



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 2023 - 31 March 2024)
Date of meeting:	11 March 2024
Report by:	Jeremy Underdown - Head of Facilities
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 2023 to 31 March 2024.

3.2 The Committee receives:

- The Annual health and safety report covering the reporting period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. This was provided in the interim report to the committee on 30th November 2023, with updates embedded in this report. (Appendix 1)
- Review of the Health and Safety Action Plan 2023/24. (Appendix 2)
- Proposed Health and Safety Action Plan 2024/25 (Appendix 3)

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



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Safety responsibilities and comply with UK Health and Safety legislation, guidance, and best practice.

- 4.2 At the employment committee meeting held on 30th November, an interim report containing the standard data normally received (Training and incident statistics) was agreed and noted and this report is found at appendix 1 for ease.
- 4.3 At the November meeting it was also recognised that the timing of the annual report had become out of alignment with the period being reported and therefore it did not provide the committee with a meaningful view of work undertaken in the previous period, nor an opportunity to input to planned work in the forthcoming period. Coupled with this was a review of the health and safety function in October 2023 which saw the function encompassed within the Corporate Facilities Management service and an opportunity to review the direction of the team for the forthcoming year and prioritise the action plan against areas of greatest risk or service improvement.
- 4.4 This report, in the main, looks to review the action plan from the preceding year and propose the action plan for the year 2024/25, but will provide a brief update on the interim report. It will also provide further information on fire training as requested by the committee.

5. Update on interim paper

Health and Safety Policy

- 5.1 In November the overarching Health and Safety policy for PCC was under review having reached its published review date. This has now been reviewed and republished, with a new statement of intent signed by the (at the time) recently appointed Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council.

Risks

- 5.2 In line with the November 2023 report the main health and safety risks affecting the Council remain as:
- Slips, trips and falls
 - Display screen equipment use
 - Work related violence including verbal abuse and physical violence against staff
- 5.3 Fire, Asbestos and Legionella

There have been no further asbestos related incidents since the previous report.



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At its last meeting the committee asked for further information relating to Fire safety training. There are currently 3 courses offered:

- Fire Safety Training (mandatory to all staff, to be completed every two years): This course covers the basics of fire safety and responsibilities of all employees
- Fire Extinguisher Training: Whilst training is available, the overarching fire policy prioritises safety of staff over tackling fires.
- Fire Warden Training: Provides the basics of when fire wardens are required and typical duties.

Statutory compliance for fire safety rests with the council's Building Services function including ensuring building Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) are undertaken to an appropriate schedule across all sites that the council operates from. However, all managers with site responsibility are responsible for ensuring building users have an appropriate awareness of local procedures and are required to provide an up-to-date fire logbook, detailing dates of drills, fire alarm tests etc. The role of managers with site responsibility is recognised in our new action plan through the development and roll out of appropriate tools and resources to assist them in this role.

Incidents and statistics

5.4 There are no further incidents, visits or statistics to report on following the previous report.

6. Review of previous years action plan.

6.1 The resetting of the timing of this report has resulted in reporting on an action plan for the year 2022/23 (agreed November 2022) At a previous meeting it was noted that many of the actions in the action plan were listed as 'Ongoing'. Following a review of the Health and Safety function it has been recognised that many of these actions represent the 'business as usual' activities of the function. Going forward the action plan will no longer include those elements that are the core function of Health and Safety and will focus instead on those areas that mitigate areas of identified risk or where that represent opportunities for service improvement. Appendix 2 provides an update of the 2022 - 2023 action plan and identifies those areas that will in future be subsumed into business as usual (BAU)

6.2 There are 4 distinct 'actions' from the previous year's plan:

- Action 2: To write a new Health and Safety Policy.
 - This action has been completed.

