

# **East Herts Council Report**

## **Human Resources Committee**

**Date of Meeting:** 5 August 2020

**Report by:** Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

**Report title:** Health and Safety – Annual Report April 2019 – March 2020

**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

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### **Summary**

#### **RECOMMENDATION FOR Human Resources Committee:**

**(a) That the report be noted**

#### **1.0 Proposal**

1.1 This report sets out a summary of Health and Safety annual activities and project work from April 2019 – March 2020.

#### **2.0 Background**

2.1 Since April 2019 there has been a positive increase, commitment and support of Health and Safety throughout the organisation enabling increased development of the service in 2019/2020.

2.2 This report outlines the work by the Health and Safety Officer for the period 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. This report will be sent to the Executive and to the Leadership Team for information.

### 3.0 Annual Accident Data

#### 3.1 Accident data Accident Totals 01 April 2019 – 31 March 2020.

Year	2019										2020			
Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec		Jan	Feb	Mar	TOTAL
Staff Non Reportable Accidents	0	0	1	0	1	2	2	0	0		0	0	0	<b>6</b>
Staff Reportable Accidents under RIDDOR 2013	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Non Reportable Accidents involving Members of the Public	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0		0	1	1	<b>5</b>
Reportable Accidents under RIDDOR 2013 involving Members of the Public	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Non Reportable Accidents to Contractors Guests / Visitor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Non Reportable Accidents at the 5 Swimming Pools and Gyms	16	22	18	21	10	18	21	16	14		14	18	See Note *	<b>188</b>
<b>TOTAL 19/20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>199</b>

\*Due to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic figures are not available for the period leading up to the lockdown as the pools were closed.

- 3.2 All accidents have been reviewed and where appropriate follow up action taken. We can confirm there has been no unusual increase, abnormal patterns or traits identified.
- 3.3 There were no accidents reportable under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) or any accidents or incidents that required investigation or intervention during this reporting period.
- 3.4 Levels of accidents are comparable to the previous calendar year (2018) see below, there has been a reduction from the total of 225 (2018) to 199 (19/20) but this is explained by the closure of the pools in March 2020, average monthly accidents in the pool are around 17-18 meaning this figure would be 217 which is very comparable to 2018.

<b>Year</b>	<b>2018</b>												
<b>Month</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>Jul</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sep</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Total</b>
Staff Non Reportable Accidents	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	5
Staff Reportable Accidents under RIDDOR 2013	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non Reportable Accidents involving Members of the Public	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Reportable Accidents under RIDDOR 2013 involving Members of the Public	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Non Reportable Accidents to Contractors Guests / Visitor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non Reportable Accidents at the 5 Swimming Pools and Gyms	20	23	9	23	28	19	19	20	18	16	14	9	218
<b>2018 TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>225</b>

### 3.5 Benchmarking Data – not available this year

3.5.1 The Health and Safety Officer sought benchmark data to make comparisons to other authorities through the East of England LGA (EELGA) but unfortunately only limited responses (7) were provided. Therefore a reliable benchmark was not achieved this year, this will be revisited as it is believed the response rate was affected by availability of staff/data due to COVID-19 restrictions. The limited feedback received confirmed that East Herts has sound reporting processes compared to others and the limited accident data provided was consistent and did not suggest any concern. The Head of HR and OD is going to approach EELGA to explore if accident data can be collected on a quarterly basis which sets out the number of staff and if possible visitors and the number of accidents to achieve a percentage which would then allow meaningful comparisons to be made in the next annual report. Please see section 12 below for more details.

## 4.0 Annual Risk Assessments

4.1 The Health and Safety Officer has developed and updated Corporate Risk Assessments to cover everyday functions such as general office working, lone working, fire safety and first aid arrangements enabling the Heads of Service and Service Managers to concentrate on specific service based risk assessments.

The Health and Safety Officer worked with managers to review service specific risk assessments, ensuring that they are still operationally relevant and up to date.

The previous H&S audit highlighted that the annual review last year had not been consistently actioned across services, this was raised at Leadership Team, it was agreed that completion of the annual review would be reported through this report to ensure accountability.

