

Health and Safety Executive Senior Management Team Paper SMT/09/93			
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## HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

Senior Management Team

**The Future of the Better Together Workstream**

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Cleared by Geoffrey Podger on 19 August 2009

**Issue**

1. To consider the future direction of the better together workstream.

**Timing**

2. For review at the meeting.

**Recommendation**

3. SMT members are invited to consider the progress made and support the following actions:
  - i. Agree better...together team should continue to develop their work plan, using results from the People Survey later this year (Para 11);
  - ii. Agree additional activities/events to be developed/organised as listed at Para 12 (next steps);
  - iii. Consider the ideas for locally based activities and agree whether these and/or others should be developed (Para 13);
  - iv. Agree the better...together team should continue until end of March 2011 with a review in November/December 2010 to determine how any further work should be progressed (Para 14).
  - v. Agree the continuing governance arrangements once the How and Where We Work Programme (H&WWW) is formally closed (Para 15).
  - vi. Agree to commit the proposed costs for 2010/11 from HSE's budgets (Para 20).

**Background**

4. The Culture Workstream was set up in October 2007 as part of the HWWW Programme. A series of workshops with staff were held to determine the type of culture staff wanted from a single HQ and in August 2008, SMT agreed to the establishment of a small team to take forward further work. The better...together team was set up in October 2008 and established an action plan for tackling the following priority areas:
  - Visibility and engagement of senior staff
  - Clarifying how HSE hangs together
  - Better use of Redgrave Court
  - Improved information sharing, including who does what
  - More collaborative working
  - Cultural aspects of Management/Leadership issues [working with HR]

5. The key aim, developed from aims in the original H&WWW business case, has been “to develop a more collaborative organisation that routinely shares knowledge, best practice and successes”. This also features as a goal in HSE’s 2009/10 business plan. Annex 1 briefly summarises the events held and progress against the actions agreed by SMT last August.
6. Plans were also taken forward to re-vitalise the Redgrave Court Sports and Social Club, led by the HR Director. The club now has a new committee and has already taken forward a range of new activities (e.g. Christmas children’s party, helping deliver the Children in Need activities in Redgrave Court, various social outings) with many more planned.
7. Whilst the better...together work has been contributing towards some cultural improvements over the last few months, it is only one small aspect of the many factors which influence cultural change. The organisation has moved forward in a number of ways over the last 12 months through the H&WWW programme, the development of our single HQ, movement of senior staff into Redgrave Court, launch of the new Strategy, various organisational/structural changes, improved learning and development/leadership training provision, changes in the structure and management of SMT, other senior management changes etc. All of these should be contributing towards a more positive culture within HSE.

### **Argument**

8. To date, the work has been progressed as part of the H&WWW Programme, however as this is formally coming to an end in September, it is timely to take stock of progress to date and consider how the work should be taken forward in future. There were a number of emerging issues highlighted through the culture workshops last year and these provide a useful starting point for considering what more needs to be done. These are listed at Annex 2, together with a brief comment on progress.
9. There is evidence through staff feedback, both formal and informal, and engagement in the activities, that the work has made a positive difference and contributed towards achieving the key aim. However, cultural change requires time, typically at least 2 years and sometimes much more.
10. It is worth noting the degrees of difficulty the team have encountered in taking forward some of the work. Although the initiatives have had a largely positive response, anecdotal evidence shows there are still many cultural constraints to overcome. These range from a general lack of self-awareness, which feeds the comments of “it’s them, not us”, to difficulties in working through various organisational processes to get things done which results in some relatively simple tasks taking a significant amount of time to achieve.
11. It is, therefore, recommended that the better...together team should continue to develop and implement their work plan. The time is not yet right to subsume the various activities into “business as usual” within other existing Directorates. There is clearly more work that needs to be done and it would be useful to learn from the formal measurement of staff opinion via the People Survey, which HR will co-ordinate later this year. The results will help us assess progress and tailor further activities to address any more emerging issues. **Does the SMT agree?**

### **Next Steps**

12. It is recommended the better...together team should continue to develop the following events/activities – **Does SMT agree?**:
- i. Organise a second Band 1 conference, "the Strategy - one year on" in May/June 2010, providing an opportunity to review senior managers contribution to delivery of the Strategy.
  - ii. Facilitate more networking opportunities for Band 1s and SCS members and for Band 1s to network across the bandwidths in HSE by working with HR Directorate to arrange informal "buddying" between newly appointed Band 1s and SCS members.
  - iii. Continue to work closely with HR and CD to deliver activities that encourage personal responsibility, self-awareness and self-improvement.
  - iv. Continue to seek and adopt best practice by learning from other Government Departments. There are thriving cultural change programmes in place in a number of other departments (e.g. DWP and HMRC). The time is right to explore whether there are further lessons to be learned that could be applied within HSE.

