

To: Member / Trades Unions Joint Consultation and Safety Panel
13th April 2005

Subject: Accident Report

From: Health & Safety Adviser

1. Purpose of the Report

to advise Members of the accidents to personnel during the period 16th September 2004 – 31st March 2005. Details of accidents during this period are set out below.

2. Accidents to Personnel

2.1 There was one accident requiring statutory notification in the review period.

A. Warwick Plant Maintenance.

One of the team of three comprising Warwick Plant Maintenance was working on a routine maintenance job, to install emergency lighting in the vicinity of the family changing room at one of the Council's leisure centres. In order to perform this task he used a set of swingback steps designed for work in relation to electrical maintenance.

He reported that whilst carrying out this task, for some uncertain reason he fell some 6' from the ladder steps, in a backwards direction. The position of his ladder, in the limited space that was his working area, resulted in him hitting the back of his head against a tile faced wall. The impact was somewhat reduced by the cushioning effect of clothing he had left whilst up the ladder. He also sustained other injuries to both hands, elbows, calves and fracture to bones in his feet. Despite these injuries he carried on working before going to hospital.

At Warwick Hospital an x-ray confirmed that metatarsals in both feet had been fractured. This prevented him from attending work for sometime. An investigation into the circumstances surrounding the accident was undertaken by the Safety Adviser to the Council as well as an Inspector from the Health & Safety Executive. Their findings as to the cause proved inconclusive. However a thorough overhaul and review of risk assessments relating to the activities of Warwick Plant Maintenance has been completed as a consequence.

2.2 There were 6 other accident notifications received during the same period which did not require statutory notification.

The details are as follows:

A. Leisure & Amenities.

A leisure attendant at Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre was stepping off the ledge of the jacuzzi when she slipped, landing on her hands thereby injuring her right wrist. At

the time of the incident she had been retrieving items from the Leisure Pool. Given the nature of the incident and the associated environment there appears little that could be. The member of staff did not require first – aid treatment, nor did she lose time from work.

B. Leisure & Amenities.

One of the Town Hall Porters was working with a colleague setting up in the Assembly Room in the Town Hall. They had already placed the components of the tower scaffolding in the Assembly Room, having left a scaffold ladder lying on the floor on its edge, adjacent to a table leg. It was whilst he was carrying a large banqueting roll with a colleague into the Assembly Room, that one of the Porters inadvertently walked into the upstanding scaffold letter, thereby gashing the lower part of his right leg.

Fortunately he required no first – aid treatment at the time of the incident, neither did he lose any time off work. The injured party felt that a lapse of concentration had brought about the incident and that no other actions were felt to be necessary.

C. Customer Services

A Benefits Assistant had walked into the Female Toilets on Level 1 in Riverside House. She found the floor extremely slippery, there being a suggestion that there had been an overspray of polish on the floor by the contract cleaners. Unfortunately she fell from the standing position on to the floor.

The fall resulted in internal bruising, muscular strain to her legs, back, neck, the back of her head, arms and shoulders. First – aid was offered but not required at the time of the incident. The injured party had two days off work after the event, one of which was planned leave.

Shortly after the above incident, another member of staff from the Document Management Centre entered the toilet area, only to slip upon the same floor surface. Her fall resulted in bruising to her right elbow and lower back. First – aid was administered, immediately post the event. No time was lost from work by the injured party.

The area was then isolated to prevent further use until such time as the floor surface could be dealt with to minimise the risk of slipping. The Contract Cleaning Supervisor was made aware of the two incidents and asked to consider an alternative method of cleaning, with prior warning to potential users that the area was temporarily inaccessible.

D. Leisure & Amenities.

A Leisure Attendant at Newbold Comyn Leisure Centre was pushing two boxes down the corridor of the leisure centre on his way to the bin cage, where refuse is usually stored. It appears that one of the boxes being pushed caught on the mat on the floor of the corridor. This action caused the member of staff to fall over the boxes and land on

the floor. It appears that this action caused the member of staff to break his left thumb. This was confirmed after a visit to Warwick Hospital. No time was lost from work by the employee concerned.

The method of removing rubbish in this manner is being reviewed.

E. Leisure & Amenities.

A Leisure Attendant at St. Nicholas Park Leisure Centre was placing some chairs into cupboard. He somehow caught his right arm on a piece of glass that had been left on a shelf. It appears that a framed picture had fallen off the wall. The debris picked up and placed by a third party on the shelf. The injured party sustained a 2" cut to his right arm. He self administered first – aid and did not lose time from work.

All pictures framed with glass fronts in the centre have been removed to allow for safer substitute material to be placed in them. The fixings on the walls and to the frame have been checked.

F. Leisure & Amenities.

One of the Town Hall Porters was in the Clock Tower at the Town Hall winding up the striker mechanism. This is a mechanical process involving the rotation of a handle, (resembling a starting handle), the effect of this is to tension a steel wire on a drum. A 'dog clutch' mechanism is designed into the system, in order to prevent the drum turning against the direction of winding. On one of the shafts, to the rear of the case containing the mechanism, is a threaded nut. It appears that for whatever reason the nut was not fully on the thread, the action of winding appears to have allowed the nut to come off the thread, thereby releasing the tensioned drum. Once this had happened the winding handle was free to rotate unchecked. The handle caught the forearm of the Town Hall Porter bringing about significant swelling. First –aid was administered at the time of the incident. The injured party did not lose time from work.

The Company responsible for maintaining the clock have been contacted to rectify the fault and install nuts which are self locking to prevent a recurrence.

3. VIOLENT & POTENTIALLY VIOLENT INCIDENTS

A. HOUSING BUSINESS UNIT

A member of staff working in Housing Reception was on duty when Mr A came in to deal with his housing application. He raised his voice in an aggressive manner suggesting that he would not leave until he had got what he wanted. He made demands of various members of staff within the Housing Unit. He made his way to the general reception of Riverside House, where he was equally as disruptive and very aggressive in his demeanour.

He appeared to calm down somewhat, nonetheless he was advised that the police would be called if he continued. The police were contacted, whereupon Mr. A left the building. He was frequent visitor to the building, being very difficult to manage

on most occasions. He has, however returned to Riverside House twice since this incident without causing any problems. His case was under review prior to rehousing. It is known that Mr A suffers from ASD. A decision to take no further action was decided upon.

B. HOUSING BUSINESS UNIT.

A receptionist in the Housing Business Unit was acting in a similar capacity to Incident 'A' referred to in this part of the report. Mr B was generally very aggressive, threatening and intimidating in his behaviour and language. He ripped the pen on the desk from its holder. The actions of this individual have been referred through the Council's designated officer to the Multi Agency Protection Panel (MAPP). Mr. A is already on the 'Sharing of Information Protocol' list. No further action was taken.

C. COMMUNITY RESOURCES.

A member of the Community Resources team received an apparently innocent phone call, which turned out be to highly offensive. The member of staff terminated the call and alerted the police. The police offered guidance and advice for dealing with such events. The member of staff had attempted to trace the incoming call, however this was programmed number with held. Additional support was offered to this employee.

4. RECOMMENDATION

The contents of this report be noted

Peter Coulls
Safety Advisor

Ref: Safety\Mach 9\mtujcsp March 2004