

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 7

meeting date: 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2018  
title: HEALTH AND SAFETY CLIMATE SURVEY UPDATE  
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES  
principal author: MICHELLE HAWORTH – PRINCIPAL POLICY AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report on the re-run Health and Safety Climate Survey for depot staff.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Community Objectives –
  - Corporate Priorities –
  - Other Considerations -
- Well informed, trained, happy, healthy, well managed and motivated employees are essential to the Council achieving its priorities.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The action plan developed following the 2015 Employee Survey included an action to undertake a survey to help identify the safety climate of the Council, in order to gather employees' views on the various aspects of safety.
- 1.2. The Health and Safety – Safety Climate survey 2015/16 was undertaken with employees across the authority. The aim of the survey was to determine the maturity of the council's safety culture.
- 1.3. The results from the survey showed that on the whole the authority had a positive safety climate in most areas, but that there was concern at the depot, seven areas had been identified where improvements could be made to achieve an overall positive safety culture.
- 1.4. These outcomes were reported to this Committee in May 2016 and members requested that a further survey be carried out at the depot in 2017 to see if any improvements had been made in the Health and Safety climate.

## 3 ISSUES

- 3.1 The Health and Safety – Safety Climate Survey report (Appendix A) provides the full details of the survey methodology, the findings of the survey and also identifies the areas for improvement.

## 4 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications
- Resources – None identified
  - Technical, Environmental and Legal – None compliance with Health and Safety Regulations could lead to accidents and injuries which could in turn result in personal injury claims, Health and Safety Executive intervention or, in very serious cases, criminal proceedings.
  - Political - None identified
  - Reputation – Non-compliance with Health and Safety regulations has an adverse impact on the Council's reputation.
  - Equality & Diversity - None identified

**5 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

5.1 Note the report.

5.2 Ask the Health and Safety Committee to consider the findings of the survey and develop a detailed action plan to improve and monitor the Health and Safety climate at the Depot.

**Michelle Haworth**  
PRINCIPAL POLICY AND  
PERFORMANCE OFFICER

**Jane Pearson**  
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

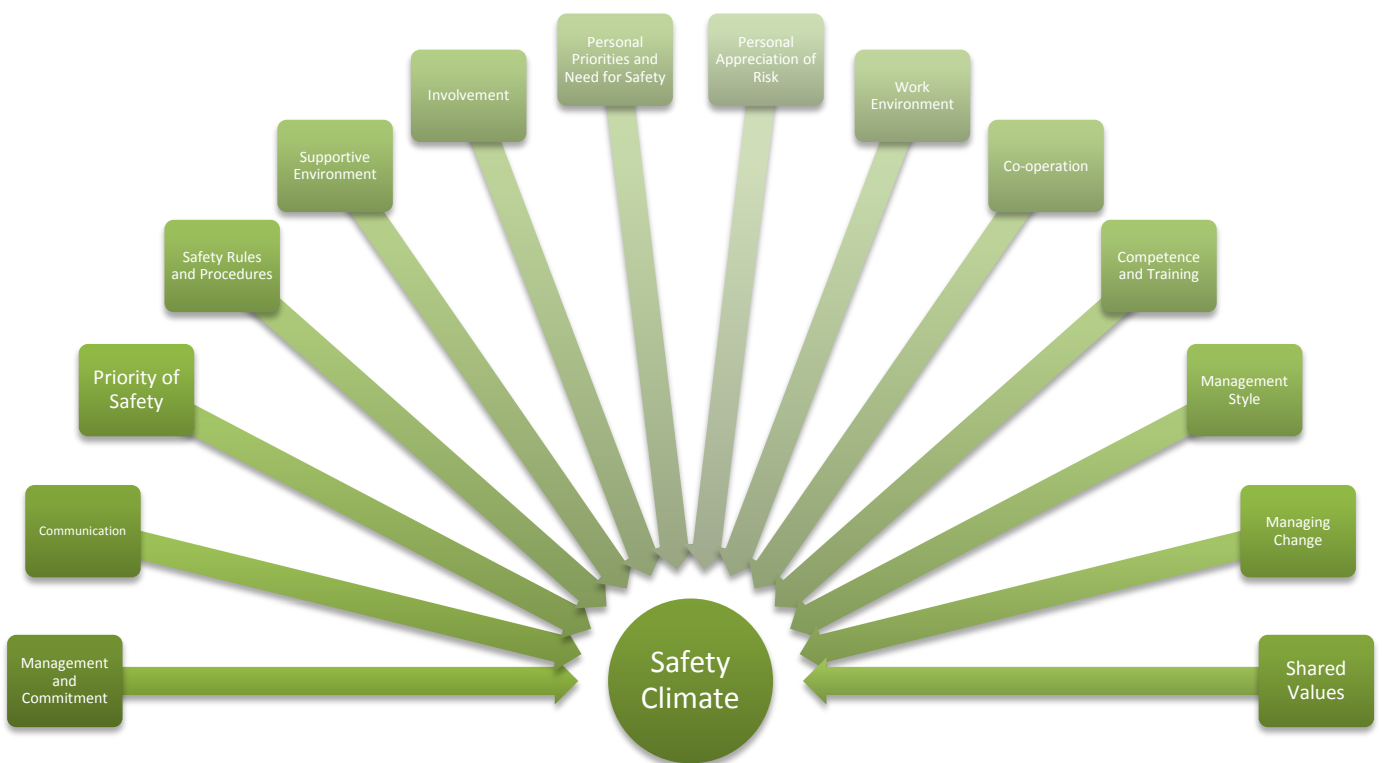
REF: Michelle Haworth/personnel committee/17 January 2018

