

This Report will be made
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Report Number **AuG/20/17**

To: Audit & Governance Committee
Date: February 2021
Status: Information Report
Responsible Officer: Alastair Clifford, Operations Lead Specialist
Andy Blaszkowicz, Director, Housing and
Operations

SUBJECT: CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

SUMMARY: This report details the performance of Corporate Health and Safety over the last calendar year and looks into future work.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note Report AuG/20/17.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises the District Council's health and safety performance to the end of the annual year 2020, and outlines its intentions for 2021 and beyond. Health and safety is monitored against an ongoing action plan devised by the Corporate Health & Safety officer in agreement with Director for Housing and Operations and the Operations Lead Specialist.

This annual review against the action plan reveals that significant areas of work have been undertaken in relation to abuse, aggression and violence procedures, fire safety procedures and direct labour organisation related safety. This demonstrates that the District Council has a strong commitment to the health and safety of its workforce, and to others who may be affected by its activities.

Health and safety is provided by the Corporate Health & Safety Officer in conjunction with managers and appropriate personnel. The Council employs approximately 451 employees in various roles, including full, part-time and casual staff; equating to 405 FTE. This increase from last year is for the former east Kent Housing coming back in house to Folkestone and Hythe. The Council has a broad range of activities with a wide variety of risks to manage. To ensure that all risks are identified, the Council has risk assessment processes for use by managers and staff. The most common risks identified include:

- Lone working
- Violence and aggression
- Transport and road risk
- Manual handling risks
- Slips and falls
- Work-related ill health, including work-related stress
- Working at height

With the Covid Pandemic sweeping the world in that last year, H&S has been paramount in keeping our staff and community safe. Considerable work has been undertaken to enable this, particularly for those who are unable to work at home.

2. KEY ACTIVITIES

CODES OF PRACTICE

Corporate Health and Safety provides codes of practice (COP) and guidance to managers and employees to equip them with the necessary support to meet their health and safety obligations. The Council has a rolling programme of COP review and implementation to support effective health and safety management. The following COP's were revised/implemented during the year;

- Abuse, Aggression and Violence
- Management of Contractors
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Health Surveillance

TRAINING

Training provision is an important part of mitigating risks to health and safety. To ensure there is relevant training and sufficient funding the corporate health and safety officers work with Human Resource (HR) officers, Organisational Development (OD) Staff and service area managers. The electronic package WorkRite is used to deliver the majority of employees statutory training, however many of the Direct Labour Organisation (DLO) staff and specialists need further training as identified by individual job requirements.

It is understood that at present there is not a centralised database that identifies and records training requirements for individuals. The organisation and identification of training varies by service area and risk level. To address this issue the H&S officer, OD and HR teams will be working together over the next year to support service area managers to identify their statutory training requirements, fund and deliver these as necessary.

Table 1: Training delivered shows some of the critical training that was undertaken during the year. Training was predominantly delivered by external suppliers, except training for fire wardens which was internal, conducted by the corporate H&S officer.

It should be noted that in the DLO organisations of the council, such as that in Grounds Maintenance (GM), Engineering and Buildings (E&B) and the Hythe Pool teams, that practical sessions called toolbox talks and onsite job specific training for equipment are regularly delivered to new starters, seasonal staff and as reminders where near misses and incidents have occurred.

The training does not include the e-learning and is based on practical or external providers.

Table 1: Training delivered

Course Type	No.	Comment
Fire Warden (including tenants in rented office space)	8	Fire precautions and methods for evacuating staff in the event of a fire.
Driving Assessments	7	This works alongside the road risk procedures and helps towards preventing road traffic collisions.

Manual Handling Techniques	30	Training in correct lifting techniques & risks through incorrect lifting.
Handling difficult customers	0	Customers services dealing with members of public.
First Aid at Work (3 days)	0	Competence to become a qualified First Aider.
Safeguarding	0	Includes a few councillors, call centre / reception staff
Grounds Maintenance Safeguarding vulnerable people.	0	This is how to recognise the vulnerable that are in public places, and how to help.
Asbestos awareness.	0	Half day course directed at those that are most likely to come into contact.
Reactec HAVWEAR monitoring system for Hand Arm Vibration.	5	Training new line manager. Agency / New Starters
New staff inductions	94	The inductions has a section that includes Health and Safety Policy, procedures and the e-learning requirements.

