

Staff and Pensions Committee

8 June 2020

Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2019 - 20

Recommendation

That the Staff and Pensions Committee considers and comments on the report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This is the annual Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service (WFRS) Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report for the year ending March 2020. The report covers performance against several key Health, Safety and Wellbeing indicators and measures and identifies any emerging themes.
- 1.2 WFRS continues to have a dedicated Senior Health and Safety Advisor and Watch Manager (operational) to provide guidance, advice and support to all departments and managers; this reflects the unique and high risk activity of the Service. The competent advice, provided by the department ensures the service is legally compliant and that managers at all levels are aware of their corporate and individual responsibilities, along with any potential areas of vulnerability. WFRS work closely with their five regional fire partners to share learning and best practice to improve health, safety and wellbeing standards across the region. Warwickshire County Council as the Fire Authority has a statutory duty to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of their employees so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.3 The main requirements which the Service must meet are set out in several complementary pieces of legislation and guidance which include: -
- 1.4 **The Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004**
The Act states that Fire Authorities must make provision for dealing with fires, road traffic accidents and other emergencies and identifies the need for adequately trained and equipped personnel.

1.5 Fire and Rescue National Framework for England

Reviewed in May 2018, this framework places a duty on Fire and Rescue Authorities to take into account the health, safety and wellbeing principles set out by the National Fire Chiefs Council. The framework identifies that Fire and Rescue Authorities have an important role in helping to ensure their firefighters remain fit and are supported in remaining in employment.

1.6 The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974

This applies to the Fire Authority as to any other employer, but it is more complex in its application to an emergency service.

In addition, there are multiple pieces of operational guidance which set out expected best practice which the Service must comply with or demonstrate good reason why it is not complying. These cover virtually every aspect of fire and rescue operations from firefighting and breathing apparatus operations through to water rescue, incident command and multi-agency response to terrorist incidents. This guidance includes:

1.7 National Operational Guidance (NOG)

NOG is continues to be an essential guide to the safe systems of work needed at an incident and is aimed at policy writers in each fire and rescue service, to support them in producing local guidance, policy and procedures. The guidance provides details of specific hazards and effective control measures, which will support a fire and rescue service to deliver an effective, assertive and safe incident command structure.

WFRS has established a small team, working in close co-operation with training staff, to adopt and incorporate NOG guidance into the service. This involves reviewing all our existing policies and, wherever possible, bringing the service into line with national guidance. At the end of 2019 a member of this team was appointed to a secondment to join the national NOG team, to provide an input and influence the national guidance content.

It is important to note that NOG applies equally to all fire and rescue services, ranging from the large metropolitans to smaller shires. Each service is required to assess how best and to what extent the national guidance can be applied locally with the resources available. Whilst WFRS always strives to align itself with national guidance this is not always possible; in such cases the WFRS NOG policy team will record the reasons for divergence and they will be agreed at an appropriate level within the service.

1.8 The Health and Safety Framework for the Operational Environment

This Framework which was produced by DCLG in June 2013 continues to assist Fire and Rescue Authorities in balancing risks, specifically in their wider role to protect the public and property, while meeting their health and safety at work duties to protect their staff and others. The Framework also focuses on the operational and training environments that are unique to firefighters and does not replace or replicate other health and safety guidance that applies to more routine activities.

1.9 The Operational Environment and the need for Realistic Training

It should be understood that, for the purposes of the legislation cited above, the incident ground is our “workplace” and we are responsible for the safety of our personnel and anybody else on the incident ground once we are on scene and in charge. It is also worth highlighting that any action taken in these circumstances

normally involves accepting a level of risk that would not be seen as “reasonable” in a normal workplace.

This combination of limited information and the expectation to act quickly in a dynamic, hazardous environment explains why the Service puts such emphasis on realistic operational training and the broader “safe person concept” promoted within a good health and safety culture.

WFRS are now developing a distributed training model. The planning application has been approved for the Kingsbury site. The building work required has gone out to tender, dates/timings for work to commence will be governed by the current lockdown. Once completed this will provide WFRS with a bespoke training facility and provided extensive training for:

- Breathing Apparatus
- Working at Height
- Water Rescue

In the interim the above training will be carried out at approved external venues.

