

## Council Health and Safety Annual Report – 2015/2016

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises significant corporate management activities over the period 2015/16 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:

- Our responsibility for ensuring a safe and healthy environment for service users, members of the public, employees and contractors;
- The on-going effective implementation of the council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy;
- Continual improvements in health and safety through the monitoring and measurement of its health and safety performance to highlight areas where the council performs well as well as areas for improvement;
- Making public the council's performance on health and safety, by publishing health and safety performance data on the Intranet;
- Openness and accountability

### 2. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE FOR 2015/16

#### Key achievements:

- 1) 55% reduction in "RIDDOR" reportable injuries
- 2) 10% reduction in days lost due to "Manual Handling" injuries
- 3) 5% reduction in days lost due to "Stress Related" illness
- 4) An action plan agreed with the CSG Estates service to bring all of our corporate buildings to a fully compliant state.
- 5) Introduction of a module on health and safety management as part of the management academy.

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

- Part B of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, which details delegated duties for health and safety, has been revised to take into account changes to the senior management structure as well as the roles introduced as part of our partnership with Capita.

#### Accident/Incident data

The council strives to continually improve its health and safety performance and to reduce work related accidents and ill health. Managers are required to ensure all incidents are reported and investigated and to introduce measures to prevent recurrence.

All incidents are recorded on the council's on-line accident reporting system and these are interrogated by managers, the CSG health and safety team and the councils Head of Safety Health and Wellbeing to ensure all incidents are fully investigated and to identify any emerging incidents trends.

There has been a significant reduction in RIDDOR reportable incidents over the reporting period, from 20 last year to 9 in this period. Although on the face of it this is good news there are investigations being carried out to ensure that this is not reflective of a reduction in reporting. The council remain high performing in this area with its Accident Incidence Rate (RIDDOR incidents per 100,000 staff), a national recognised measure of performance, standing at 440 for the reporting period, which is considerably below the average for public service provision.

**Chart 1** shows all reported work related incidents by type with the most common work related incidents reported being verbal assaults and lifting and handling injuries. Verbal assaults can be threatening and cause great stress and anxiety. Continued exposure to verbal assault can lead to increase in stress and ultimately ill health. Verbal assaults are investigated and where possible measures taken to reduce those and where this is not possible support is given to staff exposed.

Lifting and handling injuries mainly occur in the StreetScene delivery unit. Chart 2 highlights a common cause of work related ill health as Musculoskeletal and lifting and handling is a major contributor to these types of injuries. Streetscene regularly review their manual handling risk assessments and deliver training on lifting and moving to their staff.

**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 muscle injuries to the neck, shoulders and lower back.

Organisational change and lack of control are common causes of work related stress. Exposure to stress is not though 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 24/7 employee assistance which includes, if required, confidential counselling sessions. There has been a campaign to reduce stress related ill health with Delivery Units required to review their stress action plans. This has contributed to a reduction in time lost for stress related illness over the reporting period.

Musculoskeletal injuries are commonly caused by both lifting and handling activities or repetitive movements and poor posture, such as when continual using Display Screen Equipment or in maintenance activities. The majority of these injuries have been attributed to lifting and moving and so there has been a campaign to reduce these through a thorough review of risk assessments and controls. Encouragingly there has been a reduction in these types of injuries.

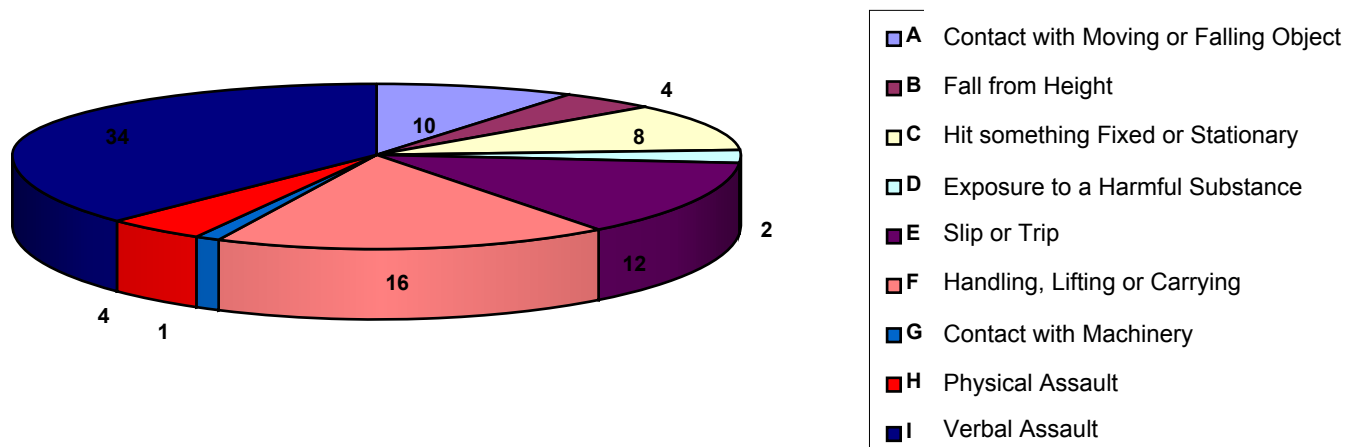


Chart 1 – Significant reported Work Related Incidents to employees by type 2015/16

