

## Council Health and Safety Annual Report – 2016/2017

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises significant corporate management activities over the period 2016/17 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 ON PRIORITIES FOR 2016/17

#### **Key achievements:**

- 1) "Report it" campaign that has led to an increase in the reporting of verbal assault and minor injury incidents
- 2) An action plan was agreed with the CSG Estates service to bring all of our corporate buildings to a fully compliant state. All buildings have now been inspected
- 3) Roll out of mandatory health and safety and fire awareness training for all staff
- 4) Roll out of mandatory health and safety training for managers and premises managers to ensure the effective H&S management of activities and premises
- 5) Introduction of micro sites on the intranet to provide information and support to managers and staff
- 6) Delivery Units have reviewed their risk assessments to ensure they remain relevant

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

- The council's legionella policy has been reviewed to take into account changes in guidance as well as to reinforce 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 slight increase in the number of reported accidents over the period. Although this would normally be seen as negative in this case the council have strived over the last 12 months to increase the reporting of verbal assaults and minor injury incidents and the increase in reports confirms this. There should now be a plateau and reduction from this new base line going forward which will be monitored by managers and the Head of SHaW and reported to GFC through the B-Annual report. There has been no increase in RIDDOR incidents which are the classified major injuries; the council remains high performing in this area with its Accident Incidence Rate (RIDDOR incidents per 100,000 staff), a national recognised measure of performance, standing at 470 for the reporting period, which is considerably below the average for public service provision.

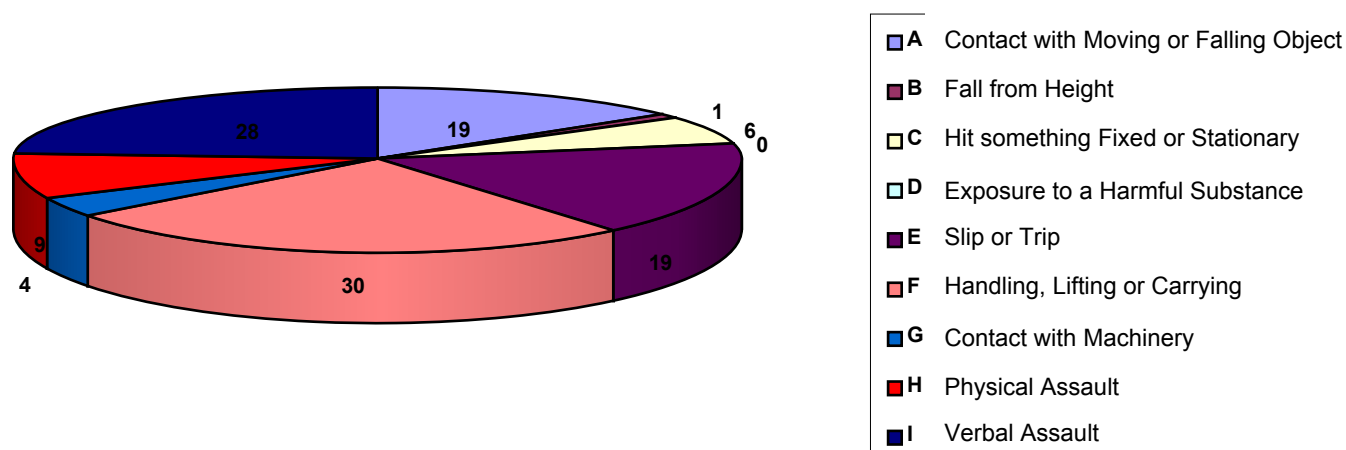
**Chart 1** shows all reported work related incidents by type with the most common work related incidents reported being verbal assaults and lifting and handling injuries. Verbal assaults can be threatening and cause great stress and anxiety. Continued exposure to verbal assault can lead to increase 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.

