

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 2023/24

April 2023 to March 2024

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Human Resources Committee:

- (a) To consider the Annual Health and Safety Report 2023/24 and provide any comments/amendments to the Service Manager of HR & OD and the Health and Safety Officer.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

Members are invited to consider the Annual Health and Safety Report 2023/24 (April 2023 to March 2024). 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. 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) April 2023 – March 2024

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 the year 2023 / 24 involving employees. These are accidents that are not reportable to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013.

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

There have been two accidents reported via the Insurance and Risk Officer in regard to members of the public.

3.2 Contract compliance and monitoring

Following advice and guidance from Protector, the Councils Insurer, Safety Committee have supported a recommendation to undertake a root and branch review of contract management, inspection regimes and compliance monitoring for:

- Outsourced contract management
 - Shared Waste Services
 - Leisure Management
 - Grounds Maintenance
- Capital Projects
 - Large scale developments that may impact on the public domain e.g., land redevelopment projects.
 - New build or refurbishment projects

The review would look at the following areas:

- Ensuring background checks are undertaken before appointing contractors.
- Inspection and compliance regimes.

The Chair of Safety Committee and the Health and Safety Officer will be developing inspection regimes using online digital tools available on MS Forms on the Councils software platform.

3.3 Capital Projects

The Health and Safety Officer can report that there have been no recorded on-site accidents or incidents for this period in regard to the development of Hertford Theatre.

3.4 Premises and Sites

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

There have been reports of increased levels of anti-social behaviour, vandalism, and graffiti at Northgate End, Multi Storey Car Park.

Local Police are monitoring the area and measures have been taken by the Corporate Property Services Manager to stop vehicles racing with the installation of additional speed control measures.

The Health and Safety Officer can report that there have been two off site accidents involving members of the public, requiring further investigation. Details of both accidents have been submitted to the Councils Insurance and Risk Officer.

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 Display Screen Equipment

The Health and Safety Officer would like to report that utilising tools available on Microsoft Forms, the Display Screen Equipment and Workstation self-assessment questionnaire has been updated and redesigned to reflect the blended working arrangements, this has allowed us the opportunity to provide further guidance and advice to staff on musculoskeletal care, good work practice and effective use of equipment. A form is being developed for use by home workers.

The new form is currently being tested by HR Colleagues and control group identified to trial the new form in order to identify and rectify any errors before being rolled out across the services.

4.0 Safety Committee

- 4.1 Safety Committee met on Tuesday 07 February 2024. These minutes will be shared with the HR Committee. The issue of safety on the top level has been raised in regard to Northgate End MSCP (Multi-Storey Car Park) The Committee have noted these concerns which have been referred to the Interim Heads of Operations for consideration and any further action.
- 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, contact injuries etc.

It was agreed at HR Committee that accident totals in regard to the sites managed by Sport and Leisure Management (SLM) are no longer to be included in the report on the basis that this is a report on the operational safety management of East Herts Council, for the purposes of this report these figures have been removed.

5.1 Quarter 4 (January 2024 to March 2024)

- 5.1.1 There were no reportable accidents under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) for the Q4 period January 2024 to March 2024.

5.1.2 One non-reportable work-related accidents was recorded for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024; 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.

Q4 table of accident totals

Parks, Open Spaces, Members of the Public	January 2024	February 2024	March 2024	TOTAL
TOTAL	0	0	0	0

EHC Employees	January 2024	February 2024	March 2024	TOTAL
TOTAL	0	1	0	1

COMBINED TOTAL	0	1	0	1
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Q3 table for comparison

Q3 Non-Reportable Accidents – Oct, Nov, Dec 2023

Parks, Open Spaces, Members of the Public	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023	TOTAL
TOTAL	0	0	0	0

Q3 Non-Reportable Accidents – Oct, Nov, Dec 2023

EHC Employees	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023	TOTAL
TOTAL	0	1	1	2

COMBINED TOTAL	0	1	1	2
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5.2 Annual Accident Statistics (2022-2023 and 2023-2024) EHC Employees

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 2022 / 2023 and 2023 / 2024. Factors that explain the fluctuations in figures include:

- Closure and redevelopment of Hertford Theatre (accidents are in employee category or members of the public category when they are recorded).

