

East Herts Council Report

Human Resources Committee

Date of meeting: Wednesday 4 June 2025

Report by: Strategic HR and Organisational Development Lead

Report title: Annual Health and Safety Report 2024 / 25 EHC Employees

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

Summary

Recommendations for Human Resources Committee:

- (a) To consider the Annual Health and Safety Report 2024/25 – and provide any comments/amendments to the Service Manager of HR & OD and the Health and Safety Adviser.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 Members are invited to consider the Annual Health and Safety Report 2024 to 2025 EHC Employees. Section 3.0 provides an executive summary of the report.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Adviser 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 2024 – March 2025

3.1 Non-Reportable and Reportable Accidents

Accidents involving EHC employees.

There have been no serious non reportable accidents for the year 2024 / 25 involving employees requiring detailed investigation and not resulting from a failure of process and procedure or equipment. 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.

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 former Chair of Safety Committee and the Health and Safety Adviser have developed new inspection regimes using online digital tools available on MS Forms on the Councils software platform. These will be tested by services to determine if they are fit for purpose for the service's needs.

3.3 Capital Projects

There are currently no capital projects in progress to report on.

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.

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 Adviser would like to report that the new Display Screen Equipment and Workstation self-assessment questionnaire is now being used for both office-based work and home working. The first roll out was issued to Housing and Health colleagues and will be followed by Planning.

It can be reported that with the replacement of the old, defective, and damaged chairs, smarter desk layouts and the provision of accessories has reduced the number of requests for additional back rests and supports, the new form also provides additional information on good practice and good health when using the computer.

4.0 Safety Committee

4.1 Safety Committee met on Wednesday 05 February 2025. These minutes will be shared with the HR Committee.

4.2 Contract Managers and 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 included in the report on the basis that this is a report on the operational safety management of East Herts Council.

5.1 Quarter 4 (January 2025 to March 2025)

5.1.1 There were no reportable accidents under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) for the Q4 period January 2025 to March 2025.

5.1.2 One non-reportable work-related accident was recorded for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 March 2025; 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

EHC Employees	January 2025	February 2025	March 2025	TOTAL
TOTAL	0	0	1	1
COMBINED TOTAL	0	0	0	1

Q3 table for comparison

Q3 Non-Reportable Accidents – Oct, Nov, Dec 2024

EHC Employees	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024	TOTAL
TOTAL	0	1	1	2
COMBINED TOTAL	0	1	1	2

5.2 Annual Accident Statistics (2023-2024 and 2024-2025) 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 2023 / 2024 and 2024 / 2025.

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).

	2023/24	2024/25
EHC Employees	2	1
TOTAL	2	1

COMBINED ANNUAL TOTAL	2	1
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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.

- 5.2.4 The Health and Safety Adviser would like to advise members of the Committee that work has been undertaken to encourage colleagues to report incidents and near miss events in order to identify patterns and themes that allow the organisation to implement measures and controls to protect employee health and wellbeing. A new table has been introduced to report the number of Incident and Near Miss events occurring.
- 5.2.5 An incident is a broader term for any event, planned or unplanned, positive, or negative, that may or may not result in harm, damage, or injury. In essence, an accident is a specific type of incident that leads to a negative outcome.

Examples of incidents include, but are not limited to the effects of abusive, threatening behaviours, receiving obscene, aggressive, or threatening phone calls, correspondence, effects on the health of an individual arising from illness, health exacerbated by environmental factors e.g. excessive heat, air quality, extremes of temperature.

The Council also has the Employee Assistance scheme that offers confidential counselling, advice and support for any person affected by an incident, accident or near miss event.

Further support will also be available through the re-launched Mental Health First Aid provision following the successful participation in a 13-week Mental Health skills bootcamp.

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 Adviser 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 Veolia have now taken responsibility for all operational aspects of Buntingford Depot, significant work has been and continues to be carried out to re-organise and clean the site. Glendale have relocated to Rapier House; Bishops Stortford and the Property Services Manager has overseen considerable improvements to the new depot at Amwell End for Glendale.

Veolia will now have sole charge of the site and will be making considerable alterations to the facility in order to meet the increase in waste streams.

The Health and Safety Adviser would like to provide an update in response to a question raised at the last Committee meeting in respect to the disposal of Vapes and Batteries ranging primary cells or non - rechargeable to secondary cells or rechargeable types.

A question was raised about what information is giving to residents about the safe disposal of these materials. The Health and Safety Adviser consulted the Shared Waste Services Manager who advised the following:

- There have been postings, advice and guidance posted across the Councils social media platforms.

- Information is also provided on the Waste and Recycling pages of the Councils internet.
- Further campaigns are planned once the new waste services and recycling contract is underway to highlight the dangers of disposing spent batteries and vapes in household rubbish bins.

7.0 Capital Projects (annual update)

7.2 The Health and Safety Adviser and Property Services Manager completed a number of safety related matters and supported the team at BEAM Hertford. 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 assisted with security arrangements once the main contractor had left the site.

The Health and Safety Adviser will continue to work with the team and will be supporting the development and implementation of procedures required under 'Martyn's Law' officially the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, that received Royal Assent on Thursday 3 April. It is designed to improve protective security and preparedness for terrorist attacks in public premises and events. It mandates that those responsible for certain venues and events consider how they would respond to a terrorist attack and, in some cases, take steps to reduce vulnerability.

The Government intends for there to be an implementation period of at least 24 months before the Act comes into force. This period will enable us to draw up new procedures and deliver training.

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 Mult-Storey Car Park.

8.1 The Health and Safety Adviser receives monthly site inspections from the Service Development Officer and Parking Contract Manager on the overall performance of the Parking Enforcement contract (with APCOA).

8.2 The Health and Safety Adviser is supporting the Parking Service Development Officer through improved inspections of the Councils parking provision across the district.

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 ongoing and risk assessments have been updated by teams. Each team has a dedicated portal management administrator who can access and manage team details.

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

10.8 Supporting the Planning Service by assisting with the issue of new lone working devices and service risk assessments.

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

- 11.1 The Health and Safety Adviser continues to liaise with the Leisure and Parks Development Officer (Leisure) on the progress of the improvement programmes.
- 11.2 The Health and Safety Adviser can advise the committee that there have been no on-site accidents or matters of safety concern in relation to BEAM.

12.0 Transformation Programme

- 12.1 The Health and Safety Adviser 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 Adviser 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 Adviser has been working with the Corporate Property Services Manager to ensure the old building was ready for High Oak to occupy.

Further work will be undertaken in 24/25 as the transformation programme develops.
- 12.4 The Health and Safety Adviser has been supporting the Housing Team by assisting with modifications to office accommodation at the two hostels and enhance CCTV coverage at Hillcrest. In addition, the Health and Safety Adviser has supported the Housing Team after procuring five flats by assisting with health and safety guidance and advice.

13.0 Learning and Development – Partnership training and future events

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

This will focus on the Mental Health First Aid provision to ensure we obtain the right level of support and training.

Additional training on plan will be fire safety for clearance volunteers and first aid at work refresher training.

Options

NA

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.

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. Failure to implement and support mitigating controls expose the public to risk and may harm the reputation of the Council

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No patterns or links in the data for 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

Yes – Through failure to ensure mitigating measures and controls are implemented and undertaken to protect the Council from financial liability and litigation.

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

Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

NA

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