

# **East Herts Council Report**

## **Human Resources Committee**

**Date of Meeting:**

**Report by: Head of HR and Organisational Development**

**Report title: Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23 (which includes the Health and Safety Quarter 4 statistics and update) – April 2022 to March 2023**

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

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### **Summary**

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Human Resources Committee:**

- (a) To consider the Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23 which includes the Health and Safety Quarter 4 statistics and provide any comments/amendments to the Head of HR & OD and the Health and Safety Officer.**

#### **1.0 Proposal(s)**

Members are invited to consider the Annual Health and Safety Report 2022/23 (April 2022 to March 2023) which includes the Quarter 4 (January 2023 to March 2023) Health and Safety Management Statistics and update. Section 3.0 provides an executive summary of the report.

#### **2.0 Background**

The Health and Safety Officer provides a Health and Safety report to the Leadership Team and then HR Committee after each quarter and provides an annual report after year end which incorporates the Q4 update. This report will also be provided to the Safety Committee after it has been considered by the Leadership Team, who review the report before it is submitted to the HR Committee.

### **3.0 Executive Summary (for the year)**

#### **3.1 Non-Reportable and Reportable Accidents**

Accidents involving employees and members of the public on council premises.

There have been no serious non reportable accidents for this year and this quarter. These are accidents that are not reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences.

There have been no accidents reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations.

#### **3.2 Contract compliance and monitoring**

The Health and Safety Officer can report that there have been no safety incidents or site accidents requiring further investigation or enquiry in respect to the contracts.

#### **3.3 Capital Projects**

The Health and Safety Officer can report that there have been no recorded on-site accidents or incidents recorded for this period.

#### **3.4 Premises and Sites**

There have been no serious accidents requiring further investigation to report at the Councils Office premises or at the sites of Charringtons House, Buntingford Deport, Hillcrest and Rectory Hall Homeless Hostels. Inspections are currently undertaken with the Property Team and Unison.

### **3.5 Parks, Open Spaces and Play Areas.**

There have been no reported incidents or accidents in respect to the parks, open spaces and play areas.

### **3.6 Lone Working Contract**

Following a joint procurement exercise with Stevenage Borough Council the Council awarded the lone working contract to Peoplesafe, formerly SkyGuard to provide a fully supported lone worker provision.

### **3.7 Covid-19 / Blended Working**

The Health and Safety Officer, HR Colleagues, and Head of HR and OD are continuing to review and update information in line with Government guidance. Staff have completed Display Screen Equipment assessments on their home work stations in line with the roll out of Laptops and appropriate adaptations provided. Further work will be undertaken in 22/23 to develop the telephone system so this can work from home through computers and head-sets.

## **4.0 Safety Committee**

- 4.1 Safety Committee last met on Tuesday 09 May 2023. These minutes will be shared with the Committee. No significant issues arose, no significant accidents, appropriate investigation and action is being taken where required to make improvements. An item to note is that e-vehicles have been developed with signage to ensure they are highly visible to support safety. Consideration of adding a e-van rather than car is being undertaken so this can be used re animal collection for which the e-cars are not suitable.

4.2 Contract Managers and Contract Project Managers are invited to attend Safety Committee to provide feedback on the main and capital projects.

## **5.0 Work and Non-Work-Related Accident Statistics**

For the purposes of the report:

I.P refers to Injured Person

Non-Reportable Accidents do not need to be reported under RIDDOR 2013 and may include minor cuts etc.

### **5.1 Quarter 4 (January 2023 to March 2023)**

5.1.1 There were no reportable accidents under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) for the Q4 period January 2023 to March 2023.

5.1.2 Three non-reportable work-related accidents were recorded for the period 1 January 2023 to 31 March 2023; the low trend is due to staff working from home or away from the office and due to the low risk working environment and good practice.

