



To: Finance and Resources Policy Board
On: 13th May 2015

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Report on the Health and Safety Achievements and Future Plans for Renfrewshire Council

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the health and safety arrangements and performance of Renfrewshire Council in effectively managing health, safety and wellbeing. In addition it supports and compliments the service improvement plan and services health and safety plans.
 - 1.2 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) place duties on the Council to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health of their employees and others that could be affected by work activities.
 - 1.3 This report supports the Council's and Services' commitment to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, and takes into consideration the government's strategy documents 'The Health and Safety of Great Britain, Be Part of the Solution' with regard to future planning and the Scottish Government's "Healthy Working Lives" project.
 - 1.4 Highlighted in the report is the continuous improvement in relation to accident/incident reduction, which demonstrates the Council's and Services' commitment that has contributed to a decrease in accidents/incidents within the workplace. This has been greatly assisted by our ongoing accreditation to British Standard BS OHSAS 18001: 2007 which has supported Services in commitment and ownership of health and safety standards. This has been further assisted by the corporate health and safety committee, Service health and safety planning groups, health and safety meetings with trade union involvement, risk assessment, audits, inspection programmes, training and awareness sessions.
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2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The board notes the attached report on the health and safety arrangements and performance in the Council.

Implications of this report

1. **Financial Implications** – Continuing to improve health and safety performance will reduce accidents/occupational ill health and associated costs.
2. **HR and Organisational Development Implications** – This report supports the Council's commitment to the health, safety and well being of employees.
3. **Community Plan/Council Plan Implications -**

This report and plan supports the objectives contained within the community and council plans.
4. **Legal Implications** – The council will continue to comply with current health and safety legislation.
5. **Property Implications** – Having a robust health and safety management system in place and an effective risk control system should ultimately reduce the risk of property damage and potential loss of premises which could be caused by fire for example.
6. **Information Technology Implications** – none.
7. **Equal Opportunity Implications** – The service supports the Council's commitment to equal opportunities.
8. **Health and Safety Implications** – This report supports and demonstrates the council's commitment to ensuring effective health and safety management.
9. **Procurement Implications** – Finance and Resources, HR and Organisational Development (FAR, H.R. and O.D.) health and safety section has a valuable input to the Council's procurement system.
10. **Risk Implications** – This report supports the overarching management of risk within Renfrewshire Council.
11. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not applicable.

List of Background Papers

None.

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Renfrewshire Council

Finance and Resources

Report on the Health and Safety Achievements and Future Plans for Renfrewshire Council

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an annual update on the health and safety achievements and future plans for the Council.
- 1.2 A safe and healthy organisation is one that successfully balances the needs of individuals with the needs of the organisation as a whole. Within the Council it is recognised that employees face a demanding working environment and are continually facing new challenges. Both of these factors have an effect on the safety, physical and mental wellbeing of our employees. As stated in the Corporate Policy, the Council depends upon a healthy and motivated workforce to deliver the services which the community needs and expects.
- 1.3 Health and safety at work is not only about health and safety management, occupational health and promoting healthier lifestyles; it is recognised that the way in which work is organised also plays a major role. To be truly effective, health and safety has to be an everyday process and an integral part of the workforce culture at all levels across the Council.
- 1.4 There are four major components underpinning a safe and healthy organisation:
 - effective health and safety management;
 - promoting access to competent occupational health provision;
 - promoting employees health and well being; and
 - organisation of work.
- 1.5 The Council recognises the continual importance of co-operating and linking all the relevant initiatives, policies, procedures and opportunities.

2. Achievements in 2014/2015

- 2.1 The Council has an ongoing commitment to eliminating accidents, so far as is reasonably practicable and encourages employees to play their part in achieving this important objective. The Finance and Resources, HR and Organisational Development (FAR, H.R. and O.D.) health and safety section publish quarterly accident statistics to inform Services of the severity, type and frequency of accidents in their area. Each Service health and safety planning group and health and safety committee/group involving employee representatives, are required to focus on the apparent causes of accidents. This will assist in the development of strategies and local accident reduction programmes.

