

Staff and Pensions Committee

11 September 2023

Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Annual Review 2022/2023

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Endorses the Corporate Occupational Health and Safety Review 2022/23 as set out at Appendix 1.
2. Considers the performance information in relation to the Council's management of Health and Safety.
3. Considers the work in our approach to the management of Health and Safety and supports the key focus areas for 2023/2024 set out in section 4.0.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Annual Review attached as Appendix 1 details the work that has taken place over the last 12 months with regards to the Corporate Occupational Health and Safety and outlines:
 - a) The achievements in 2022/23.
 - b) The long term objectives progress updates and the key focus areas for 2023/2024 to take forward to support our approach to the management of Health and Safety.
 - c) Health and Safety performance data for 2022/23.
- 1.2 This report pulls out the main themes from the annual review for consideration by the Committee.

2.0 Corporate Occupational Health and Safety: at a glance:

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Team continues to develop the Council's approach to the management of Health and Safety, focusing on the longer-term objectives

of embedding a robust health and safety culture, supported by an appropriate Health and Safety Management System to ensure that the Council maintains high standards of Health and Safety compliance to legislation.

2.2 The past year has seen many great service achievements, including:

- The safe relocation of Westgate primary school following the immediate closure of the school due to unsafe structural conditions.
- Specific training sessions provided to the Adult Social Care and Children and Families services to meet the Council's Health and Safety mandatory training requirements.
- Creation of bespoke online video training for manual handling awareness for the Library Service to effectively manage their manual handling requirements.
- Establishment of a monthly training schedule (as a result of customer feedback) to guarantee that mandatory training requirements can be fulfilled.
- Leading the tendering process for the Occupational Health (OH) and the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) services.

2.3 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 the Health and Safety Team completed:

- Health and Safety Executive training in the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) practical assessment and control.
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessor training.
- Train the Trainer training to deliver Health and Safety courses.
- Consortium Local Education Authorities Provision of Science Services (CLEAPSS) which included auditing Design & Technology and Food Technology department training.
- Health and Safety Executive mental health focused training.
- Mental Health first aid courses.
- Health and Safety professional network events at the NEC Birmingham as well as the required Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) career professional development.

2.4 The Council's aspirational objective is to consistently strive towards a vision zero approach to work-related injuries and causes of ill health. The quality and accuracy of the data plays a crucial role in identifying areas of increased risk, which are reported to each Directorate in their quarterly performance reports.

2.5 Based on the available performance data we have no significant concerns regarding accident/incident reporting. The number of Reporting of Infections, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) incidents remains low and in line with pre-pandemic levels. Whilst there has been an increase in the number of corporate incidents reported this can be linked to the focus of DLTs on Health and Safety through the quarterly reporting process. We have also seen an increased emphasis on near miss reporting which is a positive indicator in terms of developing a positive health and safety culture. Slips, Trips and Falls continue to be the main cause of injury in relation to work related accidents/incidents and the Team continues to work with DLTs to minimise these.

3.0 Corporate Health and Safety Performance Data

3.1 The Health and Safety Team has successfully completed the analysis of the available data to provide the below insights on the Council's overall annual Health and Safety performance.

3.2 There was a slight increase in RIDDOR incidents this year, which are now comparative to pre-pandemic numbers, with 7 of the 149 corporate incidents requiring a formal legal notification to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under RIDDOR regulations. All RIDDOR incidents are investigated as serious events jointly by the Health and Safety Team and the manager responsible. All resulting root causes of serious events have been identified and control measures implemented.

3.3 RIDDOR incidents in schools saw a decrease from 16 in 2021/22 to 7 this year which is a positive step towards reducing these further in the coming year.

3.4 All injury incidents are reported to the relevant line managers/schools for investigation and the implementation of actions and recommendations are monitored to prevent similar incidents recurring.

3.5 The number of near misses recorded (Corporate and Schools) show a positive increase from 66 in 2021-2022 to 171 this year, which is comparative to pre-pandemic records. The Health and Safety Team has been communicating the benefits of near miss reporting throughout the year and this has seen a positive increase in near miss reporting, indicating that the organisation is improving in its safety culture and staff are becoming more comfortable with reporting hazards rather than ignoring them. It is important

therefore that we continue to monitor any changes in this positive data to ensure we are identifying emerging trends.