5.1.3 Swimming Pools and Open Spaces. There were 41 minor non reportable accidents reported across the 5 swimming pools and gyms between January 2023 and March 2023 in respect to users and 2 accidents concerning SLM employees. The numbers in Q4 have seen some slight increases compared to Q3 in Leisure but this is mainly explained by increased footfall. None of the reported accidents were the result of any procedural or equipment related failure and a sample of the nature of the type of accident recorded is included overleaf:

- IP struck finger on weights during exercise – Skill execution error

- IP struck another swimmer during session – Root cause, no parental supervision
- IP experienced muscular discomfort during training session – IP has pre-existing condition and left unaided
- IP sustained minor cut on grass football pitch – IP collided with another player
- IP landed awkwardly on ankle jumping off equipment – Skill execution error, area checked and no fault found.
- IP slipped in car park, contact injury to face – IP not seriously hurt, area inspected no fault or defect found
- IP Mis-stepped exiting the pool – Skill execution error.

#### Q4 Non-Reportable Accidents – Jan, Feb, March 2023

Swimming Pool & Gym	January	February	March	TOTAL
Hartham	4	3	5	12
Grange Paddocks	5	8	4	17
Leventhorpe	0	0	2	2
Ward Freman	0	2	1	3
Fanshawe	3	3	1	7
Employees (SLM)	2	0	0	2
Contractors	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43</b>

Parks, Open Spaces, Members of the Public	January	February	March	TOTAL
Play Area	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

EHC Employees	January	February	March	TOTAL
	2	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>COMBINED TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>53</b>
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Q3 table for comparison

### Q3 Non-Reportable Accidents – Oct, Nov, Dec 2022

Swimming Pool & Gym	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Hartham	0	2	1	3
Fanshawe	1	1	0	2
Leventhorpe	0	0	1	1
Grange Paddocks	3	5	5	13
Ward Freman	2	1	2	5
Employees (SLM)	1	1	0	2
Contractors	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>

### Q3 Non-Reportable Accidents – Oct, Nov, Dec 2022

Parks, Open Spaces, Members of the Public	July	Aug	Sept	TOTAL
Play Area	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

### Q3 Non-Reportable Accidents – Oct, Nov, Dec 2022

EHC Employees	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
	1	0	0	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

<b>COMBINED TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>
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## 5.2 Annual Accident Statistics (2021-2022 and 2022-2023)

5.2.1 There were no reportable accidents under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) for either annual period.

5.2.2 The following table shows the total number of accidents for the annual periods 2021 / 2022 and 2022 / 2023. Accident numbers have increased in line with usage and

footfall. Each quarter has been previously reported on and showed no concern with numbers reported. During both years (less so in 22/23) the Coronavirus Pandemic meant that all leisure facilities had to close or limit numbers under the Governments lockdown measures which explains the low rate of figures across the different reporting headings. Other factors that explain the fluctuations in figures include:

- Closure and demolition of the old Grange Paddocks swimming Pool in Bishops Stortford (and then reopening of the new larger facility) and the partial closure of the Pool Hall and Gymnasium as part of the Hartham Swimming Pool and Gymnasium redevelopment.
- These developments were also subject to delays arising from Brexit in terms of taking delivery of materials and equipment, further delays arising from Covid and the effect on supply chains and material costs.
- Closure and redevelopment of Hertford Theatre (accidents are in employee category or members of the public category when they are recorded).

**The following table overleaf is a summary of non-reportable accidents between April 2021 to March 2022 and April 2022 to March 2023**

<b>Swimming Pools &amp; Gyms</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
Hartham	8	25
Grange Paddocks	36	69

Leventhorpe	3	7
Ward Freman	3	9
Fanshawe	23	15
Employees (SLM)	5	7
Contractors	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>132</b>

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
<b>Parks, Open Spaces, Members of the Public / Contractors</b>	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
<b>EHC Employees</b>	1	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>COMBINED ANNUAL TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>135</b>
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5.2.3 An analysis of the accident numbers and types have not shown any abnormal trends or patterns over the course of the two years. The increase in figures in 22/23 reflects the increase in usage following the easing and ending of Covid restrictions and the opening of larger facilities.

5.2.4 **Benchmarking.** The Health and Safety Officer has discussed benchmarking options with the Contract Manager for SLM with a view to being able to benchmark the 5 East Herts Swimming Pools and Gym with comparable facilities managed by SLM. The Contract Manager does not have direct access to provide a month-by-month review of the accident per 10K visit for other sites not under his management

control. The Contract Manager can provide something which will look at quarterly benchmarking using information in the wider Everyone Active group, South East and East Herts.