2.0 Purpose and Scope of this Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Staff and Pensions with an annual position statement of the management and performance of Health, Safety and Wellbeing within WFRS. It summarises the key Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) activities from 1st April 2019 to the 31st March 2020.
- 2.2 Please note this report does not include any information or data related to the rest of Warwickshire County Council (WCC).
- 2.3 In WFRS, the Health and Safety and Occupational Health functions are two separate departments each with their own manager. The overall management is provided by the Senior Health and Safety Advisor and the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Manger, who both report to the Area Manager responsible for Continuous Improvement and Change within WFRS.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 The information within the report relates to WFRS employees and activities for which we have statutory HSW responsibilities.

4.0 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Communication and Consultation

WFRS HSW information is presented and communicated routinely at the Health,

Safety and Wellbeing Committee Meeting held every 6 weeks. This statutory meeting is chaired by the Assistant Chief Fire Officer. Members of the recognised representative bodies (FBU, FOA, FRSA and UNISON) are invited to attend. This allows timely sharing and discussion of HSW related information and encourages early positive action to be taken in response to identified concerns by all parties.

4.1 Fee for Intervention (FFI)

Under the Health and Safety (Fees) Regulations 2012, those who break health and safety law are liable for the recovery of the HSE's related costs. The current fee is charged at £129.00 per hour if the HSE deem an employer to be in 'material breach' of Health and Safety legislation. To date, WFRS have not received any FFI charges.

4.2 National Fire and Rescue Service Significant Adverse Events

A Staffordshire FRS firefighter was left with "life-changing" injuries after an incident during a working at height rope training exercise at the end of September 2019. The HSE have been informed and a full independent investigation is being carried out by Derbyshire FRS.

On September 17th a firefighter from Mid and West Wales FRS died during a water rescue training exercise. They died when the boat he was on collided with another in the Cleddau Estuary in Pembrokeshire. A full investigation is being carried out by the Marine Accident Investigation Team. The latest update on this fatality is that Police are in the process of presenting their case to the CPS and looking to file for gross negligence and manslaughter to individuals and the corporate body.

As with all significant national adverse events WFRS will act on information, when it is made available.

4.3 Legislation Updates / Regulatory Interventions

The RIDDOR Regulations have recently been temporary amended to include the reporting procedures for COVID -19: -

RIDDOR reporting of COVID-19

You must only make a report under RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) when:

- an unintended incident at work has led to someone's possible or actual exposure to coronavirus. This must be reported as a dangerous occurrence.

or

- a worker has been diagnosed as having COVID 19 and there is reasonable evidence that it was caused by exposure at work. This must be reported as a case of disease.

There were no regulatory interventions affecting WFRS during this quarter.

5.0 Key Areas of Health and Safety Improvement in WFRS

It is very encouraging to report that health and safety continues to be integrated into a wide range of WFRS activities. During 2019/20 the areas include:

5.1 WFRS 'Hospital to Home' Service

The Health and Safety Department continues to assist with the planning and delivery of this well received service which is now embedded within the Service.

5.2 Analytical Risk Assessments (ARAs)

To improve health and safety during operational incidents ARAs are required. Once a dynamic risk assessment has been carried out and a tactical plan established, a more detailed assessment needs to be undertaken and recorded. To ensure officers are competent with this process, the health and safety Watch Manager has facilitated several training courses for level one and two supervisory officers who will then cascade this training down to their crews.

5.3 Control of Post Fire Contaminants

Nationally the above is still high on the NFCC Agenda

WFRS is continuing to implement good working practices, awareness and education, which includes:

- Four additional sets of PPE were provided to Breathing Apparatus Instructors (BAIs).
- The 'Standards of Dress Service' Order was reviewed and reinstated the parade process at the start of each shift to ensure all PPE is clean and in good condition.
- The Technical department carried out research and purchased effective wipes for personnel and equipment, to ensure 'basic' contamination and personal hygiene procedures could be carried out at the scene
- WFRS led on a regional poster/awareness campaign to promote the health and well-being of operational personnel, posters were supplied and displayed in the relevant stations/workplaces.
- Additional flash hoods provided to all crews.
- Nitrile gloves provided along with guidance for the decontaminations process.
- Face fit testing was carried out and personal issue P3 half mask respirators provided.
- PPE Bags provided for officers' cars and stations to be used on cover moves, red disposable bags also provided to ensure PPE is safely stored and transported.

