



## Health & Safety Committee

### Corporate Health & Safety Board Update

**Date:** 10 October 2024

**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.
- 1.2. The report summarises relevant matters raised at the Corporate Health & Safety Board, including most recent accident and incident statistics.
- 1.3. The report also advises the Committee of developments in the Council's delivery of Corporate Health and Safety.

## 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.
- 3.2. 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 Previous Health & Safety Committees

##### Defibrillators

- 4.1. The Committee previously requested a list of the Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs, or just “defibrillators”) on Council premises. There are currently 18 located in various Council buildings (listed below) and being maintained by Council staff. Our routine compliance inspections include monitoring whether local staff are completing routine maintenance checks on the devices. All of these devices are potentially accessible by members of the public as they are registered with the London Ambulance Service.

Premises	Defibrillator Location
Brockley Rise	Premises Reception
Civic Suite	Premises Reception
Granville Park	Premises Reception
Grove Park Adult Learning	Premises Reception
Holbeach	Premises Reception
Ladywell Children Early Learning	School Reception Area (device shared with Watergate school)
Ladywell Day Centre	Sports Hall Corridor
Landmann Way Recycling Centre	Office
Laurence House	1 x Ground Floor Reception 1 x 3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor lift lobby
Moonshot	Premises reception (device shared with Double Jab Boxing Club)
Mulberry	Premises Reception
Old Town Hall	Premises Reception
Torridon Road Library	Main Library Area
Wearside Depot	1 x Ground Floor Lobby 1 x Ground Floor Rear Office 1 x Security Area 1 x Security Lobby

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- 4.2. This list excludes schools, and any community locations who have acquired and maintain a defibrillator for themselves. We will be working on a comprehensive listing in liaison with school health and safety colleagues later in the year.

## Slips and Trips

- 4.3. At a previous committee meeting, Members enquired on the prevalence of incidents of trips and falls on Council pavements. The information we have is incomplete – these are not reportable “at work” incidents via our system unless the person falling is an employee in the course of their duties. So we would typically only become aware of those cases were the person asserts injury and seeks to make a liability claim against the Council. Even in that circumstance, people have 3 years to make a claim for injury so we cannot be confident we have tracked all the incidents in any given year for some time.
- 4.4. That caveat notwithstanding, the general statistics are that the Council has received 74 such claims in the past three years, showing a decline in each year (39 claims in 2021/22, 23 claims in 2022/23 and only 12 claims in 2023/24). Of these, the majority (44, or 60%) are still open as the Council’s insurance team seeks to establish details, review medical records and so on. Of the 33 cases closed, the Council has accepted liability in only 3 cases all of which involved a compensation payment to the injured party. The Council maintains an insurance reserve to cover potential settlement of the claims which remain open.

## Health and Safety Resources

- 4.5 At the last Committee meeting, we discussed a proposal to fully integrate former Lewisham Homes staff responsibilities in a revised health and safety corporate structure. Unfortunately, those plans have been delayed by the decision of our Health & Safety manager to leave the Council and return to Europe for family reasons. She will be significantly missed by all at the Council for her work in improving the service over the past couple of years.
- 4.6 However, I am pleased to report we had a strong response to the advertisement for a new Health & Safety Manager, and our previous manager was able to participate in the recruitment. The final assessment day is on 7 October and hopefully by the time the Committee meets we will have made an appointment.

## **5. Matters Raised At Corporate Health & Safety Board**

- 5.1. Since this Committee last met, the Corporate Health and Safety Board and the various subordinate Directorate Boards have met once, in July. The meetings for this quarter will take place later this month. All meetings include staff representatives, including colleagues from Trade Unions.

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5.2. The Board's standard agenda includes:

- HR Report on Occupational Health & Welfare, including sickness absence.
- 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:

### Premises Inspections

5.4. We continue to complete quarterly premises inspections using our new health and safety software. This allows officers to complete and distribute outturn reports, including photographic evidence, before leaving site. This enables issues to receive immediate attention from premises officers or facilities management as appropriate.

5.5. We continue to develop and expand the full checklist used by the team, including the recent addition of defibrillator checks where applicable as mentioned above. The checklist now involves examination of near 90 individual compliance items.

5.6. The table below shows the current position of publicly accessible buildings outstanding issues on most recent inspection:

<b>Building</b>	<b>H&amp;S Issues</b>	<b>Maintenance Issues</b>	<b>Change</b>
2000 Community	1	3	-2
43 Bromley Road	1	3	0
45 Bromley Road	4	2	+1
Barnes Wallis Community Centre	0	5	0
Bellingham Childrens Centre	3	2	-1
Bellingham Gateway	0	3	+1
Broadway Theatre	6	13	+8
Brockley Adult Learning	5	2	-2
Brockley Cemetery	2	4	+5
Catford Library	3	3	+1
Civic Suite	1	3	-1

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Building	H&S Issues	Maintenance Issues	Change
Dacres Wood Nature Reserve	5	1	-1
Deptford Adventure Playground	2	1	+2
Devonshire Road Nature Reserve	2	1	-1
Evelyn Children's Centre	5	2	+3
Evelyn Community Centre	1	3	-2
Granville Park Adult Learning	5	2	-8
Grove Park Adult Learning	5	2	+5
Grove Park Cemetery	5	8	+9
Hillcrest	2	2	-1
Hither Green Cemetery & Crem	8	13	+13
Home Park Adventure Playground	0	2	-3
Honor Oak Adventure Playground	5	1	+1
Honor Oak Community Centre	3	2	0
Honor Oak Surestart	6	1	-1
Honor Oak Youth Centre	3	0	0
Kirkdale Resource Centre	0	9	+8
Ladywell Cemetery	1	2	0
Ladywell Children's Centre	11	4	+8
Ladywell Day Centre	8	1	+1
Landmann Way Recycling Centre	3	4	+4
Laurence House	1	4	+3
Leemore Centre	1	2	-9
Lewisham Registrars	0	2	+1
Lochaber Hall	0	4	+3
Meloit Centre	5	2	+2
Midi Music	4	4	+4
Moonshot	4	6	0
Mulberry	9	4	+4
Old Town Hall	3	4	+3