4.2 The annual risk assessment review has been undertaken and all services have been completed this year.

**Table of Completed Risk Assessments 2019/20**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Risk Assessment</b>
<b>Housing and Health</b>	Bodies, Human Remains and Bodily Fluids Nox Tubes Psychological Trauma Site Visits Water Safety Working at Height and in Confined Spaces Hillcrest Working Alone Safely Hillcrest Fire Safety Arrangements Hillcrest External - Communal Areas Hillcrest Internal - Communal Areas Hillcrest Hostel Flats Hillcrest Office Based work Hillcrest Exposure to Violence & Aggression
<b>Strategic Finance &amp; Property Facilities Management</b>	Caretakers Driving Work Caretakers Lone Working Caretakers Hand Tools Caretakers Lone Working Caretakers Working at height and in Confined Spaces Caretakers Leaf Blower Caretakers Snow/Leaf Clearing Legionella Testing PAT Testing Facilities Arrangements for Holocaust Event Council Chamber Wallfields
<b>Generic Risk Assessment Templates</b>	Manual Handling Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Planning and organising events Working at Height Working at Height and in Confined Spaces Working with Volunteers

	Working With Young People
<b>Planning</b>	Site Visits
<b>Revenues and Benefits</b>	Outside Officers Visits
<b>Hertford Theatre</b>	Hertford Theatre Assessment
<b>Corporate Risk Assessments Managed by the Health and Safety Officer</b>	Workplace Fire Safety Workplace First Aid Workplace Shared and Common areas Workplace in Wallfields General Workplace in Charringtons General Workplace Safety General Office Workplace in Buntingford General All Weather Working
<b>Human Resources and Organisational Development</b>	Driving at Work Workstation Safety Lone Working Home Working Violence and Aggression Use of Alcohol Gels

## 5.0 Health and Safety Policy

- 5.1 In 2019/20 a significant review of operational health and safety policy arrangements continued.
- 5.2 The review has sought to streamline policy and eliminate duplication; ensuring effective and efficient coverage which is fit for purpose. Since the project commenced in 2017 the number has been reduced from 34 to 20 through consolidation with HR policies.
- 5.3 11 operational arrangements including the Statement of Intent and the Organisational Responsibilities policies have now been reviewed (4 were completed in this annual period) and adopted through the LT & Safety Committee and Full Council where appropriate;

2019/20:

- **Violence and Aggression - Cautionary Persons Register**  
Last review Sept 2019 Date of next review: Sept 2022.
- **Work Related Road Safety**  
Last review Sept 2019 Date of next review: Sept 2022.
- **Statement of Intent**  
Reviewed Annually – Last approved by Full Council March 2020.  
This details how safety will be managed and it demonstrates the organisation's commitment. It is signed by the Chief Executive, Head of HR&OD and the Leader of the Council.
- **Organisational Responsibilities**  
Reviewed Annually – Last approved by Full Council March 2020.  
This details responsibilities across the Councils range of service activities and how staff and management fit into the overall safety management system. This includes roles with specific H&S management responsibilities and decisions.

Previous Years:

- **Accidents, Incidents, Near Misses and First Aid Provision Policy**  
Last review Sept 2018 Date of next review: Sept 2021.
- **Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy (COSHH)**  
Last review Sept 2018 Date of next review: Sept 2021.
- **Display Screen Equipment and Workstations and Employees' Entitlement to Eyesight Tests Policy**  
Last review Sept 2018 Date of next review: Sept 2021.
- **Fire Safety Management Policy**  
Last review Sept 2018 Date of next review: Sept 2021.

- **Legionella Management and Control**  
Last review Sept 2018 Date of next review: Sept 2021.
- **Lone Working Policy**  
Last review Jan 2018 Date of next review: Jan 2021.
- **Procurement, Purchasing and Tenders**  
Last review: Sept 2018 Date of next review: Sept 2021.

## **6.0 Display Screen Equipment and Workstation assessments**

6.1 All staff including new starters have undertaken a Display Screen Equipment and Workstation Assessment as part of the bi-annual review and update. A total of 336 assessments were issued in 2019. The Health and Safety Officer supported, advised and resolved issues for officers where DSE issues are identified.

## **7.0 Learning and Development – Partnership training and E-Learning.**

7.1 During the period 1 April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 a range of health and safety related training sessions have been designed and delivered:

Event/Course	No of participants
First Aid at Work 3 Day qualifier	12
Statutory First Aid at Work Certificate Renewal	7
Ladder Use and Work at Height	20
Electrical Safety Awareness	10
Fire Marshall Bitesize	27
Working with Volunteers	11
<b>TOTAL Participants</b>	<b>87</b>

7.2 East Herts continue to explore shared training opportunities with neighbouring authorities to increase economies of scale and to support Town and Parish Councils in our District. All recent face to face training has been postponed due to the Coronavirus situation and is being reviewed to be implemented in due course.

7.3 Current future events planned include but not limited to:

- Asbestos and Legionella Awareness
- First Aid at Work (Refresher) 2 day
- Defibrillator Awareness (Charringtons House)
- Evacuation Chair User

7.4 The following modules on the Councils E-Learning platform 'Skillsbuild' have been updated:

- Health and Safety in the Workplace. All staff – new starters and annual refresher.
- Lone Working for all staff who are designated as lone workers
- Display Screen Equipment & Workstation Safety all new starters and support for DSE reviews.

7.5 A more detailed Fire Safety Awareness module will be added to support fire safety protocols in addition to the core H&S module which covers basic fire safety.