FIRE SAFETY

The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires employers to have a strategy to evacuate all occupants within a building. As part of the Council's fire safety arrangements nominated staff are trained as Fire Wardens. Additional refresher training will be conducted during 2021 to include tenants. They perform two roles; undertaking ongoing assessment of fire hazards and risks during their normal daily work tasks, and in the event of an evacuation conducting a sweep of their allocated fire zone to ensure all persons have safely evacuated.

To ensure compliance with the Fire Safety order a review is continuing by the Engineering & Buildings team. Work has started on high risk buildings, such as the Civic Centre, Oxenden Road Depot and Hawkinge Depot and will continue through all Council Operated Assets. In general only minor items have been raised which are being addressed predominantly within allocated budgets, but also utilising the capital enhancement funds.

Due to the lock down and the civic centre being closed since March 2020 no fire drills have been conducted.

Fire safety for housing has not been included as part of this annual report.

FIRST AID

The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981 require employers to provide adequate and appropriate equipment, facilities and personnel to ensure their employees receive immediate attention if they are injured or taken ill at work.

As part of this requirement, the Council provides two levels of first aid trained staff in its buildings. At Folkestone and Hythe Civic Centre there is a mixture of full First aid at Work and Appointed Persons (for the 24hr Lifeline call centre). Hythe Swimming pool staff undergo further training superficially design for swimming pools. Requalification is in line with the HSE guidance and the level of first aid required is based upon specific job risk. DLO staff are also individually identified depending on work location and risk. Due to the pandemic it has been difficult to provide training to staff, training is arranged for after the latest national lockdown to catch u any outstanding requirements.

MEETINGS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY GROUPS

The Council has in place a number of health and safety groups to ensure that there is a corporate approach and understanding to all relevant issues. The Health and Safety Officer reports to the Staff Consultation Forum (SCF) on a six weekly basis. The SCF is chaired by the corporate HR manager, and comprises the Health & Safety Officer, a range of appointed workplace SCF champions, and a UNISON Safety Representative. The Group discuss codes of practice, reports and supports the Corporate Health & Safety Officer in determining the Council's priorities in health and safety.

In addition to the SCF an Operations meeting is held every 3 months, that gathers all the high risk service area managers within the Operations service areas. It is used as a forum to discuss and share best practice regarding any accidents, incidents, near misses and insurance claims in detail and looks at how these can be prevented or reduced.

In recent months these meetings have been broadened to include the Housing staff – bringing a wealth of experience and a greater diversity to the core group. This is expected to have a positive effect on the overall safety of all.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

The external Occupational Health provider has continued to meet the organisation's requirements for dealing with and promoting health at work issues. The core functions of Occupational Health are work-health assessment screening, sickness absence management and health promotion. Table 2: Health surveillance shows a breakdown of the teams that health surveillance is provided to.

The Health, Safety Officer works closely with HR who manages the Occupational Health Advisor to provide a proactive health surveillance programme to required staff following the risk assessment process. This is based on two yearly programme of health surveillance checks, consisting of hand-arm vibration, skin surveillance, respiratory and audiometry.

Table 2: Health surveillance

Team	No.	Notes
Grounds Maintenance	2	Park Keepers, Sports Ground, Cemeteries, Highways.
Engineering & Buildings	0	
Other	0	

3. PERFORMANCE

The following section details accidents in relation to the years 2017, 2018, 2019 2020. The Corporate H&S officer ensures all accidents are recorded in one place, therefore in the future this report will move towards detailing accidents over a rolling five year period. There is a potential of increase reported injuries as the housing team formally East Kent Housing will become part of the statistics.

The total number of accidents remains low, with a decrease over the past year from 26 (an incident rate of 0.25 per 100 FTE) to a total of 11 accidents recorded (an incident rate of 0.027 per 100 FTE). As can be seen from: Table 3: Accident totals, shows there is no individual type of accident that is the most significant; however most of the accidents can be grouped into “slip trip and falls”, manual handling and struck by.

Table 4: Accidents by service area shows that there has been a decrease in the accidents incurred by “other council staff”.

Table 5: RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) shows there has been two reportable RIDDOR incident involving a council employee in the year 2020. The first of these was a colleague was using a hedge cutter between waist and shoulder high and whilst wiping off the loose cut clippings with his hand he managed to cut through his glove and removed the tip of his finger. The second was colleague was opening packaging with a new weed scraping knife and slipped whilst removing the plastic packaging and sliced the palm of his hand.

