

HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

April 2023 to end March 2024

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This annual report sets out the Council's occupational health and safety performance during the twelve month period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. As with previous reports it is split into a number of sections highlighting the key issues. It also sets out new policies which have been implemented as part of the control measures within the corporate health and safety framework.
- 1.2 Furthermore, the update provides an indication of the effectiveness and success of the health and safety control measures the Council has in place with evidence showing training delivered, progress towards meeting health and safety aims and objectives and the number of accidents recorded.

2.0 CHANGES TO RISK PROFILE

- 2.1 As reported on in last year's Annual report, the risk profile for the Council has increased significantly due to the Streetwise services coming back in-house in September 2022. Streetwise consists of a variety of high-risk health and safety activities including street cleansing, grounds maintenance etc.
- 2.2 Bingham Arena opened its doors to the public in February 2023, Rushcliffe Oaks was officially opened for services on 3 April 2023. Both of which increase the risk profile for the Council, with additional staff, new work activities and public visiting the venues.

3.0 PROVISION OF HEALTH AND SAFETY ADVICE AND SUPPORT

- 3.1 As a result of the increase in risk profile, the delivery of the health and safety advisory function has been reviewed. It was determined that additional internal resources were needed rather than relying on the support from Bolsover District Council. Bolsover District Council were not able to be as reactive as we would have hoped and had limited resources to offer Rushcliffe Borough Council.
- 3.2 We have now recruited a permanent Health and Safety Advisor working 18.5 hours a week. This provides better resilience, availability and understanding of our internal teams and processes.

4.0 KEY ACTIVITIES

Policy Review

- 4.1 Some policies that were due for a review in 2023/24 have not been updated due to other priorities in workload. This is low risk as it's only best practice to review every 3 years and there has been no change in legislation to impact the policies. Any outstanding policies have been placed onto the review programme for 2024/25.

The following policies are due for a review and update in 2024/25 as they will be coming up to 3 years since their last review:

- Alcohol and Substance Misuse policy
- Bomb threat policy

- Display Screen Equipment Policy
- Driving Policy
- Emotional Wellbeing and Stress Management Policy
- Fire Policy

Health & Safety Audits/Visits

4.2 Health and safety visits have been undertaken by the new Health and Safety Advisor at Rushcliffe Country Park, Streetwise and R2Go Eastcroft Depot. The purpose of which was familiarisation, hazard spotting and engagement with management and staff at the various sites. Some targeted work has also been undertaken at Streetwise with the higher risk activities.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Visit

4.3 On 18 October 2023, Streetwise Bingham Depot site had an announced visit from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) who are the enforcement body for health and safety at Rushcliffe Borough Council. This was a targeted national project for the amenity and local government sectors.

4.4 An HSE Inspector from the Chemicals Regulation Division visited to ensure we were compliant with Plant Protection Product legislation e.g. herbicides/pesticides use and storage. Due to this being an announced visit it is normal and good practice to undertake a short internal preparatory review to ensure that the external inspection is both efficient and effective. This included a review of training, procedures, risk assessment and how chemicals were being stored and used at the Bingham Depot.

4.5 Overall, the Inspector was pleased with our training, procedures, processes and risk assessments. Some minor written recommendations were made which have already been addressed, this included reducing our overall stored stock of relevant chemicals and relocation of the inherited chemical store with a more modern version located inside the depot building.

Training

4.6 Health and safety training needs are identified in a number of ways including Personal Development Reviews (PDRs), regular one to ones, team meetings and through the Executive Management Team. The Health and Safety Advisor also ensures that training is consistent with our duties and legal responsibilities.

4.7 All new starters undergo a thorough induction which details areas to be covered on day 1 of employment, week one and end of week two. This covers a number of health and safety areas such as fire evacuation, first aiders and accident reporting. This is then followed up with more detailed e-learning modules where appropriate.

4.8 The following health and safety training was organised through Human Resources in the last 12 months.

Course Subject	Number of Staff who's training is in date	% of those requiring training who have been trained	Outcome/impact
Fire safety Training e-learning	225	95%	Refresher training for staff on fire safety issues. There are 236

			employees who have access to the e-learning.
Display Screen Equipment e-learning	86	37%	On-line training and assessment of computer workstations. 236 employees have been given access to the e-learning. New certification went live in 2024 and completion levels are increasing.
Legionella awareness e-learning	42	95%	This training is for all staff who need to be aware of the risks of Legionella within the workplace. 44 staff require this training.
Asbestos awareness e-learning	51	93%	This training is for all staff who need to be aware of the risks of Asbestos within the workplace. 55 staff require this training.
Manual handling e-learning	55	23%	Basic manual handling awareness for low-risk staff. 236 employees have been given access to the e-learning package. New certification went live in 2024 and completion levels are increasing.
Working at Height e-learning	31	94%	33 employees have been requested to complete this training due to their job role
Emergency First Aid at Work	1	N/A	This 1-day qualification is designed to give first aiders working in low-risk environments the skills they need to deal with a first aid emergency.
First Aid at Work	1	N/A	This 3-day course teaches the skills to recognise and treat a wider range of injuries and medical conditions.
Risk assessment	9	N/A	This half day course provides information on the risk assessment process and how to undertake them.
Defibrillator training	20	N/A	Voluntary training course for staff keen to have the skills to use a defibrillator

