



**Report of Resources Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategic Group
(HSWSG)**

Report of Kevin Lough, Occupational Health and Safety Manager, Resources.

Electoral division(s) affected:

1. Countywide.

Purpose of the Report

2. To provide an update on the council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) performance for quarter one of 2019/20.

Executive summary

3. There was some further proactive work in relation to open water safety undertaken in the quarter ahead of the summer period. This included further safety improvements to the pelaw woods area of the city centre and also the delivery of the safe durham partnership 'dying to be cool' cold water shock campaign which was launched in June 2019 across county schools. This campaign was further supported by media press releases and social media activity.
4. Further progress with employee health and wellbeing was made with a range of activities ongoing as part of the better health at work gold award submission. A second employee health and wellbeing survey was also launched and completed in the quarter which has provided further intelligence and opportunities in terms of targeted interventions and support.
5. In relation to quarter one statistical data, there was a positive start to 2019/20 with zero RIDDOR specified injuries reported during the period and seven over seven day RIDDOR reportable incidents. A continuation of this trend would result in a further decrease in RIDDOR reporting for the year.
6. Following an increase in violence and aggression related incidents in quarter four of 2018/19 which required some police intervention, it was positive that the trend of these incidents has not been repeated in quarter one.
7. There were 29 fire safety related audits were completed during the quarter, focusing on a range of priority risk related premises. A range of positive findings were evidenced as well as opportunities to further enhance fire safety standards.

8. In total, three fire related incidents during the quarter, with arson being the cause of all three incidents, one of which however involved a residential service user. Police and fire and rescue service intervention was required for two of the incidents and investigations are ongoing to identify perpetrators.
9. Finally, the H&S team undertook a range of auditing and investigative activities during the quarter which continue to focus on priority and foreseeable risk related work activities and services. Almost 300 audits, inspections and accident investigations were undertaken during the quarter, all of which contribute to improving HSW performance.

Recommendation(s)

10. That audit committee note and agree the contents of this report.

Background

11. The HSWSG has been established to ensure that suitable priority is given to the management of HS&W within the council. The group monitors the development, implementation and review of the Corporate H&S Policy to ensure that it is consistently applied throughout the council and that performance standards are achieved. Key reporting topics are detailed below.

Consultation/Communication

12. Trade Union H&S representatives continue to actively participate in the corporate and service specific H&S meetings. Each service grouping has an established H&S forum that has met since the last HSWSG meeting in April 2019. The H&S team continue to undertake a range of joint audit and inspection programmes in conjunction with trade union H&S representatives, particularly within Regeneration and Local services (REAL).
13. During Quarter one there were eight joint inspections undertaken with trade unions employee safety representatives within REAL. Three inspections were undertaken within technical services and five within environmental services. Remedial actions were identified, implemented and monitored and discussed at the direct and technical services health and safety forums.

Fire Safety - Fire Audits (Internal)

14. There have been 29 internal fire safety audits completed during Quarter one. These were undertaken at a range of Council premises. These were at seven Primary schools, three Comprehensive schools, two Nursery schools, one library (Horden), ten Locality offices (five One Point hubs) Spectrum 8, Seaham Contact Centre, Consett CAP, Tanfield Business Centre and Lowhills Centre, one Museum (Killhope lead mine) and five Pathways premises.

Fire Incidents

15. There were three fire related incident at Council premises or staffed premises during quarter one. These were at Bishop Auckland Cockton Hill Bowls Club Bournmoor Primary School and Newton Drive Residential Children's Home.

Fire Inspections – County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Service

16. There was one fire and rescue service inspection of Council premises during quarter one. This was at Consett CAP. The outcome of the inspection was that the premises were broadly compliant with current fire safety legislation.

Occupational Health Service

17. During Quarter one, 252 employees participated in clinical consultations with the OHS, following management referral in relation to Long Term Sickness Absence (LTSA), Short Term Sickness Absence (STSA), Management Concerns (Man Con) Reviews, and Re referral appointments, Long Term Sickness Absence/Short Term Sickness Absence (LTSA/STSA)
18. During Quarter one, a total of 50 employees attended OHS appointments for routine statutory health surveillance, 44 with an Occupational Health Nurse and six with the Senior Occupational Health Physician.

Enforcement Body Interventions & Significant Incidents

19. An inspection was completed at Killhope during Quarter one by a HSE mine inspector. The inspector made comment on how well the site is managed. Evidence was provided to show completion of all previous actions identified during his visit in 2018. The inspector requested copies of the latest RADON, electrical compliance certification and new mine ventilation design. It is anticipated that a further HSE visit will be arranged for 2020.

Health and Safety Team Audit, Inspection and Training statistics

20. During quarter one, the H&S team have undertaken a wide range of proactive and reactive activities across the Council as detailed in the table below.

	Accident Investigations	Proactive/planned Audits	Reactive Audits/Advice
TOTAL	35	167	87

Open Water Safety

21. The City Safety Group continues to monitor the various safety related control measures in place within the City Centre and review their effectiveness. During quarter one, the city safety group undertook a further site visit to the completed development of Riverwalk and arranged for a final assessment of the finished project following an initial desktop review by RoSPA.