The Contract Manager will ask for comparable sites to be built in to a comparison so we have like for like site's for the dual use with gym (Fanshawe and Leventhorpe, dual use pool only (Ward Freman), Large pool and gym site with no sport hall (Grange Paddocks) and a Medium site pool/ gym and no sport hall (Hartham). The Contract Manager is discussing this option with the Everyone Active Regional H&S Quality manager.

Although benchmarking options are being considered it is important to understand in terms of health and safety what information is desirable and for what purpose.

There are 4 benchmarking models:

1. **Performance benchmarking** involves gathering and comparing quantitative data (i.e., measures or key performance indicators). Performance benchmarking is usually the first step organizations take to identify performance gaps.
2. **Practice benchmarking** involves gathering and comparing qualitative information about how an activity is conducted through people, processes, and technology.
3. **Internal benchmarking** compares metrics (performance benchmarking) and/or practices (practice benchmarking) from different units, product lines, departments, programs, geographies, etc., within the organisation.

4. **External benchmarking** compares metrics and/or practices of one organisation to one or many others.

In order to gain any benefit from benchmarking it should be understood that comparing the facilities managed by SLM on behalf of the Council will differ to other facilities offering different options, for example Westminster Lodge in St Albans in comparison to Grange Paddocks includes a climbing wall, soft play area, badminton, and tennis courts therefore differences in accident statistics will not provide a true reflection of the safety record of either venue.

The Health and Safety Officer will look to add external benchmarking to the next annual report if suitable data can be gathered. Internal comparison will continue to be made.

### 5.3 Leisure Updates over the annual period

5.3.1 **Grange Paddocks (GP).** GP handover was 26 October 2021. Aftercare and post completion meetings have taken place with the Project Manager, SLM and Wilmott Dixon and final snagging has taken place. The final meeting is scheduled to take place at the end of May 2023.

5.3.2 **3G pitch at GP.** The 3G pitch was completed 05<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and opened 08<sup>th</sup> October 2022 and is now in full use with no incidents or accidents being reported.

5.3.3 **Hartham Leisure Centre (HLC)**

Summary of project

The following milestones are planned for 2023

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Programmed delivery</b>	<b>Work Activity</b>
1	August 2023	Demolition and building of the new extension
2	November 2023	Converting the old gym into upstairs changing room and spin studio

The project manager overseeing the work has maintained a high standard of inspections and the Health and Safety Officer has observed exceptional levels of health and safety practice demonstrated throughout.

## **6.0 Annual Contract Management and Compliance**

6.1 In order to fulfil its duty of care, all contracts are overseen by a contract manager who is responsible for ensuring the contract is being delivered safely and the contractor has the appropriate safety procedures in place. The Health and Safety Officer works with the service contract managers to improve the information reporting processes and to ensure pertinent information is being monitored/reported and relevant action is being taken (when required) to Safety Committee, Leadership Team and Human Resources Committee.

The following updates should be noted:

### **6.2 Buntingford Service Centre**

6.2.1 The Property Team installed speed control humps and digital speed deterrent signs in the depot yard to enhance vehicle and pedestrian safety. The Health and Safety Officer, Property Services Manager and Surveyor

met with Urbaser to discuss the issues of the surface lining and Urbaser agreed that the enhancements would be more beneficial.

The Health and Safety Officer can report that there has been a significant improvement to the site housekeeping and a number of repairs have been undertaken or are scheduled including.

- Replacing the heating in the vehicle workshop
- Refurbishment of external WC's
- New barrier installed at the front car park
- Installation of a new defibrillator with user training

6.2.2 The Health and Safety Officer can report that the Buntingford User Group Meeting took place on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March. There have been no on-site incidents or accidents to report.

6.2.3 Urbaser have reported that they are planning to introduce an onsite scheme to use spare parts from damaged bins to replace missing components and extending the life of current bins, significant progress has been made to reduce the number of surplus bins on site.

6.2.4 The Health and Safety Officer is supporting the Project Officer on the provision of the shared waste services and street cleansing contract and has worked with the Health and Safety Officer, North Herts Council to review the Health and Safety specification of the contract.