For further information please ask for Michelle Haworth, extension 4421

# HEALTH AND SAFETY

## DEPOT

### SAFETY CLIMATE SURVEY 2017



Report: Phil Dodd and Michelle Haworth

December 2017



Ribble Valley  
Borough Council  
[www.ribblevalley.gov.uk](http://www.ribblevalley.gov.uk)

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Health and Safety – Safety Climate survey 2017 was undertaken with employees based at the depot. The aim of the survey was to determine the maturity of the council's safety culture.
- 1.2. 15 questionnaires were completed and returned from the Depot (out of a possible 58).
- 1.3. Following the toolkit guidance, and in addition to the longer questionnaire, a series of additional questions (Appendix B) were asked of a randomly selected handful of employees. 12 of these were completed at the Depot.
- 1.4. A positive safety climate is classed as a score above 6. On the whole the authority has a positive safety climate in most areas, but there are a few areas of concern.
- 1.5. At the Depot there are seven areas identified which could be improved in order to achieve an overall positive safety culture.

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. During 2015 (February/March) the Council undertook an Employee Survey. One statement in the 'Council as an Employer' section saw a drop in the level of agreement that the Council provides a safe and healthy work environment. This had fallen by 5 percentage points from the 2012 Employee survey to 69%. Community Services staff and those who 'did not wish to say' which directorate they work for were less likely to agree.
- 2.2. The Action Plan developed following the Employee Survey included an action to undertake a survey to help understand the safety climate of the Council in order to gather employees' views on the various aspects of safety. This was carried out in late 2015/2016.
- 2.3. Personnel Committee requested that a follow up survey be carried out at the depot to ascertain if there had been any improvements since the last survey.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

