

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Employment Committee
Subject:	Health and Safety Annual Report (for period 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022)
Date of meeting:	17 November 2022
Report by:	Lynda Martin, Corporate Health and Safety Manager
Wards affected:	All

1. Requested by

1.1 The Annual Report on Health and Safety to the Employment Committee.

2. Purpose

2.1 To provide assurance to the Employment Committee that Portsmouth City Council is complying with health and safety legislation and is ensuring the health, safety, and wellbeing of those affected by the council's activities.

3. Information Requested

3.1 The Annual Report, on Health and Safety activities within Portsmouth City Council during the reporting period of 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

3.2 The Committee receives:

- The Annual health and safety report covering the reporting period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- Updated 2021/22 Health and Safety Action Plan. (Appendix 1)
- New Health and Safety Action Plan which covers the period of 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. (Appendix 2)

4. Background

4.1 The Corporate Health and Safety management system is developed, maintained, and monitored by the Corporate Health and Safety team. The role of the Health and Safety team is to provide specialist advice, guidance, training and support to council members, managers, and employees to enable them to fulfil their legal Health and Safety responsibilities and comply with UK Health and Safety legislation, guidance, and best practice.

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4.2 The Corporate Health and Safety Manager has reviewed the management system, including risk identification, training and guidance documents and has introduced a Health and Safety legal register and risk register and has improved consultation, and communication by reviewing the membership of the Corporate Health and Safety Forum, which meets quarterly and has representation from each Directorate and the Unions. The 2022/23 Health and Safety Action Plan seeks to implement the revised components of the Management System and departmental risk registers.

5. Policy

5.1 The Overarching Health and Safety Policy was reviewed and updated in June 2021 and is published in the Policy Hub. The Statement of Intent was updated in July 2021. It was agreed that other Health and Safety policies and guidance documents would all be removed from the Policy Hub, reviewed and renamed as guidance. This work is ongoing and reports on progress are given to the Health and Safety Forum.

6. Risks

6.1 The Corporate Health and Safety Manager has reviewed all of the health and safety risks Portsmouth City Council faces and has produced a legal and risk register. These documents were consulted upon and approved by the Health and Safety Forum. The main health and safety risks that have affected Portsmouth City Council over the reporting period are:

6.1.1 COVID-19

During the reporting period a Joint Covid Health and Safety Meeting met each month (between the quarterly Health and Safety Forum meetings), attended by the Unions, Health and Safety, Facilities Management, HR, Corporate Communications, the Director of Corporate Services and the Assistant Director - Buildings. The group was established to address the many health and safety issues and risks that arose during the pandemic and ensured a partnership and solution focused approach was taken in managing risk and ensuring staff safety across the wide range of activities of the council.

The Corporate Health and Safety Team has provided advice and guidance to the organisation throughout the pandemic; ensured building risk assessments were undertaken and regularly reviewed as the pandemic progressed; adapted the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) risk assessment to cover home working and provided advice to managers on a range of health and safety matters thrown up by the pandemic.

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The Corporate Health and Safety Team contributed to the employee wellbeing strategy, which has been paramount throughout this time and advocates the sensible continuation of infection prevention and control mitigations.

6.1.2 Fire, Asbestos and Legionella Safety Groups

The Corporate Health and Safety Manager is a member of each of these groups who meet quarterly. Update reports are provided to the Health and Safety Forum.

Fire

There are regular liaison meetings with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service to discuss feedback regarding fire incidents, share information and plan joint working initiatives to promote fire safety.

There was one report of a minor fire in a corporate building, which resulted in evacuation but no injuries. The cause was deemed to be a faulty microwave, which was disposed of.

Asbestos

There have been no asbestos management failings or adverse 'asbestos related' incidents (accidents) reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Team or the HSE. The Corporate Health and Safety Team works with colleagues to ensure compliance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

Legionella

The Council employs the services of an external specialist contractor (Water Hygiene Centre). The Water Safety Group, has representation from each Directorate and provides assurance that there is appropriate risk management infrastructure and control in place to minimise the risk of harm and infection from Legionella bacteria. An Operational Water Safety Group reports into the Water Safety Group and their remit is to collate and review records of compliance for water safety and to ensure that water safety is being proactively managed on a day-to-day basis.