13. Although some of the better...together activities and events have been focussed on the wider organisation (e.g. the HSE wide Band 1 conference, improvements to organisation charts and photographs on Who's Who), many have been focussed on our single HQ. Since the Band 1 conference and launch of the better...together intranet site in July more staff are now aware of the work and it would be helpful to widen the scope of the team's work to include some local events. The following are suggested as possibilities - **Does SMT have views on whether these should be taken forward and/or are there other ideas the team should be developing?:**

- i. Delivery of six informal coffee and cake events in various regional offices (to be held by September 2010). Sessions to include updates on internal and external communications, legal services and informal sessions with SMT members. These will build on the popularity of events in Redgrave Court.
- ii. Delivery of two regionally based and tailored versions of HSE Live, one to be held in the North and one in the South (by September 2010).
- iii. Organising six locally based "lunch with" sessions for groups of Band 1s with various SMT members (by September 2010).
- iv. Organising six locally based similar events between Band 1s and Band 2/3s (by Christmas 2010).

These events also need to be considered in the context of future SMT visits.

14. In order to achieve the work plan with the additional activities above, it is recommended that the better...together team should continue until the end of March 2011 with a review in November/December 2010 to determine how any further work should be progressed. This will allow time to consult with relevant Directorates to ensure some of the initiatives can continue, even when the better...together team has been disbanded. **Does SMT agree?**

### **Governance Arrangements**

15. Since October 2007, the work has been part of the H&WWW Programme, initially as the Culture workstream and more recently as the better...together

workstream. As the H&WWW Programme is coming to a formal conclusion it is recommended that the following new governance arrangements should apply:

- A small Working Group of the better...together Programme Director, and Directors of CD and HR (or their representatives) should continue to meet every 2/3 months to oversee progress with the work;
- The Programme Director should continue to report progress to the Chief Executive on a regular basis.

**Does SMT agree these new governance arrangements?**

**Consultation**

16. Heads of HR and Communications Directorates, PFPD and Paula Brown as TU representative have been consulted in putting this paper together.

**Presentation**

17. The team will continue to work with Communications Directorate to publicise our activities, engage Senior Managers, HSE staff and TUs in delivering our aims and to inform of progress.

**Costs and Benefits**

18. When SMT approved the continuing work on culture in August 2008 predicted costs were as follows:

Payroll Costs	Around 120K
Other Costs	Around 100K

Actual costs between October 2008 and September 09 are as follows:

Payroll costs	123K
Other costs	85K

Annex 3 details actual costs to September 09 together with forecast costs to March 2011. The figures do not include the opportunity costs of the activities.

**Benefits**

19. The team have started to tackle those emerging issues raised through staff consultation. Feedback from senior managers, anecdotal evidence and evaluation of the activities undertaken by the team suggests the work is starting to make a positive difference. The forthcoming people survey will provide a baseline to inform our future work plan, address further emerging issues and measure achievement of the key aims.

**Financial/resource Implications for HSE**

20. The workstream has been funded mostly through BSD's budget allocation. At this stage, no additional budgets are likely to be needed for the rest of the financial year. Communications Directorate have funded costs for the Communications Consultant and have indicated their willingness to continue to do so until March 2011. Staffing costs for 2010/11 can be met from BSD's indicative allocation for 2010/11. However, proposals for the remaining costs are not included in budgets for BSD.

**Are SMT willing to commit the proposed (£82K) “other” costs for 2010/11 from HSE’s budgets?**

**Environmental Implications**

21. None.

**Action**

22. The SMT members are invited to consider the progress made and agree to the continuation of the better...together workstream until end of March 2011, with a review in November/December 2010 to determine how any further work should be progressed.

## Better...together Workstream

### Review of events and activities 2008/09

	Event/Action	When	Comment
1.	Improving the use of Redgrave Court (Christmas tree, soft seating in "street" and Deli area, art work for the street)	Furniture provided in August and December 08	Furniture softens the look of the street and is used daily A piece of artwork is being developed with Communications Directorate showing HSE past, present and future. Aim to unveil in September 2009. Further artwork with a "Bootle" and "Community" theme is being considered.
2.	Coffee/Cake Events	Monthly since October 08	10 events held since Oct 08 99% positive feedback  Almost every event oversubscribed  Proactive suggestions from staff for future events
3.	Re-vitalising the sports and social club in HQ. Events included: Children in Need Panto, children's Christmas party, outings to the races, theatre, quizzes	November 08	New committee set up and revitalised thanks to Gaynor Coldrick.  Children's party was oversubscribed.  Good take up of organised events
4.	Christmas "thank you" events in Redgrave and the regions	11 Dec 09 (RC) Dec/Jan in Regions	Good attendance in Redgrave and staff appreciated the gesture.  Generally appreciated in the regions although a lack of enthusiasm from a minority of managers diluted the impact
5.	HSE Wide Band 1 Conference	11-12 May 2009	96 Band 1 attendees (75% of B1s in HSE)  90% felt this should be a regular (at least annual) event  Increased uptake in mentoring and management training following the event
6.	Working with HRD on improvements to E-HR Who's who. Better navigation and search facilities. Improved quality of information held and number of photographs displayed	July – September 09	Navigational improvements to be introduced by HRD. Good support from HR business partners to improve information quality. Small pockets of resistance at all grades to publishing photographs on E-HR.
7.	Improving accuracy of organisational charts by simplifying process	August 09	SMT support for new process.
8.	Launch of better...together intranet site to inform staff audience and encourage wider engagement in activities and events	July 09	Initial feedback from the regions suggests there is a willingness to engage.
9.	HSE Live Internal trade fair to inform staff about the work HSE does, encourage collaborative working and celebrate achievements.	14/15 October 09	Positive response and innovative ideas from directorates for the 35 exhibition stands booked. Strong evidence of cross-directorate collaboration in organising and delivering the event.

