

**To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy board**

**On: 11 November 2020**

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**Report by: Director of Finance and Resources**

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**Heading: FARS Health and Safety Report and Plan 2020/2022**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The council's health and safety policy places a responsibility on each service department to prepare an annual report evaluating the management of health and safety within the service.
  - 1.2 The Finance and Resource Service's report is attached as Appendix 1. The report sets out the health and safety activity within the service in the year up to 31 March 2020 and demonstrates the service's commitment to continuous improvement in health and safety performance. The report summarises achievements to March 2020 and appended to the report is the service action plan for 2020/22, detailing the actions which the service aims to take to consolidate and improve health and safety practice.
  - 1.3 Finance and Resource Services have a proactive approach to health and safety. This is evidenced by the attainment of accreditation and certification to BS OHSAS 18001:2007. The standard measures the suitability and effectiveness of the service's occupational health and safety management systems
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:
    - i) notes the content of the report at Appendix 1; and
    - ii) approves the plan appended to the report
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### 3. **Background**

- 3.1 The service's health and safety governance arrangements were refreshed in 2019/20 and the health and safety policy revised. Opportunities identified then to strengthen the service department's health and safety arrangements have now had the time to bed in.
- 3.3 The service health and safety planning group which had reformed in January 2019 continued to meet in line with its terms of reference throughout the year. The service continued to be represented at and contribute to meetings of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.
- 3.4 The attached report covers the period from April 2019 to March 2020 and the new plan proposed will cover the period from now to March 2022, based on the service department's current health and safety risk profile.

The key components of the attached are:

-  1. Management of health and safety within the service
-  2. Organisation for health and safety management
-  3. Training undertaken 2019/20
-  4. Annual statistics 2019/20
-  Appendix 1: Outturn - FAR Health and Safety Plan 2019/20
-  Appendix 2: FAR Health and Safety Plan 2020/22

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### **Implications of the Report**

- 1. **Financial** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 3. **Community/Council Planning** – effective risk management supports the delivery of all community/ council plan outcomes
- 4. **Legal** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 5. **Property/Assets** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 6. **Information Technology** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 7. **Equality & Human Rights** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 8. **Health & Safety** – as per the subject matter of this report

9. **Procurement** – not relevant to report recommendations
  10. **Risk** – as per the subject matter of this report
  11. **Privacy Impact** – not relevant to report recommendations
  12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not relevant to report recommendations
  13. **Climate Risk** – not relevant to report recommendations
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### **List of Background Papers**

- (a) Background Paper - none
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Renfrewshire  
Council

## Health and Safety Report

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### Finance and Resources

## Introduction

This report is prepared by Finance and Resources in line with the council's corporate health and safety policy and service health and safety policy. The report details the service's health and safety performance in 2019/20 and sets out the service's health and safety plan going forward, particularly in light of the Covid-19 experience.

## 1. Management of health and safety within the service

1. The service continues to implement its approved health and safety policy. The Service Director is, so far as is reasonably practicable, responsible for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of employees and others who may be affected by the service's activities.
2. The Head of Property Services supports the Service Director by chairing the FAR Health and Safety Planning Group and the FAR Health and Safety Committee. The Head of Service provides health and safety updates to the Senior Management Team, ensures service areas are appropriately represented on the planning group and committee, prepares the service annual health and safety report and oversees the implementation of the service health and safety plan.
3. The Service Director has nominated Karen Locke (a service manager) to the role of service health and safety co-ordinator, to support the Head of Property Services in their role. The co-ordinator gathers information for health and safety reporting, preparing information (such as accident data and performance data), for meetings of the planning group and committee and representing the service on the corporate health and safety committee.
4. All Heads of Service fully support the implementation of the service health and safety policy across all their teams, and service department managers engage in any actions required to support the annual plan.

## 2. Organisation for health and safety management

1. The main 'groups' involved in organisation for health and safety matters are the FAR Health and Safety Committee and FAR Health and Safety Planning Group.
2. The Health and Safety Committee has representation from all areas of the service as well as staff side representatives appointed by the relevant Trade Unions. The committee monitors the implementation of good health and safety practice across the service and progress being made in relation to agreed priorities.
3. The Health and Safety Planning Group works to its established terms of reference, assists with development and implementation of the service health and safety policy and plan and provides a forum where members can review relevant statistics, identify trends, areas for improvement and potential solutions. The Group can take forward corporate initiatives and meets to share both good practice and lessons learned from across the service department. Current members of the Planning Group are:

