

Staff and Pensions Committee

12 September 2022

Our People - Focus on Corporate Health and Safety Annual Review 2021/2022

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Endorses the Annual Review;
2. Supports the Council's proposed Health and Safety key focus areas for 2022 / 2023 as set out in Section 3.0 and within the Our People – Focus on Corporate Health & Safety Annual Review 2021 / 2022.

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Annual Review shows that the Health and Safety Service has continued to operate successfully in the last 12 months, both during the Pandemic and now post Pandemic. The Council is now in a positive position and beginning to re-apply Health and Safety resources and focus attention on the wider health and safety ambitions.
- 1.2 There is still work to be completed if the Council wants to achieve a fully sustainable Health and Safety culture, particularly around improving data that will guide and support pro-active objectives to help reduce the number of personal injuries being sustained at work.
- 1.3 It is important to maintain focus on the Council's long-term objectives, which are to develop robust risk management standards that meet both legal regulations and approved UK and international standards for Health and Safety management. Management standards that produce the valuable data insights on risks and control measures that are required to ensure risks are always managed sensibly, appropriately, and proportionately. This work remains a core focus area for 2023.
- 1.4 The corporate Health and Safety Annual Review details the work that has taken place with regards to the Council's corporate Health and Safety objectives and outlines:
 - Corporate Health and Safety at a glance
 - Our People Strategy and Health & Safety Objective Alignment.
 - Service Achievements and Highlights

- Looking Back – Key Focus Areas for 2021-2022
- Looking Forward – Key Focus Areas for 2022-2023
- Conclusions
- Annual Insight Data
- Appendix A - Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service HS&W report 2021-2022

2.0 Corporate Health and Safety Summary

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Team is returning to pre-pandemic service levels, including scheduled face-to-face management of Health and Safety audits and workplace inspections, safety training sessions, DSE workplace assessments and support and guidance to teachers in Council schools.
- 2.2 Developing the Health and Safety Team's professional competence and knowledge is essential to maintaining the high levels of support and guidance given to the Council. This year, all the Health and Safety advisors completed lead auditor training and lead investigator training.
- 2.3 This year, for the first time, the Review includes high level data on the number of personal injuries sustained due to work-related incidents. As reporting technology and analytical data improves it will become more in-depth and allow the identification of trends and weakness for proactive measures to be implemented.
- 2.4 The Health and Safety Team is working with HROD colleagues in relation to the Council's sickness absence data (which is reported within the Leading Organisational Wellbeing report) in order to identify any proactive Health and Safety support that could help to reduce the absence figures (for example, help, support and guidance if any musculoskeletal absences are due to poor work posture or poor lifting practices).

Key Corporate Health and Safety Performance Data

- 2.5 There has been an increase in the total recorded incidents (excluding Schools and Operational Fire & Rescue data) from 155 recorded incidents in 2020-2021 to 194 incidents in 2021-2022. *(Definition: Accident/Incident which may or may not have resulted in an injury including work related ill health violent incident (verbal and physical), road traffic incident).*
- 2.6 The number of near misses (Corporate and Schools) reported and opportunities for intervention reports have dropped from 71 to 66 this year. Near miss reports are a clear indication that the organisation has a good Health and Safety culture, is aware of risks, and comfortable with reporting rather than ignoring them. It is important therefore that the Council monitors any changes in data to ensure that the Council is identifying emerging trends. *(Definition: Near miss, dangerous occurrence, outbreak of fire, environmental*

incident, and security / vandalism / property / equipment damage, that has the potential risk of harm to people on-site).

- 2.7 Of the 194 incidents recorded, 100 cases recorded that a personal injury had been sustained due to the incident. Slips, trips, and falls continue to be the top common identified cause for incidents in corporate settings, however the numbers of incidents have decreased on the previous years.
- 2.8 Of the 100 incidents resulting in personal injuries, 6 were of significant severity or resulted in a length of time absent from work which required the Council to report the incident to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under the RIDDOR (Reporting of Infections, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) regulations. RIDDOR figures have remained relatively static, dropping from 7 in 2020/21 to 6 in 2021/22.
- 2.9 Within Schools, there has been an increase in the number of incidents from 387 in 2020-2021 to 794 in 2021-2022. Whilst this is a significant increase, it should be noted that pre-pandemic levels were comparable to 2021-22 with 738 incidents recorded in 2019-2020. The number of RIDDOR reports for schools has increased from 6 in 2020/2021 to 16 in 2021/22. This, in part, may be due to the lifting of COVID restrictions and increasing numbers of people re-entering educational settings, however it is also an increase on pre-pandemic figures for 2019-2020 which indicate that there were 10 RIDDOR incidents.
- 2.10 The Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service Health and Safety Annual Review report is included as Appendix A. This contains areas of Health and Safety that are specific to the Fire and Rescue Service and its Health and Safety Business Plan for 2022/2023.

3.0 Looking Forward – Key Focus Areas for 2022-2023

- 3.1 The Council will continue to develop the core cultural values that define the Council's principles for managing Health and Safety.
- 3.2 The Council will continue building Health and Safety management systems to meet ISO international standards and comparative Health and Safety management systems.
- 3.3 The Council will continue to gather better performance data to enable the Council to benchmark performance with comparators. Benchmarking the Council's performance with public sector comparators will be essential to measuring the Council's success and setting the Council's own achievable measurable targets. Working with professional peers across similar size councils, the Health and Safety Team will continue to review ways this can be continually improved.
- 3.4 The Council will set and measure corporate and directorate Health and Safety targets.

- 3.5 The Council will continue to develop and test ways to share performance data and look at new opportunities to communicate and engage with all our people on where the Council is, relative to where the Council wants to be.
- 3.6 Working with partners across the Council, the Health and Safety Team will continue to explore new communication channels for Health and Safety information and align with the Council's Wellbeing Agenda.
- 3.7 The Council will continue to promote communication and engagement channels that encourage all our people to speak openly and honestly on Health and Safety matters.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The Health and Safety Service continues to develop the Council's approach to the management of Health and Safety, focusing on the longer-term objectives of developing a Health and Safety culture which is supported by an appropriate management framework which emphasises communication and empowerment, technological innovations to support greater data, and improving the Council's risk assurance and resilience.

5.0 Financial Implications

None.

6.0 Environmental Implications

None.

7.0 Supporting Information

None.

8.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

Not Applicable.

Appendices

1. OUR PEOPLE – Focus on Corporate Health and Safety Annual Review 2021/2022, including Appendix A - Warwickshire Fire & Rescue Service HS&W report 2021/2022

Background Papers

1. OUR PEOPLE - Focus on Corporate Health, Safety & Wellbeing Annual Review 2020/2021

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

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