

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Health and Safety Performance Report

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director, Corporate Services and Governance

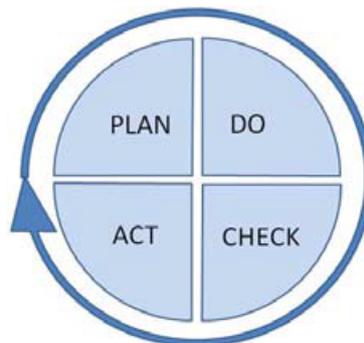
SUMMARY

This report provides the year end assessment of performance on occupational health and safety matters for 2017/18 within Gateshead Council.

Introduction

1. Gateshead Council is committed to providing its employees with safe conditions of work as far as is reasonably practicable and has structured arrangements in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and others who may be affected by our activities. Our aim is to minimise the adverse impacts to individuals and the business from ill health and injury.
2. This annual report provides an overview of key performance statistics, including the number of lost working days and reportable accidents, along with commentary on key aspects of health and safety during the year 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.
3. As noted in the body of this report, considerable work has also been undertaken in areas such as Asbestos Management, Contractor Management, Educational Visits, Fire Safety and Legionella Management.
4. Gateshead Council continues to use the principals of the HSE guidance HSG 65, Managing for Health and Safety. The key principals are Plan, Do, Check, Act. These principals underpin the council's safety management system and operational processes and procedures as detailed in the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and arrangements.

Gateshead Council's Approach to Managing Health & Safety Risks



The approach taken to demonstrate how the Council evidences the management of health & safety risks is set out below:

5. **General Health & Safety Advice** – the Health & Safety Officers carried out 94 (55 in 16/17) advisory visits, 28 (21 in 16/17) incident investigations and 135 (159 in 16/17) inspections and audits.
6. **Fire Safety Advice** – the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 places responsibility for fire safety on the “responsible person” i.e. the employer and/or the person who has control of the premises. Under this legislation, the “responsible person” must ensure a fire risk assessment (FRA) is carried out to determine whether the premises are safe to use and ensure that all necessary fire precautions are properly implemented.

All Council premises that we are aware of have had at least one FRA carried out. The FRA programme is an ongoing process with annual reviews and re-assessments required at determined frequencies. During the reporting period the Council’s Health & Safety Officers completed 71 (68 previous year) fire risk assessments and reviews. This has met the target set out on the planned programme of fire risk assessments and reviews.

Support, advice and training is made available to premises managers in all Council buildings regarding fire safety, and particularly the technical aspects of fire risk assessments and we are assured that relevant people have been trained.

Regular and close liaison with Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS) continues and has proven to be an effective way of dealing with issues which arise from their audits of Council premises and schools. This has helped to ensure that to date no enforcement notices or prohibition notices have been served.

7. **Occupational Health** - A summary of the work carried out is set out in the tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1 - Occupational Health Appointments

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
Health Surveillance	351	503	551	
Driver Medical	48	106	49	
Vision Screening	66	67	57	
Medical Referral – OHA	280	157	553	
Medical Referral – OHP	433	407	123	
Pre-employment questionnaires	1105*	1088*	1232*	Employees – desk top exercise
Pre-employment questionnaires	156*	298*	196*	Volunteers – desk top exercise
Physiotherapy	618	585	554/106	106 Medical referrals
Counselling Sessions	851	1040	1384	
Total	3908 (2647*)	4251 (2865*)	4805 (3377*)	Note increase in demand on service

**Denotes pre-employment questionnaires carried out for employees/volunteers which is a desk top exercise, rather than an appointment*

Table 2 - Occupational Health Non-attendance

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
Health Surveillance	17	47	46	
Driver Medical	1	7	2	
Vision Screening	9	3	3	
Medical Referral – OHA	41	7	56	
Medical Referral – OHP	23	41	14	
Physiotherapy	46	43	35	
Counselling	24	33	61	
Total	161 (6.0% excl*)	181 (6.3% excl*)	217 (4.5% excl*)	

**Figure excludes desk top exercise for pre-employment questionnaires*

8. **Health and Wellbeing** - As part of the Council’s achievement of the North East Better Health at Work Award (NEBHAWA) in January 2018, all employees were invited to take part in a Health Needs Assessment survey. The outcomes of the survey are being used to focus on health initiatives around the priorities identified. These include: losing weight; reducing stress levels; increasing physical activity; improving sleep; getting a better work-life balance and reducing back pain.

The Committee may wish to refer to the report presented to the OSC meeting on 3 December 2018 for a more detailed update on the progress in relation to ‘Health and Wellbeing’.

9. **Health & Safety Training** – This is delivered by internal and external trainers. Individual service areas are responsible for specialised safety training and will hold records of training that they have arranged. Figures in ‘Table 7’ show the number of employees that have attended corporate Health & Safety training in 17/18.