Service Area	Representatives	
CBS Adult Services	Louise O'Connor	Service Delivery Officer
CBS – Customer Services & Advice Works	Julie McBride	Senior Service Delivery Officer
CBS – Outlying areas	Rhona Barnes	Service Delivery Manager
CBS – Revs & Financial Support	Mary Sweeney	Development Officer
CBS – RH Hub	Craig McEwan	Team Leader
CBS – Schools Support	Sylvia Easton	Senior Service Delivery Officer
Corporate Finance	Vicki Aitken	Service Accountant
Corporate Governance	Mark Conaghan	Legal & Democratic Services Manager
ICT	Gillian Dickie	Partnering & Commissioning Manager
Internal Audit Services	Karen Locke	Risk Manager
Property Services	Craig Thorpe	Corporate Asset/Energy Manager
Transformation and OD HR	Clare McGivern	Administrative Officer

4. The service's key health and safety risk profile was reported to Board last year, as shown in the table below. The Health and Safety Planning Group reviewed the risk profile at its meeting on 11 March 2020 and agreed that the risk profile remained accurate at that point in time; there had been no material changes in terms of services provided across the various teams represented and there had been no new incident trends that would lead to a change in the health and safety risk profile for the service.

Service area	Key Service H&S Risks						
	Musculo-skeletal	Stress	Work at Height	Lone Working	Occupational Driving	Violence & Aggression	Slips, trips, falls
CBS Customer Services & Advice Works	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CBS Outlying areas, adult servs and operations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
CBS – Revs & Financial Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
CBS – RH Hub	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CBS – Schools Support	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Corporate Finance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Corporate Governance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Internal Audit Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Property Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Transformation & OD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

5. Further to the 11 March review however and with Covid-19 leading to national lockdown, some employees were involved in our efforts to support the Covid-19 response, and these included:
- colleagues involved in new customer contact services (Local Assistance Team), supporting individuals shielding from the virus and others requiring support with access to food and medicines,
  - the corporate health and safety team being significantly involved in supporting services with covid-related risk assessments and supporting the safe return of schools, and,
  - colleagues temporarily deployed to different roles to support the response to the crisis.

### 3. Training undertaken 2019/20

- During 2019/20 a total number of 88 FARs employees undertook health and safety-related courses across the various courses outlined in the table to the right.
- In addition to the above, 356 FARs staff undertook Display Screen Equipment awareness training via iLearn – the online learning platform used in the council.
- Further, 40 staff undertook IT Server Gas Suppression Evacuation training, and 12 Manual Handling Toolbox Talks were delivered across the service.

Course	Nos. 2019 - 2020
Mental Health First Aid	20
General Fire Wardens	7
Violence and Aggression	10
Fire Evac Chair Training	3
General Risk Assessment	2
Mindfulness Sessions	13
Fire Risk Assessment	2
Menopause Workshops	26
<u>3 day</u> First Aid at Work	4
<u>2 day</u> First Aid at Work Refresher	1
<b>Total =</b>	<b>88</b>

## 4. Annual statistics 2019/20

### 1. Accidents and incidents

The table to the right shows the stats for 2019/20 across the different incident types reported. A total of 16 incidents have been reported in the year.

These 16 reported incidents represent an increase of 6, up from the 10 reported in 2018/19, however the lower number recorded in 2018/19 may have been impacted by the move to the new corporate accident and incident reporting module on Business World. This is a matter that is being kept under close review by the service's health and safety planning group.





The numbers are relatively low meaning that it is not possible to see trends in causal data however the incident reporting form is structured to encourage lessons to be learned from incidents on a case by case basis.

Accident/ incident type	Nos. 2019/2020
Verbal aggression	3
Slip trip fall at same level	3
Struck by an object	3
Struck against	3
Road traffic accident	1
Lifting and handling injury	1
Contact with machinery	1
Fall from height	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>16</b>

### 2. Employers liability claims for FARs employees

During 2019/20 one employers liability claim was received and settled in relation to a head knock from a falling object.

## 5. Plan - Do - Check - Act

1. Reviewing our health and safety objectives – in considering the service objectives and development of the health and safety plan, the service health and safety planning group has taken account of:
  -  the key risk profile;
  -  any trends around accidents and incidents;
  -  any trends around employers liability claims; and,
  -  any other priorities raised by individual members of the planning group.
2. The outturn report for the service health and safety plan 2019/2020 is provided in Appendix 1.
3. The service health and safety plan going forward is provided in Appendix 2. While the plan would usually cover a single year, in the current circumstances the plan will cover through to March 2022. An annual report will still be submitted to Board early 2021/22 to report on the 2020/21 outturn and highlight any new actions to be added to the plan for the remaining months.