**Better...together Workstream**  
**Progress in Tackling Emerging Issues Arising From Culture Workshops in**  
**2008**

<b>Emerging Issues in August 2008 (from SMT 08/42)</b>		<b>Progress to date</b>
1.	There is very little confidence that senior management will act on any of the feedback from these workshops. Time and again, staff expressed their cynicism that anything would be done differently and cited many other initiatives where recommendations have not been followed through.	Senior Managers have taken action. There has been significant follow through. Setting up of the better...together workstream is an example of this.
2.	There are a significant number of communications issues to address (there is not enough face to face communication, silo working is prevalent, Who's Who directory incomplete, organisational structure not well understood, too many closed papers to the Board/SMT etc).	Work has commenced on many of these issues in partnership with HR and Communications Directorate. (Sally Sykes invited to comment) The Band 1 Conference and HSE Live are starting to tackle silo working, together with other organisational changes that have taken place over the last few months.
3.	The operations and policy divide is still a major barrier to effective working. It is unlikely to disappear simply by staff being co-located in Redgrave Court.	Recent organisational restructure will tackle this issue.
4.	HSE is poor at following up the many initiatives undertaken so some people quickly learn not to bother taking certain things forward (if they ignore them for long enough they stop being asked about them).	Senior Management have been proactive in tackling and following up issues.  The better...together team actively evaluate and follow-up on activities.
5.	HSE is still very much a Directorate based culture, rather than a corporate one. Loyalties tend to lie in sections, units, divisions and Directorates. Loyalty to HSE and commitment to the corporate strategy often comes further down the list;	Launch of the HSE Strategy and the recent organisational changes will promote the "one HSE" message.  Evidence that better...together activities have started to stimulate collaborative working across HSE
6.	There are a number of environmental issues concerning how we use Redgrave Court (not easy to find where staff sit, conference rooms have dual numbering system, the "street" not well used to showcase our work, communal area round the coffee shop has hard seating only and does not encourage more informal meetings).	Better...together have delivered several improvements including, commissioning artwork, soft seating, names and numbers on desks.
7.	There are a number of leadership issues (senior management are not sufficiently visible, SCS need to show a corporate commitment to change and improve, we need to show more open communication/ listening behaviours, we need to clarify HSE's overall purpose and ensure it is well understood at all layers);	HSE Strategy clarifies HSE's purpose. SAT teams are working on specific themes/actions. SCS are proactively working on visibility issues.  Coffee and cake events improve visibility of senior managers.  Further work needed on the "bigger picture" and clarifying how HSE hangs together which is being taken forward with Communications Directorate.

8.	There is a lot of pride in the work/achievements of HSE but staff feel we do not sufficiently showcase our work to our own staff and should take the opportunity to do more.	HSE Live will begin to tackle this issue.
9.	There is little awareness of the impact of the H&WWW Programme at and below probably Band 2 level in Redgrave Court.	H&WWW received significant publicity and the programme is due to close shortly.
10.	Some layers of senior management feel outside some of the communication loops e.g. there are no collective meetings of Band 1 managers beyond Directorate boundaries and many feel this creates a barrier to more effective working across traditional boundaries;	Band 1 conference helped in developing networking across the Band 1 community and in clarifying what band 1s and the SMT expect of each other.  Several actions to will be taken forward by the better...together team and SCS members to build on the initial success of the conference.
11.	HSE values were mentioned many times at most workshops with a general feeling that these work and are understood but need to be re-launched with firm commitment for the necessary behaviours attached to them.	SMT agreed in August '08 we would not re-launch the values (timing not right) but themes and behaviours have been promoted through various activities.

### Annex 3

#### Better...together workstream - Resource Summary

Cost of Better...together Workstream		10/08 – 09/09	09/09 - 03/10	04/10 - 03/11
<b>Staffing</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>£k</b>	<b>£k</b>
SCS Pay Band 1	0.3	34	17	35
Band 2	1	61	32	65
Band 5	1	28	14	30
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>		<b>123</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>Total Consultancy costs</b>		<b>61</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Other Costs:</b>				
Travel & Subsistence		1	1	2
Band 1 Conference		30		34
Thank You Events		8	9	10
HSE Live			14	
Xmas Tree		2	2	2
Soft Seating		40		
Regional Events			1	10
Coffee and Cake events		2	1	2
Regional events				
Networking events			1	2
Publicity material		2		
Commissioned artwork				20
<b>Estimated total other cost</b>		<b>85</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>82</b>

	Staff	Consultancy	Other	Total
<b>Estimated overall costs for 10/08 to 03/11</b>	<b>£316 k</b>	<b>£158 k</b>	<b>£196 k</b>	<b>£670 k</b>