2.1.1 The number of accidents/incidents reported has decreased for the 5th year running (see fig 2.1.1), in addition RIDDOR reportable incidents have also reduced.(see fig 2.1.2)

fig 2.1.1

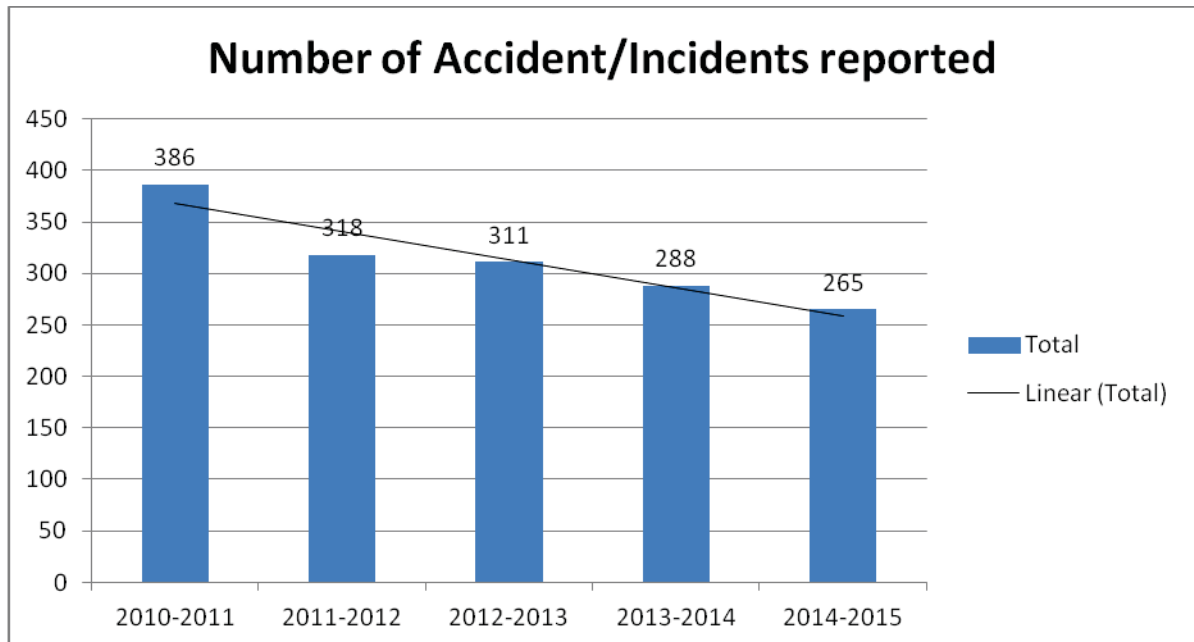
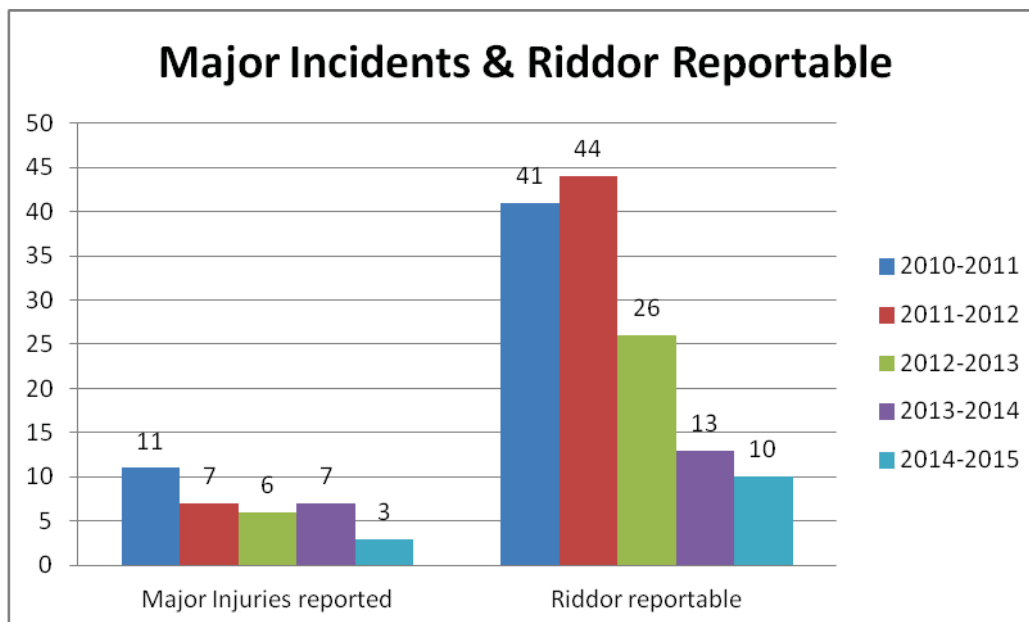


fig 2.1.2



Year end figures	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015
Number of accident/incidents reported	386	318	311	288	265
Major Injuries reported	11	7	6	7	3
Riddor reportable	41	44	26	13	10

The number of working days lost through industrial injury from financial year end 13/14 to financial year end 14/15 has decreased by 68 days (see fig 2.1.3 and fig 2.1.4).