- 3.6 There has been a slight increase in the total recorded accidents and incidents (excluding schools) from 194 incidents in 2021-2022 to 219 this year.
- 3.7 Of the 219 corporate incidents recorded on the Council's current database, 149 reported a personal injury resulting from a work placed incident (84 FTE employees and 65 non-employees).
- 3.8 In the school setting, there was a slight decrease in the total number of recorded accidents and incidents from 794 in 2021-22 to 721 this year. Out of the 721 school incidents recorded, 678 reported a personal injury resulting from a work placed incident (318 FTE employees and 360 non-employees).
- 3.9 Incidents involving Slips, Trips, and Falls in the workplace continue to be the top identified cause for injuries in the corporate workplace. Corporate records show a 31% increase from 48 reported in 2021-2022 to 63 reported in 2022-23. The data indicates that the numbers of Slips, Trips and Falls is still higher than would be desirable (working on an aspirational zero incident level), as previously the increased levels may be down to increased reporting but also to continuing increased use of Council buildings. The work to improve risk awareness through learning continues and the number of incidents of this type will continue to be monitored and reported accordingly to the Directorate teams on a quarterly basis for action.
- 3.10 Incidents involving violence to school staff from pupils continues to be the top identified cause for injuries in the school setting with 202 incidents recorded. Schools continue to record high numbers of incidents of violence against staff compared to the rest of the organisation, with the numbers remaining high over the last 3 years (excluding pandemic lockdowns between 2020-2021). All incidents were reported to the relevant line managers to investigate if further control measures could be successfully implemented to help reduce this number.
- 3.11 Health and Safety claim payments for 2022-2023 totaled £207,000 with a further £923,000 payments estimated as outstanding. (*Claim payments in 2022-2023 may include claims submitted in previous years*).

Definitions:

RIDDOR: Reporting of Infections, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

Accidents / Incidents: Are unplanned events that result in the injury or ill health of an employee or a member of the public or have enough significant risk to merit recording and investigation.

Near Miss: Any event that could have resulted in injury, damage or loss but did not on this occasion but could in the future.

4.0 Looking Forward – Key Focus Areas for 2023-2024

- 4.1 Embed the new Corporate Health and Safety Commitment Statement at all levels of the Council.
- 4.2 Improve awareness of Health & Safety roles, responsibilities, and accountability of all employees in line with the changing working environments, through existing and new communication channels.
- 4.3 Ensure that Health and Safety performance is openly discussed at Quarterly Directorate leadership meetings.
- 4.4 Continue to develop ISO 45001 as the Council's standard for Occupational Health and Safety and take an integrated systems approach pulling in the most relevant and useful elements of international standards that add value to the Council.
- 4.5 Ensure that the Council can demonstrate that it meets Occupational Health and Safety standards and that all significant risks are recorded on a Corporate Health and Safety Risk Register with control measures that are sufficiently in line with legislation.
- 4.6 The Council will set a schedule of compliance audits and workplace inspections focused on identifying significant risks and opportunities for improvements with each Directorate and set annual Health and Safety objectives.
- 4.7 The Council will continue to develop the quality of Health and Safety data to provide each Directorate with improved visibility of health and safety

performance and clearer insights into inspections, actions and remediations as part of their Quarterly Health and Safety Performance reports.

4.8 Making use of existing channels of communication, the Council will regularly communicate Health and Safety information that is beneficial and appropriate for employees to remain healthy and safe.

4.9 Develop customer feedback and reporting channels to encourage increased reporting on matters of Health and Safety.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 The focus areas for 2023-2024 outline the work that will be undertaken as part of the Council's wider objectives to build a safe and healthy workforce and build a safety culture that is committed to safety and safer outcomes. This includes improving the Council's systems for managing Health and Safety so that everyone understands what they need to do to stay healthy and safe. We will also aim to enable greater discussion of health and safety which in turn will have a positive impact on the key performance indicator figures, such as numbers of accidents/incidents and near misses.

6.0 Financial Implications

None

7.0 Environmental Implications

None

8.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

Not Applicable

Appendix

Appendix 1 - Focus on Occupational Health & Safety Annual Review 2022/2023

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact details
Report Authors	Gary Summerfield, Health & Safety Technical Specialist Marina Fraser-Ryan, Delivery Lead People Relations	garysummerfield@warwickshire.gov.uk marinafraserryan@warwickshire.gov.uk
Director	Craig Cusack, Director of Enabling Services	craigcusack@warwickshire.gov.uk
Executive Director	Rob Powell, Executive Director for Resources	robpowell@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation	Councillor Yousef Dahmash	yousefdahmash@warwickshire.gov.uk