

**REPORT FOR: Governance, Audit and  
Risk Management  
Committee**

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**Date of Meeting:** 29 June 2010

**Subject:** INFORMATION REPORT – Annual  
Health and Safety Report 2009/10

**Responsible Officer:** Myfanwy Barrett, Corporate Director  
Finance

**Exempt:** No

**Enclosures:** None

## **Section 1 – Summary**

This report summarises the Council's health and safety performance for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010, providing an update of activities and giving information on outcome measures – training, audits and accidents.

**FOR INFORMATION**

## **Section 2 – Report**

### **Executive Summary**

#### 2.1 The main points during the period 2009/2010

- Continuing development of health and safety codes of practice to meet identified needs e.g. fire policy and the asbestos policy
- Continued provision of the health and safety training programme.
- Support and development of the Health at Work Group, employee assistance programme and the planned shared provision of the Occupational Health Service with Brent Council.
- Visits by the HSE and Fire Brigade. This has included providing support to the HSE on a safety programme targeting workers for whom English is not their first language and developing and undertaking the requirements of an action plan resulting from an incident at Heathlands School.
- Focus on suitable and sufficient consultation and communication with the rejuvenation of the Corporate Health and Safety Group.
- Further development of the corporate health and safety scorecard.

### **Background**

2.2 In line with statutory requirements and in order to allow the Council to monitor and measure health and safety performance and prioritise areas of health and safety risk, an annual safety review is performed.

2.3 Effective health and safety management enables the Council to meet its legal, moral and economic obligation, thus benefiting all stakeholders.

### **External Assurance**

2.4 The Council is a large employer and subject to a large number of statutory regulations. Therefore it is not uncommon for the Council to be the subject of visits and inspections by a number of enforcement agencies. Relations with enforcement agencies remain good and only one enforcement action was taken during the 2009/10 period.

2.5 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) liaised with the Council on a number of occasions during the period under review. This has included continuing a programme of visits across the Council and liaising with the council with regard to an action plan related to an incident at Heathlands School.

2.6 The Fire Authority undertook a number of inspections on Council premises. One improvement notice was served principally requiring Hatch End School to perform a fire risk assessment and complete any necessary remedial action.

## **Health and Safety Policy and Guidance**

- 2.7 There are currently over fifty guidance and advice notes available on a variety of health and safety and safety related subjects. These guidance and advice notes provide managers and staff with practical advice that can be implemented at corporate and service levels.
- 2.8 The corporate Health and safety team continually review existing policies and procedures to ensure that they remain suitable and sufficient and legally compliant. During this period the fire and asbestos policies have been undergoing review and the service has issued guidance notes on dual screen display screen equipment, the use of the online display screen assessment tool, working safely with tablet computers together with reactionary communications in response to the swine flu pandemic.

## **Health and Safety Groups**

- 2.9 The Health and Safety groups are necessary to ensure that effective consultation and communication with respect to health and safety takes place across the Council. They also determine the strategic direction of the management of health and safety across the organisation. The Health at Work Group (HAWG) function is the promotion of staff health and wellbeing.
- 2.10 The Corporate Health and Safety Group is formed under Statute and is the principal consultation forum on health and safety within the Council. The Group meets once a quarter and is presently chaired by the Assistant Chief Executive. The following provides an illustration of the principal issues dealt with by the Group during the period under review:
- Received the quarterly accident reports.
  - Monitored the work of the Directorate Health and Safety Groups.
  - Reviewing proposed policies e.g. fire policies subject to a formal consultation.
  - Reviewing a new council accident report form.
  - Received reports on Display Screen Equipment compliance.
  - Kept informed of the progress of the asbestos identification and management action plan.
- 2.11 Each Directorate has a Health and Safety Group. These Groups deal with Directorate health and safety and provide employees, health and safety representatives and managers with an opportunity to discuss and resolve health and safety related issues. Directorate Health and Safety Groups have been rejuvenated during this period, with the emphasis on ensuring that these meetings are held, scorecards are reviewed, training needs are identified and progress with risk assessments is monitored.

## **Health and Safety Visits Inspections and Audits**

- 2.12 Due to the transitions within the service an audit programme has not been followed during this period. However the service has continued to respond to the needs of the organisation, providing support to management and staff, conducting site visits and providing site-specific training courses and workshops.

2.13 The majority of visits were conducted in schools in the Children Services Directorate, ensuring that all new School head teachers were visited. The service has also targeted new managers and notifiable building works under the requirements of the Construction Design and Management Regulations 2007.

### **Health and Safety Training**

2.14 In line with legislative requirements and the requirements of the internal training matrix a programme of training was delivered during this period delivering training to in excess of 500 employees, representing a 6% increase in training from 2008/09. Although this represents an improvement the service has identified that further work is needed to ensure all employees receive that necessary health and safety training to perform their roles.

2.15 The health and safety induction remains the most heavily attended course, delivering essential information to new starters.

### **Educational Outside the Classroom**

2.16 The service has continued to promote and assess educational visits and journeys for school children. The assessment process critically reviewed over 200 school visits to ensure that the Educational Visits Co-ordinators had considered the risks associated with the visits and that the necessary reasonable precautions are taken. In addition to this, training has been provided, where necessary, to ensure that Schools have a trained Educational Visits Co-ordinator.