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- Action 4: To introduce the revised audit templates for council buildings.
 - This action remains outstanding as is carried forward.
 - This is partly due to a number of changes in the Health and Safety team over the previous year which has impacted on capacity, but also because there has been a need to ensure that building managers are aware of their roles and responsibilities. This work and the need for a robust audit programme has been carried forward into the 2024 - 2025 action plan.

- Action 6: To implement changes to the incident reporting procedures.
 - This action remains outstanding but positive progress has been made in this area.
 - A digital incident form was trialled with a number of services from November 2023 and the success of this pilot will see the digital form shared with rest of the organisation imminently.
 - There is still a great deal of work to be done in this area, and this is reflected in next year's plan.

- Action 7: To review all Health and Safety Training:
 - This action has been completed

7. Health and Safety Action Plan 2024/25

7.1 The action plan for the forthcoming year can be found at appendix 3.

7.2 The plan removes the 'on-going' actions that can be viewed as business usual, accepting that these activities are the core function of Health and Safety. Instead, it focuses on a number of key themes that address areas of identified risk or opportunities for service improvement:

- Digitisation
 - Improving the efficient and effective interaction between the Health and Safety service and the wider organisation to:
 - Enable and simplify the reporting of incidents and near misses in line with policy.
 - Improve data collection, analysis and therefore tailor response and promote safety.
 - Increase capacity of the team and productivity of services

- Roles and responsibilities
 - Ensuring these are easily recognised and understood with the introduction of a site manager tool



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- A review of the direct health and safety team to ensure the correct resource is in place to cope with demand and promote health and safety across the organisation.
- Audit programme
 - One that is targeted where it is required with the improved collection of data to maximise its efficiency and effectiveness.

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Signed by Jeremy Underdown, Head of Facilities

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 - The Annual health and safety report covering the reporting period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
- Appendix 2 - Health and Safety Action Plan 2023/24.
- Appendix 3 - Health and Safety Action Plan 2024/25

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



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Subject:	Health and Safety Annual Report (for period 1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023)
Date of meeting:	30 th November 2023
Report by:	Jeremy Underdown - Head of Facilities
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 2022 to 31 March 2023.

3.2 The Committee receives:

- The Annual health and safety report covering the reporting period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

3.3 The committee would also normally receive at this point, progress reports against the previous years agreed action plan and a draft of the proceeding years Health And Safety action plan to agree. However, it is requested of the committee, and for reasons explained below, that the action plan is brought to a subsequent meeting. This may indeed prove a more beneficial model to adopt going forward, providing an opportunity for members to consider the data presented here, before agreeing where focus should be placed and recorded in the formal action plan.

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4. Background

4.1 The driver for taking a more staggered approach to information shared with the committee at this time, is a change to the structure of the health and safety team in terms of personnel and reporting hierarchy. The Corporate Health and Safety manager (Lynda Martin) left the employ of Portsmouth City Council in September 2023. Since 2019, the post of Health and Safety Manager has been held by 4 separate individuals, and in 2021 the team moved from the HNBS directorate to sit within Corporate Services. With a team having faced so much change, it makes good business sense to take the opportunity to ensure that the structure and resources are fit for purpose, for the benefit of the organisation, and with hope to provide some much needed stability.

4.2 Undoubtedly Health and Safety belong within the Corporate Services directorate with natural synergies with the other services contained within it. However, Health and Safety will now sit under Facilities Management (having previously sat within HR), and the health and safety officers will report directly to the Head of Facilities. Facilities and Health and Safety are natural bedfellows, with one providing the theoretical framework (H &S), and the other (FM) putting this into practice. Working together can only strengthen output to the benefit of PCC. However, with this change only occurring in October 2023, it provides little opportunity to report on any learning and provide an adequate action plan for the next financial year. Although clearly one item on the plan will be to review required resources and bed in any service changes required.

4.3 Regardless of structural changes, the Corporate Health and Safety management system continues to be developed, maintained, and monitored by the Corporate Health and Safety team. The role of the Health and Safety team being 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.

