

London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Report to: Audit and Pensions Committee

Date: 01/12/2020

Subject: Annual Health and Safety at Work Report 2019 / 2020

Report of: Paul Barton, Head of Corporate Safety

Responsible Director: Strategic Director for Economy

Summary

This report highlights the Council's activities and performance in health and safety at work during financial year 2019 / 2020. It also recommends priorities for the coming financial year.

Recommendation

For the Committee to note and comment on the report.

Wards Affected: None

Legal implications

'Except in such cases as may be prescribed, it shall be the duty of every employer to prepare and as often as may be appropriate revise a written statement of [the] general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of [the] employees and the organisation and arrangements for the time being in force for carrying out that policy, and to bring the statement and any revision of it to the notice of all of [the] employees'. (Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974. section 2(3)).

The policy statement, signed the leader and the chief executive, is displayed in all LBHF workplaces. The organisation and arrangements for health and safety at work in LBHF are found on the intranet and available in paper copy on request.

Financial implications

No change. A budget is allocated for training of safety responders (Nominated First Aiders, Fire Evacuation Officers, Evacuation Chair Operators) as identified in policy, which is coordinated by corporate health and safety.

Health and safety at work is equal to all other business LBHF. Tier 2 and tier 3 managers are required under policy to budget for health and safety at work accordingly. Similarly, under policy, the council must ensure that the decisions they make take account of health and safety and that resources are allocated for this purpose.

Contact Officer:

Name: Paul Barton
Position: Head of Corporate Safety
Telephone: 07917 553 589
Email: Paul.barton@lbhf.gov.uk

DETAILED ANALYSIS**Key points of note**

A revised corporate health and safety policy was introduced to show disaggregation and realignment of sovereign services.

There was no enforcement action taken against the Council by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in this year. Seven injuries were reportable to HSE during the year. These are detailed below. No dangerous occurrences, occupational disease cases or gas safety incidents were reportable to HSE during the year.

Ongoing operational support was given to the 'Hello Future' directive and decent project by Corporate Health and Safety. Advice was provided on provision and duties of safety responders (nominated first aiders and fire evacuation officers), display screen equipment and fire evacuation safety.

At the end of the financial year the coronavirus pandemic struck. Procurement and mobilisation of personal protective equipment within the borough to workplaces and partnership agencies commenced at pace during the first two weeks of a national lockdown. Food banks run by voluntary workers were in the advanced planning stage as the year closed. The corporate health and safety audit programme timetable for the forthcoming financial year was halted to concentrate on necessary resulting reactive work.

Accidents, injuries and near-miss incidents

Appendix 1 details accidents, injuries and near-miss incidents during the year 2019 / 2020. There were seven incidents reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), six being injuries to employees and one to a member of the public.

This gives the Council an incidence rate of 10.5¹, calculated on a full-time equivalent establishment of 1,837 employees for the year 2019 / 2020 and a RIDDOR incidence rate of 3.8. This is our baseline figure because the incidence rate for the previous year is unknown due to unavailability of data on FTE establishment at 31st March 2019.

Table 1 provides an overview of incidents reported to HSE.

Date	Category	Type	Department
------	----------	------	------------

¹ Calculated on all injury and violence intimidating behaviour incidents (193)

30 th Oct	Fracture	Struck by falling object	Schools
28 th Feb	Over 7-day injury	Slip trip or fall	Corp. Property & FM
5 th Dec	Fracture	Slip trip or fall	Schools
20 th Dec	Over 7-day injury	Physical assault	Provided Services
13 th Aug	Fracture	Physical assault	Corp. Property & FM
9 th July	Fracture	Slip trip or fall	Decant project
20 th Aug	Over 7-day injury	Slip trip or fall	Complaints & Improvements

Table 1. Incidents reported to HSE during financial year 2019 / 2020

All incidents that are reportable to HSE are investigated by Corporate Health and Safety, seeking to make recommendations to prevent recurrence and requiring services to review risk assessments.

Additional control measures implemented directly from recommendations arising from such investigations include

- Security improvements to the Cobbs Hall building in Fulham Palace Road,
- Improvements to marking the presence of a step were made to the landlord's managing agent of 45 Beaver Lane Hammersmith, which the landlord has accepted and has rectified.
- Procurement tendering for improved conflict resolution and 'breakaway' training for all employees.
- An overhaul of the policy for employee personal safety, including those that work alone.
- Ongoing reminders to care workers of the need for regular care plan risk assessment reviews of children and adults that have protected characteristics.
- Ongoing commitment to annually safety audit every community school, SEND schools and academy school in the buy-back scheme

Overall 283 incidents were reported in the year. 88 of these were accident injuries, 105 were violence and intimidation incidents, 16 were near miss incidents 7 were dangerous occurrences (non-HSE reportable) and 67 were 'other' types of incident.