### **Occupational Health**

2.17 The Occupational Health Service has continued to meet the organisation's requirements for dealing and promoting health at work issues. The Occupational Health team continue to perform health screen pre-employment health screening, and process management and self-referrals. The service will be provided jointly from 2010 with Brent Council, with the service based in the Civic complex in Harrow.

### **Promotion of Health, Safety and Well Being**

2.18 The Council with our Occupational Health provider, held a very successful health at work event in October 2009, linked to World Mental Health Day and National Stress Awareness Day. In addition to this there have been a number of other promotions including smoking cessation sessions, a free workshop on stress, healthy eating programmes and a men's and women's health week programme.

### **Employee Assistance Programme**

2.19 The Employee Assistance Programme, part of our staff benefits package, enables employees to get independent telephone advice and where indicated face-to-face counselling support for a range of problems. This supports employees in maintaining their mental, social and emotional wellbeing, contributing to general health and resilience of the workforce and ultimately of the organisation. The programme provider will continue to take part in onsite health promotion planned for next year to raise staff's awareness of the benefits of the service.

## Health and Safety Scorecard

2.20 In order to monitor and measure and hence improve health and safety performance individual services are required to perform self-assessments, in the form of health and safety scorecards. The scorecards are collated into corporate scorecards to monitor and measure health and safety performance across Directorates. Scorecards are reviewed both at Corporate & Directorate meetings and consider factors such as risk areas, training needs and risk assessment.

2.21 During this period a number of services have asked for clarity in how to complete the scorecards. A guidance note has therefore been issued and the Health and Safety Service is looking in the forthcoming year to review the performance indicators to further improve monitoring and measurement.

## Accidents at Work

2.22 The Council is required by statute to record and maintain records of accidents that occur in connection with its activities. Quarterly accident reports are compiled for submission and scrutiny by the Corporate and Directorate Health and Safety Groups.

2.23 In order to ensure continual improvement the accident reporting and recording system has been reviewed and the service is looking to introduce online reporting in the forthcoming year.

2.24 The data for reported accidents in the year are shown in Table 1. The total for the previous year is also shown (in brackets). The distribution of numbers between Directorates is not exactly comparable with the previous year because of movement of staff across Directorates during the year. The total overall has increased, possibly representing improved reporting across the organisation.

**Table 1: Reported Employee Incidents by Directorate 1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010**

Directorate	Reported Employee Accidents 1/4/2009-31/3/2010
Corporate Finance	9 (0)
Chief Executives	3 (3)
Legal and Governance Services	2 (3)
Place Shaping	3 (n/a)
Children's Services	260 (193)
Adults & Housing	114 (90)
Community & Environment	85 (71)
Total reported	476 (367)

*\*Note: the total for the previous year given in brackets*

2.25 The majority of accidents to employees in Children's Services were to staff in schools and were for the most part minor injuries as can be seen from the number of RIDDOR reportable events recorded (as shown in Table 2).

**Table 2: Reported Employee RIDDOR Accidents by Directorate**

Directorate	Reported Employee RIDDOR Accidents 1/4/2009- 31/3/2010
Corporate Finance	2 (2)
Chief Executives	0 (0)
Legal and Governance Services	0 (0)
Place Shaping	0 (n/a)
Children's Services	19 (15)
Adults & Housing	1 (1)
Community & Environment	8 (15)
Total reported	30 (33)*

\*Note: the total for the previous year in give in brackets

2.26 The top five causes of employee accidents account for the majority of reports. The total has increased but the causes are largely unchanged from previous years and reflect the national picture of accident causes. The picture also supports the Council continuing to target these priority areas for attention.

**Table 3: The Top Five Causes of Employee Accidents**

Causes of Reported Accidents	Reported Employee Accidents – Top Five Causes (1/4/2009- 31/3/2010)
Violence and aggression	218 (157)
Slips, trips and falls	78 (73)
Struck by/struck against	58 (57)
Manual handling	30 (27)
Electricity	5 (n/a)
Total reported	389 (325)*

\*Note: the total for the previous year in give in brackets

2.27 The occupational groups reporting most accidents are shown in table 4. Teachers in schools make up the majority of employees so their position at the top may not be unexpected. However, the number must also be seen in the light of the fact that there are larger numbers of teachers and that the majority of the accidents are minor.

**Table: 4 The Top Five Occupational Groups Reporting Accidents**

Occupational Group	Reported accidents by top five occupational groups (1/4/2009- 31/3/2010)
Teacher/TA	180
Day care workers	86
Refuse collection	35
Caretakers	17
Escorts	10
Parking attendant	3
Total reported	331 (262)*

\*Note: the total for the previous year in give in brackets

## **Health and Safety Training data**

- 2.28 The service has followed a training programme during this period and delivered training to over 500 employees centrally. In addition to this, bespoke health and safety training, such as Educational Visits Co-ordinators training, has been delivered locally in individual Directorates.
- 2.29 The two highest attended courses were the induction and manual handling courses with forty four percent of employees trained on the training programme receiving the Health and Safety Induction for staff and twelve percent of employees trained on the training programme receiving the manual handling training.
- 2.30 The training data, when considered against the accident data, highlights the following points:
- New starter are receiving general health and safety training.
  - The number of manual handling incidents is low in comparison to national data, where it accounts for approximately a third of all RIDDOR reportable incidents, reflecting the effectiveness of manual handling training.
  - There is a need for greater uptake on the available training in personal safety and lone working to significantly reduce the number of violence and aggression incidents.