	2022/23	2023/24
Parks, Open Spaces, Members of the Public / Contractors	0	0
TOTAL	0	0

	2022/23	2023/24
EHC Employees	1	2
TOTAL	1	2

COMBINED ANNUAL TOTAL	1	2
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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.

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 and completed or are scheduled including.

- Replacement 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 28th February 2024. There have been no on-site incidents or accidents to report.

6.2.3 The Health and Safety Officer and the Health and Safety Officer, North Herts Council have completed stage two evaluation and scoring of the Health and Safety Method Statements submitted by the bidders on the provision of the shared waste services and street cleansing contract. The Health and Safety Officer will be participating in the final moderation with the shared waste service contract moderation team and external consultant.

7.0 Capital Projects (annual update)

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

7.2 The Health and Safety Officer and Property Services Manager are supporting the team at Hertford Theatre in preparation for the practical completion of phase one of the project. Both have assisted in the provision of first aid and emergency evacuation arrangements,

fire risk assessments and fire safety management plans. In addition, Property Services are assisting with security arrangements once the main contractor has left the site.

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. The abbreviation MSCP refers to Multi-Storey Car Park.

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). The Health and Safety Officer must report that an accident occurred in one of the Councils open air car parks which has been reported to and being processed by the Councils Insurance and Risk Officer in conjunction with the Councils insurer.

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.

10.0 Lone Worker Contract Annual Update

10.1 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 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 Transformation Programme

12.1 The Health and Safety Officer is now working as part of the transformation team to deliver the planned management and delivery of the transformation programme.

12.2 The Health and Safety Officer ensured that an Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken prior to commencement. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is an evidence-based tool, which enables us to consider the likely impact of work on different groups of people. Completion of equality impact assessments is a legal requirement under race, disability and gender equality legislation and must be undertaken for any changes in the working environment, organisational policies, services to ensure we do not adversely discriminate against any person under the protected characteristics and promote equality of opportunity.

12.3 The Health and Safety Officer is working with the Corporate Property Services Manager to ensure new workstations comply with Regulation 10 of the Workplace, (Health Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 that states the following with regards to room dimensions and space requirements:

Every room where persons work shall have sufficient floor area, height, and unoccupied space for purposes of health, safety, and welfare.

The associated Approved Code of Practice and Guidance goes on to state:

Workrooms should have enough free space to allow people to get to and from workstations and to move within the room, with ease. The number of people who may work in any particular room at any one time will depend not only on the size of the room, but on the space taken up by furniture, fittings, equipment, and on the layout of the room. Workrooms, except those where people only work for short periods, should be of sufficient height (from floor to ceiling)

over most of the room to enable safe access to workstations. In older buildings with obstructions such as low beams the obstruction should be clearly marked.

The total volume of the room, when empty, divided by the number of people normally working in it should be at least 11 cubic metres. In making this calculation a room or part of a room which is more than 3.0m high should be counted as 3.0m high. The figure of 11 cubic metres per person is a minimum and may be insufficient if, for example, much of the room is taken up by furniture etc.

12.4 Staff will be issued with Display Screen Equipment self-assessment questionnaires once relocated to the ground floor. Further work will be undertaken in 24/25 as the transformation programme develops.

13.0 Learning and Development – Partnership training and future events

13.1 The Health and Safety Officer has arranged first aid training for the new team at Hertford theatre.

13.2 The Theatre team will also receive training on the safe use of evacuation chairs. The Health and Safety Officer will be arranging train the trainer sessions for Wallfields.

13.4 The Health and Safety Officer worked with colleagues on securing training for officers with enforcement accreditation, this was formerly managed by Hertfordshire Police, but they have devolved this function.

13.5 The Health and Safety Officer will be discussing training and development options with the Service Manager, Human Resources and Organisational Development in conjunction with UNISON.

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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