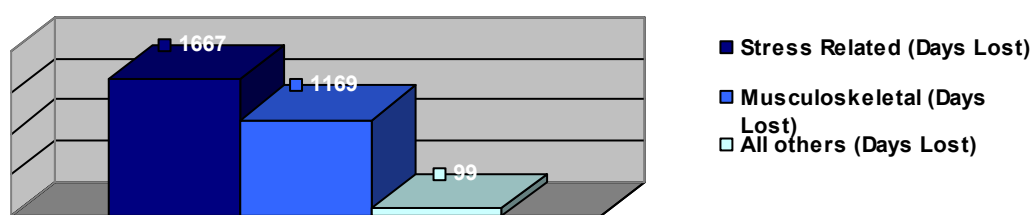


Chart 2 - Top three common causes of Work Related Ill Health 2015/16

## Corporate Health and Safety Training

We have continued to deliver corporate health and through our e-learning system as well as face to face training. The priorities for 2015/16 were managing health and safety as well as display screen equipment.

There was a total of 1243 module completed in 2014/15. The significant corporate training activities for the reporting period and numbers who completed these courses:

- **Management Academy Modules** – 141
- **Display Screen Equipment** – 87
- **Fire Safety** – 86
- **Induction Safety Interactive** – 61
- **Manual handling Interactive** – 60

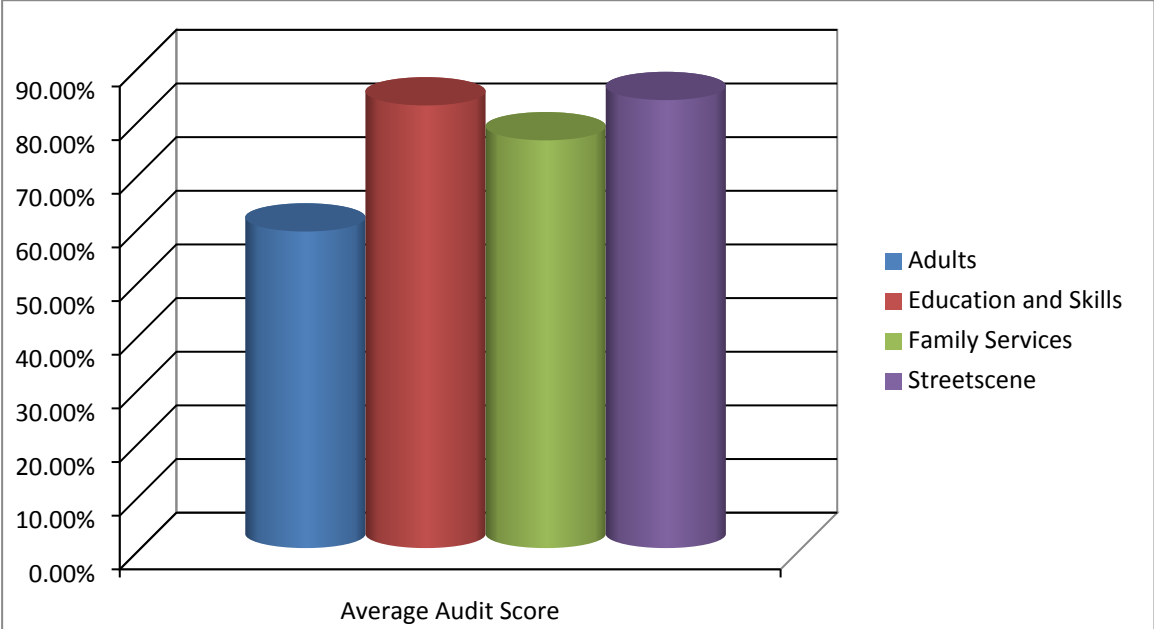
*Please note that Delivery Units organise and deliver a wide range of role specific health and safety training which is in addition to corporate training shown above.*

## Health and Safety Audits

In order to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation, our policies and accepted 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 selected to ensure a representative sample of council activities as well as taking into account higher risk activities. Audits are not usually carried out on lower risk areas of the council, such as predominantly office based activities, to make effective use of the available

resource. Risk assessments and regular monitoring by managers still continues in these low risk areas to ensure good practice and compliance.

A total of 161 Audits and reviews were carried out in 2014/15 with the averaged results of the audits summarised in the table below. The average overall compliance score across the council was 75% which is an overall improvement in the average compliance score compared to 2013/14 of 72%.



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 relatively low compared to the other DU's it still scores close to 60% with no significant risks identified. 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 2016/17

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 risk assessments and controls, that are over 12 months old, in order to ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent and reduce work related accidents and Ill health by at least 10%
- 2) Continue to seek reductions, of at least 10%, in days lost due to stress related illness and musculoskeletal injury through continued review of risk assessments and monitoring of work activities.
- 3) Review of the corporate health and safety training framework to ensure all levels receive the appropriate training and support
- 4) Review the way the council commission's works and services and manages projects to ensure health and safety is considered at all relevant stages and effective monitoring of h&s performance takes place.