



13<sup>th</sup> July 2017

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| <b>Paper Title</b>         | Wellbeing, Health and Safety Update |
| <b>Paper Reference:</b>    | <b>NRW B B 39.17</b>                |
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| <b>Purpose of Paper:</b> | Scrutiny                                 |
| <b>Recommendation:</b>   | To note issues and progress made to date |

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|---|---|
| <p><b>Impact:</b> To note – all headings might not be applicable to the topic</p> | <p>How do the proposals in this paper help NRW achieve the Well-Being of Future Generations Act principles in terms of:</p> <p><b>Looking at the <u>long term</u>:</b></p> <p><b>Taking an <u>integrated</u> approach:</b></p> <p><b>Involving a <u>diversity</u> of the population:</b></p> <p><b>Working in a <u>collaborative</u> way:</b></p> <p><b><u>Preventing</u> issues from occurring:</b></p> <p>The NRW Roadmap describes how our success depends on the way we work together to create a better Wales. The roadmap sets out our vision and what we will do to deliver it. Through the work that we do and the way that we do it, NRW will make a positive contribution to improving the wellbeing, health and safety of our staff and customers across Wales. Our values mean that we will be both responsible and accountable for our actions and we will act to keep ourselves and others safe and well.</p> |
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## Issue

1. Wellbeing, Health and Safety (WHS) update for the People & Remuneration Committee.

## Background

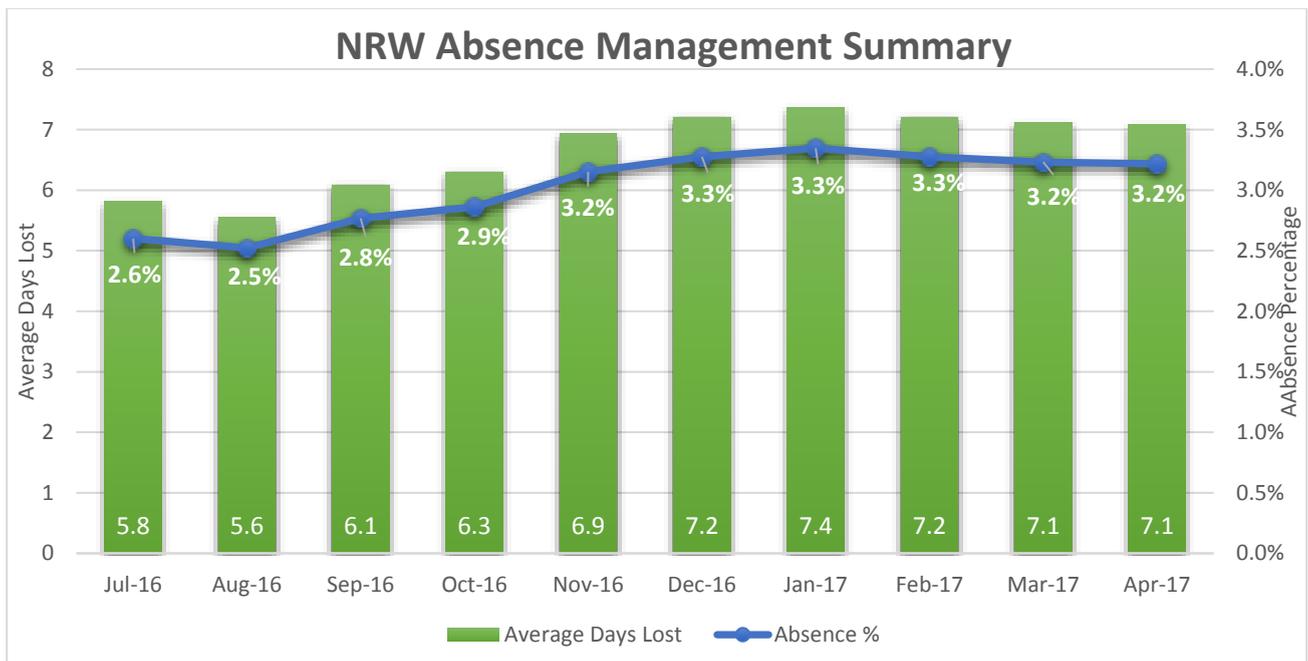
2. This briefing paper describes the headline issues and recent developments in relation to wellbeing, health and safety, providing an update, key headline statistics and interpretation plus a brief summary of progress made on specific issues.