## **7.0 Capital Projects (annual update)**

7.1 The Health and Safety Officer has been supporting the Head of Operations with the opening of Northgate End Multi Storey Car

Park. The Health and Safety Officer and the Property Team have installed a Premises Information Box at the site along the same lines as those installed at Buntingford, Hillcrest and Rectory Hall Hostels and Wallfields.

7.2 The Health and Safety Officer has supported the recommendations for the closure of the top deck of Northgate End due to lighting restrictions in the Planning Consent.

7.3 The Health and Safety Officer has also provided support and guidance to the Parking Team in regard to the placement of planters on level 3 which provide ease of access to an open parapet, the recommendation to remove these is supported by the Property Team and the Parking Services Team.

7.4 Launchpad has re-located to the commercial unit at Northgate End and the Property Team are waiting for the Fire Risk Assessment report to review the findings.

The Corporate Property Services Manager supported by the Health and Safety Officer have been providing support to the Launchpad team on specific health and safety responsibilities.

## **8.0 Parking Enforcement Contract (annual update)**

For the purposes of the report the Councils Parking Contract Provision is delivered by APCOA - APCOA's name originates from the former US parent company and is an abbreviation for Airport Parking Corporation of America

8.1 The Health and Safety Officer receives monthly site inspections from the Service Development Manager and Parking Contract Manager on the overall performance of the Parking Enforcement contract (with APCOA) and it can be reported that that there have been no accidents in regard to car parks or Multi Story Car Parks (MSCP's) during this quarter.

## **9.0 Parks and Open Spaces Management Contract (annual update)**

- 9.1 There have been no incidents or accidents reported for this period and no incidents involving the Councils Grounds Maintenance Contractor, Glendale.
- 9.2 The Health and Safety Officer can advise the Committee that two events were held for Love Parks Week, one event was held at Southern Country Park on Tuesday the 26th July and the second event took place at Pishiobury Park on Wednesday 27th July. The Health and Safety Officer is pleased to report that both events were well attended, approximately 300 people attended Southern Country Park and approximately 250 at Pishiobury Park. The events showcase the Councils Green Flag award winning open spaces and provides an opportunity for the Council to proactively engage with the community. The Councils Ground Maintenance Contractor Glendale not only provided support in setting up but managed parking control for the events and brought along the large tractor to display. In addition, the Council had stands promoting health and wellbeing and running activities for attendees. The two Friends of Groups were running nature activities.
- 9.3 Following the unusually hot weather in 2022 the Operations Team have been working with the local fire brigade to put in place Fire Breaks across district in areas of conservation and/or long grass. Southern Country Park and Pishiobury Park, and various other smaller open spaces where long grass is left for biodiversity, to minimise potential fires. This is mapped and the fire brigade have copies, so they know where to direct fire to if at all possible. These fire breaks were put in where housing was in line with trees and the prevailing wind.

With long term forecasts predicting similar weather patterns going forward the Operations Team have been liaising with Hertfordshire County Councils Countryside Management Services Team on new plans to manage open spaces during

periods of excessive heat and are building in contingencies in the Opens Spaces Management Plans.

## **10.0 Lone Worker Contract Annual Update**

10.1 A procurement exercise was undertaken using the Procurement for Housing framework with support from PFH in sense checking tender documents, quality checks and managing clarification questions.

10.2 The aim of the exercise was to secure a single provider for both Councils but under two separate operating contracts to ensure compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

10.3 The MySOS device is not a personal alarm but a durable and compact personal safety unit that is monitored 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year.

10.4 A single press of the SOS button immediately alerts a continuously monitored Alarm Receiving Centre controller who can respond in seconds.

The ARC can open the device and listen to activity and if required.

- Connect directly to the appropriate blue light responder
- Locate users through dedicated GPS
- Provide user details to responders in the event they are unable to respond using information on a secured management portal holding details of medical conditions, contact and escalation details.

10.5 As a provider of dedicated lone worker support services PeopleSafe are fully accredited to the highest levels of security standards.

10.6 Devices and training have been issued to employees designated as lone workers and each team has a dedicated portal management administrator who can access and manage team details.