Table 6: Work days lost due to accidents shows that 61 days have been lost due to accidents. Table 7: Accidents involving members of the public have remained low over the past three years.

Accident statistics continue to remain low, however there has been a slight increase in the number of recorded accidents. This is believed to have incurred in line with a drive to report all accidents, no matter how small. As the largest service area within the Council, grounds maintenance remains as the department with highest related risks.

Training and other interventions remain in place to address the areas of highest injury. The wider H&S team continues to not only address the accident related incidents but also focus on areas which have potential to cause serious injury and must therefore not be overlooked. Such areas identified during the previous year include fire safety, contractor control and site security. These were achieved by either in house or external training. Most accidents related to Grounds Maintenance will have a Safety Notice completed and displayed at all the operational depots. Going into 2021 training again will be focused on DLO and the grounds maintenance teams - for example more task related manual handling, basic maintenance and servicing of tools.

Table 3: Accident totals

Type	2017	2018	2019	2020
Contact with machinery or hand tool	0	1*	1	2
Struck by moving object	2	2	5*	2
Strike by moving vehicle	0	1	0	0
Strike against fixed object	2	1	4	0
Slip, trip, fall same level	1	3	7*	4
Lifting & handling injuries	0	3	1	2
Injured by an animal including insect stings	0	1	3	1
Fall from height	1*	0	0	0
Physical Assault	0	0	0	0
Contact with electricity	0	0	0	0
Trapped by something collapsing	0	0	0	0
All other kinds & unspecified	2	2	5	0

Total	8	14	26	11
Incident Rate <i>per 100 FTE employees</i>	0.08	0.135	0.25	0.027

*RIDDORS (reportable injuries)

Table 4: Accidents by service area

Service Area	2017	2018	2019	2020
Grounds Maintenance	7	8	12	7
Engineering & Buildings	0	0	2	1
Other Council Staff	1	6	11	3
Environmental Enforcement	0	0	1	0
Total	8	14	26	11

Table 5: RIDDOR

Type	2017	2018	2019	2020
RIDDOR Accidents	1	0	*2	2
RIDDOR Disease	0	1*	0	0

Table 6: Work days lost due to accidents

Type	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of work - related days lost	0	0	30.5	61

Table 7: Accidents involving members of the public

Type	2017	2018	2019	2020
Public	1	1	1	0

WORK RELATED ILL HEALTH DAYS LOST

Lost working time statistics through ill health e.g. stress, anxiety and depression are gathered and produced via the Human Resources team.

DANGEROUS OCCURENCES

In addition to the accidents in the table above last year there was no Dangerous Occurrence reported.

4. AUDIT

There are no outstanding action from the 2018 audit as shown in last year's report.

5. LEGISLATION UPDATE

No HSE legislation changes have occurred that affected the Councils current policies and procedures. There have been some updates within the current legislation that has required the council to review some individual task procedures and update the relevant Risk Assessment and Safe Operating Procedure.

There has been a massive review of many procedures due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, which has produced additional risk assessments and Safe Systems of Work in addition to the normal requirements. As new legislation is developed and released our processes will be updated. It is worth noting that our management of parks and open spaces during the pandemic was presented to other authorities as "best practice".

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTIONS FOR 2021/22 AND BEYOND

In 2020/21 the emphasis will be to support managers and staff to continue good standards of health and safety and continuous improvement. An action plan has been developed that tracks this work; a summary of key actions are provided below:

- a. Review the corporate health and safety procedures (2 year programme).
- b. Revise corporate guidance on fire safety and fire wardens.
- c. Revise the corporate guidance on legionella management.
- d. Revise the corporate guidance on asbestos management.
- e. Deliver a health and safety training programme.
- f. Undertake audits/inspections of individual services/teams/buildings.
- g. Undertake fire risk assessments across all council managed buildings and assets.
- h. Update and improve intranet based health and safety information for

staff use.

- i. Undertake driving assessments on all fleet drivers.
- j. Support the new employees within the housing teams.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE VISIT / CONTRAVENTIONS

- There has been no visits or requests from the HSE during 2020.

8. CLAIMS DUE TO ACCIDENTS / INCIDENTS /OTHER

The following section and Table 8: Claims details provide details on what is registered on the insurance database. In 2020 there were a total of 76 claims. This is an increase of one claim

Road traffic collisions increased from the previous year to 11 incidents up to 13. This is a slight increase in line with additional vehicles.