## Assessment

### Wellbeing & health

#### **Sickness absence statistics for 2016/17**

3. From May 2016 to April 2017, the rolling year sickness absence rate is 7.1 days lost per employee per annum equating to 3.2%. The NRW benchmark is no more than 7 days lost per employee equating to 3.1%. Previous comparisons has shown NRW absence rates to be less with other public sector organisations in Wales and this continues to be the case. The table below shows the trend in absence by month since July 2016.



4. Mental health continues to be the top sickness absence reason for the year to date, with respiratory system, digestive system and musculoskeletal system and connective tissue being second, third and fourth respectively, these reasons accounting for 64.5% of total absence reported.

5. Our occupational health data is provided to us on a quarterly basis by our occupational health provider as specified within the terms of the contract. In the most recent quarter, our occupational health data indicates that 47% of our management referrals are related to mental health issues, a decrease from 55% in the previous quarter. 27% of those mental health related referrals are workplace stress related, a reduction from 37% in the previous quarter. Work related stressors are reported to be workload, organisational change and job evaluation outcome. Further detail for January to March inclusive is provided in the table below. Note that the data is indicative as mental health causes are not always the result of single stressors and that a combination of issues e.g. workplace and personal may be at play, and that our provider has identified where that is clearly the case i.e. multi-faceted stress reasons.

| Month    | Referrals | Mental health | Personal stress | Anxiety & depression | Workplace stress | Multi-faceted stress | Causes                      |
|----------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Jan 2017 | 11        | 4             | 1               | 1                    | 2                | 0                    | Org change & job evaluation |
| Feb 2017 | 11        | 6             | 1               | 3                    | 1                | 1                    | Workload & org change       |
| Mar 2017 | 10        | 5             | 1               | 2                    | 1                | 2                    | Workload                    |
| Totals   | 32        | 15            | 3               | 6                    | 4                | 3                    |                             |

6. Looking at currently available data for 2016-17 in the table below shows that the level of absence due to mental health with reference to the total number of days lost for all absence reasons. The data set is also split into long term and short term absence together with the separate number of absence incidences for mental health. The data suggests that more of our absence incidences due to mental health are short term as opposed to long term events. Our occupational health data for the same period indicates that where referral is sought issues such as work related stress due to excessive workload, change and poor leadership are identified as primary causes. However alone these are not necessarily the whole picture as other causes such as personal stress, anxiety and depression are also a cause, and more likely in combination with each other in many cases. Most recently our provider has confirmed a number of referrals where the stress cause is multi-faceted.

| <b>Absence 2016-17 – total days lost &amp; days lost due to mental health</b>  |                     |                           |                          |
|--|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | Days lost - absence | Days lost – mental health | Incidences–mental health |
| Total  | 13017               | 3292                      | 283                      |
| Short term   | 7156                | 718                       | 162                      |
| Long term  | 5861                | 2575                      | 121                      |
| Long term absence – an absence incidence of 21 days or more. Short term absence – an absence incidence of between 1 and 21 days. |                     |                           |                          |

## Wellbeing initiatives & developments

7. Analysis of mental health absence and management referrals for mental health to our occupational health provider indicates that staff showing signs of stress or actually suffering from stress are being referred for assessment and support. From January to March inclusive, some 94 incidences of recorded absence due to mental health issues, a similar number to

the previous quarter. 15 referrals were made for mental health issues in the same period, again similar in number to the previous quarter.

