

Council Health and Safety Annual Report – 2017/2018

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises significant corporate management activities over the period 2017/18 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 the health and safety of employees, service users, members of the public 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;
- Openness and accountability

2. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE FOR 2017/18

Key achievements:

- 1) Services have reviewed their current health and safety management, communication and monitoring arrangements to ensure the council's H&S policy is effectively implemented throughout services and that health and safety performance is effectively monitored.
- 2) A comprehensive review of the council's fire safety arrangements was carried out following the Grenfell tragedy
- 3) Risk assessments and controls have been reviewed to ensure they are up to date and effective in controlling risk
- 4) The council has introduced a 'Contractor Incident Notification System' that requires contractors to notify the council of any H&S incident. This will enable the council to better monitor contractors H&S performance.
- 5) The Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHaW) team reviewed the Council's main delivery partners H&S arrangements to provide the council with assurance over their performance.

Introduction of new health and safety policies or procedures

- The council's Asbestos policy has been reviewed to consider changes in guidance as well as to reinforce the roles introduced as part of our partnership with Capita.
- The council's Lone Working, Display Screen Equipment and Working Remotely policies have been reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose as we move towards a new way of working with the move to Colindale

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 Customer Support Group SHaW 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 15% decrease in the number of reported accidents over the period, which exceeds the target set by the council of a 10% year on year reduction. This is positive news and a reflection of the work the council has done to review its H&S management approach. This will be monitored to ensure this is a positive trend and not as a result of a reduction in incident reporting. There has been a small increase in Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) incidents, which are the classified major injuries, from 7 to 9. None of these incidents were classified major injuries but rather over 7 day absences cause by manual handling activities. The council remains high performing with its Accident Incidence Rate (RIDDOR incidents per 100,000 staff), a national recognised measure of performance, standing at 511 for the reporting period, which is considerably below the average for public service provision of over 650. Despite this the council will continue to strive to reduce not just RIDDOR incidents but all reported incidents.

Chart 1 shows all reported work-related incidents by type with the most common work-related incidents reported being 'Slips and Trips' and 'Contact with an Object'. Slips and Trips are the most common incident reported nationally and are in the main contributable to the working environment such as slippery floors and uneven floors, trailing cables, etc. Contact with Objects can be contact with something stationary, such as a cupboard, or something moving such as a vehicle. Risk assessments consider environmental conditions and managers are required to regularly inspect the workplace to ensure no hazards exist.

All the RIDDOR incidents were Lifting and handling injuries occurring in the StreetScene delivery unit. Chart 2 also 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.