- 4.9 The above training is supported by significant on the job training within all Service Areas. Training at the Depots is delivered in a number of ways including tool box talks which are brief practical sessions for employees on site. Other types of training also include for example robust induction training specific to the job role, tasks and equipment used, and driver training. The aim of the training is to ensure that the job is carried out in the correct safe manner to reduce accidents.
- 4.10 A recent upgrade to the e-learning system now enables automatic reminders to be sent to employees when training is due and also copies in their manager when training is overdue, this is called “certifications”. The Display Screen Equipment and manual handling courses have transferred onto the new certification and should see an increase in completions over the next few months

Meetings of Health and Safety Groups

- 4.11 The Council has in place a number of health and safety groups to ensure that health and safety is discussed at relevant levels within the organisation.

Meeting	Frequency of meetings	attendees
Corporate Health and Safety Group	6 monthly	Executive Management Team
Employee Health and Safety Group	6 monthly	Director Neighbourhoods, Strategic HR Manager, 8 workplace representatives
Legionella, Asbestos and Tree Management Group	6 monthly	Director Neighbourhoods Relevant managers Strategic HR Manager

- 4.12 Health and Safety is also an area of discussion in staff one to one's and performance development reviews.

- 4.13 In the last year the meetings detailed above have enabled consideration to be given to several issues including training, occupational health, accident statistics, legislation and policy update and service area feedback.

Occupational Health

- 4.14 The Council are supported by an external Occupational Health provider who are utilised to provide a host of occupational health packages. Within the last twelve months the services that they have provided specifically relating to health and safety issues have included:

	Attendance numbers Apr 2023 to end March 2024	Comment
Pre-employment medicals	39	All new employees are assessed through a pre-employment questionnaire prior to commencing their role with the Council
Medical examinations	23	To support with sickness absence or managing medical condition in the workplace
Audiology tests	40	Hearing assessments for staff using tools that emit high level of noise

- 4.16 Flu injections - Staff were provided with an option to receive a free flu voucher

Workplace Health

- 4.17 Workplace Health Champions have been involved in a number of promotional activities for staff across the sites including:
- Organised staff walks
 - Know your numbers – health checks
 - Restart a Heart campaign

- National puzzle day – mindfulness and social inclusion
- No Smoking day
- Great British Spring Clean

5.0 PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING HEALTH AND SAFETY GOALS

5.1 At its meeting on 5 September 2023 the Corporate Overview Group supported the following health and safety goals. These were previously set by the Council's Executive Health and Safety Group and are monitored and reviewed by them. Progress is set out below.

H&S Goal	Target date	Action to date	Target met?
Review and update the policies that are over 3 years old	End March 2024	Some policies remain outstanding and have been rolled on to 2024/25	partial
Health and Safety compliance audits across the Authority	End Dec 2023	Health and safety visits made to Rushcliffe Oaks, Rushcliffe Country Park, Streetwise and Eastcroft	Yes
Continue to support health and safety compliance at Streetwise	On going	Regular visits to Streetwise to support with risk assessments, training, site visits and queries from staff and management	Yes
Health and Safety inspection Rushcliffe Oaks	End Dec 2023	Health and safety visit undertaken	Yes
Continue to deliver appropriate workplace health initiatives in line with employee's needs	End March 2024	See initiatives listed in 4.12	Yes
Improve on e-learning compliance rates for DSE e-learning course by moving over to a certification	End of March 2024	Numbers not as high as predicted. This will be a key piece of work for the new Health and Safety Advisor	No

6. PERFORMANCE

6.1 *Accident report forms completed*

Corporately the number of accident report forms completed by employees and agency staff within the twelve month period is set out in the following table:

Accident report forms completed

	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24
Establishment figure head count	291	285	275	266	257	259	257	259- 312	316
Eastcroft Depot	24	18	15	10	10	14	14	13	18
Bingham Depot	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	9	16
Arena (Civic)	2	2	3	2	2	0	0	2	3
Community Contact Centre	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community Facilities	1	1	1	5	0	2	4	2	0
Total	28	22	19	17	12	16	18	26	37
Incidence rate	96	77	69	64	47	62	70	91	117

6.2 The table above shows that the number of accidents to employees/agency staff has increased slightly compared to previous years. In particular Streetwise accident notifications have increased due to a toolbox talk, reminding employees of the need to report all work related accidents, including minor injuries.

6.3 The Incidence Rate shows the number of accidents per 1000 employees. This is calculated by the number of accident forms completed, divided by number of employees, multiplied by 1000. The HSE use this formula to compare businesses accident rates, however they only look at number of reportable accidents under RIDDOR and not accident forms completed.

6.4 *Accident reports by type*

The table below sets out the accident figures by type.