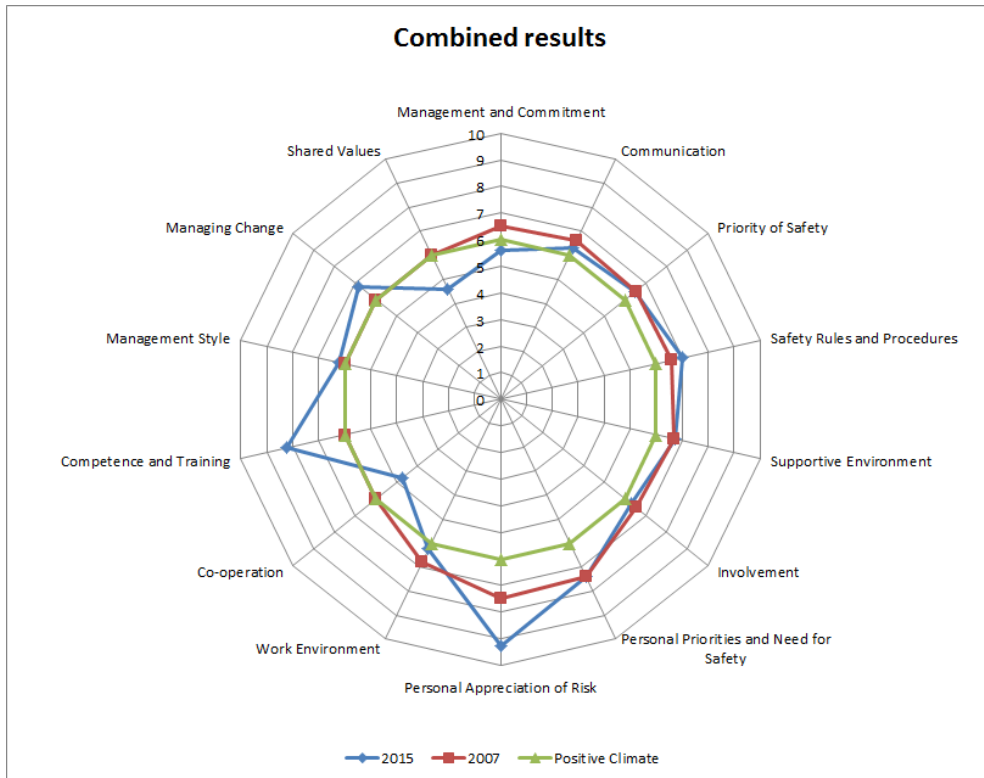
- 3.1. The Health and Safety Executive produced a Safety Climate toolkit to help organisations ascertain their safety climate and this was used by the Council in a similar survey exercise in 2007. The Safety Climate Tool is used and trusted by organisations of all sizes, and across all industry sectors.
- 3.2. The Safety Climate Tool gives a unique insight into the organisation's safety culture and provides an objective measure of the 'way things are done' in the organisation when it comes to health and safety, as the starting point for improvement.
- 3.3. The Principal Policy and Performance Officer was able to set up the survey and analysis spreadsheet by using the 'Safety Climate Measurement User Guide and Toolkit' as a guide.
- 3.4. Using a simple, online/paper questionnaire, the Safety Climate Tool explores employees' attitudes and perceptions in key areas of health and safety, while guaranteeing anonymity. The Tool then generates analysis in the form of charts.
- 3.5. The questionnaire is designed so that people can rate their responses to the statements on a 1 to 5 point scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. It is purposely designed to seek the views of all levels of the workforce so that their results can be compared.

- 3.6. Some statements are worded negatively so as not to 'lead' respondents towards one particular viewpoint. For example, "In my workplace management turn a blind eye to safety issues" and "Management acts only after accidents have occurred".
- 3.7. The survey (Appendix A) comprises 43 statements. These statements map onto one of 9 factors:
- Management and Commitment (Questions 9, 16, 19, 26, 33, and 42)
  - Communication (Questions 1, 10, 25, 28 and 31)
  - Priority of Safety (Questions 4, 5, 20, and 40)
  - Safety Rules and Procedures (Questions 17, 21 and 35)
  - Supportive Environment (Questions 3, 15, 22, 29, 32 and 41)
  - Involvement (Questions 8, 13, and 39)
  - Personal Priorities and Need for Safety (Questions 2, 11, 12, 23 and 36)
  - Personal Appreciation of Risk (Questions 6, 11, 12, 23 and 36)
  - Work Environment (Questions 7, 14, 27, 30, 37, and 43)
- 3.8. During October 2017 all Depot staff were encouraged to take part in the survey.
- 3.9. In total 15 questionnaires were returned. All of these responses were received as paper copies which had been placed in a ballot box left at the Depot. No other demographic information was collected.
- 3.10. Following the toolkit guidance, and in addition to the longer questionnaire, a series of additional questions (Appendix B) were asked of a randomly selected handful of employees. 12 were completed at the Depot. The responses mapped onto one of the following 5 factors:
- Co-operation
  - Competence and Training
  - Management Style
  - Managing Change
  - Shared Values

#### **4. COMPARISON OF RESULTS OVER TIME - 2015/2016**

- 4.1. A positive safety climate is classed as a score above 6 (marked on the charts in green).
- 4.2. For the purpose of identifying any issues relating to workplace the results were also split and analysed according to location i.e. Depot based or Office and other buildings.