Incidents in the category 'other' were examined for trends and patterns. A sample revealed 43 percent were miscoded threatening incidents, 30 percent were concern for client welfare (mostly due to substance abuse), 27 percent were security incidents.

Risk of injury to staff from violent behaviour at the Haven were mitigated in line with the setting's ongoing behaviour management policy. At mid-year report the council noted a rise in violent incidents here, but it was shown that improvement in reporting culture had taken place, alongside already established mitigations; for example, care-plan review undertaken after every incident and the way in which this linked back to the overall risk control of the setting.

Comparing the overall violent incident figures with the previous financial year, there shows a rise in violence and intimidation incidents of 36 percent on last year's figures.

A similar rise in the number of injuries at work is also shown as 24 percent up on the previous year.

In light of these increases and to further reduce the risk of violence towards employees so far as is reasonably practicable, a review of conflict resolution training was carried out and suggestion made for a ‘zero tolerance’ poster campaign on violence towards staff, akin to that promulgated by Transport for London. The training review recommended a corporate approach to conflict resolution training, which will be further developed in the next financial year. It is of note that the majority of violent incidents are from dysregulated behaviour by vulnerable clients in care. These incidents are investigated and reviewed individually every time and care plans amended to reflect any changes where identified.

Slip, trip and fall accidents were the main causes of other employee injuries during this year. There is no overall pattern as to why there was an increase in the number of injuries to employees during this year. In the second half of the year a communication to all staff from the corporate health and safety team reminded that all injuries from accidents at work must be recorded on the accident and incident reporting system (AIRS) and not just in the first aid logbook. It could therefore be conjectured that the rise in injury reports was due to an increased awareness in reporting culture, following this reminder.

Table 2 shows comparison between the safety incident reporting figures for this financial year and the previous year.

2019 / 2020		2018 / 2019	
Accidents resulting in injury	88	Accidents resulting in injury	64
Violence and intimidation	105	Violence and intimidation	77
Other	67	Other	42
Near miss	16	Near miss	10
Dangerous occurrence	7	Dangerous occurrence	8

Table 2. Safety incident reporting. Comparison 2019/2020 with 2018/2019

Realignment of corporate health and safety

An internal audit report in January 2018 concluded a limited assurance adequacy of the corporate health and safety team. A realignment of the service was subsequently completed during this year.

The health and safety policy was revised as part of corporate health and safety realignment. It makes improvements in areas such as consultation, control of contractors, use of volunteers, contract managers and commissioning officers, more clarity around schools and a streamlined reporting structure for health and safety. The policy details the organisation and arrangements necessary to underpin the Council’s health and safety management system, following disaggregation from the tri and bi-borough partnership. The policy is designed to make changes with a minimum amount of disruption to existing channels of communication, consultation, competency and cooperation. A revised policy and statement of intention was introduced and is attached at appendix 2.

The SLT dashboard within the corporate risk register was revised to show health and safety as a separate risk entry. The separation was made in order to provide a greater clarity and distinction from other corporate risks, such as those associated with statutory breach of human rights and statutory breach of data protection. The rationale was agreed by the corporate risk manager, thus setting the strategic approach for corporate health and safety management, where in the current climate fines for non-fatal workplace accidents can cost local authorities up to one million pounds as well as significant reputational damage.

An operational health and safety risk register was formulated to ensure live document access to progress on actions arising from risk assessment review, workplace safety audits and inspections. The operational risk register is updated and presented monthly to the Assurance Risk Operations Group (AROG) and quarterly to the Health and Safety Board. The register provides clarity on the directorates accountable and the services responsible for remedial actions and mitigations listed.

A corporate health and safety business change plan 2019 to 2021 identifies key milestones to achieve service excellence. It outlines the need for a health and safety management system assessment software tool to upgrade the tri-borough assessment system.

A health and safety board was inaugurated during this year to oversee health and safety management throughout the authority. Chaired by the strategic director for health and safety, it convenes quarterly, or more often if required to.

Health and Safety Audit Programme

Audits across all areas of the Council were completed during the year. A plan of works schedule is available from Corporate Health and Safety. Audits are on target across all services and planning is in progress for the 2020 / 2021 programme.