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Building	H&S Issues	Maintenance Issues	Change
Rockbourne Youth Centre	0	4	+2
Scotney Hall	1	1	-3
Sydenham Centre (Naborhood)	3	2	5
The Dumps Adventure Playground	0	2	-7
The New Generation Community Centre	2	5	-1
Torridon Road Library	1	8	+5
Woodpecker Youth Centre	1	6	+5

- 5.7. None of the issues identified posed direct and immediate threat to staff or service users. Typical issues included the need to clear areas of obstructions, carry out and document testing of safety equipment and ensuring adequate signage and instruction. None of the issues are recurring; but we would typically escalate where we found the same problem on successive inspections.

## 6. Incidents

- 6.1. The Board (and relevant Directorates) also received information on reported incidents and change from last year. Note that this table includes data that will be reported to the Board later this month so as to provide a more up-to-date picture. The table below summarises:

Directorate	Q1&2 2024/25	Q1&2 2023/24	Change
Chief Executive's	0	2	-2
Children & Young People (non-school)	3	18	-15
Schools	243	524	-281
Adult Social Care & Health	12	12	0
Corporate Resources	39	44	-5
Housing	12	1	+11
Place	43	91	-48
<b>Total (Corporate Only)</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>-59</b>
<b>Total (including Schools)</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>-340</b>

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- 6.2. There have been operational changes from year-to-year that would tend towards fewer incidents, such as the temporary closure of Lewisham Library. We also noted during the quarter that a number of recent-convert Academy schools were continuing to report incidents through the Council’s system. As an Academy school, we have no continuing right to hold that data and so are offering advice for them to make alternative arrangements to monitor health and safety on their premises.
- 6.3. However, while the number of incidents is down year-to-year there is a significant rise between the last six months of 2023/24 and the first six months of 2024/25 (up to 352 from 180, see table below). Our working assumption is that this is a “return to normal” following under-reporting as people became familiar with our new system that launched in January 2024.
- 6.4. A significant advantage of the new system is that it allows for live monitoring and reporting, plus much improved ability to tailor and query reports. Previously, analysis of incidents was largely a manual task which limited our ability to use the data to shape policy response. Now, we are able to analyse incidents across the full range of categories advised by the Health & Safety Executive. Note that the tables below are only for Q4 2023/24 (that is, since going live with the new system) so numbers will not align with the table above.

<b>Summary and Detailed Cause</b>	<b>Incidents Q1 24/25</b>	<b>Incidents Q4 23/24</b>
Illness (see paragraph 6.4)	9	4
Injury	280	162
Near miss	58	9
Other (see paragraph 6.5)	5	5
<b>Total (Summary Cause)</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>180</b>
Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour	31	8
Accident (minor)	29	22
Assault by member of the public	3	3
Assault by a pupil/client on an employee	56	48
Assault by pupil/client on another pupil/client	16	17
Contact with moving machinery	5	2
Contact with moving object	40	26
Contact with fixed object	20	24
Exposure to fire or heat	3	1
Exposure to or contact with harmful substance	1	2

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Summary and Detailed Cause	Incidents Q1 24/25	Incidents Q4 23/24
Exposure to or contact with hot material/substance	1	2
Fall from height	11	4
Human bite	7	5
Illness	9	4
Incident involving a vehicle	3	1
Injured while manual handling	6	6
Near miss	58	9
Slip, trip or fall on same level	53	40
<b>Total (Detailed Cause)</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>180</b>

- 6.5. Typically, staff illnesses would be reported through our HR system (Oracle) as absences and not appear automatically in health and safety incident statistics. We would only expect reporting as a health and safety incident where the illness was clearly attributable to a workplace event.
- 6.6. The use of the “other” category continues to decline as a proportion of incidents as the real time reporting allows us to review, monitor and offer advice on proper classification where necessary.
- 6.7. 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 six months to 30 September 2024 is below.

RIDDOR Category	Council Q1/2 24/25 (Q3/4 23/24)	Schools Q1/2 24/25 (Q3/4 23/24)
Dangerous Occurrence	0 (0)	0 (0)
Major Injury or Condition	0 (0)	4 (2)
Member of Public to Hospital	1 (1)	1 (1)
>7 Day Absence	5 (6)	3 (3)
Pupil to Hospital	n/a	6 (18)
Prescribed Disease	0 (1)	0 (0)
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6 (8)</b>	<b>14 (24)</b>

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- 6.8. 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. Risk implications**

- 9.1. 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.

## **10. Equalities implications**

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

## **11. Climate change and environmental implications**

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

## **12. Crime and disorder implications**

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

## **13. Health and wellbeing implications**

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

## **14. Background papers**

- 14.1. No background papers.

## **15. Report author and contact**

- 15.1. Rich Clarke, Head of Assurance. [rich.clarke@lewisham.gov.uk](mailto:rich.clarke@lewisham.gov.uk). Telephone (020) 8314 8730 (ext. 48730).

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