

# East Herts Council Report

## HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**Date of meeting:** Wednesday 3 June 2026

**Report by:** Health & Safety Adviser

**Report title:** Update on Quarter 4 Accident Reports and Annual Corporate Health and Safety Report for 2025/26

**Ward(s) affected:** All

**Summary** – This report presents accident data for the period January 2026 to March 2026 (Quarter 4) and provides the Leadership Team with an overview of the Council’s health and safety activity for 2025/26.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) **For the HR Committee to consider the Annual Corporate Health and Safety Report for 2025/26 and provide any comments.**

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 The HR Committee’s responsibilities, as set out in paragraph 8.2.5 of the council’s Constitution, include acting as the Council’s steering group to advise it in relation to the discharge of its responsibilities for health and safety.
- 1.2 To help enable the Committee members to fulfil these responsibilities, the Council’s Health and Safety Advisor will update the Committee members on a quarterly basis with key statistics include details about accidents, contract compliance and premises management.
- 1.3 Since the shared Human Resources Service with Broxbourne Borough Council was implemented, the Corporate Health and Safety Adviser began reporting to the Assistant Director for Environmental Health and Corporate Health and Safety.

- 1.4 Although responsibility for the corporate health and safety function has moved out of the Human Resources team, there remain strong links between the two functions. This includes employee health and wellbeing, occupational health and identifying and supporting reasonable adjustments where specific needs are identified.
- 1.5 For these reasons, the teams will continue to work closely together.

## **2.0 Review of Accidents for January 2026 to March 2026 (Quarter 4)**

- 2.1 As members will be aware from previous reports, the number of accidents arising from the Council’s work activities remains low. This reflects the nature of the work undertaken and the processes and procedures in place to minimise risk.
- 2.2 There were no reportable accidents under the Reporting of Incidents Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR) during Quarter 4.
- 2.3 One non-reportable work-related accident was recorded during Quarter 4. This accident did not occur as a result of any operational or procedural failure as a result no changes were made to Council processes.
- 2.4 Table 1 below provides a breakdown of accidents reported to the Council’s Health and Safety Adviser during Quarter 4. For context, the table also includes data from the previous quarter.

**Table 1: Comparison of reported accidents**

Category of Accident	Number of reported accidents	
	Quarter 4	Previous Quarter
Reportable	0	0
Non-Reportable	1	5

### **3.0 Annual Overview for 2025/26**

3.1 The remainder of this report provides members with an overview of the Council's occupational health and safety activity for 2025/26.

### **4.0 Accidents**

4.1 It was agreed at Human Resource 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.

#### **4.2 Reportable accidents**

There were no accidents involving members of staff during 2025/26 that were classified as reportable under RIDDOR.

#### **4.3 Non-reportable accidents**

There were no serious non reportable accidents involving members of staff during 2025/26.

4.4 Serious non reportable accidents are those that require a detailed investigation or result from a failure in process, procedure or equipment. While serious, they do not meet the threshold for reporting under RIDDOR.

#### **4.5 Accident trends**

The Health and Safety Adviser has undertaken work to encourage colleagues to report incidents and near miss events. This supports the identification of patterns and themes and enables the Council to implement appropriate measures and controls to protect employee health and wellbeing.

4.6 Analysis of the number and types of accidents over the past two years has not identified any abnormal trends or recurring patterns.