Accident Report Forms by type

	2015 /16	2016 /17	2017 /18	2018 /19	2019 /20	2020 /21	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24
Struck by Moving Object	9	4	5	3	2	4	5	6	7
Strike against fixed object	5	6	2	1	4	0	2	1	3
Slip / Trip / Fall	4	5	9	5	4	5	8	9	14
Manual Handling	8	7	3	3	2	6	3	6	8

Animal attack (e.g. dog)	0	0	0	5	0	1	0	3	5
Other (Shock/Cont act with liquids)	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	2
Total	28	22	19	17	12	16	18	26	39

6.5 Key points to consider from the figures presented in this table are:

- Slip/trip/fall accidents have increased this year
- Manual handling accidents have returned to a higher level than was seen in the previous year
- Animal attacks were higher this year. These were all dog bites.

6.6 *The number of employee days lost due to accidents*

	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24
Number of days lost	262.5	77	161	99	39	15	26	19	161

6.7 The number of days off as a result of an accident at work has increased in this twelve month period. The number of days absent has fluctuated significantly over the past few years. The average annual figure over the last nine years equates to 99.5 days. You will see from the table in 6.8 below that there were 11 accidents resulting in time off from work, with four accidents accounting for much of the absence.

6.8 The following table shows the incident and injury type for those accidents which resulted in time lost.

Incident Type	Injury type	Location	Time lost in days
Slip, trip, fall	Grazed knee	R2Go-on site	1
Struck by moving object	Bang to head	R2Go-on site	0.5
Manual handling	Lower back pain	R2Go-on site	22
Slip, trip, fall	Twisted ankle	R2Go-on site	4
Slip, trip, fall	Twisted ankle	R2Go-on site	15
Manual handling	Crushed hand	Streetwise-on site	2
Animal attack	Hand puncture	Dog Warden-on site	2

Animal attack	Cut finger	R2Go-on site	5
Slip, trip, fall	back	R2Go-on site	56.5
Slip, trip, fall	Twisted ankle	R2Go-on site	52
Slip, trip, fall	Bruised finger	Streetwise-on site	1
Total			161

6.9 *The number of RIDDOR injuries, illnesses and dangerous occurrences involving Council employees*

In the 12 month period 4 accidents were reported to the Health and Safety Executive as required by the RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) legislation. This has increased from the previous year.

6.10 *The number of health and safety enforcement notices*

There has been 1 visit by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) to Streetwise, Bingham and no visits from the Fire Service within this 12-month period. There have not been any enforcement notices served on the Council.

7. THE COUNCIL'S WIDER ROLE IN HEALTH AND SAFETY

7.1 The Council has health and safety duties to persons not in its employment, for example members of public visiting our sites. The risk assessment process and management of the Council's services ensures that risks to the public and contractors are assessed at the same time as the risk to our employees.

7.2 Actions we've taken as a Council to reduce risks to members of public when visiting our premises and also to those involved in activities with Council staff include:

- Water risk assessments have been completed at sites across the Borough
- Fire risk assessments completed and in place for all Council occupied buildings
- Legionella risk assessments have been reviewed and updated for all appropriate sites
- Asbestos surveys completed and management plans in place
- The gritting of car parks during periods of inclement weather to ensure safe access to the public
- Scheduled inspections of play equipment at parks using a new system PSS Live which enables real time recording of inspections and defects ensuring a faster response time

7.3 The proactive actions outlined above help to reduce and manage risk at Council sites and venues. Furthermore, they assist in maintaining low accident statistics for the public and contractors in comparison with the volume and numbers of people involved. The table below set out these figures and provides a previous year comparison.

	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24
Member of Public	25	10	2	7	16	1	4	4	11
Contractor	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

8. CONCLUSION AND OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The information reported in relation to the management of health and safety indicates that figures for number of accidents to employees/agency staff has risen. This is also reflected in the higher number of days absent from work as a result of an accident whilst at work. However, this figure does fluctuate greatly from year to year but has remained low for the previous four years. Within this 12-month period, 11 accidents resulted in time off from work. As always, employees are encouraged to return to work and this can be helped by the use of the fit note process by the GP which allows employees to return to work earlier on phased return and/or with adaptations to duties.
- 8.2 Significant progress has been made this year on completing the health and safety objectives set at the beginning of the financial year, in particular the work involved in improving on e-learning completion rates and the ongoing support for Streetwise service as they transitioned back to the Council.
- 8.3 To ensure continuing development in health and safety policies and practice, and to address the increase in time off due to accidents within R2Go, the following objectives have been determined for the forthcoming year. These objectives have been identified by giving due regard to the issues highlighted in the report.
- Review and update the policies that are over 3 years old (as listed in 4.1 of this report)
 - Safety campaign targeted at R2Go around slips/trips and manual handling
 - Health and safety compliance audits across the authority
 - Continue to support health and safety compliance at Streetwise
 - Risk assessment audit
 - Training audit to be undertaken alongside the risk assessment audit to identify any training gaps
 - Continue to deliver appropriate workplace health initiatives in line with employee's needs