



Health & Safety Committee

Corporate Health & Safety Board Update

Date: 14 November 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. Matters Raised At Corporate Health & Safety Board

- 4.1. The most recent Board meeting was on 19 October 2023. It followed a full set of Directorate-level health and safety meetings, all of which included union representatives. Ex-Lewisham Homes colleagues attended the Corporate Health & Safety Board and the Place directorate meeting as a prelude to starting Housing directorate meetings from January.
- 4.2. 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.
- 4.3. Principal matters of interest for this Committee included:

Violence and Aggression Policy

- 4.4. At the last Committee meeting we reported feedback raised in Directorate meetings and by Union colleagues reflecting a view among some staff of increasing aggression from service users. This was somewhat reflected in incident reporting statistics, though not to the anecdotally reported level.
- 4.5. The Board's recommendations were to finalise the already-in-development refresh to the Violence and Aggression Policy, encourage full incident reporting and promote and review support and training on offer.
- 4.6. The October Board received fresh incident reporting statistics that show a sharp increase in verbal abuse or threatening behaviour. However, feedback from colleagues suggest this is primarily (but not wholly) the impact of more comprehensive reporting. The Board also received a refreshed Policy for approval and reviewed the training and support (both online and in-person) on offer to staff and managers directly affected.

Outstanding Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM)

- 4.7. The Board noted that average PPM and general health and safety compliance on the corporate estate had improved to 80% from the last report of 58%. There are no individually material items and all statutory and routine inspections are up to date.
- 4.8. The reported performance of the Council's facilities management service to responsive work remains good (95% work completed), with much of the outstanding tasks falling to building occupants.

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4.9. Especially with larger Council sites occupied by many services, there can be some uncertainty over responsibility for completing these minor works. Partly for that reason, the Council is currently refreshing the support it gives to building managers, including production of a comprehensive Premises Handbook, to set out clearly how to complete routine health and safety tasks. The Board reviewed a near-complete draft of this Handbook, which will be rolled out to building managers, with accompanying in-person training across the remainder of the year.

Fire Evacuations

4.10. The Board received a separate report on evacuations of Laurence House. That report is also on this Committee’s agenda as a separate item.

Health and Safety Audit Programme

4.11. We reported previously to Members in May the results of the self-assessment that comprised stage one of the revived corporate health and safety audit programme. Almost 90% of services completed the self assessment, recording on average 71% compliance, weighted slightly more towards ‘practical’ health and safety (84% compliance) than governance (60% compliance).

4.12. The next step was to undertake detailed audits of individual services, both to test the veracity of self-assessment but also provide advice on improving compliance. For that reason our audit programme, which covered 12 service areas, focused on services reporting low compliance or who did not return a self-assessment.

4.13. We’re pleased to report the self-assessment and audit have acted as a spur for services to improve their health and safety compliance. The table below summarises results.

Audit Selection Category	Self-Assessed compliance (May 2023)	Audited compliance (Oct 2023)	Change
No self-assessment return	n/a	85%	+85%
Low reported compliance	13%	80%	+67%

4.14. We continue to work with services to address areas of non-compliance through providing guidance and training. We will continue the audit programme into 2024 starting with a fresh self-assessment exercise in the Spring.

5. Incidents

5.1. The Board (and relevant Directorates) also received information on reported incidents and change from last year. The table below summarises:

Directorate	Q2 2022	Q2 2023	Change
Chief Executive's	0	2	+2
Children & Young People (non-school)	4	9	+5
Schools	197	140	-57
Community Services	14	38	+24
Corporate Resources	28	21	-7
Place (formerly HRPR)	18	15	-3
Total (Corporate Only)	64	85	+21
Total (including Schools)	261	225	-36

5.2. As we continue to develop our incident reporting approach ahead of new software implementation, we can now also present analysis by primary cause. The below table sets out the (Corporate, non-schools) incidents above by reported primary cause:

Reported Primary Cause	Q2 2022	Q2 2023	Change
Verbal abuse / threatening behaviour	11	26	+15
Assault on employee by public / pupil	12	5	-7
Assault by service user on service user	13	7	-6
Injured by animal / insect	2	0	-2
Electrical / Fire / Heat / Harmful Substance	1	3	+2
Existing Illness / Medical Condition	0	8	+8
Slip / Trip / Fall	5	8	+3
Manual handling	2	1	-1
Contact with object / vehicle	14	11	-3
Other type of accident	2	12	+10
Near Miss	2	4	+2
Total	64	85	+21

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- 5.3. 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 30 September 2023 is below.

RIDDOR Category	CED	CYP	School	COM	COR	Place
Dangerous Occurrence	0	0	0	0	0	0
Major Injury or Condition	0	0	2	0	0	0
Member of Public to Hospital	0	0	2	0	0	0
>7 Day Absence	0	0	1	1	1	1
Pupil to Hospital	0	0	4	0	0	0
Prescribed Disease	0	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	0	0	9	1	1	1

- 5.4. 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.
- 5.5. The Board will start fully integrating incident reporting from the Housing Directorate beginning in the period ending 31 December 2023.

6. Financial implications

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

7. Legal implications

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

8. Risk implications

- 8.1. The risk of non-compliance with Health and Safety requirements is recognised in the Council's corporate risk register, along with service-specific related risks within Directorate registers. Operating effective oversight and governance of the Council's arrangements and their performance is a key mitigation in reducing the level of risk.

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

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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

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