

## Council Health and Safety Annual Report – 2014/2015

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises significant corporate management activities over the period 2014/15 covering key achievements, council-wide statistics and developments for the year ahead to improve our performance.

The objectives of this report are to demonstrate Barnet Council's commitment to:

- Making public the council's performance on health and safety, by publishing health and safety performance data on the Intranet;
- The on-going effective implementation of the Council's health and safety policy and its associated arrangements;
- Monitor and measure health and safety performance, with a view to highlighting areas where the council performs well and also areas for improvement;
- Openness and accountability in all of the council services;
- Our responsibility for ensuring a safe and healthy environment for service users, members of the public, employees and contractors.

### 2. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE FOR 2014/15

#### Key achievements:

- Introduction of a web-based accident reporting system
- Starting the staged roll out of health and safety e-learning to all staff through the introduction of the Fire and Display Screen modules
- Maintaining accident and incidents rates below the national average for the Public Sector
- Embedding health and safety as a key consideration in the commissioning of services

#### Introduction of new health and safety policies or procedures

- We have introduced a toolkit to assist commissioners and project managers to manage health and safety risks at all stages of a project.
- The Asbestos and Legionella policies have been revised to take into account changes to legislation and the new arrangements for managing the council's estate with our CSG and Re partners.

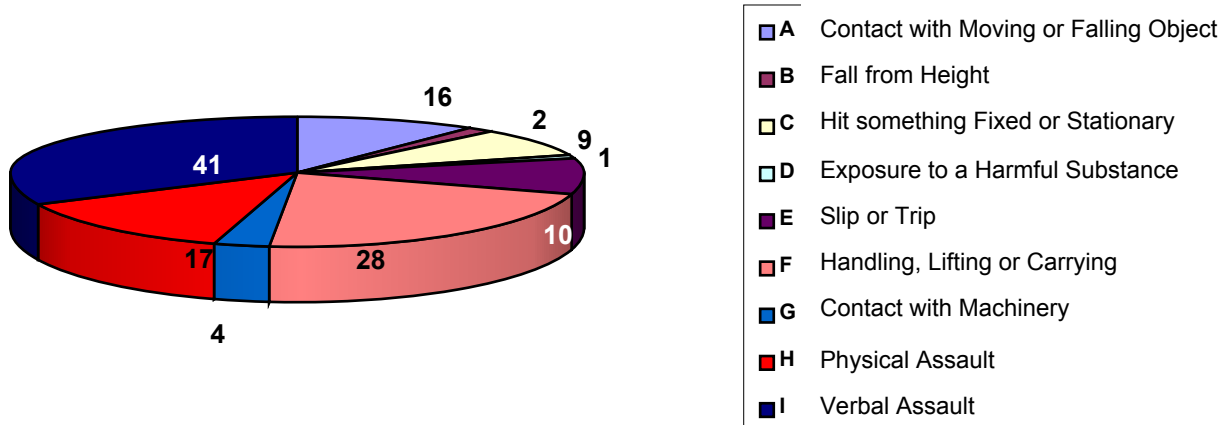
#### Accident/Incident data

As a good employer we should always be seeking to reduce work related accidents and ill health and so managers are required to investigate all incidents and, where possible, introduce measures to prevent recurrence. All incidents are recorded on the council's on-line accident reporting systems and these are interrogated by managers and the safety, health and wellbeing team to identify trends and ensure incidents are properly investigated.

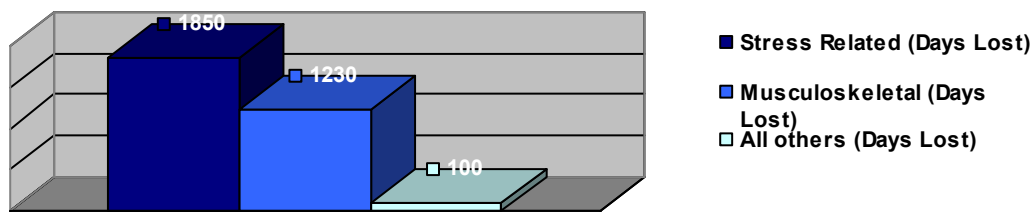
Although there were 20 RIDDOR accidents over the reporting period the councils overall Accident Incidence Rate (RIDDOR incidents per 100,000 staff), which is a national recognised measure of performance, stood at 1011 for the reporting period, which is below the average for public service provision.

**Chart 1** shows all reported work related incidents by type with the most common type of incident reported being verbal assault. Many of these assaults occur in establishments where the client group have special needs. Continual exposure to verbal assault can affect an individual’s performance and lead to stress with the resultant health effects. The most common accident reported are those associated with manual handling, many of these result in minor injuries such as cuts and bruises but on occasion they can lead to more serious muscle injury that results in time off work.

**Chart 2** shows that there are two common cause of work related ill health reported on CoreHR; “stress related”, which include psychological ill health and “musculoskeletal”, commonly caused by repetitive and lifting and moving activities. Organisational change and lack of control are common causes of organisation stress. Exposure to stress is not limited to work, as a good employer we should seek not only to reduce organisational causes of stress but also support staffs who are experiencing issues that may lead to stress outside of work. To this end the council provides support services to staff including a 24/7 employee assistance programme which includes, if required, confidential counselling sessions.



