

LONDON BOROUGH OF HAMMERSMITH & FULHAM

Report to: Audit Committee

Date: 14/12/2021

Subject: Mid-Year Report on Health and Safety at Work 2021 / 2022

Report author: Paul Barton, Head of Corporate Safety

Responsible Director: Jonathan Pickstone, Strategic Director of Economy

SUMMARY

This report is the mid-year update on the council's health and safety at work management.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the committee note the health and safety at work performance of the council at the halfway stage of this financial year 2021/2022.

Wards Affected: All wards

H&F Values	Summary of how this report aligns to the H&F Values
Building shared prosperity	Good health and safety performance has the goal of eliminating and reducing workplace accidents. Accidents come at a cost (human and financial) both to the council and to the injured person. A shared prosperity between the organisation, the employee and the residents is achieved by the elimination and reduction of accidents in the borough.
Creating a compassionate council	Good health and safety management has a moral objective. To learn of family, friends, colleagues or residents killed, or seriously injured, in a workplace accident is profoundly distressing. Therefore, a compassionate council must embrace the moral aspect of health and safety at work, not merely the economic and legal aspects of it.
Doing things with local residents, not to them	Good health and safety at work performance includes the safety of the

	residents with whom the council interacts in the everyday aspects of our core business activities.
Being ruthlessly financially efficient	Good health and safety management is financially efficient because it prevents fines for breach of statutory duty or settlement of civil claims brought against the council.
Taking pride in H&F	The council takes pride in a good health and safety at work performance because it reflects the image of the borough as portrayed to the residents and to others.
Rising to the challenge of the climate and ecological emergency	Good health and safety management plays a part in tackling the climate emergency in many ways. For instance, the requirement to seek less hazardous workplace substances for employee health also has ecological benefits when, for example, replacing solvents with water-based products during COSHH assessment review.

Financial impact

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report. Revenue budget is allocated for the training of safety responders (Nominated first-aiders, fire evacuation officers, evacuation chair operators) which is coordinated by the Corporate health and safety team.

Health and safety induction training is funded for all employees and coordinated through the 'Be-online Awaken' software program.

Where specific health and safety training is identified through risk assessments, this is funded by the respective departments and they are expected to make hold suitable budget provision.

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 by the leader and the head of paid service, is displayed in all LBHF workplaces. The statement is valid until 2023, unless a change in head of paid service or leadership occurs first, in which case the statement must be renewed sooner. The organisation and arrangements for health and safety at work in LBHF are within the council's health and safety policy and can be found on the intranet.

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1. Analysis of progress to date on this year's key priorities

Fire safety: A review of the fire safety management policy is underway in preparation for the Building Safety Act, which is expected to receive royal assent next year. A new regulator has been appointed and will operate as part of the health and safety executive (HSE). The new law will prompt a major revision of the regulatory reform (fire safety) order 2005. A working group of relevant council officers from various directorates will lead consultation on the policy review from October 2021, reporting to the health and safety board. The group is likely to discuss the appointment of an over-arching third-party independent consultant. This will deliver high level assurance on fire safety management across all council services, including the 'information gateways' required by the new regulator that ensure a 'golden thread' of information about council buildings.

Coronavirus: Hammersmith and Fulham (H&F) workplace cases rose slightly in number during the summer months after a general lull during the spring. However, this was not of significance and the cautious approach continues to ensure infection controls remain in place in H&F buildings. Services must still present their case for returning to frontline operations at the technical assurance group and then receive assent from the covid-19 board. Changes in law for employees in care homes came into force on 11th November, whereby employees must have received both vaccinations unless medically exempt. Templates for service risk assessment and individual risk assessment have been amended to reflect this, as well as other changes such as regular testing of staff working in the borough as part of general risk management. Infection control training for all employees was made available during October. This was a pre-recorded session on the intranet, but with the offer of a question and answer session for staff by the infection control nursing officer at the popular 'Wellbeing Wednesday' slot.

Training: A revised health and safety training policy was presented for consultation at health and safety board on 9th September 2021. The aim is a

consolidated corporate policy with clear guidelines on levels of training required across all employment groups within the council. The policy is on target for introduction this year.

Driver safety management: A new software management system is being scoped with the digital service project team. It is tailored to last year's working group specifications and recommendations from the council's insurer. Progress is currently on target.

Risk profiling: This continues on target with service profiles broken down for analyses to achieve an overall organisational profile. This 'benchmarking' work informs key performance indicators for the next financial year and links into the corporate risk register (risk 32).

Work-related stress: A stress indicator tool (software program) is being procured. Using the HSE management standards six 'stressors' criteria, the indicator tool will anonymously analyse the type and extent of work-related stress risk across services through a series of 34 questions, thereby aiding stress risk assessment. As with all risk assessment training, manager training for stress risk assessment will be provided by the corporate health and safety team. Progress is currently on target.

Training and assessment for working in the home environment: Display screen equipment assessment and training remains behind schedule at present. A manager's forum in October provided training to all managers in use of the software program to ensure they are able to monitor and review employees within their respective teams that are working from home. A guidance document for all staff on hybrid working has been drafted for the Hello hybrid future launch as part of the workplace transformation programme.

2. Accidents, injuries and near miss incidents (excluding schools)

There have been 86 incidents to date¹ this year, 23 of which were injuries and 63 of which were near-miss incidents. Of the 23 injuries 3 were reportable to HSE, each being injuries that caused an absence of more than seven days as a result. The first HSE reportable injury was an assault on an officer in housing services, the second was an assault on a civil enforcement officer and the third was a trip and fall. Two incidents occurred in July and the third in October. In the assault incidents the assailants are being prosecuted by the police for causing actual bodily harm.

Work continues on messaging within the borough to help prevent violence and aggression towards H&F staff and a number of initiatives will be delivered by the end of the financial year. In the case of the trip and fall injury, which occurred in the street, the area was examined and there was no defect with the kerb over which the employee fell. A new safety incident reporting 'portal' is now operational and reveals that 110 days have been lost so far this year due to injury sustained at work. These statistics now automatically include community schools.

¹ At 8th November 2021

Safety incident data in schools is reported to the headteachers meeting annually and to teaching staff representatives at the LBF trade union forum.

3. **Operational performance review**

The table below shows that at the end of the second quarter this year there are fewer outstanding items on the operational risk register compared to last year. While completion of items was down a little in terms of percentage, the overall percentage of remedial actions with target dates that had been missed shows a reduction, indicating a faster turnaround by services of remedial actions identified through health and safety monitoring (both active and reactive). A detailed copy of the register, which is protectively marked, for the end of quarter 2 is available to elected members via request to the corporate health and safety service. A full review of performance during this financial year will be included in the annual health and safety at work report.

	2021 / 2022 End of Q2	2020 / 2021 End of Q2
Items on the risk register	46	60
With target dates missed	16	22
Items completed	16	28
Items completed on target	9	15
Percentage total complete in Q2	34.8%	46.7%
Percentage with target dates missed in Q2	34.8%	37%

Table 1. Comparison of second quarter entries on the operational risk register: this year with last year

4. **Equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI) implications**

Corporate health and safety continue to support the EDI agenda through workplace assessment for reasonable adjustment and in the formulation of personal emergency evacuation plans for disabled colleagues.