7. Training

7.1 Completion of Health and Safety training was down in 2021/22 compared to the previous years.

Year	Completion number
2021/2022	3425
2020/2021	4505
2019/2020	4738

7.2 The training includes, Handling of People, DSE, Asbestos, Fire Safety, Incident Reporting, Health and Safety Induction, Legionella and Manual Handling of Loads.

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7.3 The reasons for the reduction in training completion are likely to include the capacity challenge presented by the pandemic - there has been a consistent reduction in training completion rates across a range of other disciplines - as well as the adjustment to a different way of working.

7.4 Compliance levels for Mandatory Health and Safety training is monitored and reported to the Health and Safety Forum, along with direct follow up with Departments. However, a review of mandatory training is going to be undertaken to ensure training is targeted to the right groups at the right time. For example all new staff should undertake the Health and Safety induction module within 3 months of joining PCC, however Handling of People, although mandatory, will only be relevant to specific groups of the workforce.

8. Incidents (Accident and Violent Incident reporting)

8.1 There were 28 RIDDOR reports submitted in this reporting period (17 in PCC + 11 in schools), compared to 11 in 2020/21 and 16 in 2019/20. This increase is believed to be due to better follow up reporting.

8.2 In 2021/22 'Overall' incidents reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Team (accidents and violent incidents) were 453 (226 in PCC + 227 in schools compared to in 2020/21 = 266 (175 in PCC + 91 in schools), and in 2019/20 = 596 (276 in PCC + 320 in schools).

8.3 Corporate incident statistics are below the normal expected industry norm compared to previous years which is attributed to the pandemic and associated periods of lockdown over the reporting period

9 Visits from Enforcing Authorities

9.1 Two issues relating to enforcing authorities arose during the reporting period as follows:

9.1.1 Working at Height procedures are being updated and the Health and Safety team will liaise with all departments to ensure compliance, further to the HSE following up the School RIDDOR that was reported previously.

9.1.2 As a result of proactive Health Surveillance for the risk of Hand Arm Vibration from using power tools there have been two RIDDOR notifications. Consequently, the HSE wrote to the Service, who responded detailing all of the measures they have in place. At the moment there has been no further contact from the HSE.

9.2 To our knowledge there were no further planned UK interventions, unannounced site inspections (building sites/refurbishment projects managed by the council), additional telephone/email queries (associated with RIDDOR/Non RIDDOR accident reports,

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asbestos, legionella or customer complaints/queries). Reportable issues and the actions of enforcing authorities are discussed regularly at the Corporate Health and Safety Forum.

10. Monitoring, Compliance, Audit and Inspections

10.1 Audit programme

The audit process was reviewed during the reporting period and the programme will recommence in 2022/23.

A new audit template has been produced and the audit schedule will recommence in 2022/23.

10.2 Schools Health and Safety Traded Service Agreements

The 21 Local Authority Schools and an additional 9 Academies benefit from the Health and Safety Traded Service Agreement, which was reviewed during the reporting period and states that, The Corporate Health and Safety Manager will be Schools' competent person and along with the Corporate Health and Safety Team, will work with schools to ensure health and safety compliance.

11. Communication and Consultation

11.1 The Corporate Health and Safety Team continue to use a wide range of communications channels to deliver appropriate Health and Safety messages.

- During this reporting period there were four formal quarterly Health and Safety and Forum meetings (July, September, November 2021 and February 2022). The function of this Board is to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by the Council's activities by encouraging and promoting co-operation and communication, maintaining a safe and healthy working environment, ensuring safe systems of work and providing a forum for effective council-wide consultation on health and safety matters.
- The Joint Covid Health and Safety Meeting continued to meet each month between Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board, although this has now stood down
- E-newsletter - circulated and published on the Health and Safety Intranet pages following each quarterly Health and Safety Forum meeting.
- Policy Hub, staff intranet, Teams Channels and email provide access for all council and school employees to Corporate Health and Safety guidance documents and forms.
- The Corporate Health and Safety Manager is working with stakeholders to review and improve methods of consultation and communication.

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Signed by Lynda Martin, PCC Corporate Health and Safety Manager

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Updated 2020/21 Health and Safety Action Plan.
- Appendix 2 - New Health and Safety Action Plan which covers the period of 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location