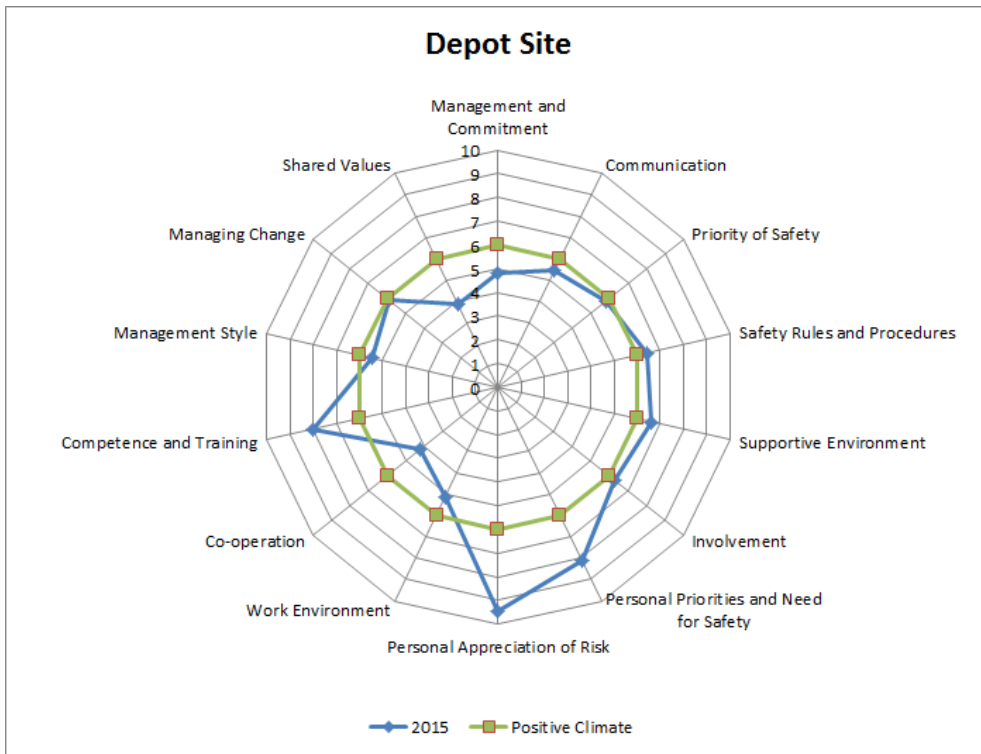
## Combined results



- 4.3. On the whole the authority had a positive safety climate in most areas, but as can be seen on the chart there were a few areas of concern. These being 'Co-operation', 'Shared Values' and 'Management and Commitment'.
- 4.4. We were also able to analyse the 2015/16 combined results (blue) and compare them to the 2007 survey results (Red). In most areas the results between the two surveys were very similar. However, there were some changes in the results – 'Personal Appreciation of Risk', 'Managing Change' and 'Competence and Training' received higher scores in 2015 than 2007. 'Management and Commitment', 'Shared Values' and 'Co-operation' received lower scores.