4.4 The very nature of Health and Safety means there is continued need to review risks, policies and processes, training and legislation and this work has continued in 2022/23. A live legal register and risk register continue to be the most appropriate tools for this to occur, with the Health and Safety Forum, which meets quarterly, a useful vehicle to share information for wider dissemination across the organisation. Whilst the current action plan places much focus on this review work, the plan for 24/25 is likely to have a number of key strategic themes:

- Team structure:
 - o Ensuring this is fit for purpose with the capacity to meet the demands placed upon it.
- Digitisation:
 - o All reporting functions (Accidents, first aid etc.) to be available as on-line forms.

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- Better use of data to analyse trends and target action, with change based on knowledge.
- The use of digital tools and AI for such elements as FAQs and user-friendly web pages
- Reasserting roles and responsibilities
 - Ensuring the devolved model of responsibility is understood across the organisation and appropriate actions are being undertaken by staff and building managers.
 - This will enable and strengthen an appropriate audit programme to be undertaken.

5. Policy

5.1 All Policies and procedures (with the exception of one) are currently up to date. Work is underway to ensure that these are easily available to staff and those schools included within the traded services agreement, via SharePoint.

5.2 The overarching Health and Safety Policy for PCC is currently under review having reached its published review date, and this is likely to be issued to the wider organisation after the Health and Safety forum in December.

6. Risks

6.1 The Head of Facilities has reviewed the risks recorded on the legal and risk registers. The main health and safety risks that have affected Portsmouth City Council over the reporting period are those that have the potential to impact on the largest staffing groups:

- Slips, trips, and falls
- Incorrect use of display screen equipment (DSE)
- Work related violence including both verbal abuse and physical violence against staff.
- Stress, anxiety and depression remains the largest recorded reason for staff absence across PCC.

6.2 Whilst a dedicated risk assessment is still published with regard to Covid-19 (last updated September 23), the management of risk associated with covid is now on a business as usual setting, although previous mechanisms such as the joint covid health and safety meeting, can be stood up should the need arise



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6.3 Fire, Asbestos and Legionella Safety Groups

Whilst responsibilities in this area are devolved to building services, via the Director of Housing Neighbourhood and Building Services, the Head of Facilities 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.

Asbestos

There have been three 'asbestos related' incidents reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Team involving contractors (i.e., not a PCC failing). The Corporate Health and Safety Team works with colleagues to ensure compliance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.

- 03/08/2022 Contractor – Removal and storage of AIB soffits in an unsafe manner despite being identified in survey due to a changeover of contractor site manager. Investigated by PCC HNBS and Principal contractor. Licenced asbestos removal company engaged to monitor and remove AIB. Full review by contractor, new site induction, operative training undertaken, and site manager handover procedure reviewed.
- 07/10/2022 Subcontractors – disturbed AIB while undertaking balcony refurbishment works and placed in a skip despite being identified in survey. Investigated by PCC HNBS and Principal contractor. Licenced asbestos removal company engaged to monitor and remove AIB. Training for operatives, site supervisor instructed to be more proactive.
- 09/03/2023 Contractor – operative witnessed drilling into AIB by PCC asbestos surveyor. Licenced asbestos removal company engaged to decontaminate area. Contractor review of processes and training.

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.

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7. Training

7.1 Completed health and safety training sessions are shown below and include e-learning and 3x classroom-based courses*.

Training Course	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Asbestos Awareness	53	114	76
Display Screen Equipment	990	877	944
Fire Safety	1156	1560	1087
Health and Safety Induction	586	680	664
Incident Reporting	214	204	149
Legionella Awareness	130	90	73
Manual Handling of Loads	156	226	370
Manual Handling of Loads*			25
Manual Handling of People*	134	15	299
COSHH Awareness (new)	-	-	52
COSHH Assessment (new)	-	-	51
Risk Assessment (new)	-	-	25
Personal Safety & Lone Working (new)*			104
Total	3419	3766	3919

7.2 Whilst the training figures are based on e-learning, figures are included for classroom based manual handling courses for the reporting period recognising a transition back to this more appropriate method following changes because of Covid.#

7.3 The training data also captures information on a number of new courses that have been recently introduced.

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.