Social Care

Fifty sites were selected in Adult Social Care for audit during 2019 / 2020 and are on target for completion by the end of March 2020. Six sites were re-inspected in the Supported Housing Service. This was to follow up on audits highlighting an absence of remedial action planning for works identified in fire risk assessments and electrical installation condition reports. The re-inspections revealed that managers of selected sites had now placed works requests for remedial action with Corporate Property and that documents were now available and up to date. Three of the centres in the original audit sample were now closed.

Schools

A sample of twenty schools were selected for audit during this financial year and these are on target for completion by end of March 2020. Audits so far reveal very good overall progress.

Asbestos management in schools remains a national concern. Results from the DfE's Asbestos Management Assurance Process saw only 75 percent of schools and academies in England and Wales responding to the DfE's instruction to undertake the process. Of this 75 percent, 3.5 percent were referred to the Health

and Safety Executive because they could not provide enough evidence that they were managing asbestos in line with regulatory requirements. Although current audits in the borough show good progress in this area of health and safety management, further checks on asbestos management will form an additional themed series of inspections from March 2020 onwards and carry into the next financial year. The risk has been moderately heightened on the workplan to reflect our acknowledgment of the DfE's national findings and to reflect the return to in-house asbestos management under Children's Services from consultants 3BM.

Continued membership of EVOLVE and CLEAPPS was recommended by Corporate health and safety.

Corporate Buildings

Audits: fifty premises were audited during the year. Of note were Linford Christie stadium, where improvement works from this and a previous health and safety report were completed to water systems; The Haven, where glazing was made safer to prevent injury through self-harm;

A case of pneumonia in a colleague working in 145 King Street generated an investigation into a potential cause possibly being associated with the building environment. It was the fifth case from the building. Corporate Health and Safety examined sickness absence patterns for the teams on the third and second floors. A wider survey than the original indicative one planned was recommended by Corporate Health and Safety. The survey was widened to a full independent 'sick building syndrome' survey. Head of Corporate Safety met with the OH Physician to discuss the cases. This part of the investigation revealed that the diseases contracted by colleagues were not directly attributable to the building environment, plant or work equipment. The other aspect of 'sick building syndrome' is work-related stress and this was being investigated by Corporate Health and Safety until lockdown, with full cooperation from service managers.

The fire risk assessment review programme continues across the Council. In Corporate Property. Significant findings from fire risk assessment reviews were entered onto the Operational Risk Register to expedite remedial actions and mitigations for the first part of year. Once it was established that remedial works were planned and executed accordingly the assessment process was contracted out to an FCS consultant. In Economy, including Housing, the Fire Safety Compliance and Works Services undertake and coordinate fire risk assessments.

Decant of staff away from Hammersmith Town Hall and Extension into hub workplaces, plus a welcomed increase in agile and flexible remote working, has led to pockets of shortages in the provision of nominated first aiders and fire evacuation officers in new workplaces across the authority. A gap analyses was conducted by Corporate Health and Safety and a resulting advertisement on our intranet during the summer called for volunteers in the new workplace buildings. Take up of volunteers was reasonably good and ongoing at the end of the year.

Environment

A health and safety board within the Environment directorate was set-up during the year to periodically examine health and safety matters. It feeds into the corporate health and safety board to ensure reciprocity, enabling directorate health and safety goals to be aligned to corporate goals and directorate matters to be raised to Health and Safety Board when necessary. It is further linked to the Environment JCC, where trades unions are able to discuss safety matters with the directorate.

Furthermore, Public Realm have a health and safety committee for some of our higher hazard services, including cleansing and waste, parks and civil enforcement officers.

Office moves and display screen equipment

All staff that are display screen equipment users and that are relocating under the decant project were instructed to undertake an updated display screen equipment (DSE) assessment.

The DSE assessment system was 're-loaded' after a series of meetings. Technical obstacles around files extant from the bi-borough arrangement were largely overcome. The data feed launch reached around 2,196 users and added a further 300 users since January 2019. About 500 users had 'bad pathways' and these will divert to a dedicated inbox. The inbox will be monitored over time by Corporate Health and Safety to ascertain line manager details. This result achieves compliance amongst a majority. A more recent file of exclusively LBHF staff has been compiled by People and Talent and passed under secure cover by IT to the system provider. It is hoped this latest file will help to root out 'bad pathways' and improve the compliance data set. Corporate Health and Safety Continue to monitor and keep close watch.

Performance

A new operational risk register was introduced, distributed and discussed at Assurance and Risk Officer's Group (AROG) on 24th July 2019. The operational risk register covers both reactive and proactive monitoring.