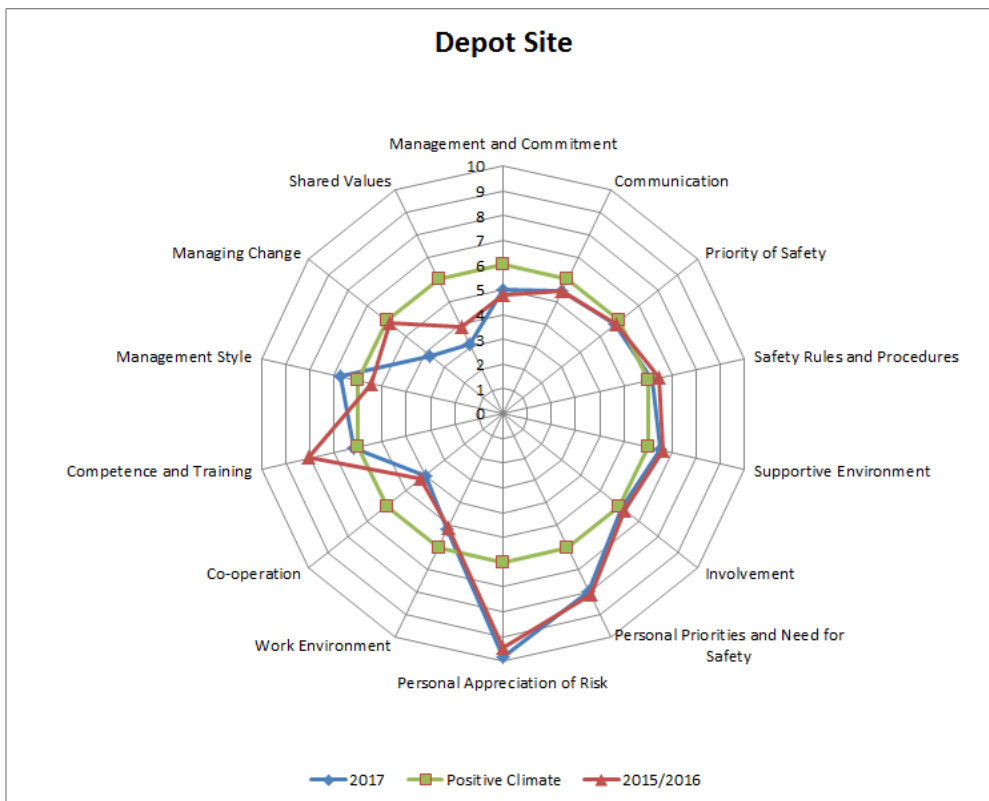
## Depot results

- 4.5. The 2007 the survey was not conducted in a way which allowed the results to be split to show place of work, so this analysis was not carried out and comparisons with the 2015/2016 results were not available.
- 4.6. There was a positive safety climate in some areas, however, many areas fall below the score of 6 – 'Management and Commitment', 'Communication', 'Priority of Safety', 'Work Environment', 'Co-operation', 'Management Style', 'Managing Change' and 'Shared Values'.








## 5. 2017 RESULTS

5.1. The chart below shows a comparison of the 2015/2016 survey results for the Depot with the 2017 results. As can be seen there has not been a lot of movement in the data.












## 6. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. At the Depot there are seven areas identified which could be improved in order to achieve an overall positive safety culture.

AREA	2016	2017		RECOMMENDATION
Cooperation	4.25	4.00		<p>As health and safety affects the entire workforce of an organisation, it makes sense for all workers to be involved in managing health and safety, this will in turn build ownership of safety at all levels</p> <p>This means involvement of the workforce beyond the required legal minimum standard (i.e. more than consultation), where a genuine management/workforce partnership is developed based on trust, respect and co-operation.</p> <p>Managers should participate in regular H&amp;S meetings with their staff and conduct regular safety inspections.</p>
Management Style	5.43	6.75		<p>Improvement here could be brought about by a further increase in visible commitment by managers along with improved communication and cooperation on safety and health issues thereby setting a good example.</p> <p>Lack of management training or understanding of good management practice is not only associated with low health and safety engagement, but it can also undermine initiatives for improvement.</p>
Shared Values	3.88	3.08		<p>This remains a particularly poor score for the Depot and may be tackled by the progression toward the appointment of appropriately trained observers/champions to assist with peer to peer monitoring, This has been proven to promote behavioural safety and changing attitudes, a support group to observe, commend and correct where required. An organisation's attitudes and values regarding safe working are important factors that influence its health and safety performance.</p> <p>Symptoms of poor culture can include widespread, routine procedural violations and failure to comply with the Health and Safety Management System.</p>
Communication	5.47	5.49		<p>To achieve success in health and safety management, there needs to be effective communication up, down and across the organisation. Organisations need to communicate information to their workers on the risk to their health and safety identified in their risk assessments, and the preventive and protective measures necessary to control risk.</p> <p>In a positive culture questions about Health and Safety should be part of everyday work conversations.</p> <p>Closer contact and positive reinforcement/praise for working safely by managers could improve this score considerably.</p>
Management and commitment	4.79	5.03		<p>The perceptions of management's overt commitment to Health and Safety issues.</p> <p>Senior management must visibly demonstrate support and allocate resources. Proactive and decisive action from managers and supervisors in resolving safety issues more efficiently is required.</p> <p>This commitment produces higher levels of motivation and concern for health and safety throughout the organisation.</p>

