



Constitution and General Purpose Committee

12 January 2021

Title

Barnet Council's Annual Health and Safety Report

Report of

Mike Koumi - Head of Safety, Health and Wellbeing

Wards

None

Status

Public

Urgent

No

Key

No

Enclosures

Appendix 1 – Barnet Council's Annual Health and Safety Report

Officer Contact Details

Mike Koumi
michael.koumi@barnet.gov.uk 020 8359 7960

Summary

This report provides information on the Council's health and safety performance for the period 2019/20. It also sets the priorities for the period 2020/21, to enable continued improvement in H&S performance.

The report is based on performance information and data obtained from the council's accident/incident reporting system, together with independent audit results, corporate training records and ill health data. It also includes initial COVID 19 response.

Recommendation

- 1. The Committee is requested to note the report and approve the priorities for the period 2020/21 as outlined in section 3 of Appendix 1; Barnet Councils Annual Health and Safety Report**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 This report enables the council to monitor its health and safety performance over a defined period, to set priorities to address any gaps identified and achieve continual improvement.

- 1.2 The [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#) and associated guidance suggests that regular monitoring of health and safety performance enables organisations to set meaningful targets to effect improvements in attendance and productivity, reduce work related accidents and ill health and comply with statutory duties.
- 1.3 The review of the previous year's performance, as shown in Appendix 1, is split into the four areas that enable us to effectively monitor health and safety; these being:
- Reported work related accident and Ill health
 - Levels of compliance with legislation and council policy
 - Health and safety training delivered
 - Any enforcement action taken against the council
- 1.4 The review shows that the council performs well overall and manages its risks effectively, with the main performance achievements over the year being:
- A reduction in reported incidents of 20%
 - A RIDDOR Accident Incidence Rate of 368 (HSE reportable incidents per 100,000 staff), which is below the average for public service provision of over 500.
 - Slight improvements in H&S performance with average compliance audit scores increasing from 84% to 87%.
 - Improvement in premises compliance across the council estate
 - No health and safety enforcement action was taken against the council
- 1.5 The main areas that require further improvements are in managing stress and mental health related absence and musculoskeletal injuries.
- 1.6 COVID-19 Response - The COVID 19 response began in February for the SHaW team, initial activities involved actively sourcing supplies in both PPE and sanitising products to ensure supplies for any increase in the pandemic.

As the impact of the pandemic increased the service role changed to supporting the response by providing advice to the council leadership on risk mitigation as well as providing support to managers and staff. Guidance was issued on lockdown and managing risks to those essential services that continued to operate, as well as providing them with appropriate PPE. Guidance was also provided to staff about working safely from home.

- 1.7 The council's priorities for 2020/21 are:
- 1) Continue to support the councils COVID 19 response
 - 2) Seek reductions in days lost due to stress/mental ill health and musculoskeletal injuries
 - 3) Seek reductions in days lost due to slips/trips/falls and lifting and carrying
 - 4) Ensure all staff have undertaken mandatory health and safety training
 - 5) Continue to improve the staff Health and Wellbeing offer and achieve the revised London Healthy Workplace Charter

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

2.1 The recommendation seeks agreement of the council's health and safety priorities which aim to address gaps and effect improvement in the council's health and safety performance.

2.2

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

3.1 N/A

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Directors will be required to formulate action plans to implement the priorities for the period 2020/21. Directors will be supported and advised by the Corporate Health and Safety and Wellbeing Team to ensure action plans are comprehensive and achievable.

4.2 The 2020/21 Annual Council Health and Safety report will highlight performance against these priorities.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 This report aims to contribute to all of the priorities contained in the [Corporate Plan](#) by setting standards through the way it manages health and safety to ensure that services are in the best position to fully contribute to those priorities. Also that the council remains exemplars in the community, continues to be a good employer and protects any person who may come into contact with its activities.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 There are no additional financial implications as a result of the proposed decision. Health and safety management is part of business as usual and is managed within existing budgets.

5.3 Social Value

5.3.1 N/A

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4.1 The council has various legal duties held under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the [Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974](#) and regulations made under it. Failure to comply with those duties may lead to prosecution for breach of statutory duty for the council as well as individual Members and officers. Negligence in relation to health and safety matters can also result in costly personal injury claims in the civil courts.

5.4.2 According to the Council's Constitution, Article 7 the terms of reference for the Constitution and General Purposes Committee includes to have responsibility for overseeing the Council's governance arrangements including Health and Safety Strategy and performance.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 Failure to effectively manage health and safety risk increases the likelihood of injury and ill health to staff and others during council activities. Significant failure may lead to a catastrophic event that causes multiple injuries or fatalities to staff and the public. Failure to comply with statutory obligations increases the risk of prosecution. Any work practices that result in ill health or injury could result in legal action against the council, financial loss and negative publicity leading to reputational damage.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

5.6.1 The council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy aims to ensure the protection of employees and anyone else who may come into contact with our activities and services. This includes people at particular risk, for example people with disabilities, pregnant women and vulnerable service users. The policy helps to enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live, and aims to protect employees and service users taking regard of age, disability, ethnicity, faith/belief, gender, and sexual orientation.

- 5.6.2 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, the Council is under an obligation to have due regard to 1) eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; 2) advancing equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' and those who do not share it; and 3) fostering good relations between persons who share a relevant 'protected characteristic' and persons who do not share it. The 'protected characteristics' are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. The Council also has regard to the additional protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnership even though this does not apply to parts 2) and 3) (above) of the public-sector equality duty.

5.7 Corporate Parenting

5.7.1 The report has no impact on looked after children or care leavers

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

5.8.1 The Annual Health and Safety report will be presented and discussed at the Local Joint Consultation Committees (JCC's).

5.9 Insight

5.8.1 N/A

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37)
- 6.2 [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3242/contents/made)