

Council Health and Safety Annual Report – 2018/2019

1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarises significant corporate management activities over the period 2018/19 covering key achievements, council-wide statistics and developments for the year ahead to improve Health and Safety.

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

- Our responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing 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

Key activities:

- 1) The Safety Health and Wellbeing team (SHaW) carried out a council wide risk profiling exercise to identify the activities that carry the greatest risk and the arrangements in place to manage those risks. This will enable the appropriate distribution of resources for H&S support into the areas of greatest risk. The exercise will also assist in the identification of the type of H&S training required by managers and lead to the production of a H&S training matrix.
- 2) The SHaW team reviewed and updated the incident reporting system to ensure its usability in all areas of the organisation.
- 3) The Head of SHaW revised the Health and safety guidance for project management to ensure all elements of H&S are considered throughout the life time of a project. This has been used to successfully manage the H&S elements of the new leisure centre builds and the new Colindale Offices.
- 4) A Workforce Health and Wellbeing Group (WHWBG) was established in the early summer of 2018 with the main purpose of scaling up our organisational offer on workforce health and wellbeing with the aim of reduced absenteeism, increased productivity, staff engagement and resident's satisfaction. The group is led by Public Health and includes stakeholders from services, partners and the Trade Unions.
- 5) The introduction of a Health and Wellbeing Intranet Hub which is now a part of corporate staff induction.
- 6) The council has successfully carried out Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Champion Training over the course of the year. The courses have been heavily oversubscribed and further training will be organised to commence during the autumn.
- 7) The "New Office New You" and "Active Design" projects, that encompass the Health and wellbeing offer to staff linked to the move to Colindale
- 8) Health checks for staff were provided at NLBP and Barnet House with over 100 staff taking part. Sessions have been booked in for both Oakleigh and Harrow Depots in June. These health checks assess key health and wellbeing

indicators such as weight and blood pressure and provide advice on ways to improve health.

- 9) A successful flu immunisation campaign was carried out with over 200 front line staff given vaccinations.
- 10) A campaign was run to increase the reporting of minor incidents and verbal assaults
- 11) The Head of SHaW took a lead role in ensuring the CSG Estates service meet the councils aim to ensure our premises are fully compliant with the requirements for statutory tests and inspections. This resulted in an action plan being produced by the Estates Service that enabled these improvements to be made

2. SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE FOR 2018/19

Main performance achievements:

- 1) A 50% reduction in RIDDOR reportable incidents compared to last year
- 2) Sickness absence average reduced from 10 to 8 working days per employee
- 3) An increase in the reporting of minor injuries and verbal assaults of 30%
- 4) Significant improvement on the number of mandatory courses undertaken with the average completion rate now at 72% compared with 55% at the same period last year
- 5) Improvements in H&S performance with average compliance audit scores increasing from 75% to 84%.
- 6) Improvement in premises compliance across the council estate

Introduction of new health and safety policies or procedures

- As part of the TW3 project and the move to Colindale H&S guidance was produced for staff and managers. There was a poster campaign and guidance was published on the intranet and includes:
 - Lone and Remote Working
 - Use of Display Screen Equipment
 - Manual Handling
 - Fire safety

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 sickness absence is reported on HR Core These are interrogated by managers, the Customer Support Group Safety, Health and Wellbeing (SHaW) team and the councils Head of Safety Health and Wellbeing to ensure all incidents are fully investigated and to identify any emerging work-related incident or ill Health trends.

There has been a slight increase in the total number of incidents reported over the period, from 112 in 2017/18 to 119 in 2018/19. However there has been a 50% decrease in the number of Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences (RIDDOR) incidents. This is positive news and a reflection of the work

the council has done to review and improve its H&S management approach. None of these incidents were classified major injuries but rather over 7-day absences cause by either manual handling activities or slips and trips. There has been a 30% increase in the numbers of minor injuries and verbal assaults reported. Again, this should be seen as positive as the council ran a campaign to increase this type of reporting which has been previously under reported. This trend will be monitored to ensure this is because of an increase in reporting and not a rise in incidents occurring. The council remains high performing with its Accident Incidence Rate (RIDDOR incidents per 100,000 staff), a national recognised measure of performance, standing at 260 for the reporting period, which is considerably below the average for public service provision of over 500. 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', 'Verbal Assaults' 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. The majority of verbal assaults reported occurred in Schools.

The RIDDOR incidents were either Lifting and Handling injuries or Slips and Trips occurring in the Streetscene Directorate and Schools. 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. Services 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.