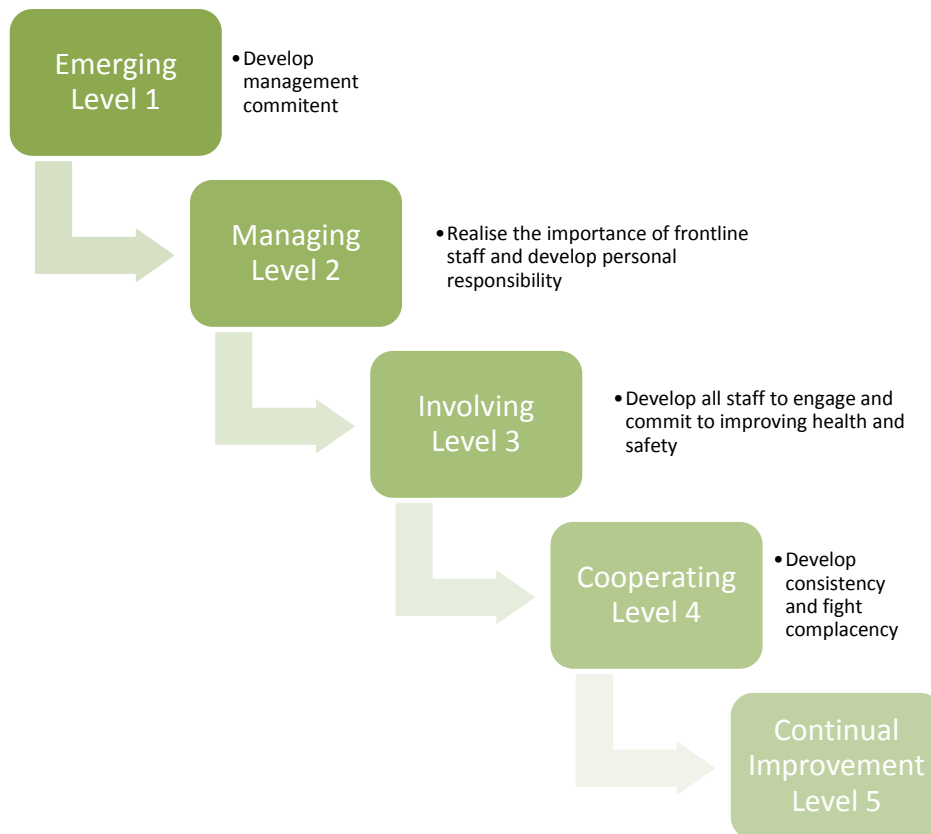


AREA	2016	2017		RECOMMENDATION
Work Environment	5.12	5.19		Safety climate may be used to describe the ways in which members of organisations make sense of the overall safety of their work environment. Including National Occupational Standards and H&S skills, knowledge and experience requirements in vacancy advertisements and job descriptions for all roles could greatly improve this score.
Priority of Safety	5.12	5.80		Describes the relative status of health and safety issues within the organisation. Improved behavioural safety through empowerment of staff, coaching training of observers/champions to encourage safe behaviour through peer to peer monitoring. Praise for effort and willingness to follow safe systems of work and closer involvement by managers.
Managing Change	5.87	3.75		Efficient management of changes in attitudes or unsafe behaviours must be improved if the overall culture is to be turned into a "positive". Do managers/supervisors/team leaders always confront unsafe acts? Leaders influence other people's behaviour, in this context the terms manager/supervisor/team leader are synonymous and as such are judged by what they do, not by what they say. As safety culture is best described as "the way we do things around here" effective leadership is essential.
Safety Rules and Procedures	6.44	6.18		Employees views on the efficacy and necessity of rules and procedures.
Supportive Environment	6.63	6.52		The nature of the social environment at work and the support employees derive from it.
Involvement	6.28	6.12		Probably the most important indicator of a positive safety culture is the extent to which employees are actively involved in safety on a daily basis. If there is little involvement, with safety solely dependent on the safety department it can be said that an organisation has failed to win people over to the safety effort.
Personal Priorities and Need for Safety	8.12	7.97		The individual's view of their own health and safety management and the need to feel safe.
Personal Appreciation of Risk	9.46	9.81		How employees view the risk associated with work.

AREA	2016	2017		RECOMMENDATION
Competence and Training	8.04	6.17		<p>This can be defined as the ability to undertake responsibilities and perform activities to a recognised standard on a regular basis. It is a combination of skills, experience and knowledge. The inadequate management of competence has not only contributed to disasters such as Esso Longford and BP Texas City, but also to fatalities, personal injuries and ill health.</p> <p>National Occupational Standards (NOS) are statements of the standards of performance individuals must achieve when carrying out functions in the workplace, together with specifications of the underpinning knowledge and understanding. These standards should be incorporated into all roles and responsibilities for existing employees and for recruitment of new employees.</p>