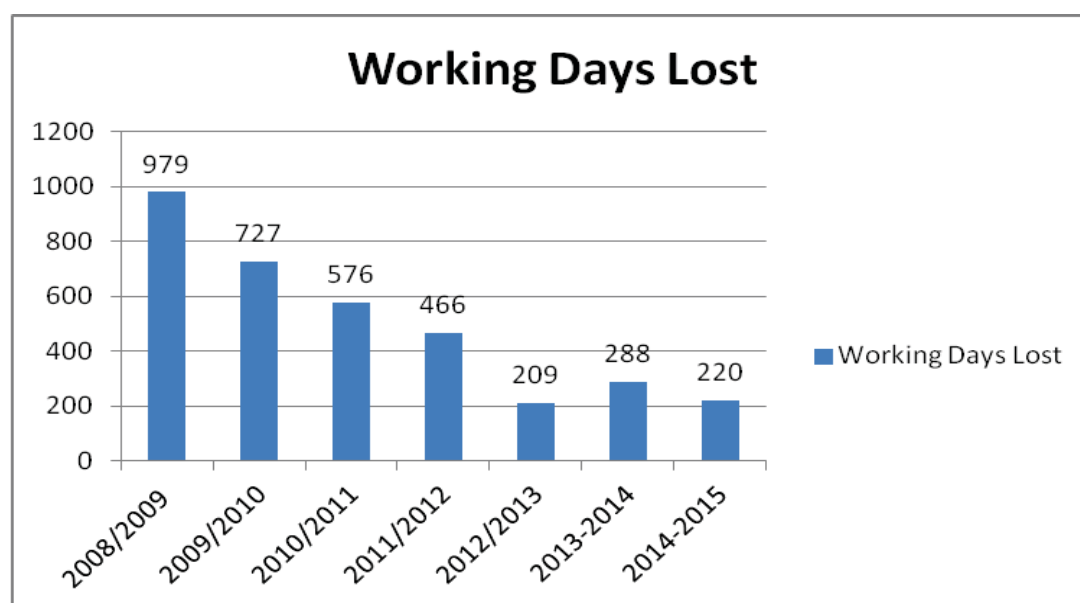


fig 2.1.3

Year end	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015
Working days lost through industrial injury	979	727	576	466	209	288	220

fig 2.1.4

2.2 The provision of appropriate health and safety training continued throughout 2014-2015. The programme offered by the health and safety section during last year included:

- Accident Investigation

This course provided practical guidance on reporting and investigating accidents, incidents and near misses and includes the use of Renfrewshire Council's internal guidance on

accident investigation and reporting, together with an overview of other applicable health and safety legislation and common causes of accidents and typical remedial measures.

- Risk assessment training.

Risk assessment training is offered to all employees who have a responsibility for carrying out risk assessments in the workplace. This is a course with consistently high attendance, which demonstrates the commitment to health and safety throughout Services. There have also been special Service specific risk assessment courses ran outwith the scheduled planner.

- Violence and aggression awareness training.

The health and safety section continued to raise awareness amongst our employees and promote the Council's zero tolerance attitude and policy on Violence and Aggression to employees through the provision of training.

- Fire Warden training.

Fire warden training was arranged for employees who assist in an official capacity during an emergency fire situation. Bespoke courses were delivered to a number of premises across the Council including Social Work residential units and school establishments.

- Quality of Working Life (Stress) Risk Assessment training.

Presentations are given on demand to Services on the Quality of Working Life (Stress) risk assessment process. As a result of the demand for this course it was added to the corporate training planner.

- Institute of Occupational Health and Safety (IOSH) accredited courses:

Working safely is a 1 day course suitable for all staff that require to understand the basics of health and safety. It looks at why health and safety is important and how changing your behavior will make a difference. 3 courses were delivered during 2014- 2015.

Supervising safely is a 3 day course is for supervisors and managers who are responsible for health and safety and want to increase their knowledge to make sure they supervise safely. 3 courses were delivered during 2014-2015.

Managing safely is a 4 day course targeted at employees who have a management remit and 2 courses were delivered during 2014- 2015.

Overall 2541 health and safety training places were taken up by Council employees from April 2014 – March 2015. This represents a marginal decrease on last year's figures (2557).