8. Incidents (Accident and Violent Incident reporting)

8.1 There were 12 RIDDOR reports submitted in this reporting period (9 in PCC + 3 in LA schools), compared to 28 in 2021/22 and 11 in 2020/21.

8.2 In 2022/23 'Overall' incidents reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Team (accidents and violent incidents) were 486 (302 in PCC + 184 in LA schools) compared to 2021/22 = 453 (226 in PCC + 227 in schools), and in 2020/21 = 266 (175 in PCC + 91 in schools). This increase is due to improved reporting following work with directorates and schools.

8.3 Corporate incident statistics are within expected industry norms.



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9 Visits from Enforcing Authorities

9.1 To our knowledge there were no visits by enforcing authorities during the reporting period.

10. Monitoring, Compliance, Audit, and Inspections

10.1 Audit programme

There is a need for major focus on the audit programme in the coming reporting period. Whilst there is little to report on in terms of actual audits of sites, encouragingly tools that will assist with this, particularly an extensive site management tool, that will provide guidance for those with site management responsibility and set the framework for audit.

The digitisation of reporting records and the ability to better analyse and spot trends, will allow for more targeted audits to occur and should also create capacity within the team to provide more focus in this area.

11 Schools Health and Safety Traded Service Agreements

11.1 The 13 Local Authority Schools, 4 Portsmouth Catholic Diocese schools, and an additional 12 Academies benefit from the Health and Safety Traded Service Agreement.

11.2 Work is currently underway to review the services offered by this route and in line with the traded services cycle. There is a need to provide clearer detail as to what is included within the agreement and what should come at an additional charge.

11.3 With a number of schools transferring to academies, there is a risk that these in turn will chose other methods to manage Health and Safety. This would have the potential to create major budget pressures on the team, which would need to be addressed to ensure an appropriate level of service could be provided to the rest of the organistaion.

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 (June, September, December and March). 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.



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- E-newsletter - circulated and published on the Health and Safety Intranet pages following each quarterly Health and Safety Forum meeting.
- SharePoint, staff intranet, Teams Channels and email provide access for all council and school employees to Corporate Health and Safety guidance documents and forms.

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Signed by Jeremy Underdown - Head of Facilities

Appendices:

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

- Not Classified -



Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan 2022 / 2023

Our approach is based on the HSE's Leading and Managing Health and Safety guidance, adopting the Plan, Do Check, Act framework, where key actions are identified in each part of the cycle and related back to leadership, management, worker involvement and competence. The key actions are:

- Plan
 - Determining our policy
 - Planning for implementation
- Do
 - Profiling our health and safety risks
 - Organising for health and safety
 - Implementing our plan
- Check
 - Measuring performance
 - Investigating accidents and incidents
- Act
 - Reviewing performance
 - Learning lessons

Each year we produce a new Health and Safety Action Plan, which is specific and measurable. Performance against the plan is reported to the Health and Safety Forum.

Action	Objective	Target date	Lead Person	Update/ Outcome
1. To implement the components of the management system across the Council Directorates.	To protect the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by the Council's activities and to comply with corporate H&S policy, and UK H&S legislation	31/03/23	H&S Manager	BAU
2. To write a new Health and Safety Policy, adopting the HSE's Leading and Managing Plan, Do, Check, Act framework.	To protect the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by the Council's activities and to comply with corporate H&S policies and UK H&S legislation	31/03/23	H&S Manager	Complete
3. To support and engage with all schools with a Health and Safety Traded Services Agreement and carry out audits against a schedule.	To protect the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by the Council's activities and to comply with corporate H&S policies and UK H&S legislation.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	BAU
4. To introduce the revised Audit templates for Council Buildings and Directorates and carry out audits against a schedule, to include measuring performance.	To provide corporate assurance by verifying service/ workplace-specific compliance with corporate H&S policies and UK H&S legislation.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	Incomplete - carried forward to 2024-2025 action plan