- As part of the last PPE procurement process individuals were issued with 2 sets of PPE, to ensure effective laundering can take place.
- Occupational Health provide education regarding this potential risk to individuals during their health assessments.
- A CBT lecture package has been produced to educate the importance of 'post fire' hygiene.
- A new draft clean cab policy has been produced

One of the most recent effective control measures which has been procured by WFRS is an autoclave, which is planned to be ready for use in May this year. This sterilising unit which can house 4 BA sets at one time, will ensure a deep clean is carried out as part of the annual service. The unit will also be used after incidents as part of the decontamination process.

5.4 New Emergency Response Vehicles

The new Magirus M32 turntable ladder has been specifically designed and built to meet the needs of the service to help make Warwickshire communities safer. The vehicle has a 16-tonne chassis and has the added function of an independent rear wheel steer, which will permit good access and manoeuvrability within areas that have not been accessible to a WFRS aerial appliance before.

Following the tragic Grenfell Towers incident on 14 June 2017. This new aerial appliance, which is not only quick to deploy can also reach heights of up to 32 metres, which can the 13th floor of a tower block. There is one high rise in Warwickshire which has 15 floors, crews will deal with a fire at this property by gaining access to the 13th floor and putting in a jet up to the 15th floor. All of which will increase our ability to rescue people and fight fires in high rise properties.

The Health and Safety, Watch Manager has been actively involved with all stakeholders involved with this new appliance, to ensure legal compliance is met and suitable and sufficient policies, procedures and risk assessments are produced, along with quality assurance of all aspects of training, instruction and supervision.

The new appliance has now been in service since November 2019 and is based centrally at Leamington Fire Station, to ensure an effective response to high rise dwellings throughout Warwickshire as identified in the WFRS Integrated Risk Management Plan. The vehicle can also be deployed anywhere in Warwickshire for various incident types.

Health and Safety have also supported the replacement type 'B' project to identify the type of emergency vehicles are required as part of the continuous replacement schedule. The key health and safety considerations for these vehicles included,

effective stowage of equipment to reduce manual handling injuries, effective control of diesel emissions eg Euro 6 compliant and safe access and egress to vehicles. The outcome of the project is the Service has ordered twelve 15 tonne Volvo diesel appliances to be phased in over the next 5 years.

5.5 Officers Lease Cars

It is positive to report that the project to roll out officers' lease cars which started in 2018 is now complete for Group Managers and Station Managers.

5.6 Health and Safety Training

The following training was successfully undertaken this year by several relevant personnel:

- FRS bespoke 'IOSH Managing Safely'.
- NEBOSH General Certificate.

5.7 Health and Safety Inspections/Audits

A risk based programme of inspections is in place across all WFRS sites. These identify the physical workplace hazards and identify required actions for the responsible person to remedy. In 2019/20 most of these workplace inspections were undertaken as planned and the appropriate remedial actions were put in place.

This inspection process continues to work extremely well with the support of the Facilities Support Manager from WCC Enabling Services.

Please note a small number of inspections were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these will be rescheduled in as soon as working practices allow.

Regional Health and Safety Peer Review Audits

As part of the West Midlands Regional Health and Safety Business plan, peer review audits are carried out every 3 years. In April 2019 WFRS assisted with the peer review of West Midlands Fire Service. WFRS were also audited during this reporting period. The 3-day audit focused on the following areas:

- Breathing Apparatus
- Working at Height
- Slips, trips and falls

A comprehensive report was produced in January 2019 by the lead auditor from Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.

The identified areas of good practice included:

- Staff were aware of their working at height limitations from the level of training provided.
- Training planner available for all operational training to guide competency and

compliance.