10.7 The Health and Safety Officer has overall contract management for East Herts Councils service.

### **11.0 Contract and Development Support for Leisure Development Projects / Capital Programmes**

11.1 The Health and Safety Officer continues to liaise with the Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Leisure) on the progress of the improvement programmes.

11.2 The Health and Safety Officer provided support to the team from Hertford Theatre for the delivery of Christmas events at Ware's Drill Hall in December 2022. The production run concluded successfully with no incident or accidents to report.

11.3 Work is continuing on the development of Hertford Theatres Growth and Legacy Project.

11.4 The Health and Safety Officer can advise the committee that there have been no on-site accidents or matters of safety concern in relation to the Theatre development.

### **12.0 Blended Working Programme/COVID Protocols**

12.1 The Health and Safety Officer and the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development have significantly re-worked the Protocols now that Covi-19 restrictions have been lifted. The new 'Office Housekeeping and Safety Protocols' are aimed at reinforcing and maintaining the good hygiene practices implemented for Covid control and to encourage decluttering of

the workspace. Unison have actively participated and supported the revised protocols

12.2 The Health and Safety Officer, Head of HR and Leadership Team continue to monitor guidance and messaging from Government in order to respond proactively to any substantive changes.

12.3 The Health and Safety Officer worked with the Corporate Property Services Manager on updating the furniture and layout of the meeting rooms at Wallfields to create greater flexibility. Room layout guides and capacities have been developed and calculated so people will be able to make informed choices for events and meetings.

12.4 Staff have completed Display Screen Equipment assessments on their home work stations in line with the role out of Laptops and appropriate adaptations provided. Further work will be undertaken in 22/23 to develop the telephone system so this can work from home through computers and head-sets.

12.5 The Health and Safety Officer has been working with the Corporate Property Services Manager on the installation of Carbon Dioxide monitors by the end of May 2023. Staff are advised to ensure windows are regularly left open to create ventilation. The monitors will be used to measure CO2 levels and will include a programme of monitoring and recording the readings to determine the air quality in the offices.

12.6 The Health and Safety Officer working with the Head of Strategic Finance and Property and the UNISON Branch Secretary completed an asset review of operator chairs, some of which had outlived their purpose and were no longer considered suitable.

12.7 As part of the review 307 office operator chairs were inspected of which 71 were identified as no longer fit for purpose, the Committee are advised that some of the chairs are over 30 years

old the average life expectancy of a standard operator chair is between 7 and 8 years.

The following factors were considered when identifying chairs for replacement.

- Wear and tear
- Functionality of component parts such as wheels, arms, back rest, adjustment mechanisms
- Defect or damage

12.8 Health and Safety Officer has signed up to ESPO (Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation) purchasing framework to ensure value for money and working with the Head of Strategic Finance has selected a suitable supplier and acquired replacement chairs that have been deployed.

### **13.0 Learning and Development – Partnership training and future events**

13.1 The Health and Safety Officer and Human Resources Officer have successfully launched the new e-learning platform Skillgate. Health and Safety learning modules have been updated and a new module on display screen equipment and workstation safety has been developed for the platform.

13.2 With the new lone working contract now in place a series of training sessions have taken place with teams as part of the implementation and roll out.

13.3 The Health and Safety Officer has reviewed the cover arrangements for First Aid in line with the blended working programme to ensure that consistent first aid cover is maintained.

13.4 The Health and Safety Officer is working with colleagues on securing training for officers with enforcement accreditation, this

was formerly managed by Hertfordshire Police, but they have devolved this.

## **14.0 Options**

N/A

## **15.0 Risks**

As stated in the report where health and safety risks have been identified appropriate assessment has been made with relevant controls or mitigation put in place.

## **16.0 Implications/Consultations**

### **Community Safety**

As covered by the report the measures or controls put in place will impact positively on community safety e.g. re parks and open spaces or reception re-opening to the public.

### **Data Protection**

No

### **Equalities**

No patterns or links in the data that accidents are related to any protected characteristics. In terms of developments reasonable adjustments are made to support disabilities and ensure disabled access.

### **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**

Yes - Health and Safety practice, reporting and monitoring is in place to comply with legal requirements and the report has been reviewed by LT which includes the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

## **Specific Wards**

No

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

N/A

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