

# **Staff and Pensions Committee**

**13 September 2021**

## **Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Annual Review 2020/2021**

### **Recommendations**

1. That the Committee notes the achievements in relation to the services response to the COVID Pandemic. Highlights of these achievements are summarised in the annual review report.
2. That the Committee notes the ongoing work to develop a new health, safety and wellbeing delivery framework outlined in the annual review report
3. The committee notes and supports the development of our technology platforms to improve essential data collection as outlined in the annual review report.
4. The committee supports the key focus areas for 2021/2022 as set out in the annual review report.
5. That the Committee considers for future committee reports whether the need for the summary health & safety performance data is required to be included as part of this cover sheet, or whether the annual review report would be sufficient for the committee.

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to provide the Staff and Pensions Committee with an annual review for the management and performance of corporate health, safety and wellbeing. It outlines the health, safety and wellbeing activities from 1st April 2020 to the 31st March 2021 and the objectives proposed for 2021-2022.
- 1.2** Our workplaces and the way we work are continually changing, and this won't alter in the future. The emergence of the COVID pandemic in 2020 showed us that the way we work, and our people's expectations can change quickly and dramatically and what is truly achievable if we all work together.
- 1.3** With the emerging changes in the way we now work presenting new health & safety challenges it is more important than ever to continue to strengthen our safety culture. We have learnt through our successful staff check in surveys that continuous engagement and allowing people to be part of decision making for health, safety and wellbeing has had a positive outcome.
- 1.4** As we emerge out of the pandemic, we will continue to focus on working together to communicate, engage and empower all our people. Listening and understanding what our people want to support their involvement in improving

health & safety and wellbeing will be a core focus for 2021- 2022

**1.5** The annual health, safety and wellbeing review attached as Appendix 1 details the work that has taken place with regards to our people's occupational health, safety and wellbeing and outlines:

1. Our People Strategy Alignment
2. Health, Safety & Wellbeing Performance & Achievements 2020-2021
3. Our Performance Highlights Summary 2020-2021
4. Meeting our Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Challenges for 2021/2022
  - Working to our People Strategy Priorities
  - Development of a delivery framework that supports our safe & healthy culture
  - Importance of Measuring our Performance
  - Key Focus Areas for 2021-2022
5. Health and Safety Annual Data 2020-2021

## **2.0 Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing summary:**

This summary pulls out the main health & safety performance data contained in the annual report for consideration by the Committee.

- 2.1** The total number of recorded accidents and incidents during 2020/2021 decreased across all service levels. We believe this is a direct result of lockdown measures and people working from home.
- 2.2** The number of injuries or incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR requirements also decreased slightly but not by the amount expected with the pandemic lockdown measures and more people working from home.
- 2.3** Absence due to Musculoskeletal injuries have reduced for the 3rd consecutive year in a row from 19.6% (18/19) 17% (19/20) 15.7% (2020/2021). This may potential be due to the increased working from home during the pandemic.
- 2.4** Musculoskeletal Injuries still account for a mean average of 17.4% of reasons for sickness absence. Second highest reason for sickness absence after mental health. Currently we do not know why this figure is so high with the data available. With improved analytics on the way the Council records these absences, we expect to be better positioned to identify why and where these incidents are occurring and make recommendations on how the Council can reduce the number of work-related musculoskeletal absence numbers in 2021/2022
- 2.5** Corporately slips, trips and falls recorded have decreased by 82% to 31.82%. At this stage we believe this is due to the increased numbers of staff working from home rather than because of any H&S intervention programs or safety culture improvements delayed due to the Pandemic. With the proposed improvements in how we capture and record incident analytics we will be able to identify why and how these incidents are occurring to be able to make a positive impact on reducing this type of work-related incidents in 2021/2022
- 2.6** Schools recorded an increase in slips, trips, and falls from 2019/2020 by 78% and now accounts for 36.82% of recorded school incidents. We believe this increase is due to the increased work necessary to keep schools open during the

pandemic, resulting in a decrease in general safety awareness.

- 2.7** Personal Injuries sustained by the fire and rescue service decreased by 36% to account for 15.44% of all injuries recorded. This noticeable decrease could potential be the result of changes to working practices during the pandemic. However, it could also be because of the increased communications on the importance of reporting near misses, resulting in better awareness of hazards in the workplace. We will continue to monitor these figures post pandemic to review the effectiveness of the positive H&S communications ongoing to improve safety.

### **3.0 Conclusions**

- 3.1** 2020/2021 has been a successful year in terms of responding to the pandemic, maintaining critical services, and supporting all our people and the community through the global crisis.
- 3.2** Our focus for 2021/2022 is to continue to develop a delivery framework with consistent principles and measurable outcomes that engage and interact with our people to continuously improve our health & safety performance and reduce incidents and accidents.
- 3.3** The introduction of the new annual review approach that aligns together, for the first time, several HR&OD areas working to deliver the Our People Strategy. This will allow for Warwickshire to continue to tell its story in relation to Our People and our vision to make Warwickshire a great place to work where talented and diverse people are enabled to do their best.

### **Background Papers**

Appendix 1 - Our People focus on Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Review 2020/2021

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The report was not applicable to circulate to members prior to publication.