8. We continue to develop a much clearer picture of where we are in relation to absence and mental health, and are very much conscious of the need to manage these issues effectively where they are identified. We are actively working on measures to prevent and deal with mental health issues, recognising the potential impact on staff from issues such as job evaluation, business area reviews and organisational design. We are also re-enforcing the need for line managers to use the available tools to prevent and manage absence due to mental health e.g. referral to Occupational Health, use of the Employee Assistance Programme, especially long term absence episodes. Similarly we continue to raise awareness of the availability of the stress risk assessment for use with teams and individuals to actively manage potential stressors to help prevent short term absence and effectively manage existing issues before they manifest to longer term absence.

9. We have instigated and raised awareness on a number of initiatives to support our health and wellbeing commitment in NRW including:

- Diabetes Week
- Mens health week
- Cervical screening awareness week
- Rheumatoid arthritis awareness week
- Tourettes Syndrome Awareness day
- Mental health awareness week
- Wellbeing promotional newsletters from Care First – How to be more resilient and reduce your risk of stroke.
- Sun awareness week

10. All of these initiatives reminded and encouraged staff of how to look after themselves and their colleagues at work and outside of work. These initiatives have been brought to the attention of staff through our Intranet, Managers Monthly updates, Yammer pages and through engagement at local WHS Forums and team meetings.

## **Health & Safety**

**Headline accident and near miss statistics for 2017-18 as of 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 with 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 full year figures for comparison.**

|                                 | Incidents since last update | Incidents (2017-18 Year to date) | 2016-17 Full year | 2015-16 Full Year | 2014-15 Full year |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| RIDDOR – staff                  | 0                           | 2                                | 9                 | 12                | 0                 |
| Lost time incidents – staff     | 1                           | 1                                | 4                 | 8                 | 2                 |
| Incidents, no lost time - staff | 12                          | 13                               | 85                | 96                | 55                |
| Near miss – staff               | 26                          | 36                               | 232               | 304               | 131               |
| Serious incident reviews        | 0                           | 2                                | 9                 | 3                 | 4                 |
| Incidents - contractors         | 1                           | 2                                | 8                 | 6                 | 60                |
| Incidents – public              | 23                          | 35                               | 70                | 60                |                   |
| Near misses – contractors       | 8                           | 10                               | 62                | 88                | 98                |
| Near misses – public            | 3                           | 5                                | 27                | 76                |                   |

- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) incident is a particular type of incident that is required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)
- A lost time incident (LTI) is where a member of staff is injured during the course of their work and they have subsequently had time off or been on light duties as a result of their injuries (reportable under RIDDOR if over 7 days). Lost Time starts the first day after the person was injured.
- An incident with no lost time (Non-LTI) is where a member of staff is injured during the course of their work but only needed minor 1st aid treatment and subsequently have not had any time off work. Non-LTI's include property damage to NRW vehicles and equipment.
- A Near Miss is an unplanned or uncontrolled event that does not cause injury, ill health or damage, but could do so.
- Member of public injuries relate predominantly to mountain bike accidents on our purpose built trails, and slips, trips and falls on walking trails. Trails are risk assessed and routinely inspected periodically and are also inspected following an accident.
- Public near misses are predominately public incursions on to live harvesting sites.

## **Latest health & safety updates**

### **RIDDOR & Lost time incident updates**

11. There has been one employee lost time incident (5 days) during the period covered by this report. The injured person had been refuelling a tractor and had bent down to disconnect the power lead from the rear of the vehicle when he felt a sharp pain in his lower back and found it difficult to complete the task. The line manager has reviewed the incident. There have been other instances of the injured person reporting 'twinges' of back pain therefore the line manager plans to make a referral to Occupational Health.

### **Near miss updates**

12. Numbers of near miss reports for the period of this report are higher than in the same period for 2016/17. We are continuing to support line managers directly on reporting and investigating incidents and managing health and safety risks through campaigns and engagement. We anticipate that the launch of new directorate WHS forums will lead to an improvement in the quantity and quality of incident reports and we will monitor progress over the next few months.