**Table 9: The Main Health and Safety Training Courses Attendances 1/4/2009- 31/3/2010 (2008/2008)**

Directorates Courses /	Corporate Finance	Strategy and Business Support	Children's Services	Adults and Housing	Environment and Community	Total
Health and Safety Induction for staff	26(12)	17(14)	132(25)	22(40)	60(24)	257(115)
Health and Safety Induction for managers	0(6)	5(3)	9(20)	9(27)	5(4)	28(60)
Health and Safety Risk Assessment	0(1)	1(4)	20(19)	15(31)	8(23)	44(77)
Health and Safety for Premises managers	0(0)	0(0)	67(10)	5(2)	5(1)	73(13)
Stress Awareness	2(0)	0(0)	0(1)	3(8)	0(1)	5(10)
Fire Marshals	0(1)	0(0)	11(12)	0(12)	12(1)	23(26)
Fire Risk Assessment	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(5)	0(0)	0(5)
Lone working	0(0)	0(0)	7(10)	18(10)	1(1)	25(21)
Personal safety	0(0)	0(0)	0(2)	0(4)	0(5)	0(11)
DSE users	0(3)	0(3)	3(0)	6(33)	0(0)	9(33)
DSE assessors	0(1)	0(1)	2(11)	10(9)	2(10)	14(32)
Stress awareness/risk assessment	1(0)	0(6)	4(2)	8(9)	1(2)	14(19)
COSHH update	0(0)	0(0)	2(1)	4(10)	2(3)	8(14)
Evac chair training	4(4)	5(8)	4(15)	0(0)	4 (8)	17(35)
Educational Visits coordinators	N/A	0	0(23)	0(0)	N/A	0(23)
Manual Handling	8(0)	8(1)	34(8)	10(21)	8(26)	68(56)
Common back problems						0(30)
Basic Construction awareness					0(14)	0(14)
CDM overview						0(11)
CDM coordinators						0(11)
Asbestos Awareness						0(8)



## **Legislation Update**

2.31 There has been one major change relevant to the organisation's activities with the issuing of HSG 264 Asbestos: The Survey Guide, in January 2010 to expand upon and replace MDHS 100. The document is aimed at those conducting asbestos surveys, those who commission surveys and those with specific responsibilities for managing asbestos in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations (CAR) 2006.

## **Health and Safety Enforcing Authority**

2.32 The HSE as the Council's enforcing authority have made contact with the Council on a number of issues during the year. They have visited Heathlands School and liaised with the Council regarding progress with the action plan relating to the management of asbestos and are continuing with a programme of visits across Council premises. Contact has also been made with regard to an incident relating to car park barriers and future maintenance of the barriers. In addition the Council has worked with the HSE in the promotion of key safety messages to workers who do not have English as a first language.

## **Plans for 2010/2011**

2.33 Health and safety planning is a crucial part of the organisation's strategy to enable priorities to be identified and progress measured and monitored. A service efficiency review is currently being undertaken to ensure the Council meets its legal and moral obligations and the service will continue to do the following:

- Continue to use national and local campaigns as opportunities to promote health safety and well being during the year – particularly through a health and safety fair in September.
- Continue to support the Corporate and Directorate Health and Safety Groups, with particular attention to further developing key performance indicators and improving health and safety performance.
- Continue to monitor the services, including the Occupational Health Service and the Employee Assistance Programme, to ensure that services are operating effectively and in ways that make best use of resources.
- Further develop the Health and Safety and Occupational Health intranet portal.
- Assess new and proposed health and safety legislation and its impact on the Council.
- Continue to provide support to individual Directorates through advice and training.
- Continue to develop the Health and Safety Management System to ensure that policies and guidance remain up to date and reflect

legislative requirements, including consulting on health and safety policies and procedures

- Provision of statistics and appropriate reports for Health and Safety Groups and forums.
- Further develop the training programme to ensure it reflects and meets the requirements of the organisation.
- Develop improved systems for the reporting and analysis of incidents to ensure that accurate reporting takes place and necessary steps are taken to reduce the number of incidents.
- Continue to critically assess educational visits and trips.

### **Section 3 – Further Information**

3.1 None

### **Section 4 – Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no growth items in the proposed plans for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011. All items should be contained within the existing budgets.

### **Section 5 – Corporate Priorities**

5.1 The management of health and safety and the Council's health and safety performance has the potential to impact on each of the council's priorities. The performance implications are included in the main body of the report.

Name: Myfanwy Barrett



Chief Financial Officer

Date: 17 June 2010

### **Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Mark Riordan, Interim Health & Safety Lead, 0208 424 1521

**Background Papers:** None