



Health & Safety Committee

Corporate Health & Safety Team Update

Date: 24 May 2023

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Rich Clarke, Head of Assurance

Outline and recommendations

This report provides information to the Health & Safety Committee on matters of interest raised in previous meetings. It also summarises information raised at the Corporate Health & Safety Board including relevant incident statistics.

We ask Members to note the report.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The report includes an update on matters raised previously by this Committee, including details on training offered to Council staff.
- 1.2. The report summarises relevant matters raised at the Corporate Health & Safety Board, including most recent accident and incident statistics.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. We ask that Members note and comment on the report.

3. Policy Context

- 3.1. The Council has various legal, regulatory and ethical responsibilities in ensuring the continuing health and safety of all those to whom it owes a duty of care. The work of this Committee in general helps to ensure the Council meets its responsibilities, especially to non-domestic service users. This report contributes to the Committee's understanding of health and safety governance at the Council and so aids in the effective completion of its responsibilities.

4. Update On Matters Raised By Committee

Defibrillators

- 4.1. There is a separate agenda item detailing a proposed Policy to guide buying and using defibrillators.

5. Matters Raised At Corporate Health & Safety Board

- 5.1. The most recent Board meeting was on 20 April 2023. It followed a full set of Directorate-level health and safety meetings, all of which included union representatives.

- 5.2. The Board's agenda included:

- HR Report on Occupational Health & Welfare
- Facilities Management Update, including compliance report on the corporate estate.
- Actions from each Directorate meeting.
- Statutory compliance report and incident reporting summary provided by the Corporate Health & Safety team.

- 5.3. Principal matters of interest for this Committee included:

Violence and Aggression Policy

- 5.4. Raised also by Union colleagues reflecting a view among some staff of increasing aggression from service users. Incident reporting statistics support this view at least to an extent. Visual review shows an increase in these reports. We cannot be definitive as we do not presently record incidents by type.
- 5.5. Following the meeting, the Corporate Health & Safety Team have reviewed the Council's existing policies and provided comment. The meetings also noted online training is available with the need for further in-person training discussed.

Outstanding Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM)

- 5.6. The Board noted that average PPM compliance on the corporate estate is 58%. This means just over half of maintenance is completed on time. However, there are no individually major or long-standing issues. The Corporate Health and Safety Team are working with Facilities Management colleagues to discuss and agree an action plan for earlier flagging of overdue maintenance.

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Fire Risk Assessments

- 5.7. On 25 April the London Fire Bridge inspected Lewisham Library and delivered a Level One Broadly Compliant result. The inspection highlighted some minor housekeeping issues but was satisfied with the Council’s fire risk assessment arrangements for the building. The Board also heard the Catford Library fire risk assessment is complete and identified remedial work is underway.
- 5.8. Several Directorate meetings also noted that a move to longer-term hybrid working had undermined established routines on the availability of fire marshals and first-aiders. The Corporate Health and Safety Team are discussing with directorates various approaches to help improve consistent coverage.

Health and Safety Self Assessments

- 5.9. After a break of several years, the Council is resuming its health and safety audit programme in 2023/24. A crucial first step is seeking self-assessments from individual services to help identify where intervention from the Corporate Team can lend most help. Based on responses from almost 90% of services, we identified a reasonable starting point of health and safety compliance. Overall, 71% of questions on the assessment received a positive response, with a slightly higher compliance rate on matters of ‘practical’ health and safety when compared with policy and governance. The chart below summarises, with responses to individual questions set out in the table which follows:

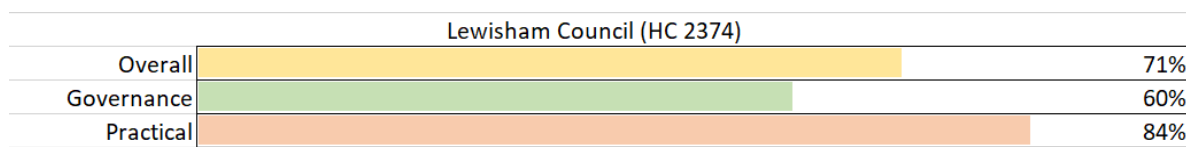


Figure 1: Graph showing self-assessment reported health and safety compliance

| Governance Questions (% “yes”) | Practical Questions (% “yes”) |
|--|--|
| Staff aware of intranet guidance (87%) | Incidents recorded promptly (93%) |
| Have reviewed H&S risks (83%) | Building safety plans known (92%) |
| H&S item at team meetings (73%) | Use online incident reports tool (89%) |
| Action plan for high H&S risks (61%) | Complete incident reporting (86%) |
| H&S documents accessible (55%) | Lessons learned from incidents (86%) |
| Detailed review for high risks (54%) | Suitable PPE accessible (81%) |
| Screen assessments complete (45%) | Personal evacuation plans (73%) |
| Remote workers risk assessed (43%) | First aid location known (69%) |
| H&S training plan in place (41%) | |

Figure 2: Table showing self-assessment responses by question

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6. Incidents

- 6.1. The Board (and relevant Directorates) also received information on reported incidents and change quarter-to-quarter. The table below summarises:

| Directorate | Q3 2022/23 | Q4 2022/23 | Change |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|------------|
| Chief Executive's | 1 | 0 | -1 |
| Children & Young People (non-school) | 3 | 6 | +3 |
| Schools | 292 | 323 | +31 |
| Community Services | 20 | 36 | +16 |
| Corporate Resources | 39 | 20 | -19 |
| Housing, Regeneration & Public Realm | 17 | 10 | -7 |
| Total | 372 | 395 | +23 |

- 6.2. The more serious are called 'RIDDOR' incidents. These come with compulsory reporting to the Health & Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013. The number and nature of such incidents in the quarter to 31 March 2023 is below.

| RIDDOR Category | CED | CYP | School | COM | COR | HRPR |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Dangerous Occurrence | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Major Injury or Condition | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Member of Public to Hospital | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| >7 Day Absence | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Pupil to Hospital | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Prescribed Disease | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 0 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

- 6.3. The highlighted RIDDOR incident, in which a member of the public went to hospital, is of particular relevance noting this Committee's remit. In this incident, a member of the public was injured crossing the road between Laurence House and the Civic Suite in Catford. Members of the Council's security team who witnessed the incident offered their help and reported the incident using our online tool.
- 6.4. The relevant health and safety directorate meeting discussed this incident in some detail. Technically it should not feature in our statistics as it did not involve a council employee or council property. Nonetheless we recognise there

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will be times where council staff act diligently to help others while on duty. There are advantages to noting these instances as well as developing guidance to support colleagues in providing effective help. The Corporate Health and Safety Team are developing further guidance to share with especially public-facing colleagues.

- 6.5. The most serious incidents involved fractures arising from falls or slips. The Council documents all RIDDOR incidents and investigates as appropriate. There is, to the best of our knowledge, no external agency involvement in any of these incidents.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1. The report is to note. There are no financial implications arising.

8. Legal implications

- 8.1. The report is to note. There are no legal implications arising.

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1. The report is to note. There are no equalities implications arising.

10. Climate change and environmental implications

- 10.1. The report is to note. There are no climate change and environmental implications arising.

11. Crime and disorder implications

- 11.1. The report is to note. There are no crime and disorder implications arising.

12. Health and wellbeing implications

- 12.1. The report is to note. There are no health and wellbeing implications arising.

13. Background papers

- 13.1. No background papers.

14. Report author and contact

- 14.1. Rich Clarke, Head of Assurance. rich.clarke@lewisham.gov.uk. Telephone (020) 8314 8730 (ext. 48730).

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