## Appendix 1: Outturn - FAR Health and Safety Plan 2019/20

1. The service health and safety plan for 2019/20 focused on four priority areas as they were relevant to the majority of service areas:

- ✚ **musculoskeletal disorders**
- ✚ **lone working**
- ✚ **stress**
- ✚ **violence and aggressions**

In addition, through analysis of health and safety incidents in 2018/19, '**slips, trips and falls**' was also added as a priority for action in 2019/20.







One further element was included in the plan, as raised by Property Services and this related to plans to undertake specific refresher training for staff on asbestos management.

2. Performance against the 2019/20 plan:

- ✚ The plan outlined 6 key risk areas with associated actions
- ✚ When the plan was developed there was a 90% target set for completion. Some actions were scheduled for the end of March 2020, by which time the UK had entered a national lockdown and due to the related impacts, some actions had to be temporarily put on hold meaning that the target was not achievable.
- ✚ Given the above, it is the service's intention to roll the action plan forward for completion during 2020/21 instead. New actions will be added to reflect the current working environment where many of the service's employees continue to work from home.



### Action plan that was initially established for 2019/20

Risk statement	Risk controls expected to be implemented	Focused actions for 2020/21	Action status
If the potential for <b>musculoskeletal disorders</b> is not sufficiently addressed there is an increased risk to staff wellbeing and increasing absence levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DSE assessments should be undertaken as a matter of course every 18 months</li> <li>▪ DSE assessments should be undertaken specifically and timely for any new starts, anyone moving desks or anyone with a material change of circumstances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To undertake an audit within all teams to identify any staff who are due/ overdue DSE assessments (<b>Target 100% teams</b>)</li> <li>▪ To ensure any overdue DSE assessments are carried out online by staff (<b>Target 90% relevant FAR staff</b>)</li> </ul>	 COMPLETE  <i>2nd action was rolled forward due to homeworking by default and new (Covid) DSE forms issued</i>
If the risks associated with <b>lone working</b> are not sufficiently addressed there is an increased risk to staff safety and the potential for physical or psychological harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporate and local procedures to be followed to ensure staff safety and to assist with early identification where staff make be exposed to harm or ill-health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To identify lone workers across all teams (<b>Target 100% teams</b>)</li> <li>▪ To ensure all risk assessments are updated for identified lone workers (<b>Target 90% relevant FAR staff</b>)</li> </ul>	 COMPLETE  <i>2nd action was rolled forward due to homeworking by default and home visits cancelled during lockdown</i>
If <b>stress in the workplace</b> is not sufficiently identified and addressed there is an increased risk to staff wellbeing and increased risk of absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appropriate access to and use of stress in the workplace risk assessments and team stress risk assessments, and application of the corporate supporting attendance policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To identify any actions that the service needs to undertake in order to support the revised corporate stress in the workplace strategy.</li> </ul>	 COMPLETE
If potential exposure to <b>violence and aggression</b> is not sufficiently addressed there is an increased risk to staff safety and the potential for physical or psychological harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation of the corporate policy on violence and aggression</li> <li>▪ Implementation of corporate training (including for example breakaway techniques)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To promote awareness of this risk across all teams (<b>Target 100% teams</b>)</li> <li>▪ To assess training requirements, linking in with corporate health and safety colleagues</li> </ul>	<i>Both actions rolled forward (Due end March 2020 and overtaken by Covid-19)</i>
As evidenced by accident data, the risk of <b>slips, trips and falls</b> needs to be addressed otherwise there could be avoidable incidents, with injury to staff and there is an increased risk to staff safety and related absences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Apply health and safety flashes such as 'stairwell safety'</li> <li>▪ Be personally alert to wet or uneven surfaces</li> <li>▪ Wear appropriate footwear</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To review in more detail the 2019/20 slip, trip and fall data to ensure all lessons have been learned and undertake any appropriate actions</li> <li>▪ Corporate rep on planning group to give presentation on proactive inspection for slip, trip, fall risks</li> <li>▪ Group members to undertake proactive inspections</li> </ul>	 COMPLETE <i>(11 March meeting)</i>
If the presence of <b>asbestos</b> in any relevant properties is not effectively identified and managed there is an increased risk to staff (and public) safety, an increased risk of claims against the council and HSE intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asbestos management surveys, carried out in accordance with HSG 264, have been undertaken in all public buildings, information is available on CAMIS.</li> <li>▪ Further surveying is carried out prior to any refurbishment or demolition.</li> <li>▪ All contractors must be given asbestos information prior to commencing any repairs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Periodic re-inspections will be carried out to check the condition of previously identified asbestos.</li> <li>▪ Asbestos awareness refresher training to be arranged for relevant staff within Property Services.</li> </ul>	 COMPLETE   COMPLETE

## Appendix 2: FAR Health and Safety Plan 2020/22

1. The Finance and Resources service department is very diverse in terms of activities, with employees *usually* spread across many different sites. At the time of preparing this service health and safety plan however, the vast majority of Finance and Resources employees continue to work from home. In doing so, the service contributes to reducing the risk of transmission of the Covid-19 virus where possible, and in doing so contributes to the key national objectives to save lives, support the NHS, help schools to remain open and support livelihoods through as many businesses as possible remaining open.