- An effective debrief process/system in place.
- An effective adverse event reporting system/process in place.
- Working at height equipment seen during the audit had been procured and upgraded well within the life expectancy of the equipment.
- Suitable evidence was found to suggest that operational learning was being embedded within the organisation.
- Evidence was provided to the audit team to demonstrate repairs and equipment periodic servicing is in place to support the high level of confidence in the BA equipment.
- BA competency framework in place.
- Housekeeping on stations was very good with fixtures and fittings in good condition.
- Annual workplace inspections are carried out.
- All personnel were aware of the arrangements for gritting and adverse weather arrangements and referred to the risk assessments for this.

The recommendations from the report include:

- To provide a periodic download of information to supervisory managers to confirm BA checks are completed to the required standard and frequency.
- Review the Working at Height Policy.
- Review equipment manuals.
- Review the working at height training on stations to include risk assessments.
- Review the process in place for the equipment testing records.
- Produce and implement a quarterly health and safety check list for stations/workplaces.
- Review the safety shoes worn by operational crews.

A recommendations action plan has been produced; the work to implement these will be monitored by Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.

The next review was planned to take place at the end of April 2020 at Shropshire Fire and Rescue Service, the audit was being led by the WFRS Senior Health and Safety Advisor. However, due to COVID-19 this audit has been postponed and rearranged for April 2021.

This peer review audit process is extremely useful and allows for the sharing of good health and safety practice within the West Midlands Region.

5.8 **HMICFRS Inspection**

Preparations and work for the next inspection were underway including meetings with the health and safety team, however due to COVID-19 this

inspection was postponed.

5.9 WFRS Health and Safety Practitioners Group

This group continues to work effectively, the members include both uniformed and non-uniformed managers who are NEBOSH qualified and represent departments of the Service. The group is chaired and managed by the H&S Watch Manager and overseen by the Senior Health and Safety Advisor. The Practitioner's roles and responsibilities support the service and their individual departments as well as promoting good/best health and safety practices throughout the service. This year the work carried out by the group includes:

- a review on station gyms
- the production of risk assessments for stations/workplaces during adverse weather conditions
- the potential use of virtual reality equipment for health and safety training
- a review and production of new health and safety computer based training packages
- completion of risk assessments on stations to control diesel emissions, and the implementation of improvements
- continuous improvements to control the potential exposure to contaminants

5.10 Performance against last year's Health and Safety Departmental Plan

The H&S Department has continued to make every effort to carry out the work streams included in the departmental plan.

Since early March, priorities have changed due to COVID-19 pandemic. On the 13/03/2020 the Local Resilience Forum aware notified that WFRS were implementing Business Continuity Plans (BCP) due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

On initiation of the BCP, a Business Continuity Co-ordination Team (BCCT) was established to co-ordinate initial pre-planning, combined with considered action based on Government guidance to address the immediate risks to staff, and protect the essential services WFRS provide.

A great deal of work has been carried out developing new work areas supporting the NHS and the most vulnerable within our communities. These activities include, delivery of provisions/medication to vulnerable persons shielding, body recovery, delivery of PPE to local trusts and an increase in the use of the Hospital to Home function. In addition to this the Health and Safety Department have been proactive in producing risk assessments for activities agreed with the representative bodies as part of the tripartite agreement.

This work to some extent redesigned how the service works, and how we do it. Due to the fast pace of the pandemic the business continuity team had to establish future working practises and planning for risks and impacts over the short, medium and long term into the recovery period.

Facilitating this included establishing and updating a Covid-19 risk register. The aim of the risk register was to provide an overview of the risks posed by Covid-19, our control measures through existing pre-planning documents such as Business Impact Assessments (BIA's) for all departments, Business Continuity Plans (BCP's) currently in place along with the production of new and reviewing of existing risk assessments, and providing guidance to ensure the wellbeing of our staff and compliance with Health and Safety legislation.

From a business continuity perspective, the risk register has built a record of the measures taken by the service and assisted in evidencing the need for any change of approach to senior managers. It has also helped senior officers to formulate a plan covering the time frames, risk critical elements and priorities to keep the service working effectively both now and after the pandemic in the 'new normal'.