### **Serious Incident Reviews**

13. Two existing serious incident reviews (no. 10 & 11 below) have been completed since the previous update. Further information and updates on those serious incident reviews are provided in the table below.

| No | Date                          | Description   | Location                     | Status   | Lessons learned   |
|----|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------|--|---|
| 10 | 7 <sup>th</sup> February 2017 | Whilst on a site visit an employee discovered and transported a piece of live ordnance. | Nant Gwynant, Snowdonia      | Review complete. Report in process of being finalised. | The focus will be on how to raise awareness of these devices with staff potentially through pictorial reference sheet flagged in the monthly health and safety bulletin, rather than further investigation.   |
| 11 | 21 <sup>st</sup> April 2017   | Forestry contractor sustained a broken leg  | Nanteos Mansion, Aberystwyth | Review complete. Report in process of being finalised. | Review identified competency issues for both NRW and the contractor. These included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organisational failure to provide technical training to staff in operational roles.</li> <li>2. Resource pressures have reduced capacity to identify and address operational risks.</li> </ul> |

## Current reviews

**14. (Update) Serious Incident Review (10) moving and transportation of live ordnance** – on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2017, a member of staff checking the effect of grazing goats on a tree re-growth area in Nant Gwynant found ordnance lying on the ground surface. The staff member took the device, unaware what it actually was and transported it in his work vehicle for several days. The ordnance, which was identified as mortar round, was eventually taken to Bangor police station and then later destroyed in a controlled explosion by a military ordnance disposal team. Completion of this review suggests that this incident was an isolated incident, as awareness generally of ordnance at known sites is good. Our relevant generic risk assessments cover ordnance as a hazard and a general awareness of ordnance will be raised through the Manager’s Monthly bulletin.

**15. (Update) Serious incident Review (11) accident involving a forestry contractor.** On 21<sup>st</sup> April at a direct production harvesting coupe at Nanteos Mansion, near Aberystwyth a chainsaw operator was hospitalised having sustained a broken left leg. The review of this incident is now complete and the report and recommendations are in the process of being finalised. Root causes identified and associated remedial actions, relate to competency issues for both NRW and the contractor; an organisational failure to ensure that staff supervising such operations have attended appropriate technical training or to ensure that such staff are supported by competent colleagues pending the delivery of such training; and, resource pressures have reduced the capacity to be able to identify and address operational risks.

## Other updates

**16. Accident involving Forestry Contractor at Cwmgerwyn, Dyfi** – On 25<sup>th</sup> May at a standing sale plus coupe just North East of Machynlleth, a forestry contractor sustained a broken femur (leg). Trees were being winched by skyline up a steep slope where they were being grabbed by the harvester for processing. One of the trees got away and slid back down the slope striking and injuring the contractor. On this occasion a Serious Incident Review

has not been commissioned because it is the responsibility of the Forest Works Manager (FWM) to monitor health and safety on the worksite. NRW are not FWM in relation to this coupe. NRW are therefore requiring the FWM to investigate the accident and provide a copy of their investigation report to NRW. NRW's own review of the incident is limited to ensuring that our landowner responsibilities have been fulfilled.

**17. MyNRW Managers H&S Module** – we have recently launched a module within MyNRW which for the first time gives line managers and their staff the ability to record and document key H&S actions and information to be able to demonstrate good management of health and safety risks. Managers will be able to record and review risk assessments with their team, record information such as PPE and H&S equipment issued, H&S training taken and active monitoring undertaken. Managers will be able to run reports for information and for scrutiny of performance. We will also be able to develop further indicators for our dashboard from information stored within MyNRW. The use of this module will be a mandatory requirement for line managers and teams and will replace the interim solutions in place following the loss of legacy systems for recording such information.

### **Recommendations**

18. Note issues and progress made to date.

### **Key risks**

19. Ongoing WHS risks identified and monitored through updated WHS risk register. No additional risks foreseen.

### **Financial Implications**

20. None foreseen. Investment in learning and development requirements for NRW included within 17/18 training budget. Possible future employer liability claims in relation to HAVS disease.

### **Equality impact assessment (EqIA)**

21. Not undertaken for this briefing paper.