- Not Classified -

Annex Q

Action	Objective	Target date	Lead Person	Update/ Outcome
5. To consult with staff and union groups on health and safety matters and continue to review and improve communication methods.	To comply with corporate H&S policy and UK legislation - and to facilitate H&S consultation and communication council wide.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	BAU
6. To implement the changes to the incident reporting procedure.	To prevent incidents and to assist managers/staff in complying with corporate 'post-incident' management requirements and UK H&S legislation. To assist service managers in collating/ documenting evidence for reference, in case of future legal/ civil litigation claims.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	Partially completed - carried forward to 2024-1015 action plan
7. To review all Health and Safety training, including liaison with other stakeholders and to produced Departmental Training Matrices.	To ensure up to date H&S advice and training is available to all council employees and 'others' signed up to the H&S Team's traded service.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	Complete
8. To review and implement Health and Safety guidance against the legal and risk registers and best practice.	To protect the health, safety and wellbeing of those affected by the Council's activities and to comply with corporate H&S policy, and UK H&S legislation.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	BAU
9. To continually review and improve the Health & Safety team and report to Health and Safety Forum, to include exploring opportunities to expand the service offering to both internal and external customers.	To evaluate the council's H&S functions for compliance with corporate H&S policies and UK H&S legislation. To increase the service engagement across PCC.	31/03/23	H&S Manager	BAU

Commented [EN1]: Appreciate this level of detail may have originally been reported but can we please not remind the committee of this stuff which should not have been in a public report

End of Action Plan

- Not Classified -



Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan 2024 / 2025

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- Plan
 - Determining our policy
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- Act
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 - Learning lessons

Each year we produce a new Health and Safety Action Plan, which is specific and measurable. Performance against the plan is reported to the Health and Safety Forum.

Action	Objective	Target date	Lead Person	Update/ Outcome
1. To ensure that all reporting lines between H & S and the users of the H&S service are provided digitally. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - First aid - Violent incidents - Accidents - Near misses 	To provide an easier way for all staff to report incidents which in turn will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase the capacity of all involved, particularly within the H & S team. - Capture a wider amount of data and in a format that allows greater analysis and reporting. - Strengthen PCCs approach to H & S by improving trend analysis of incidents, targeting response and enhancing the audit program. 	Q1 to Q3	Head of Facilities	
3. Provide a digital process for requesting and approval of eye test vouchers	To increase capacity within the health and safety team and provide a more streamlined approach to employees	Q3	Head of Facilities	
4. To update how information is made available to staff either through updated intranet pages or a bespoke SharePoint site	To ensure information is easily accessible to those who require and to be well placed to make further improvements as the service develops and based on	Q2	Head of Facilities	

Commented [EN1]: Any policies that need to be updated in the course of the year? Have building services updated the asbestos policy yet?

- Not Classified -

Annex Q

	evidence of need.			

Action	Objective	Target date	Lead Person	Update/ Outcome
5. To develop and introduced a Site Manager's responsibility tool	To provide a tool to site managers that will clearly define their responsibilities, signposting to resources, guidance, training etc. and providing a reporting tool to the H& S team to monitor compliance and inform an audit program.	End of Q2	Head of Facilities	
6. To develop and reintroduce an audit process and program	To utilize the enriched data set, to reintroduce an appropriate audit program, and provide greater reassurance that day to day health and safety management is undertaken across PCC sites. To ensure early identification and mitigation of H&S risks. To enable future tailoring of training, communication and the work of the Health Safety forum in continuously improving Health and Safety	Development Q1 - Q3 First audits Q4	Head of Facilities	

End of Action Plan