2. The service health and safety risk profile *usually* highlights the following priorities:

- ✚ 11 of 11 service areas have identified **musculoskeletal disorders** as a relevant risk factor
- ✚ 10 of 11 service areas have identified **lone working** as a relevant risk factor
- ✚ 09 of 11 service areas have identified **stress** as a relevant risk factor
- ✚ 09 of 11 service areas have identified **violence and aggression** as a relevant risk factor






As a result of the pandemic however and being at the 'tipping point' of a second wave of the virus, the fundamental health and safety priority for the service is the wellbeing of our employees while working from home, or in the case of many of our Customer and Business Services colleagues, working in schools and some customer-facing services.

3. Given the above, the plan going forward will:

- ✚ include **outstanding actions rolled forward from 2019/20** in relation to the usual risk profile
- ✚ include new actions that reflect the importance of managing **employee wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic**.

4. Additionally in light of the present circumstances, where the Covid-19 risk is likely to be a concurrent risk throughout the winter season along with the risk of seasonal flu, the plan will include the risk of **potentially higher levels of staff absence** and reflect the contingency arrangements the service has in place as well as any other relevant actions to be undertaken.

### Action plan for 2020/22

Risk statement	Risk controls expected to be implemented	Focused actions for 2020/21	Action status
If the potential for <b><u>musculoskeletal disorders</u></b> is not sufficiently addressed there is an increased risk to staff wellbeing and increasing absence levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ DSE assessments should be undertaken as a matter of course every 18 months</li> <li>▪ DSE assessments should be undertaken specifically and timely for any new starts, anyone moving desks or anyone with a material change of circumstances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure DSE assessments are carried out online by staff using the new Business World assessment</li> </ul>	 In progress
If the risks associated with <b><u>lone working</u></b> are not sufficiently addressed there is an increased risk to staff safety and the potential for physical or psychological harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporate and local procedures to be followed to ensure staff safety and to assist with early identification where staff make be exposed to harm or ill-health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify any lone workers (in the current Covid-19 context) and ensure risk assessments are updated</li> </ul>	 In progress
If potential exposure to <b><u>violence and aggression</u></b> is not sufficiently addressed there is an increased risk to staff safety and the potential for physical or psychological harm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation of the corporate policy on violence and aggression</li> <li>▪ Implementation of corporate training (including for example breakaway techniques)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To promote awareness of this risk across all teams</li> <li>▪ To assess training requirements, linking in with corporate health and safety colleagues...</li> </ul>	 In progress
<b><u>COVID-19 and employee wellbeing</u></b> It is nationally accepted that essential measures to control transmission of the virus lead to other harms, such as an adverse impact on mental health and wellbeing and in some cases, this could be exacerbated through longer term homeworking by default.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to and uptake of a range of wellbeing services and guidance as set out online for employees, and regularly highlighted through corporate comms:  <a href="http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/10541/Working-from-home#Health%20and%20wellbeing">http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/article/10541/Working-from-home#Health and wellbeing</a> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote health, safety and wellbeing to all FARS employees</li> <li>▪ Ensure managers regularly communicate with staff to support mental and physical wellbeing, particularly throughout the winter season</li> </ul>	 In progress
<b><u>COVID-19 concurrent winter risk</u></b> With a second wave of the virus coinciding with the winter period and the potential also for season flu, there is an increased risk of <b><u>higher levels of staff absence</u></b> which could lead to impact on employee wellbeing and service disruptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Uptake of the flu vaccination will be an essential part of mitigating this concurrent risk and minimising higher levels of employee absence.</li> <li>▪ Service business continuity plans/ restoration plans are in place to minimise impact on service provision arising from higher levels of employee absence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensure managers regularly communicate with staff to support mental wellbeing particularly throughout the winter season.</li> <li>▪ Promote uptake of the Councils flu vaccination programme to all staff through managers promote the uptake to remaining staff who qualify for the NHS Scheme</li> </ul>	 In progress