

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 JANUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE INTERIM HEAD OF FINANCE

INCIDENT AND NEAR MISS REPORTING PROCEDURE

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a report of the incidents and near misses that were reported to the Insurance and Risk Officer in the 2019 calendar year for consideration.

2. Connections to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

2.1 This report assists in the achievement of the following corporate priority/priorities:

- Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible and support the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver the Council's priorities.

3. Background

3.1 Incident and near miss reporting is a key element of good risk management. When something goes wrong an investigation should take place to identify how and why this happened. This should lead to a change in practice to ensure that, where possible, it does not happen again. In this way, lessons can be learnt to reduce the risk of the Council failing to achieve its objectives.

3.2 The definition of an Incident and Near Miss is as follows:

- **Incident** – any event or circumstance that led to harm to the Council or other occurrence that could impact on the Council's ability to achieve its objectives.
- **Near Miss** - an incident that did not lead to harm, but could have done.

3.3 Examples of Incidents include but are not limited to:

- the Council becomes dependent on an outsourced contractor which suddenly ceases trading, leaving the Council unable to deliver certain functions e.g. provision of social care,
- the Council experiences a cyber-attack and key tasks such as the payment of benefits cannot be completed on time, and
- a deadline for the application of a grant is missed and a transport improvement scheme cannot proceed.

3.4 Examples of Near Misses include but not limited to:

- a care home experiences financial difficulties and the Council steps in to protect the welfare of vulnerable people,
- a misprint on a ballot paper is discovered just before an election and replacements have to be printed at the last moment,
- torrential rain is experienced and a school narrowly avoids being flooded, and
- vital data is lost but can be recovered from a backup.

3.5 The Council introduced an Incident and Near Miss Reporting Procedure which was presented to Audit Committee on 17 January 2019. A copy of the Incident & Near Miss Policy is attached at **Appendix A** for information. This procedure complements the existing Health and Safety Management System Procedure.

3.6 All employees have a responsibility to report incidents to their Line Manager and to contribute to any subsequent investigation and a report form is completed for all incidents and near misses (other than those relating to Health and Safety which follow a different process).

3.7 Incident or near miss occurrences are risk evaluated to determine the level of risk and the type of action needed to be taken to reduce or eliminate further risk.

3.8 Near miss reporting allows managers / supervisors to take corrective preventative action before a similar incident happens which could result in an injury or damage.

3.9 The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider a report of incidents and near misses on an annual basis and ensure that it is satisfied with the action taken to prevent reoccurrence. The Audit Committee will also receive a copy of the report on incidents and near misses on an annual basis to assist it in its governance function.

4. Current situation / proposal

4.1 Since January 2019 three 'Incidents and Near Miss' happenings have been reported. **Appendix B** provides details of these incidents. There were two **green** and one **amber** incident; there were no **red** incidents reported during the period.

4.2 The incident and Near Miss reporting procedure was publicised in a Bridgenders e-mail earlier in the year with a hyperlink to the procedure. It was presumed that Senior Management Team would disseminate the information in manager meetings to reinforce this new procedure. However, the number of incidents reported may not be an accurate reflection of the actual occurrence of incidents and near miss events as it seems not all managers are aware of this procedure.

4.3 The Corporate Management Board were asked to consider how the raising of staff awareness of this policy could best be achieved. One consideration to ensure this document reaches all staff is the development of a mandatory e-learning module, however development of such a module would take time and therefore a more immediate approach to information sharing is needed.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

5.1 None as a direct consequence of this report.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7. Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 Implications

7.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable impacts upon the achievement of well-being goals/objectives as a result of this report

8. Financial Implications

8.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with the Incident and Near Miss Reporting procedure. Actions planned to mitigate any risk identified will be progressed within approved budgets.

9. Recommendation

9.1 That Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the report of incidents and near misses at **Appendix B** to ensure that it is satisfied with the action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

9.2 Note that an annual report will be presented to the Committee for consideration.

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20 JANUARY 2020

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Background documents

None