1239 Health and Safety e-learning modules were accessed. This was an increase from 1164 units in the previous year.

10. **Corporate Procedures and Codes of Practice** – these form part of the overall health and safety policy, providing safe systems of work for employees to follow and to adapt them to their service areas as appropriate. Documents were revised for: Carriage & Storage of Petrol; Display Screen Equipment; Electrical Safety; First Aid; Gas Safety; Respiratory Surveillance and Incident Reporting and Investigation.

Checks are made to ensure things are happening through:

11. **Reporting to the Corporate Health & Safety Committee** - quarterly updates are presented on new legislation and guidance, the Corporate Health & Safety action plan, Health & Safety training strategy and the Better Health at Work Award, with the opportunity also being available for those attending to discuss other relevant health and safety issues. Trade Unions are represented at all meetings.

12. **SMG Health & Safety Update Reports** - quarterly update reports are delivered to the Senior Management Group by the Occupational Health & Safety Manager, advising on the status at the time of the robustness of the health & safety management system, recommending to SMG any reasonable actions to be taken. This also provides an opportunity to share information and lessons learnt from any incidents/near misses that have occurred.
13. **Monitoring hazards** – the Health & Safety Officers utilise a spreadsheet for the recording of hazards identified by employees. Checks are carried out to ensure appropriate action has been taken by the relevant manager to address concerns. This ensures that compliance is maintained and improved if necessary.
14. **Incident Investigations** – where appropriate, incidents are investigated with findings and recommendations communicated to responsible managers. Managers are responsible for taking appropriate action to prevent a reoccurrence. The Health & Safety Officers ensure that incidents are followed up appropriately.
15. **Annual Reporting on Corporate Health & Safety** – annual reports are produced for Senior Management Group – Services and Performance and Overview and Scrutiny Committee to inform senior managers and councillors of the work undertaken in the last 12-month period. These reports include details on health and safety performance and incident statistics.
16. **Internal Assurance**

Asbestos Management

The Asbestos Management Team (AMT) is responsible to the Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, within Council Housing, Design & Technical Services. The team works closely with the Health & Safety Team and has achieved the following in this reporting period:

- Continue to carry out the asbestos re-inspections, update and deliver registers.
- Provided technical advice to schools which have bought into the gateway scheme.
- Reviewed the corporate asbestos management plan and provided assurance that no changes are required.
- Input asbestos data into the GP2 system for in-house re-inspections
- Arrange asbestos refurbishment/demolition surveys as and when required.

Contractor Management

During the summer and half term holidays (2017) the Health & Safety Officers visited all schools and other sites where they were notified that contractors would be working. This enabled activities to be monitored and risk assessments, method statements, and training records to be checked. When the necessary standards were not being achieved the work was stopped until corrective action was taken. Recent visits by the Health and Safety Executive to some of the construction sites without enforcement action being taken can give assurance that the approach taken is appropriate and effective.

Educational Visits

Council Health & Safety Officers (under the banner of the Educational Visits Advisory Team) provide advice and support to teachers, youth workers and other Council employees who take young people out on educational and out-of-centre visits. They are also responsible for the implementation of, and monitoring compliance with, the policy and procedures which ensure the Council meets its statutory responsibilities for the safety of such activities. The team maintain the EVOLVE on- line visit planning, recording and approval system for Gateshead.

EVOLVE also provides the Council with a clear picture of the great range of Learning outside the Classroom opportunities being provided for Gateshead children. In the academic year 2017/18 we recorded 5996 (6080 in previous year) visits. Of these, 443 (505 in previous year) involved residential stays, adventurous activities or travel overseas to countries including Malawi, Uganda, USA, Italy, Croatia, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, France, Switzerland, Iceland, Poland, Holland, Spain, Germany and China.

Legionella Management

The Water Hygiene Team is responsible to the Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, within Council Housing, Design & Technical Services. The team works closely with the Health & Safety Team have achieved the following in this reporting period:

- In all buildings visited or audited no significant issues were found. Ensured that all Council buildings continue to have their risk assessment documentation updated.
- 476 samples were taken with 4 positive legionella results returned. At the same time samples were taken for pseudomonas with 3 positive samples returned and Ecoli with 8 positive results. Remedial action was taken, and the properties resampled. All buildings came back with negative results demonstrating that our control methods are robust and where positive results have been identified they have been dealt with quickly.
- Retained Legionella Control Association Accreditation to prove good practice.
- Continued to carry out risk assessments on water systems in domestic properties owned by Gateshead Council as part of a ten-year scheme. 5382 properties have been assessed so far.

17. **Performance Indicators** - The tables set out below details the performance indicator data for 2017 - 2018 and how this compares to previous years. These are common indicators for occupational health and safety and help to track performance and compare against other organisations.

Table 3 - Incidents / Industrial Diseases (ID)

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
RIDDOR	25	8	18	Injuries resulting in over 7 days absence reported to HSE
Specified Injuries	2	7	4	Significant injuries such as fractures, amputation, loss of sight, crush injury, significant burn injury and degree of scalping
ID	0	6	7	Industrial diseases reported to the HSE
> 3 day	3	12	3	Injuries > 3 days but < 7 days noted for information

Table 4 - Incidence Rates

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
RIDDOR	4.88	1.44	3.34	Incidence Rate for over 7-day injuries (number of over 7-day injuries per 1000 employees).
Specified Injuries	0.39	0.54	0.74	Incidence Rate for specified injuries (number of injuries per 1000 employees).

The statistics (which include the Council's maintained schools) show improvements in some areas compared to the previous year:

- Total number of incidents decreased from 493 to 484
- Specified injuries decreased from 7 to 4 though the incident rate increased due to decrease in employee numbers
- Non-employees sent direct to hospital increased from 1 to 4
- Increase in near miss reporting from 94 to 100 which includes 11 reports of verbal threatening behaviour.

The main causes of over 7-day incidents are slip/trip/fall and handling/ lifting/carrying. The specified injuries were a result of physical assault, slip/trip/fall; and struck by an object. These occurred in various locations at different times of the year so could not be linked to any trends. Detailed quarterly reports are given to groups on the recorded incidents to enable them to take relevant action to help reverse any local trends, identify training needs etc. Appendices 3 – 6 show the number of incidents per group; the category and cause of incident.

Table 5 – HSE Enforcement Action

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
Prosecution	0	0*	0	*HSE investigated asbestos incident but the Council was not prosecuted. However, the Council received FFI resulting in fine.
Prohibition Notice	0	0	0	
Improvement Notice	0	0	0	
Fee for Intervention (FFI)	0	1**	0	*(£3250.8) **(£1,277.10) HSE carried out an investigation into the health surveillance management.

Table 6 – Sickness Absence (Stress / Work Incidents)

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
Sickness Absence	60,166	55,561	53,543	Total sickness absence days
Stress	23.8%	26.33%	28.29%	Percentage of total days lost due to stress, depression and mental health including work related stress
Work incident	2.81%	0.67%	1.28%	Percentage of total days lost due to work related injury and ill health

Table 7 – Training

Type	Year			Comments
	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	
Corporate	131 (10 courses 84% average attendance rate)	168 (15 courses 79% average attendance rate)	385 (32 courses 81% average attendance rate)	Number attending corporate health and safety training courses (Accident investigation, Asbestos Management, DSE, Fire Warden, Health & Safety for Managers, Risk assessment and Stress Management). Additional courses were delivered to schools on request.
e-learning	412	1164	1239	

We act on the findings through:

18. **Auditing and performance review** is the final step in the health and safety management control cycle. They constitute the ‘feedback loop’ which enables the Council to reinforce, maintain and develop its ability to reduce risks and to ensure the continued effectiveness of the health and safety management system.

One audit was carried out during the reporting period. Normally the service would schedule several audits each year, however, this year priorities were re-aligned, and resources were diverted to the management of fire safety.

19. **Review of policies and procedures** – considerable ongoing review of the Health & Safety policy, corporate procedures and guidance takes place. New documents are developed, or others amended. See paragraph 9 for details.

Health & Safety Executive

20. To the best knowledge of the Health & Safety Team there were no prosecutions or enforcement notices issued by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE). The HSE did visit / make contact several times in the reporting period to look at the management of hand arm vibration; carry out site inspections; and, follow up on reportable incidents with no further action being taken.

Service Level Agreements

21. The Occupational Health & Safety Team has developed contracts through Service Level Agreements (SLA’s) with schools, academies, TGHC, NEPO, Regent Funeral Services and several community establishments and private organisations. Occupational Health, also provide services to these organisations and operate a pay as you use service, where appropriate, and resources permitting. These have proved beneficial to both the team and the organisations involved.

Summary

22. As detailed earlier in this report, the Council's approach to health & safety management continues to follow the guidance document HSG65 – 'Managing for Health and Safety'. Commitment from senior management is strong and substantial progress has been made in delivering improvements.
23. Throughout the last year there has been increased focus on fire safety management.
24. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in this reporting period visited two Council sites, with no action taken.

What will we do next?

25. The Health & Safety team will work with the Group Management Teams to ensure that progress is made on a continual basis.
26. Group Management Teams and Head Teachers will be informed of any significant changes to the Council's corporate health and safety policies and procedures or when action is necessary because of any health and safety failing via a health and safety briefing note.
27. Senior Management Group will be advised on a quarterly basis on the progress being made and any issues to address.

Recommendation

28. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are sought on:
 - Whether the Committee is satisfied that the actions taken are appropriate and effective to maintain or improve the health and safety management system

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