Priorities for the coming year 2020 / 2021

From the emerging picture at the end of the financial year 2019 / 2020, health and safety at work priorities for the council will be determined and dictated by the coronavirus pandemic. At the end of the financial year 2019 / 2020, it is hard to gauge the full extent or duration of the pandemic's effect on the council's employees and those with whom we interact. Health and safety is a key component in all levels of the response.

If and where there is scope to do so, within the emerging emergency situation, other priorities for 2020 and 2021, established through active and reactive monitoring during the year, are recommended as follows:

- ❖ Improve transport safety management at Bagley's Lane depot
- ❖ Improve asbestos management plan knowledge within schools
- ❖ Continue ongoing client-side health and safety scrutiny overview of the West King Street Renewal (WKSР) project, particularly the refurbishment of Hammersmith Town Hall to help achieve the target completion date.

- ❖ Revamp the employee personal safety, including lone working, policy
- ❖ Review the work-related stress policy and procedures
- ❖ Procure improved health and safety management system software
- ❖ Produce an improved corporate employee protection register, to allow confidence in ease of use and to discontinue all local and departmental registers.

Equality implications

There are no equality implications in this report.

Appendix 1 – Safety Incidents 2019/20

Safety incidents during financial year 2019 / 2020

What has happened?	How many
Dangerous Occurrence	7
Injury Accident	88
Near Miss	16
Other Incident	67
Violence and Intimidation Incident	105

What team are you part of?	how many
Adult Learning and Skills	1
Allocations Service	1
Appeals Team	1
Arts and Culture Management and Admin	1
Askew Road Library	23
Assessment Teams	1
Bi-Borough Human Resources	1
BPM Technical Support	2
Building and Property Management	2
Building Control	1
Business and Enterprise	1
Central Services Client Management	1
Chelsea Library	4
Community Support Service	2
Contact Service	2
Coroners Service	1
Day Opportunities Imperial Wharf	2
Director of Family Services - LBHF	1
Director of Finance and Resources	1
Director of Housing	8
Director of Housing Services	1
Early Help Service	2
Economy and Infrastructure	2
Electoral Support Services	1
Env Admin Technical Team 1	1
Estate Support and Security	8
Family Services Front Door Team	1
Fulham Library	24
Hammersmith Library	19
Head of Compliance and Health and Safety	1
Head of Economy and Infrastructure	1
Head of Housing Advice and Assessment	1

Head of Rental Income	1
Health and Safety	2
Highways and Construction	1
Hostels Management	4
Housing Advice	7
Housing Assessment and Reviews	5
Housing Services North	10
Imperial Wharf Resource Centre	3
Kensington Central Library	2
LAC and Care Leavers	1
LBHF Building Control	1
LBHF Corporate Finance and Systems	1
LBHF LAC and Care Leavers	1
LBHF Pest Control Service	1
LBHF Registrars	2
Management and Support	1
Markets and Street Trading	1
Mental Health Team Ellerslie Road	1
Middle Base	3
Neighbourhood Wardens - HRA	2
New PSL Scheme	3
North Base	8
North Team	1
Options Day Service	7
Parking Enforcement	6
Parks and Open Spaces	3
Parks Police 3	1
Pay and Park	1
Prison Library Service	1
Private Housing - Standards	1
Property Compliance Team	2
Property Services and Regeneration - Operational and Engineering	2
Property Services Head of Operations	1
Quality Monitoring	1
Reablement Team LBHF	2
Recovery - Taxation Team	1
Rehousing Options (HRA)	1
Rent Income Team FCS	1
Resident Involvement	1
Revs and Bens Operations	1
Rivercourt Respite Service	1
Rough Sleeping	1
Sensory and Language Impairment	1
Service Quality Team	1
Sheltered Housing North	2
Sheltered Housing South	4

Shepherds Bush Library	16
South Base	4
St Mary's & Out of Borough Hospital Team 2	1
The Haven Centre	36
Waste Contract Management	1
West London Strategic Partnership	1

Appendix 2

Health and Safety Policy Statement of Intention

We will strive to be the best by aiming to continuously improve health and safety performance through our governance arrangements; where management of risks arising in respect of health and safety at work forms an integral part of our business decision making process.

We recognise and accept our duty to provide and maintain a safe and healthy work environment for our employees, partners and others affected by our activities. We recognise the need for a sensible and proportionate approach to managing health and safety.

Each employee has a duty to co-operate in the operation of the health and safety policy by taking care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions or inaction and to cooperate with us by complying with any legal duty or requirement.

The health and safety policy details particulars of the organisation and arrangements for the management of health and safety within the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. It is important that we all adhere to it and remember that the most powerful message we can send is through our own visible behaviour.