## **5.0 Contract compliance and monitoring**

- 5.1 There have been no material breaches of health and safety regulations across the Council's contracted services during the reporting period. This includes:
- a) Grounds maintenance, parks and open spaces
  - b) Shared waste management service
  - c) Leisure services, swimming pools and gymnasiums
  - d) Car park enforcement.
- 5.2 A material breach occurs when a contract manager identifies that health and safety legislation has been breached and considers the matter sufficiently serious to notify the contractor in writing.
- 5.3 While the Council may outsource services through legal contracts, it cannot outsource its statutory duties or liability. To meet its duty of care, each contract is overseen by a contract manager who is responsible for ensuring services are delivered safely and that appropriate health and safety procedures are in place.
- 5.4 The Health and Safety Adviser works closely with service contract managers to strengthen reporting arrangements and ensure relevant health and safety information is monitored, reported and acted upon where required. This includes reporting to the Safety Committee, Leadership Team and Human Resources Committee.
- 5.5 **Grounds Maintenance, Parks, Open Spaces and Play Areas** - There were no reported incidents or accidents relating to parks, open spaces or play areas during the reporting period. In addition, the team delivered two successful and incident free events in 2025 to promote the Council's Green Flag open spaces.
- 5.6 **Shared Waste Management and Street Cleansing** - Following the successful award of the waste contract to Veolia and the introduction of new waste management arrangements across the district, the transition has been successfully embedded. No health and safety processes have been compromised.

- 5.7 **Leisure Services** – The Council’s leisure facilities at Grange Paddocks and Hartham are operated by Sport and Leisure Management (SLM). These facilities continue to operate safely, with no reported health and safety concerns or breaches.
- 5.8 Fanshawe, Ward Freman and Leventhorpe leisure facilities have now been handed back to the County Council and no longer fall within these reporting arrangements.
- 5.9 **Parking Services** - The Council’s Health and Safety Advisor has been working closely with the Parking Service Development Officer on a number of key safety matters, including:
- a) Improving health and safety reporting through the use of online tools to support inspections and response management.
  - b) Responding to a reported structural issue at Jackson Square multi storey car park. A dividing wall to a small storage room was found to be unstable. The site was attended immediately and, with support from Veolia’s street cleansing team, safety barriers were installed once spaces had been vacated. Property Services arranged for a contractor to attend, remove the wall and rebuild it to a higher safety standard. The contractor confirmed the original wall had no structural ties and degraded concrete infill. The wall is now fully secure.
  - c) Developing an operational fire safety strategy for the Council’s three multi storey car parks.

## **6.0 Capital projects**

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

## **7.0 Premises and Site Safety Management**

- 7.1 Quarterly inspections have been carried out jointly with the Council’s Health and Safety Advisor, Property Team and UNISON. These inspections identified no serious health and safety issues requiring further investigation at the following Council operated sites:

- a) Wallfields
- b) Navigation House
- c) Buntingford Depot
- d) Hillcrest and Rectory Hall Homeless Hostels

7.2 The Council's Health and Safety Adviser provided a safety assessment for the Director of Regeneration, Customer and Commercial Services in relation to Water Lane Hall, Bishop's Stortford. The assessment covered the health and safety measures required to support continued use of the building. This included fire safety management, asbestos arrangements, electrical safety, accessibility, sanitary facilities, legionella testing and the provision of first aid. The assessment also identified the structural works needed to ensure the building was safe, insurable and viable for use.

7.3 The Council's Health and Safety Adviser has also been working with the Assistant Director for Property Services and the Housing Team to inspect and assess the suitability of premises for use as temporary accommodation. This work ensures that properties meet Equality Act requirements and the relevant safety standards for temporary housing.

## **8.0 Mental Health First Aid**

8.1 The Council's Health and Safety Adviser has led the coordination of the relaunch of the Council's Mental Health programme. This has included recruiting colleagues who are currently undertaking the Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Advocacy in the Workplace Level 2 Certificate. This is a government funded, nationally recognised and accredited qualification.

8.2 To support the Council's commitment to mental health first aid, a dedicated safe space has been established. Using existing resources, the room is equipped with a networked computer and telephone and provides a private space for mental health first aiders to support colleagues who may be experiencing crisis.