The Health and Safety team have been and are working alongside the BCCT to identify recovery of prioritised functions, tailoring our approach to the current situation whilst minimising the impacts for the future.

The main responsibility of the Health and Safety team during this time, is to ensure that service health and safety policies and procedures are adhered to. The team have been actively involved in working with managers and Rep Bodies, to produce risk assessments, to ensure the risks are identified are adequately controlled for the new activities which WFRS are carrying out to support the communities of Warwickshire.

Whilst the risk register is currently the BCCT's focus, we plan to keep liaising with departments to develop and strengthen their BIA's and resulting Business Continuity Plans as appropriate. Where BCP's don't currently exist, or don't fit the current situation, the risk register will also help in developing these documents and will evidence a suitable approach by analysing the impacts of the current situation and planning a prioritised response to recovery.

6.0 Health and Safety Monitoring/Performance Data

Accidents/Incidents (Adverse Events) Statistics – Trend Analysis

	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020
Dangerous Occurrence	1	0	1
Major Injuries	0	0	0
RIDDOR Injuries (over 7 days)	4	2	2
Near Misses	43	49	46
Personnel Injury	34	30	33

Vehicle Incident	29	23	32
Violence and Aggression	6	7	7

It is encouraging to report the number of personal injuries although slightly up this year with 33 reported, the numbers have remained constant over the last 3 years. All incidents have been investigated and where required improvements made. There were no significant trends identified.

A total of 32 vehicle incidents were reported, which is a significant increase of 9 compared to last year. Following investigation, it was identified that 10 of these incidents were caused by 'non fault' of WFRS drivers.

There was no increase in the number of violence and aggression incidents reported. The Health and Safety Department liaised with the WFRS Arson Reduction/Community Fire Safety Team and arranged for bespoke violence and aggression/diffuser training course; this training was very well received. In addition to this body worn cameras are also utilised when attending incidents in known 'hot spots' Positive support continues to be provided by the service ASBIT Team and the positive intervention of Warwickshire Police.

The number of near misses reported again although a slight decrease has remained constant over the last 3 years. The health and safety department continue to raise awareness and educate personnel in the benefits of near miss reporting.

6.1 The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR)

It is encouraging to report for the last 3 years they have been no 'major injuries' reported.

One 'dangerous occurrence was reported this year, relating to a 'distress to wearer'. An investigation has been carried out with no fault found relating to the BA set, which was independently inspected by Staffordshire Fire & Rescue qualified BA technicians. At the time of writing this report the final report and findings are currently in draft format.

It's positive to report no increase in the number of 'over 7-day injuries. Two incidents were reported, both were investigated and where required improvements were made. In total 39 working days were lost as a result of these incidents.

6.2 Common Identified Causes

Causes	2017/18		2018/2019		2019/2020	
	Half Year	Year End	Half Year	Year End	Half Year	Year End
Personal Injury	19	30	13	30	20	33
Manual Handling	6	6	1	2	6	6

Slips, Trips & Falls	2	4	0	6	2	6
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	0	9	4	4	6	6
Hit something fixed or stationary	2	2	3	3	3	6
Burns - Operational		2	0	0	0	1
Burns - Training	0	0	1	3	1	1
RIDDOR Major Accidents	0	0	0	0	0	0
RIDDOR Over 7 Day Accidents	3	4	1	2	2	2
RIDDOR Dangerous Occurrences	0	1	0	0	0	1
Near Misses/Hits	20	43	41	49	19	46
Acts of aggression to Operational Staff	1	6	5	6	5	7
Acts of aggression to Non-Operational Staff	0	0	0	1	0	0
No. Employees	453	462	458	426	458	441

A total of 5 adverse events were reported under the other category.

The manual handling, hit by moving, flying or falling objects and hit by something fixed or stationary incidents have increased this year, all of which resulted in minor injuries. All incidents were investigated which identified no trends.