**Chart 1 – Reported Work Related Incidents by type 2014/15**



**Chart 2 - Top three common causes of Work Related Ill Health 2014/15**

## Corporate Health and Safety Training

We have continued to deliver corporate health and through our new e-learning system and face to face training. The priorities for 2014/15 were fire awareness and display screen equipment training to tie in with the planned office moves.

Corporate training carried out for the reporting period and numbers who completed the courses:

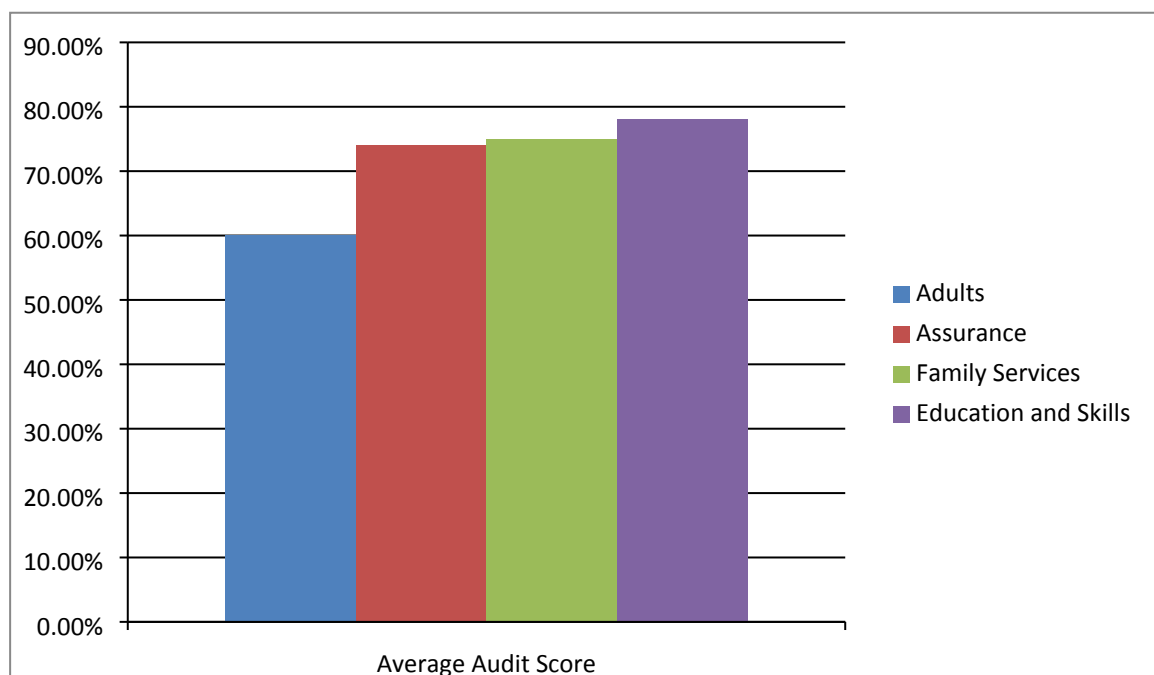
- **Fire Safety** – 185
- **Display Screen Equipment** – 21
- **Asbestos awareness** – 45

*Please note that Delivery Units organise and deliver a wide range of service specific health and safety training, including h&s induction, which is in addition to corporate training shown above.*

## Health and Safety Audits

In order to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, our policies and good practice we use a system of internal independent auditing to identify and remedy any shortfalls in health and safety performance. The audits are carried out by health and safety professionals with the annual audit programme agreed by the Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing. The areas for audit are based on risk and to ensure a representative sample of council activities. Due to the low level of risk associated with the activities of the Deputy Chief Operating Officers service, no audits were carried out over the reporting period. *Please note that due to restructuring within the StreetScene Delivery Unit no audits were carried out during 2013/14, there are comprehensive audits planned for the following period.*

The results of the audits are summarised in the table below. The overall compliance score across the council was 72% which is an overall improvement in the average compliance score compared to 2013/14 of 68%.



The audits highlight that the council performs well in the implementation of policy and in effective risk management. The areas of poorer performance are around premises related compliance. Although Adults and Communities score was low compared to the other DU's there was no significant risk identified and plans are in place to ensure a significant improvement for the following period. All audits result in the production of action plans to address any areas of poor performance.

### **3. CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY PRIORITIES FOR THE PERIOD 2015/16**

The corporate priorities aim to ensure the continued improvements in health and safety performance and the reduction of work related injury and ill health. They also seek to address any gaps or trends identified through monitoring activities such as incident data and audits.

- 1) Delivery Units to review current manual handling risk assessments and controls in order to ensure a reduction in these incident typos over the period
- 2) Deliver a reduction in stress related absence through a comprehensive review of current stress action plans by Delivery Units. The review to consider current causes of stress related absence and controls in place.
- 3) Ensure improvements in premises compliance across the council's operational estate by reviewing current arrangements for testing and inspection and monitoring.
- 4) Introduce a health and safety management module as part of the management academy to ensure all managers fully understand their responsibilities and are equipped them with the skills necessary to manage health and safety risk.
- 5) Review the councils health and safety policy to take into account new legislation and changes to the councils operations.