## **9.0 Safety Committee**

- 9.1 The Safety Committee provides oversight and assurance on the Council's health and safety arrangements. It supports the Council in meeting its legal duties by monitoring performance, reviewing incidents and trends, and helps to ensure appropriate controls are in place to protect employees, service users and others affected by the Council's activities. The Committee also provides a forum for learning, continuous improvement and the sharing of good practice across services.
- 9.2 Contract Managers and Council tenants are invited to attend the Safety Committee to provide feedback on the health and safety performance of the Council's contracted services. This helps ensure that risks associated with outsourced activities are effectively managed, that contractors are meeting contractual and legal requirements, and that any emerging issues are identified and addressed promptly.
- 9.3 The Council's Safety Committee met twice during this reporting period, on:
  - a) 7 May 2025
  - b) 5 November 2025
- 9.4 Minutes from these meetings have been shared with the Leadership Team and Human Resources Committee.
- 9.5 At the time of drafting this report, the next meeting of the Safety Committee is scheduled for Wednesday 22 April 2026. Minutes from this meeting will be shared following the meeting.

## **10.0 Occupational Health Provision**

- 10.1 In December 2025 the Council's Occupational Health Service provider informed the Human Resources service that it would be ceasing operations early 2026. The Health and Safety Adviser had launched a procurement exercise through the Eastern Shires Purchasing Organisation (ESPO) procurement framework but due

to the size of the organisation it did not attract interest. Working with the Human Resources Adviser to find a solution Stevenage borough Council were approached as they were in the process of launching a procurement exercise, it was agreed to undertake a joint procurement exercise, operating under two separate contracts. The Health and Safety Adviser created a duplicate set of contract documents, and the Human Resources Adviser opened a dialogue with a provider working together to put an interim arrangement into place to ensure a seamless continuity of service.

The joint procurement has now closed, 4 expressions of interest were received and have been evaluated, and a provider has been selected with the intention of awarding the contract in April 2026.

## **11.0 First Aid Provision**

The health and Safety Adviser is responsible for ensuring that arrangements for the provision of first aid are in place to ensure adequate cover during the working week especially critical now that hybrid working arrangements are operating. A vital element of this was to arrange for the Caretakers to undertake the training as the role covers the full week and evening meetings providing a critical and vital important resource for the Council.

Further training is being planned for June 2026 to recruit first aiders and bolster the number and replace first aiders that have left or retired.

## **12.0 Employee Assistance Scheme**

- 12.1 The Council also operates an Employee Assistance Scheme, which provides confidential counselling, advice and support to any employee affected by an incident, accident or near miss event.

## **13.0 Learning and Development**

- 13.1 During 2026/27 the Council's Health and Safety Adviser will be exploring opportunities for shared training with the Assistant Director for Resources at Broxbourne Borough Council.
- 13.2 This work will initially focus on first aid provision, to ensure there is an appropriate level of first aid cover throughout the working week.
- 13.3 Additional training under consideration includes:
  - a) Management health and safety responsibilities
  - b) Fire marshal training
  - c) Review and redesign of e-learning modules on Skillgate

## **14.0 Risks**

- 14.1 At this time, there are no risks that the Council's Health and Safety Adviser wishes to bring to the attention of the members of Human Resources Committee.

## **15.0 Implications/Consultations**

- 15.1 Community Safety
  - a) None arising directly from this report. However, 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.
- 15.2 Data Protection
  - a) None arising directly from this report.
- 15.3 Equalities
  - a) None arising directly from this report. 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 and comply with the Equalities Act.
- 15.4 Environmental Sustainability

a) None arising directly from this report.

15.5 Financial

a) None arising directly from this report.

15.6 Health and Safety

a) Yes. Health and Safety practice, reporting and monitoring is in place to comply with legal requirements, and the report has been reviewed by Leadership Team which includes the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

15.7 Human Resources

a) None arising directly from this report.

15.8 Human Rights

a) None arising directly from this report.

15.9 Legal

a) None arising directly from this report.

15.10 Specific Wards

a) Not applicable.

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

16.1 Background Information:

a) None

16.2 Appendices

a) None

**Contact Member**

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