7.0 Occupational Health Departmental Update 2019/2020

7.1 Overview

The main service priority for Occupational Health is to ensure all staff are physically and psychologically fit to effectively undertake their roles and responsibilities. The department provides a range of health screening services, along with the provision of health and wellbeing advice and training. Another priority is to ensure staff who have been absent from work are supported during their return to work and where necessary, sickness absence is robustly managed.

7.2 Staffing Model and Establishment

- Occupational Health and Wellbeing Manager – 30 hours per week
- Occupational Health Advisor – 25 hours per week
- Service Medical Advisor – 4 hours per week
- Occupational Health/Health and Safety Administrator – 24 hours
- Service Fitness Advisor – Ad-hoc hours to meet service needs

The Occupational Health Advisor's work continues to see an increase in the number of statutory asbestos screenings and follow up appointments after three yearly

medicals, this ensures minor issues are noted are rectified.

New initiatives have included the establishment of a Wellbeing Peer Support service. The team has been trained in mental health awareness and active listening skills. The team was launched in April 2019, along with a refresh of the Trauma Support Team. Both teams will be instrumental in raising awareness in respect of the impact of critical incidents and wellbeing education.

8.0 Occupational Health Statistics

Counselling and Psychotherapy Activity – 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

During the above period there were 29 new referrals, 13 of which were returning clients with new presenting issues. In total, 413 formally contracted counselling/psychotherapy sessions have been provided. This figure does not include one off appointments, or people who just needed a safe and neutral space to talk through a current issue without therapeutic intervention.

The Annual Client Profile for the above-mentioned period

Total of 56 Clients – 42 Uniformed and 14 Non-Uniformed

Male – 38 and Female - 18

Presenting Issue	Total No. of cases	Work Related	Personal	Combination	Comments
Depression	14	1	4	9	All cases clinically assessed using CORE 3 cases suicide risk
Anxiety – General	12	2	5	5	1 case relating to impact of menopause 1 case severe OCD
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	10	4	4	2	3 cases Atherstone on Stour related 1 case high suicide risk
Relationships	7		5	2	
Low Mood	4	1	1	2	
Addiction/Self-Harm	3		3		
Bereavement/Loss	3		3		

Terminal Illness/Cancer	3		2	1	
Totals	56	8	27	21	

Client Profile and Presenting Issues as of 31 March 2020.

Total of 28 ongoing clients - **22** Uniformed and **6** Non-Uniformed

Male - **18** and Female - **10**

Presenting Issue	Total No. of cases	Work Related	Personal	Combination	Comments
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)	7	4	2	1	3 cases Atherstone on Stour related
Anxiety - General	5		3	2	
Depression	5			5	All cases clinically assessed using CORE
Relationships	4		4		
Addiction/Self Harm	2		1	1	
Low Mood	2	1	1		
Terminal Illness/ Cancer	2		2		
Bereavement/Loss	1		1		
Totals	28	5	14	9	

Statistics for period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020

Service Medical Advisor Activity

Type of Appointment	Number Undertaken	Comments
Clinical Reviews	103	To monitor progress and phased return to work plans
Referrals	58	64% Musculoskeletal
LGV Medicals	57	100% pass rate
Asbestos Screenings	40	No issues arising from exposure to Asbestos were noted.
New Recruit Medicals (RDS and WT)	37	1 individual did not pass the Chester Step Test 2 Individuals Red/Green Colour Blind

Other Contracts (Coventry Airport)	1	100% pass rate
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Occupational Health Advisor

Type of Appointment	Number Undertaken	Comments
3 Yearly Medicals	74	All medicals are up to date
Follow-ups and sickness absence reviews	47	It is now easier to complete these reviews as the department have full access to Your HR sickness records.
LGV Medicals	57	100% pass rate
BAI Medicals	17	6 monthly routine now established.
New Recruit Medicals (On-Call and WT)	37	1 individual did not pass the Chester Step Test 2 Individuals Red/Green Colour Blind
Other Contracts (Coventry Airport)	1	100% pass rate

Failed to Attend Appointments

Person with whom appointment was missed	Number of missed appointments	Comments
Service Medical Advisor	1	This represents a 83.5% decrease in missed appointments
Occupational Health Advisor	5	71% decrease

It is very positive to note the large decrease in missed appointments.