- 2.3 In order to meet legal requirements and current best practice, a number of health and safety policies and guidance were developed or revised. These include:

- Eye examination policy
- Guidance on First aid arrangements
- Corporate Policy on Health and Safety and
- A number of other health and safety policies and guidance are in the process of revision.

2.4 To facilitate the partnership approach to health and safety with employees, the corporate health and safety committee (CHSC) continued to progress important health and safety issues. The committee has representation from Services and trade unions. Service Co-ordinators are required to submit a quarterly report detailing their respective Service's health and safety performance. This report is also passed to Service senior management teams in order for them to review health and safety performance.

Service planning groups continue to assist at management level in the formulation and implementation of Service health and safety policies, plans and in addressing operational issues.

These groups are also responsible for:

- agreeing the content of the Service health and safety policy;
- production of an annual action plan to achieve the Service health and safety objectives;
- promotion of a high quality health and safety culture throughout the Service;
- identification of management arrangements to implement policy;
- identification and prioritisation of actions and the development of key performance indicators related to the health and safety plan;
- identification of risk control systems and workplace precautions together with associated performance standards;
- ensuring effective joint communication and participation with employees; and
- monitoring the implementation of the health and safety plan.

2.5 The health and safety section assisted all Services in retaining the BS OHSAS 18001: 2007. Feedback from Services has been very positive, with employees commenting that the accreditation process has been invaluable in focussing their attention on and increasing awareness of health and safety. BSI act as our compliance auditors.

2.6 The health and safety section supported the CPU in vetting council contracts, 79 contracts were vetted during the period April 2014 to March 2015. This equates to 301 companies having been assessed.

2.7 The Quality of Working Life (Stress) Risk Assessment (QWLRA) continues to be utilised across Services, this tool reflects the six stress Management Standards identified by the Health and Safety Executive. The standards identify the areas where potential causes of workplace stress may exist. The Stress policy and management support tools for dealing with workplace stress were also revised to take account of the new risk assessment procedure. This includes support mechanisms for managers and employees. To further support this, the training for managers and supervisors was reviewed and updated to include other aspects of mental health awareness.

2.8 In July 2014 the Council was awarded the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) Presidents award for continual high standards in health and safety management over 12 consecutive years.

2.9 The health and safety section brings guidance, policies and relevant information to the attention of employees and others using “Renfo”, i-learn and the Internet home page. For employees who do not have access to the intranet/internet, a variety of communication sources are used, such as TU representatives, notice boards and payslip inserts. The section utilises an electronic management system that is available to all employees who have access to the lotus notes server. The management system will be further developed in the coming years. The 4 main functions available at the moment are:

- Accident, Incident Reporting database (AIRD):
- General Risk Assessment Database (GRAD)
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- New and Expectant mothers (NEM)

2.10 A comprehensive health and safety workplace inspection programme has been followed throughout 2014- 2015. This inspection programme compliments the external audits for BS OHSAS 18001: 2007, and promotes Service ownership of health and safety.

Workplace Observation Inspection Report WOIR

Services continue to utilise the WOIR for their own internal use, this document is in the process of being migrated into an electronic format for ease of use and for tracking purposes.

2.11 The incumbent Occupational Health provider People Asset Management continues to provide the Council's Occupational Health Service.

The main elements of the Service are:

- health surveillance and screening;
- site visits;
- health promotion and education;
- physiotherapy;
- cognitive behavioural therapy for employees; and
- early intervention programme EIS.

The Early Intervention Service (EIS) allows managers quicker access to medical information and advice. The EIS aims to assist with the reduction of sickness absence by addressing health queries/concerns in a timely manner.

Examples of the type of advice are detailed below:

- advice about an employee who has sustained an Injury at work ;
- any new self certified or GP certificated absence which the manager requires advice about ;
- a manager feels there is a health concern regarding an employee ;
- where an employee has raised a health concern to their manager;
- identification of transferable infection ; or
- any health or well-being concern.

Health assessment, health surveillance and early intervention are areas that require continual monitoring. The Occupational Health Service (OHS) developed a health surveillance programme in conjunction with Services which includes audiometry, and hand arm vibration screening.

The Employee Counselling Service is provided by a separate contractor TFT (Time for Talking). The Service offers a 24/7 helpline, supported by local information posters, wallet cards for employees and leaflets. They have offices in Glasgow and Paisley.

