

Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

To: **Environmental Services Committee**

NEW TO THE JOB VULNERABLE YOUNG PEOPLE

1st December 2015

For Information

1.0 Report to Committee

Linkage to Corporate Plan	
Strategic Priority	Accelerating Our Economy and Contributing to Prosperity
Objective	To advise members of an initiative aimed at reducing workplace accidents for inexperienced, vulnerable or young people who are new to the job.
Lead Officer	Bryan Edgar
Cost: (If applicable)	N/A

1.1 Background

The enforcement of health and safety at work in Northern Ireland is carried out jointly by the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) and District Councils. In February 2011 HSENI and the District Councils launched a joint strategy for the better regulation of health and safety at work in Northern Ireland. The strategy "Health and safety at work: protecting lives not stopping them", commits HSENI and district councils to work together to tackle the major causes of accidents and ill health in workplaces in Northern Ireland. A key goal of the strategy is to highlight the needs of vulnerable groups, including inexperienced and new recruits.

1.2 Details

In 2015/16 HSENI and district council will focus on the health and safety of new to the job employees. Young and inexperienced recruits who are new to a workplace are three times more likely to be killed or injured than their experienced workmates who have been there for a year or more.

The extra risk arises due to:

- lack of experience of working in a new industry or workplace
- lack of familiarity with the job and the work environment
- reluctance to raise concerns (or not knowing how to)
- eagerness to impress workmates and managers.

This means workers new to a role:

- may not recognise hazards as a potential source of danger
- may not understand 'obvious' rules for use of equipment
- may be unfamiliar with site layout - especially where site hazards may change from day to day
- may ignore warning signs and rules, or cut corners.

When inspectors visit workplaces as part of the initiative they will expect new and vulnerable workers to be considered in the risk assessment. There are a number of steps that businesses will need to take to protect new starters:

1. **Capability** - Assess new start's capability
2. **Induction** - Provide an appropriate Induction
3. **Control Measures** - Make sure control measures to protect against risk are up to date and are being properly used.
4. **Information** - Provide relevant information, instruction and training about the risks that new workers may be exposed to
5. **Supervision** - Make sure workers know how to raise concerns and supervisors are familiar with the possible problems due to unfamiliarity and inexperience.
6. **Check understanding** - Check workers have understood the information, instruction and training they need to work safely, and are acting on it, especially during the vital first days/weeks at work.

HSENI and district councils have set dedicated web pages which provides link to useful advice and guidance on New to the Job employees. The web site address is www.hseni.gov.uk/newtothejob

Environmental Health Officers in the Health and Safety Team will write to premises in advance of a visit to advise of the initiative and the steps the employer can take to protect their inexperienced workers. The initiative has been publicised in the local press and Council's website.