Private Treatment Referrals and Flu Vaccinations

Type of Appointment	Number Undertaken	Cost to WFRS	Comments
Physiotherapy	88	£3,894	Combination of upper and lower limb disorders 5 Cases required surgery A majority remained at work or on light duties
Private Scans (MRI, CT etc.)	2	£795	2 MRI/CAT scans with follow-up consultations.
External Counselling/Mentoring	23	£1666	Unable to be treated by WFRS counsellor due to ethical boundaries.
Eye Protection	17	£1924	17 provisions of safety glasses and BA inserts where appropriate
Other Consultants	4	£942	Second opinions required.
Podiatry Assessments	6	£288	When PPE is causing issues for wearer
Dyslexia Assessments	2	£500	
Flu Vaccinations	50	£340	

Annual Fitness Testing

In line with previous years, the fitness testing has been completed with 10 people unable to take the annual test due to injury, long term sickness or maternity. Overall 312 have been completed and passed, which equates to a 97% pass rate.

General update on new activities during 2019/20

Wellbeing Ambassadors – A new team of over 20 volunteers who have been trained in Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness and Active Listening Skills are now available for initial peer support and signposting for their colleagues. Some of the team have been trained in suicide awareness and prevention and a package of suicide awareness training is proposed for all crews and teams during 2020/21. The posters and awareness campaign commenced in March 2020 and will continue via regular updates and dedicated health and wellbeing notice- boards and folders on all stations will be delivered to all locations in the near future.

In addition, WFRS Occupational Health and Wellbeing Manager delivered the training for WCC Listening Mates, this was well received, and further training sessions are proposed in the near future, which may also be delivered as a joint venture including both WFRS and WCC employees.

March saw the first edition of the Occupational Health Newsletter, this edition focussed on COVID-19, the Wellbeing Ambassadors, Critical Incident Wellbeing and Muscular Skeletal wellbeing. In early April a special edition newsletter will be distributed which will focus on mental health and resilience due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19.

In light of COVID-19, additional updates will be sent to all staff reminding them of how to safe and well, with a particular emphasis on mental health and wellbeing. This feels particularly important due to the increasing number of people being required to self-isolate or affected in other ways.

The impact of COVID-19 has been felt by the Occupational Health Team where many of our working practices have needed to be adjusted to respond to the ongoing demands of customer base. Understandably, there has been some anxiety from within the team and across the organisation about how we maintain key services within times of such uncertainty and increased risk to physical and psychological wellbeing. For the time-being routine 3 yearly health screens have been postponed and referrals/reviews for the Service Medical Advisor are being conducted remotely. However, if necessary, he will be able to see personnel in a controlled clinical environment, should the need arise.

With regard to counselling and psychotherapy sessions, these are mainly being conducted over Zoom, although not ideal this still remains as it a preferred option by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy. The exception is when a client requires specialist trauma treatment, this is undertaken face to face whilst wearing suitable PPE.

Financial Implications

None

Environmental Implications

None

9.0 Conclusion

During this year, both the Health and Safety and Occupational Health & Wellbeing Departments have continued to work efficiently, providing a professional service to ensure the Authority meets its statutory duties.

The benefits of having both operational and non-operational personnel in the health and safety team continues to work effectively and ensures managers receive competent advice and guidance. The operational knowledge supports departments such as Technical Support, Training, Operational Policy and Response, which are all critical functions.

Last years review of the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Department and the appointment of the Occupational Health Advisor also continues to work well, with several new initiatives introduced this year, in particular the Wellbeing Peer Support service and the review of the Trauma Support service.

Overall it is very encouraging to report again this year that no 'major injuries' were reported and there was also no increase in the number of 'over 7 day' injuries. Although there has been a small increase of personal injuries, these have remained consistent over the past 3 years. Over the next few months both the Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing and Health and Safety Departments will continue to prioritise their work to ensure we meet the ongoing demands arising from COVID-19, by providing a robust service as we protect and support the health, safety and wellbeing of all WFRS personnel.

Background Papers

None

	Name	Contact Information
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