Strimming incidents have reduced to 0 incidents for injuries. Part of this reduction can be attributed to both in house training and investment into modern equipment with better guards around the heads.

Public liability claims have reduced overall to 45 claims or incidents, from the previous year's 52. An increase in documentation within the Engineering and buildings team has successfully allowed claims to be defended against via a portfolio of evidence.

There has been 1 Employers liability claim again in 2020 that is currently under investigation.

The following section and Table 8: Claims details provide details on what is registered on the insurance database. This has increased by 1 on the previous year. There could be an increase to Tenant claims as the council have taken housing stock back within the council. These claims would previously been dealt with by East Kent Housing.

Table 9: Insurance Claim Costs shows that there has been a reduction in total claim costs. This pattern continues if the removal of the potential data breach claim is considered. However it should be stressed that as claims are ongoing and based upon financial years this data could alter significantly. Some of the cost increase is claims carried over from last year and slightly higher than estimated.

Table 8: Claims

Type	2017	2018	2019	2020
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Road Traffic Collision. Council vehicles involved in accidental incident either with other vehicles or fixed objects.	14 incidents; 7 Hit third party vehicle 5 Hit stationary object 2 other type of incident	20 incidents; 6 Hit third party vehicle 6 Hit stationary object 8 other type of incident	11 incidents 7 own fault claims where our driver hit other third party vehicles or hit property 4 no fault claims where third parties hit our vehicles	13 incidents 10 own fault claims where our driver hit other third party vehicles or hit property 3 no fault claims where third parties hit our vehicles
Members of public vehicles hit by flying debris from strimming etc	14 strimming incidents; 2 incidents involve injury to a person	16 strimming incidents; 0 incidents involve injury to a person	Nil	5 strimming plus 4 grass cutting mower incidents
Liability claims from members of public from faulty equipment, i.e. play equipment, park benches, and uneven ground.	76 claim for public liability; 7 Play Area incidents 9 Slip incidents 6 Trip incidents 43 Other types of claim	66 claim for public liability; 2 Play Area incidents 2 Slip incidents 6 Trip incidents 56 Other types of claim	52 claim for public liability 12 Slip trip claims 10 pot hole claims 9 strimming claims 14 other type of incidents. 7 tree root/subsidence claims.	45 claim for public liability 14 Slip trip claims 26 other type of incidents including pot holes and highway issues. 0 tree root/subsidence claims. 1 Employers liability claim

Property claims across the Housing stock Commercial stock and General Fund.	Nil	Nil	12 Property claims 1 Commercial claim 6 HRA claims 5 General fund claims	17 Property claims 3 Commercial claims 9 HRA claims 2 General fund claims 3 claims where the council are seeking recovery from a third party for damage to council property
	Total: 104	Total: 102	Total: 75	76

Table 9: Insurance Claim Costs

Type	2017/18	2018/19	2019/2020	2020/2021
Motor claims	£31,228	£3,845	£2,750	£11,148
Miscellaneous	£3,367	£2,699	£1,050	£0
Property	£2,970	£1,299	£1,700	£15,100
Public	£411,890*	£1,929	£1,252	£3,049

**This includes potential claim for Data Protection Breach for £323,500.*

9. CONCLUSION

Accident levels are positively slightly lower than previous year and are still very low for the type of work being undertaken within the council. This is testament to the great work of all officers and especially within the DLO sections of the council. There have been 61 lost days caused by accidents for the year and only two RIDDOR for the year.

A substantial effort has been made by all staff to ensure we have been Covid compliant – and keeping up with all the changing legislation. No Covid outbreaks have been reported to be directly linked to work undertaken at the council. A visit by the HSE to enquire about what we were doing was met positively by the HSE and no concerns were raised.

There has been a significant drive to have a more proactive approach to the H&S within the council, led by the Director for Housing and Operations and the Operations Lead Specialist with support from the Corporate Health and Safety Officer. This year has continued the previous years' work but with the 2 RIDDOR's and 0 dangerous occurrences it is clear that work must be ongoing.

10. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

10.1 Legal Officer's Comments (E)

There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report other than as already stated therein. It is the Council's duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (as amended) to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees and other people who might be affected by its business, which includes making sure they are protected from anything that may cause harm and controlling any risks to injury or health that could arise in the workplace.

10.2 Finance Officer's Comments (RH)

There are no financial implications concerning this report.

11. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

(Alastair Clifford: Operations Lead Specialist)

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