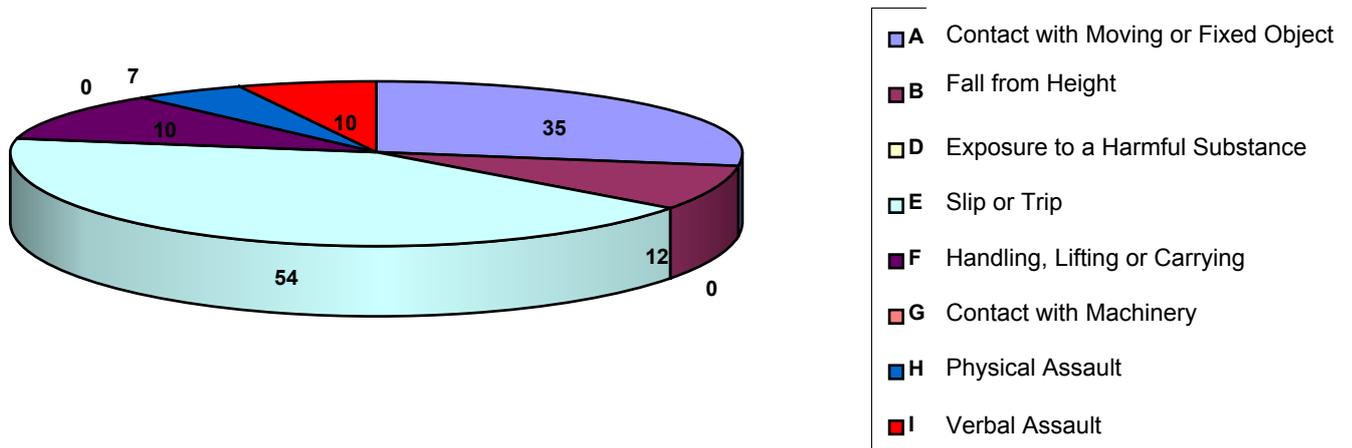


Chart 1 – Significant reported Work-Related Incidents to employees by type 2017/18

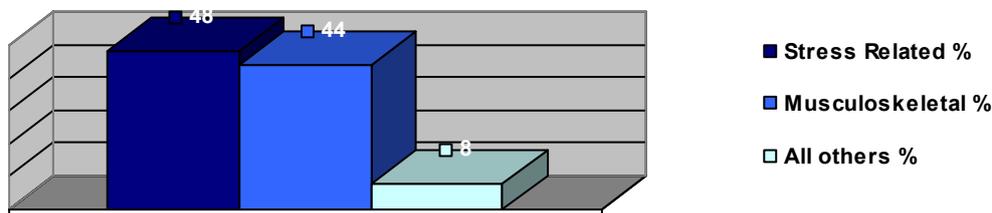


Chart 2 - Top three common causes of Work Related Ill Health 2017/18

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.

Over 1000 modules of training were completed in 2017/18 from the 26 courses available. The *mandatory* corporate H&S training modules for the reporting period and numbers who completed these courses are as follows:

| Mandatory E-learning - Percentages Completed | |
|--|-----|
| Workplace Safety | 62% |
| DSE | 68% |
| Fire Safety | 66% |
| Risk Assessment | 40% |
| H&S for Managers | 51% |

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 43 Audits and reviews were carried out in 2017/18 with the averaged results of the audits summarised in the table below. The average overall performance score across the council was 75% which is slight decrease in the average score compared to 2016/17 of 80%. Scores of 70% and above are viewed as 'Good Performance' 'Excellent Performance' would see scores of >90% and achievement of this score is the councils aim.



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 and participation in H&S training. *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 AND WELLBEING PRIORITIES FOR THE PERIOD 2018/19

The corporate priorities aim to ensure the continued proactive improvements in health and safety and wellbeing performance, reduction of work related injury and ill

health and increased productivity of our workforce. They also seek to address any gaps or trends identified through monitoring activities such as incident data and audits.

- 1) *Seek reductions of at least 10% in days lost due to stress related illness* – H&S and Wellbeing Corporate Team to support Directors to identify size of the problem (e.g. stress related audit and review of sickness absence causes) and review local arrangements to support staff and reduce levels of stress. Directorates should develop action plans for the management of risks associated with Work Related Stress.
- 2) *Seek reductions of at least 10% in days lost due to musculoskeletal injury* - H&S and Wellbeing Corporate Team to support Directors to review local arrangements for the management of risks associated Musculoskeletal Injuries, including manual handling and Display Screen Equipment.
- 3) *Ensure all staff have undertaken mandatory health and safety training* - Directors to introduce measures to ensure that all staff have undertaken mandatory health and safety training and that health and safety practice is imbedded in daily work routines.
- 4) *All council managed premises are compliant with statutory requirements* - Review of the current arrangements and monitoring activities to ensure H&S premises compliance
- 5) *Review of the Occupational Health Contract* - Ensure that occupational health contract is reviewed and adapted to the emerging needs of our employees.
- 6) *Integration of Health and Safety and Wellbeing functions* – In order to ensure staff and managers are supported to proactively improve their own resilience, health and wellbeing as well as resilience and health and wellbeing of their teams.