## **8.0 Contract Management and Compliance**

8.1 In response to a review of Health and Safety arrangements it was felt there was a need for greater continuity with services for contract management. This led to an improved partnership with Operations, it remains the Councils duty of care to ensure outsourced controls are operating and effective.

8.2 The Health and Safety Officer is working more closely with contract managers and providers for the high risk services being delivered;

- Accompanying the Contract Managers on site visits
- Reviewing accident, incident and near miss reports and statistics (this includes direct access to providers H&S records where possible)
- Attending Contract Management meetings and contributing to the review of health and safety arrangements

The key contract areas include;

- The Sport and Leisure Management contract for the management of the five swimming pools/leisure centres in the district.
- The Grounds Maintenance Contract operated by John O'Connor until 1 January 2020 when the contract was awarded to Glendale.
- The Shared Waste Services Contract awarded to Urbaser that commenced on the 1 May 2017.

8.3 Heads of Service and Service Managers are required to ensure that any new contract is identified to the Health and Safety Officer during the specification stage to ensure H&S elements are considered and documented. This was recommended to be strengthened in the H&S SIAS audit report in 2019 and then an ongoing monitoring agreed which is now in place (as above).

## **9.0 Safety Committee**

9.1 The Head of Human Resources and OD has actively supported raising the profile of health and safety and is now the permanent chair of the Committee.

9.2 This included a review of how the Committee functioned and reported matters. Reports are now being submitted to the

Leadership Team as well as the Human Resources Committee and also to Executive for information to ensure full awareness and accountability.

- 9.3 The membership has also been extended to include Contract Managers from Operations to ensure feedback on the main outsourced contracts for the Swimming Pools, Grounds Maintenance and Shared Waste Service. Membership continues to have Unison representation, the Service Manager for Environmental Health as well as the Insurance and Risk Business Advisor.

## **10.0 Lone working Solution – Contract Renewal**

- 10.1 Since April 2016, the Council has been with Guardian 24 to provide monitored lone worker protection.
- 10.2 The device allows the user to record safety memos; call for assistance and through its GPS functionality allows the ARC to direct assistance to the holders' location in addition to being able to locate a colleague if contact is lost. The contract is being reviewed with the Procurement Business Advisor and meetings have been made with Stevenage Borough Council to discuss the options of a shared procurement exercise.
- 10.3 The Procurement team has requested that East Herts Councils Health and Safety Officer is the designated lead due to the established service and procedures at EHC. However, due to the Coronavirus Pandemic the existing contract with Guardian 24 has had to be extended for a further year as the exercise has been delayed.

## **11.0 Defibrillator**

- 11.1 A defibrillator was installed in the reception area at Charringtons House, Bishops Stortford in January 2020 in line with HR Committee's recommendation.

11.2 Face to face cardiac and defibrillator awareness training will be delivered as soon as the current situation with Covid-19 allows. In the meantime the first aiders are trained in the basics of how to use the machine and the machine also guides users through voice instructions.

11.3 Since 2019 three defibrillators have been implemented at Wallfields, Charringtons House and Hertford Theatre.

## **12.0 Benchmarking**

12.1 A survey was circulated through the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) seeking views on benchmarking standards to be considered to compare with East Herts Councils Health and Safety performance.

12.2 The survey asked what areas of health and safety other Council's report on e.g. accidents, incidents, near miss statistics, contract monitoring and compliance etc. It also asked how they review H&S in terms of committees.

## **12.3 Results**

12.3.1 EELGA has 50 member Councils, unfortunately only 7 authorities responded to the survey.

12.3.2 It was not possible to gain additional responses and it appears restrictions from COVID have made this more challenging this year but we will continue to explore options of benchmarking with neighbouring authorities.

12.3.3 There may be difficulties comparing data due to the different ways authorities manage their services e.g. Stevenage Borough Council still have Waste Services and Grounds Maintenance in house in addition to Housing.

## **13.0 Networking**

13.1 The Health and Safety Officer is a member of a quarterly informal Hertfordshire Health and Safety Advisors Group.

13.2 The group consider legislation and regulations, good practice and acts as an information sharing body. In addition it allows the opportunity to share training opportunities and develop shared working and resources.

13.3 The Health and Safety Officer will discuss benchmarking options with the group and will also contact SLM/Everyone Active to see if Leisure Centre comparison data in terms of accidents can be provided for next year.

## **14.0 Options**

N/A

## **15.0 Risks**

N/A

## **16.0 Implications/Consultations**

### **Community Safety**

No

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

No

### **Environmental Sustainability**

No

**Financial**

No

**Health and Safety**

Yes – as described in the report

**Human Resources**

Yes – Health and Safety is part of the HR & OD Service

**Human Rights**

No

**Legal**

No

**Specific Wards**

No

**17.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

N/A

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