recent months, following some work with Pink Fish, the council's website provider, to identify and address concerns about usability and effectiveness. This led to a 'test site' being created, where some changes were made, whilst further changes were made to the 'live' site, to address more urgent issues.

Changes made include:

- Updated graphics
- Updated pages for all services, community centre hire and similar
- Additional information provided around CV-19 and sources of support
- Inclusion of Gazette back issues within the site
- More regular updates of information on the homepage
- Updated Councillor pages, with links to Register of Interests and a bio, where provided (these should be updated / provided where possible, please)
- Updated policies and procedures, branded and in line with best practice

The development site also has new feeds to our Facebook page, a redesign with more pleasing graphics, layout and fonts and removal of outdated information and pages.

In addition, an audit of accessibility has been undertaken and includes a review of all pages on the site to ensure compliance with WCAG regulations that came into force in September. This resulted in a need to add alternative words to all pictures and some issues around how information is presented to enable screen readers and similar to be able to work correctly.

The next stage is to combine the two sites to enable the 'test' site to become the default and then remove the existing site. This is a time-consuming process which has not yet been completed. If possible, this will be delegated to an officer who has

sufficient time within their role, especially with the upcoming 'lock down' period which may free up some resource.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

No further expenditure is expected. £200 was spent on the accessibility audit, which was covered through delegated powers due to the need for compliance.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

It is likely that the combining of the two sites, removal of any out of date information and ensuring that information is current, up to date, formatted and branded correctly will take considerable time.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager