

TITLE OF REPORT: Annual Health and Safety Performance Report

REPORT OF: Mike Barker, Strategic Director

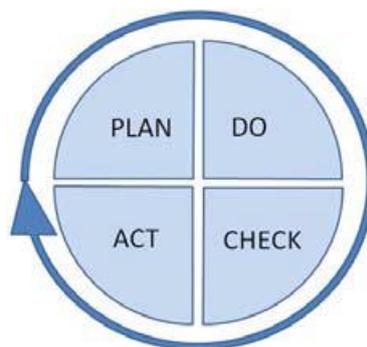
SUMMARY

This report reviews the health and safety performance for 2018/2019 of Gateshead Council and identifies key priorities for 2020.

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. The 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.

PLAN AND DO - Gateshead Council's Approach to Managing Health and Safety Risks



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

3. **General Health and Safety Advice** – from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 Health and Safety Officers from carried out 95 (94 in 17/18) advisory visits, 34 (28 in 17/18) incident investigations and 143 (135 in 17/18) inspections and audits.
4. **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.

The Health and Safety Team has developed a spreadsheet which holds the following information: name and address of premise; type of premise; name of fire risk assessor; target and completion dates; FRA status (high, med or low); date next FRA due and dates of reviews; any Fire Service intervention and upload onto the GP2 system. This is an essential tool to keep track of progress.

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 and Safety Officers completed 51 out of a target of 55 (71 from a target of 76 in 17/18) fire risk assessments and reviews. The delay in completing the target figure was due to a site being refurbished; dates postponed at the request of Head Teachers; and other work priorities.

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.

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.

5. **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
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Health Surveillance	503	551	551	
Driver Medical	106	49	63	
Vision Screening	67	57	54	
Medical Referral – OHA	157	553	531	
Medical Referral – OHP	407	123	134	
Pre-employment questionnaires	1088*	1232*	926*	Employees – * desk top exercise
Pre-employment questionnaires	298*	196*	153*	Volunteers – * desk top exercise
Physiotherapy	585	554/106	602/115	115 Medical referrals
Counselling Sessions	1040	1384	2169	
Total	4251 (2865*)	4805 (3377*)	5298 (4219*)	Note gradual 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		
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019
Health Surveillance	47	46	47
Driver Medical	7	2	5
Vision Screening	3	3	2
Medical Referral – OHA	7	56	66
Medical Referral – OHP	41	14	12
Physiotherapy	43	35	29
Counselling	33	61	115
Total	181 (6.3% excl*)	217 (4.5% excl*)	276 (5.2% excl*)

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

6. **Health and Wellbeing** - throughout the year the task and finish groups set up to act on findings from the Health Needs Assessment have continued to focus on losing weight; reducing stress levels; increasing physical activity; improving sleep; getting a better work-life balance and reducing back pain. Through the work of the focus groups, several campaigns and activities have taken place including mental health awareness; step challenge; Nordic walking and healthy eating options in Bewicks. There have also been some local success stories where small teams have participated in weight loss and exercise programmes

The Committee may wish to refer to the report presented to the OSC meeting on 17 June 2019 for a more detailed update on the progress in relation to 'Health and Wellbeing'.

7. **Health and Safety Training** – this is delivered by internal and external trainers. Individual service areas are responsible for relevant specialised safety training and hold appropriate training records. Service Managers are also responsible for ensuring mandatory training is up to date and records are kept. Figures in table 7 detail the number of employees who have attended corporate health and safety training in 18/19.

Wherever possible, the Council directs staff to e-learning which is a more efficient method of delivering training. Over the last year, 593 health and safety e-learning modules were accessed across the Council. Whilst this a decrease from 1239 in the previous year, it is linked to the decommission of the external e-learning platform 'Safety Media' which supports a wide range of generic modules, and the transfer/development of more targeted, relevant, modules to the Council's Knowledge Net platform. There is no indication that the decrease in accessing the courses is having an impact on the Council; all service areas have confirmed that their training is up to date. The Workforce Development team continues to promote the health and safety training and will continue to do so throughout the year.

8. **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 adapt, as required, for their service areas as appropriate. During this reporting period, one new policy has been adopted; 20 new procedural documents were developed; and, 42 documents have been revised. All new documents and those with significant changes are presented to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee as part of the consultation process. Minutes of meetings which outline discussions and outcomes are available on the intranet ([Gateshead Intranet - Safety alerts, briefings and minutes](#)).
9. The new policy adopted is [LCS-HS-26](#) '*Management of Violence and Aggression towards Employees*'. This was developed to reinforce the Council's commitment to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all its employees, and as an umbrella document to reinforce information given to employees in other guidance documents.

CHECK - Checks to Ensure Things are Happening Through:

10. **Reporting to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee** - quarterly updates are presented on new legislation and guidance; the corporate health and safety action plan; the health and safety training strategy; and, health and wellbeing. The committee meeting provides all service areas with an opportunity to discuss other relevant health and safety issues. Trade unions are represented at all meetings.
11. **Senior Management Group (SMG) Health and Safety Update Reports** - quarterly reporting by the OH&S Manager to SMG, Services and Performance, advising on the status of the health and safety management system and hazards that have been identified, recommending to SMG any reasonable actions to be taken. This also provides an opportunity to share information and lessons learnt from any incidents or near misses that may have occurred.
12. **Monitoring hazards** – Health and 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, where appropriate, improvements are implemented.
13. **Incident Investigations** – where necessary, incidents are investigated with findings and recommendations communicated to responsible managers. Managers are responsible for taking appropriate action to prevent a reoccurrence. Health and Safety Officers ensure that incidents are followed up appropriately.
14. **Annual Reporting on Corporate Health and Safety** – annual reports are produced for SMG, Services and Performance and this Overview and Scrutiny Committee to inform senior managers and councillors of the work undertaken in the previous 12-month period. These reports include details on health and safety performance and incident statistics.
15. **Internal Assurance**

Asbestos Management

The Asbestos Management Team (AMT) is responsible to the Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, within Council Housing, Design and Technical

Services. The team works closely with the Health and Safety Team have achieved the following in this reporting period:

- Continued to carry out the asbestos re-inspections, update and deliver registers.
- Provided technical advice to schools which have bought into the asbestos management package via services to schools.
- Reviewed the corporate asbestos management plan and provided changes that were required.
- Input asbestos data into the GP2/Amis system for in-house re-inspections
- Arrange asbestos refurbishment/demolition surveys as and when required.

Contractor Management

During the reporting period the Health and Safety Officers visited all schools and other sites when they were notified that contractors would be working (104). This enabled activities to be monitored and risk assessments, method statements, and training records to be checked. There were no major issues identified.

A small number of non-compliance issues were identified relating to: personal protective equipment (PPE) not being worn; health and safety documentation not being available for inspection; scaffolding not being erected to correct standards; asbestos registers not being checked prior to work commencing; and poor vehicle management. When the necessary standards were not being achieved, the work was temporarily stopped until corrective action was taken; the building surveyor informed; and, the issues discussed at the Shearlegs Road operational management meeting attended by senior managers. More significant concerns are also raised at the Communities and Environment Group Management Team meetings chaired by the Strategic Director, who can ensure appropriate action has been taken to ensure non-compliances do not re-occur.

Educational Visits

Council Health and Safety Officers (under the banner of the Educational Visits Advisory Team) provide advice and support to teachers, youth workers and other Council employees who are responsible for young people on educational and out-of-centre visits. They are also responsible for the implementation and monitoring of compliance with appropriate policy and procedures to 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 2018/19 5500 visits were recorded (5996 in previous year) visits. Of these, 350 (443 in previous year) involved residential stays, adventurous activities or travel overseas to countries including Italy, Iceland, Croatia, Shanghai, France, Northern Ireland, Holland, Uganda, Japan, USA and Germany.

Legionella Management

The Water Hygiene Team is responsible to the Strategic Director, Communities and Environment, within Council Housing, Design and Technical Services. The team

works closely with the Health and Safety Team have achieved the following in this reporting period:

- In all buildings visited or audited no significant issues were found and ensured that all Council buildings continue to have their risk assessment documentation updated.
- 195 water samples were taken in the reporting period with no positive legionella results returned. At the same time samples were taken for pseudomonas with 6 positive samples returned and Ecoli with no 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.
- Resignation from the Legionella Control Association Accreditation; the Council now adopts the North East Council Legionella Focus Group (NECLFG) guidance for best practice.
- Continued to carry out risk assessments on water systems in domestic properties owned by Gateshead Council as part of a ten-year scheme. 6896 properties have been assessed so far. An increase of 1514 from previous report.

16. **Performance Indicators** - The tables set out below details the performance indicator data for 2018/19 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
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
RIDDOR	8	18	21	Injuries resulting in over 7 days absence reported to HSE
Specified Injuries	7	4	8	Significant injuries such as fractures, amputation, loss of sight, crush injury, significant burn injury and degree of scalping
ID	6	7	0	Industrial diseases reported to the HSE
> 3 day	12	3	7	Injuries > 3 days but < 7 days noted for rmination

Table 4 - Incidence Rates

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
RIDDOR	1.44	3.34	3.57	Incidence Rate for over 7-day injuries (number of over 7-day injuries per 1000 employees).
Specified Injuries	0.54	0.74	1.19	Incidence Rate for specified injuries (number of injuries per 1000 employees).

The statistics (which include the Council's maintained schools) show the following compared to the previous year:

- Total number of incidents increased from 484 to 581 (this includes near misses where no injury was sustained).
- Specified injuries increased from 4 to 5.
- Non-employees sent direct to hospital increased from 4 to 6.
- Increase in near miss reporting from 100 to 174 which includes 96 reports of threatening behaviour and verbal abuse.

The main causes of over 7-day incidents are slip/trip/fall and handling/ lifting/carrying. The specified injuries were a result of slip/trip/fall and equipment failure. These occurred in various locations at different times of the year, and analysis of the data found no links to any trends. Detailed quarterly reports are provided to Groups on the recorded incidents to enable them to take relevant action to help reverse any local trends, identify training needs etc.

Table 5 – HSE Enforcement Action

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Prosecution	0*	0	0	
Prohibition Notice	0	0	0	
Improvement Notice	0	0	0	
Fee for Intervention (FFI)	1*	0	0	*(£1,277.10)

Table 6 – Sickness Absence (Stress / Work Incidents)

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Sickness Absence	55,561	53,543	47,494	Total sickness absence days excluding schools 36,253 for 18/19
Stress	26.33%	28.29%	31.50%	Percentage of total days lost due to stress, depression and mental health including work related stress
Work incident	0.67%	1.28%	3.5% (1690)	Percentage of total days lost due to work related injury and ill health

Table 7 – Training

Type	Year			Comments
	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019	
Corporate	168 15 courses 79% average attendance rate	385 32 courses 81% average attendance rate	177 16 courses 66% average attendance rate	Number attending corporate health and safety training courses (Accident investigation, Asbestos Management, DSE, Fire Warden, H & S for Managers, Risk assessment and Stress Management). Additional courses were delivered to schools on request.
e-learning	1164	1239	593	

ACT - We Act on the Findings Through:

17. **Auditing and performance review** are the final steps 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. Two out of four scheduled audits were carried out during the reporting period. The two not completed were in respect of '*Response to Violent/Aggressive Incidents at Civic Centre Receptions and Public Areas*'. These were postponed, as agreed by SMG on 1 April 2019 as the information relating to this issue is now incorporated into [LCS-HS-79](#) '*Management of Violence and Aggression towards Employees – Policy supporting guidance*'. Postponing the audit will provide an opportunity for the new policy and guidance to be embedded before auditing takes place. Steps are in place to review the internal emergency response alarms, which may impact on the scope of the audit.
18. **Review of policies and procedures** – considerable ongoing review of the Health and Safety policy, corporate procedures and guidance takes place. New documents are developed, or others amended. See paragraphs 8 and 9 for details.

Health and Safety Executive

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

Service Level Agreements

19. The Occupational Health and 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

20. As detailed earlier in this report, the Council's approach to health and 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.
21. Throughout the last year there has been continued focus on fire safety management.
22. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in this reporting period visited several Council sites, with no action taken.

What Will We Do Next?

23. The Health and Safety team will work with the Group Management Teams to continually improve health and safety management systems including policies, procedures and arrangements.
24. Deliver the corporate audit programme.
25. Deliver the fire risk assessment programme.
26. Occupational Health to meet all statutory requirements by fulfilling health surveillance programmes.
27. Continuation of the co-ordination of employee wellbeing events throughout the year with emphasis being placed on the principles of THRIVE.
28. 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.
29. Senior Management Group will be advised on a quarterly basis on the progress being made and any issues to address.

Recommendation

30. 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 Council's health and safety management system

Contact: Susan Smith

Ext. 2272