## 7. SAFETY CULTURE

- 7.1. The purpose of this Health and Safety Climate, or mood, Survey, is to gain a measurement of each component of the Culture, or personality, (perceptions and attitudes) of the council.
- 7.2. The 'Culture' of an organisation can be defined as 'the way we do things round here', and provides a context for action which binds together the different components of an organisational system. Within organisations with a strong culture nothing is too trivial or too much trouble and every effort is made by every member to ensure that all activities are carried out efficiently (doing things right), and effectively (doing the right things), with both workers and managers 'doing things properly'. An organisation's Culture impinges on and influences most aspects of work activity, affecting both individual and group behaviour at all levels in the workplace.
- 7.3. Probably the most important indicator of a positive safety culture is the extent to which employees are actively involved in safety on a daily basis. If there is little involvement, with safety solely dependent on the safety department it can be said that an organisation has failed to win people over to the safety effort and, therefore, they do not have a very good safety culture. However, where safety issues are identified and acted upon by all employees, including managers, as part of their normal working day, the organisation can be said to have won over people's hearts and minds to the safety cause, and therefore has a living, breathing, proactive safety culture.
- 7.4. The Safety Culture Maturity Model (shown below)



### The 5 levels of safety culture

7.5. Key features of each of the 5 levels of cultural maturity underpinning the model are given below:

Maturity Level	Key Features
Level 5 – Continually improving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The prevention of all injuries or harm to employees is a core company value.</li> <li>• The organisation has a sustained period (years) without a recordable accident or high potential incident – but there is no feeling of complacency.</li> <li>• The organisation uses a range of (leading and lagging) indicators to monitor performance but it is not performance driven – it has confidence in its safety processes.</li> <li>• The organisation strives to be better and find better hazard control approaches.</li> <li>• All employees share the belief that health and safety is a critical aspect of their job and accept that prevention of non-work injuries is important.</li> <li>• The company invests considerable effort in promoting health and safety at home.</li> </ul>