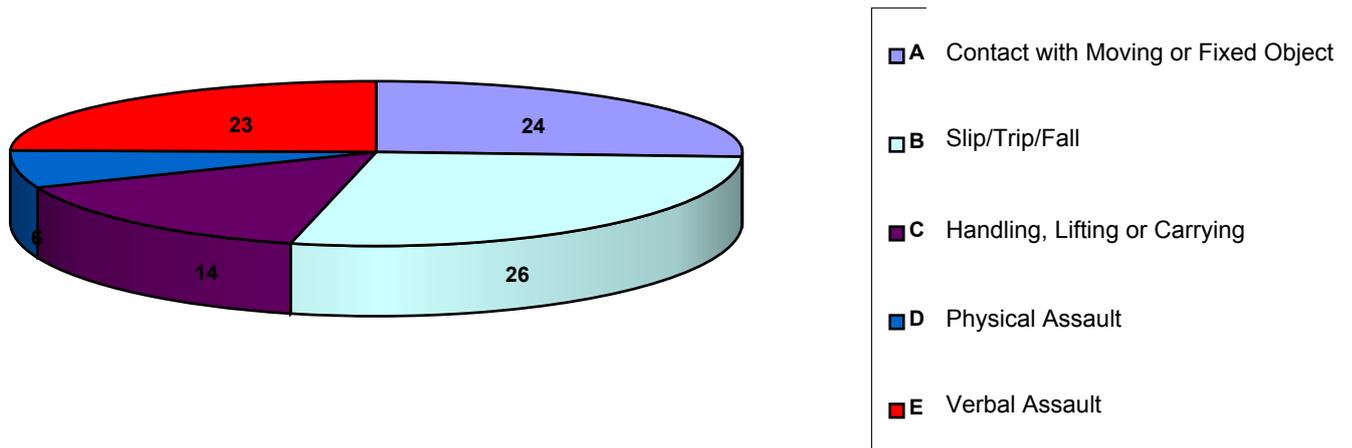


Chart 1 – Significant reported Work-Related Incidents to employees by type 2018/19

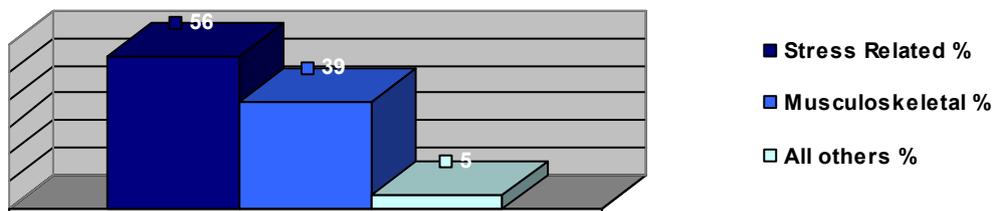


Chart 2 - Top three common causes of Work Related Ill Health 2018/19

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 are 26 courses available on our eLearning system with 3 of those being mandatory training for all staff.

Alongside this corporate training services organise and deliver a wide range of role specific health and safety training identified through performance review and risk assessments.

The mandatory corporate H&S training modules and numbers who completed these courses are as follows:

Mandatory E-learning - Percentages Completed	
Workplace Safety	70%
DSE	74%
Fire Safety	72%

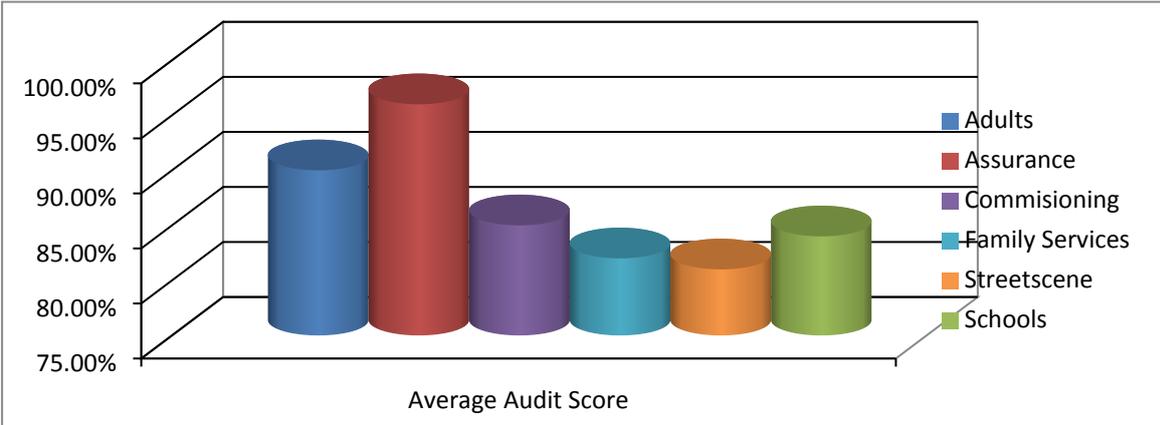
Health and Safety Audits

To monitor compliance with the councils Health and Safety Management System, Legislation and accepted good practice we use a system of internal 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 considering 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 41 H&S Audits and performance reviews were carried out in 2018/19 with the averaged results of the audits summarised in the table below. The average overall performance score across the council was 84% which is an increase in the average score compared to 2017/18 of 75%. 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 show that the council performs well in the implementation of policy and in H&S risk management. The areas for improvement are in local premises related compliance and record keeping.



It is

important to note that all audits result in the production of action plans to address any areas of low performance, with the SHaW team supporting managers in addressing these gaps.

3. COUNCILS HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WELLBEING PRIORITIES FOR THE PERIOD 2019/20

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 as highlighted in this report.

- 1) *Seek reductions in days lost due to stress related and illness and mental ill health* – Corporate Stress Audit to be undertaken to identify Organisational Stressors. The Safety Health and Wellbeing Team to support Directors, through Directorate H&S Champions, to produce action plans that address any organisational issues identified in audit. The Head of SHaW to review current provision for Stress and Mental health training as well as employee support offer.
- 2) *Seek reductions of at least 10% in days lost due to work related incidents and ill health* - The Safety Health and Wellbeing Team to support Directors to review local arrangements for the management of risks, particularly those associated Musculoskeletal Injures, 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 – Wholesale Client-side review of the current arrangements and monitoring activities to ensure H&S premises compliance.*
- 5) *To improve the Health and Wellbeing offer to staff and continue to impact in the decrease of sickness absence - Achieve the revised London Healthy Workplace Charter*