22. Safety improvements were also enhanced in the vicinity of pelaw woods public footpath following concerns raised by a member of the public. The group considered these concerns and a further assessment of the location was undertaken which resulted in additional fencing being installed at key parts of the footpath adjacent to the rowing club and existing fencing was repaired also.
23. From a County wide perspective, the safe Durham partnership cold water shock water safety assemblies were delivered from 3 June to secondary and primary school pupils. This campaign was again supported by a range multi agency communications, particularly in the lead up to school summer holiday period.
24. A comprehensive review of water safety related priorities and risk in terms of locations was completed and visits to priority locations continued to be undertaken to ensure that the approach and resources in terms of re-assessments is being used as effectively as possible prior to summer 2019.

Employee Mental Health and Wellbeing

25. The council continues to progress towards the better health at work gold award status, having been officially awarded with the silver award in March 2019. As part of this award an employee engagement survey was launched in May 2019. The survey enables an improved level of intelligence in relation to a wide range of factors which affect the health and wellbeing of employees. 2662 employees responded (33% of workforce) compared to 2301 (27%) in 2017.

Corporate risks that may have an impact on Health and Safety as at 09/07/2019

26. This is the current list, there were no changes during the last period.

Ref	Service	Risk	Treatment
1	CYPS	0227 - Failure to protect child from death or serious harm (where service failure is a factor or issue)	Treat
2	AHS	R0562 - A service failure of Adult Safeguarding leads to death or serious harm to a service user.	Treat
3	T&P	R0565 - Breach of duty under Civil Contingencies Act by failing to prepare for, respond to and recover from a major incident, leading to a civil emergency.	Existing controls considered adequate

4	REAL	R0490 - Serious injury or loss of life due to Safeguarding failure (Transport Service)	Existing controls considered adequate
5	RES	R0611 - Serious breach of Health and Safety Legislation	Existing controls considered adequate

Main implications

Legal

27. Compliance with statutory legislative requirements reduce risks of enforcement action and/or prosecution against the council or individuals. It will also assist in defending civil claims against the council from employees and members of the public, including service users.

Finance

28. Compliance with legislative requirements will reduce increased service delivery costs, financial penalties associated with H&S sentencing guidelines 2016 and successful civil claims against the council. Financial costs may be insured to some degree and uninsured in some cases, with poor outcomes possibly leading to increased insurance premiums. Financial implications also include staff absence associated with physical and mental ill health, staff training, retention, recruitment and productivity.

Staffing

29. In relation to impact on staffing due to employee absence from injury or ill health, attendance management, employee complaints and grievances, recruitment, selection and retention of employees.

Conclusions

30. The quarter one report highlights some key proactive activities relating to organisational change and employee development. A significant amount of managerial training has taken place during quarter one in relation to mental health awareness, refresher of managerial health and safety responsibilities and awareness of organisational risks. Feedback from the training delivered to managers was very positive and indicates that the training was both well received and adds value to the roles of managers in terms of supporting employees and identifying mental health related issues at an earlier stage.
31. Continued allocation of H&S resources to proactive auditing and inspections remains an effective mechanism for early identification of best practices, non-conformances and work related activities which require additional risk

control measures to prevent injury and ill health. There was again a good level of H&S and fire safety audits and inspections undertaken in this quarter.

32. Statistical data in relation to accidents and incidents indicate a positive start to 2019/20, with lower than average levels of accidents and in particular zero specified injuries reported from across the council.
33. The delivery of the open water safety campaign, led by the council on behalf of the safe durham partnership, again provided much needed education and awareness for young people and parents/carers of cold water shock.
34. The outcomes of the employee health and wellbeing survey, launched in June 2019, will provide further intelligence and opportunities to improve employee health and wellbeing in the remainder of 2019/20 and beyond, whilst supporting the submission for the better health at work gold award.

Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications - Failure to comply with statutory legislative requirements may result in enforcement action and/or prosecution against the council or individuals. There are risks from civil claims against the council from employees and members of the public, including service users.

Finance – Failure to comply with statutory legislative requirements may result in enforcement action, including prosecution against the council or individuals. These enforcement actions may result in increased service delivery costs, financial penalties associated with H&S sentencing guidelines 2016 and successful civil claims against the council. Financial costs may be insured to some degree and uninsured in some cases, with poor outcomes possibly leading to increased insurance premiums.

Consultation - Service Grouping strategic managers and operational management staff have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - Equality Act compliance ensures consistency in what the council and its employees need to do to make their workplaces a fair environment and workplace reasonable adjustments are required.

Human Rights - The right to a safe work environment, enshrined in Article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, links with numerous human rights, including the right to physical and mental health and well-being and the right to life.

Crime and Disorder – None.

Staffing – Potential impact on staffing levels due to injury and ill health related absence, staff retention and replacement staff.

Accommodation – The report references H&S related risks associated with workplaces some of which may have impact on accommodation design and provision of safety systems and features.

Risk – This report considers physical and psychological risks to employees, service users and members of the public. Risks also relate to the failure to comply with statutory legislative requirements, which may result in civil action being brought against the council and enforcement action, including prosecution against the council or individuals. Enforcement actions may result in financial penalties, loss of reputation and reduction in business continuity.

Procurement – None