Maturity Level	Key Features
Level 4 - Cooperating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of staff are convinced that health and safety is important – from both a moral &amp; economic view point.</li> <li>• Management recognise that a wide range of factors lead to accidents – and the root causes are likely to stem from management decisions.</li> <li>• Front-line staff accept responsibility for their own and others' health and safety.</li> <li>• The importance of all employees feeling valued and treated fairly is recognised.</li> <li>• The organisation makes significant effort into proactive measures to prevent accidents.</li> <li>• Safety performance is actively monitored using all data available.</li> <li>• A healthy lifestyle is promoted and non-work accidents are also monitored.</li> </ul>
Level 3 – Involving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accident rates are low, but have reached a plateau.</li> <li>• Organisation realises employee involvement is essential for safety improvement.</li> <li>• Management recognise that a wide range of factors lead to accidents – often stemming from management decisions.</li> <li>• A significant proportion of front-line employees are willing to work with management to improve health and safety.</li> <li>• The majority of staff accept personal responsibility for their own health and safety.</li> <li>• Safety performance is actively monitored and the data used.</li> </ul>
Level 2 – Managing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety seen as a business risk and management time and effort devoted to accident prevention.</li> <li>• Safety focus is on adherence with rules, procedures and engineering controls.</li> <li>• Accidents seen as preventable.</li> <li>• Management perceive that the majority of accidents are solely due to the unsafe behaviour of front-line staff.</li> <li>• Safety performance measured with lagging indicators (e.g. injury rates).</li> <li>• Safety incentives based on reducing loss time incidents.</li> <li>• Senior managers only become involved in health and safety if accidents increase; punishment likely to be used.</li> <li>• Accident rates are near the industry sector average – but tend to have more serious accidents.</li> </ul>
Level 1 - Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety focus is on technical and procedural solutions and compliance with regulations.</li> <li>• Safety not seen as a key business risk.</li> <li>• Safety department perceived as being primarily responsible for safety.</li> <li>• Many accidents seen as unavoidable.</li> <li>• Most front line staff not interested in safety – only used as a lever on other issues.</li> </ul>

## 8. CONCLUSION AND 2017 ACTION PLAN

- 8.1. The average scores in the survey indicate that the Depot is in the upper quartile of level 3, Involving, in the maturity model.
- 8.2. The poorest score at the Depot, 3.08 in the Shared Values area; this area is a major component in the Safety Culture of an organisation and can be described as the collective

individual and work group responses (their values, beliefs and behaviours). There is clearly room for improvement here and this may be achieved by the appointment of appropriately trained champions to assist with peer to peer monitoring, this has been proven to promote behavioural safety and assist in changing attitudes.

- 8.3. Organisations with a blame culture have been described as those which: 'over-emphasise individual blame for human error, at the expense of correcting defective systems'. Blame allocates fault and responsibility to the individual making the error, rather than to the system, organisation or management process. Those investigating accidents and incidents should have a good understanding of the mechanism of human error in order to assess the degree of culpability and employees should feel that they are able to report issues or concerns without fear that they will be blamed or disciplined as a result of coming forward.
- 8.4. Cooperation is another area for improvement, cooperation means involvement of the workforce beyond the required legal minimum standard (i.e. more than consultation), where a genuine management/workforce partnership is based on trust, respect and cooperation. With such a partnership in place, a culture can evolve in which health and safety problems are jointly solved and in which concerns, ideas and solutions are freely shared and acted upon. As health and safety affects the entire workforce of an organisation, it makes sense for all workers to be involved in managing health and safety. Managers can promote cooperation by conducting regular safety inspections and holding regular Health and Safety meetings with their staff. The effect of workforce involvement is that operational practices and health and safety risk management are aligned for the benefit of all and with the co-operation of everyone.
- 8.5. Work Environment at the Depot scored 5.19. Some health and safety law describes the training, skills and experience that someone should have to be a competent person to perform a specific task in a particular industry or work environment. Information on the competence required for different industries and work activities can be found at the National Occupational Standards website. Competence can be described as the combination of training, skills, experience and knowledge that a person has and their ability to apply them to perform a task safely. Health and Safety skills and knowledge should be part of all job descriptions so that every director, manager and worker are able to recognise risks in operational activities and then apply the right measures to control and manage those risks. This can be achieved through accredited training such as IOSH Managing Safely.
- 8.6. Recommendations for improvement in other areas are identified in the relevant section of the analysis.

Phil Dodd

**Health and Safety Advisor**

Michelle Haworth

**Principal Policy and Performance Officer**