- 2.12 The health and safety section, supported by Optima, participated in the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives Gold Award scheme. The Gold Award is the ultimate Healthy Working Lives Award presented only to those organisations which demonstrate long term commitment to improving health and well-being within their workplaces. Renfrewshire Council retained this award in July 2014.
- 2.13 The health and safety section in conjunction with Renfrewshire Leisure, held events aimed at raising employee awareness of health issues and allow employees to try different sport/exercise activities, a number of taster activities were on offer including free swims, blood pressure, mini fitness checks.
- 2.14 Mental health awareness week; There were a number of diverse activities and events as part of the Scottish mental health Week including the Scottish mental health arts and film festival, art exhibitions, writing workshops, shows to comedy clubs to publicise the topic.

3. Future Plans and Objectives

- 3.1 The HSE have selected priority programmes which concentrate on hazards or sectors where improvements are needed. The HSE's priority programmes affecting the Council are:

- falls from height;
- vehicle load safety;
- dust;
- vibration;
- musculoskeletal disorders;
- stress;
- asbestos;
- construction related activities; and
- slips and trips.

In addition the HSE have added new aims to their workplace strategy: 'The Health and Safety of Great Britain, Be Part of the Solution'

- to continue investigating work related accidents and ill health and taking enforcement action to prevent harm and to secure justice when appropriate;
- encouraging strong leadership and championing a common sense approach to health and safety;
- promoting the benefits of worker involvement, whether the workplace is unionised or not;
- HSE and Local Authorities (LA) will continue to work together to investigate work related incidents and secure justice;
- taking account of the wider issues that impact on health and safety and its delivery.
- to motivate focus on the core aims of health and safety and, by doing so, to help risk makers and managers distinguish between real health and safety issues and trivial or ill informed criticism;
- to encourage an increase in competence, which will enable greater ownership and profiling of risk, thereby promoting sensible and proportionate risk management; and
- to specifically target key health issues and to identify and work with those bodies best placed to bring about a reduction in the number of cases of work related ill health.

The overall aim within the Council is for Services to continue to address the above issues and incorporate these into their health and safety action plans which should include pertinent performance indicators. This will ensure that health and safety continues to be a significant driver and result in a health and safety performance that can be used as a model for other local authorities.

- 3.2 The Council will continue to work in partnership with our Occupational health provider in reviewing and developing health and well being programs with the focus on supporting attendance at work.

Over the next twelve months, key areas to be targeted in relation to health safety and wellbeing are:

- Roll out of an electronic referral process
- Introduction of an electronic pre-employment screening process
- Plan to digitise all employee occupational health records
- continuation of sickness absence monitoring;

- promotion of occupational health services to improve on sickness absence management;
- health education and training of employees on occupational health related subjects for example Managing Absence and mental health awareness;
- Service development in the provision of expert advice and development of health related policies as required;
- continuation of the health surveillance plan which will include audiometry and hand arm vibration screening; and
- reduce the working days lost through industrial injury.

3.3 In order to continue to promote and sustain a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture, further objectives have been set for 2015/2016 which include:

- Re alignment of the corporate health and safety support to compliment the revised service structures.
- Revise the current health and safety model to meet the new council structure
- maintaining the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award programme;
- continuing with the audit and workplace inspection programme within Services;
- maintain the accreditation of services to BS OHSAS 18001:2007 registration, this includes ensuring preparedness for the migration of the standard to ISO 45001.
- continuing to examine the presentation of accident statistics and how this may be improved to give clearer information and encourage their use by Services to provide a focus for proactive accident prevention programmes;
- assisting Services to compile their health and safety action plans for 2015/16 which should include health and safety performance indicators;
- prioritise, agree and carry out all Service health and safety audit and inspection programme;
- continuing to promote, provide, develop and expand the IOSH accredited health and safety courses;
- continuing to promote the use of the Quality of Working Life (stress) risk assessment Council wide to minimise work related stress;
- continuing to use an external contractor vetting scheme, using the framework specified in the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015;and

- Achievement of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents RoSPA gold medal for the 13th consecutive year.

4. Conclusions

4.1 Organisations that successfully manage health and safety recognise that the relationship between controlling risks and general health is at the very centre of the organisation itself. Within Renfrewshire Council, this approach rests on the principles in BS OHSAS 18001:2007 to which the Council is committed to retain and maintain registration for all Services. The standard clearly states that managing health and safety successfully is founded on effective systems which:

- set and develop policy;
- plan for health and safety;
- implement and operate the plan;
- check and introduce corrective actions when appropriate;
- review overall performance; and
- work towards continuous improvement.

By ensuring the application of these principles in partnership with all employees, Renfrewshire Council will continue to be seen by its stakeholders as an exemplar employer and be recognised accordingly.

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