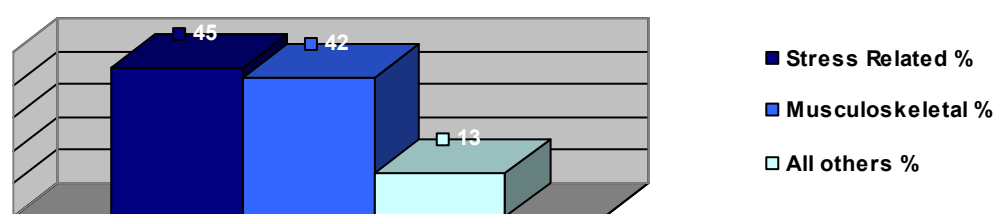
**Chart 2** shows that there are two common cause of work related ill health reported on CoreHR; "stress related", which include psychological ill health and "musculoskeletal", commonly muscle injuries to the neck, shoulders and lower back.

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. Delivery Units have stress action plans in place to manage the risk of organisational stressors.

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.



**Chart 1 – Significant reported Work Related Incidents to employees by type 2016/17**



**Chart 2 - Top three common causes of Work Related Ill Health 2016/17**

## 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.

There were a total of 2087 modules completed in 2016/17 from the 26 courses available. The mandatory corporate H&S training activities for the reporting period and numbers who completed these courses are as follows:

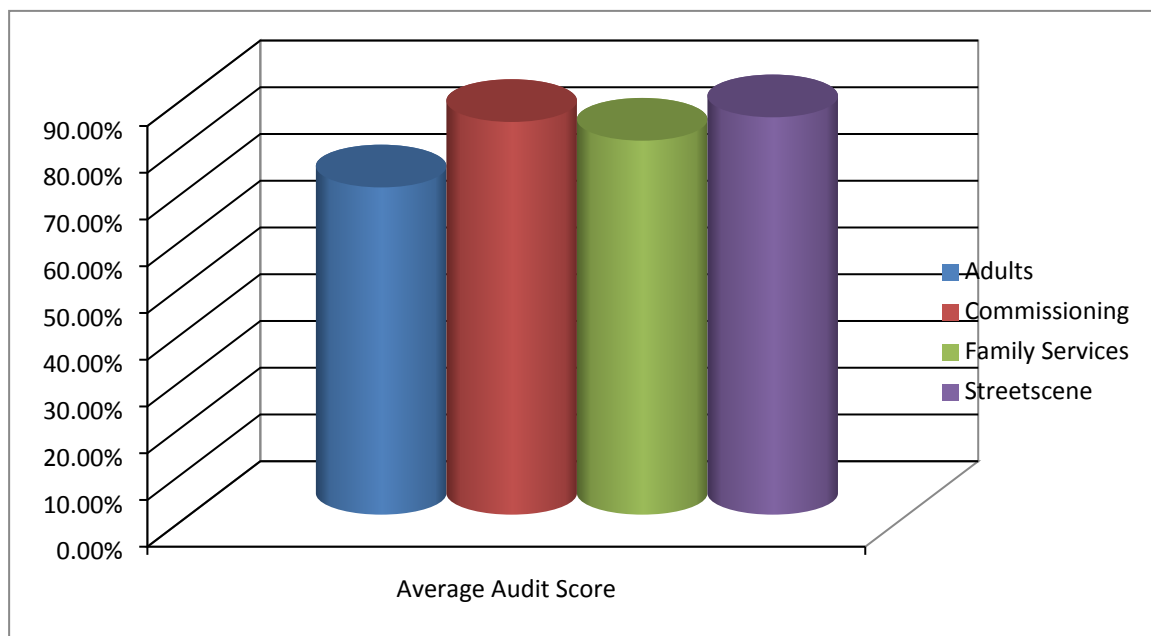
- **Health and Safety for Managers** – 49
- **Workplace Safety** - 447
- **Display Screen Equipment** – 514
- **Fire Safety** – 549
- **Induction Safety Interactive** – 48

*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 Health and Safety Management System 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 39 Audits and reviews were carried out in 2016/17 with the averaged results of the audits summarised in the table below. The average overall performance score across the council was 80% which is an improvement in the average score compared to 2015/16 of 75% and confirms our continued trend in improvement.



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. It is important to note that 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 2017/18

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) Directors to review their current health and safety management, communication and monitoring arrangements to ensure the councils H&S policy is effectively implemented throughout services and that health and safety performance is effectively monitored.

- 2) 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) Ensure all staff have undertaken mandatory health and safety training
- 4) Review delivery partners health and safety arrangements and performance to ensure they meet the council's requirements and policies.