

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

**On:** 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024

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**Report by:** Director of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure

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**Heading:** Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (E, H & I) Annual Health and Safety Plan (2024/25) – Mid-year (6 month) Update

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council's Health and Wellbeing Plan, a key priority within the Council's People Strategy 2021 – 2026, promotes a positive Health and Safety culture to ensure compliance with relevant Health and Safety legislation and supports the Council Plan in Working together to achieve a thriving and connected Renfrewshire, creating opportunities for all.
  - 1.2 This report provides an update on the work undertaken by the Department of Environment, Housing and Infrastructure to implement the actions contained in the Annual Health and Safety Plan 2024/25 which was approved by the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024.
  - 1.3 Appendix 1 to this report sets out a brief update for actions contained in the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (E, H & I) Annual Health and Safety Plan 2024/25.
  - 1.4 It should be noted that the Report and Appendix 1 will be considered by the Communities and Housing Policy Board on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024, the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024 in respect of the elements covered by those Boards' remits.
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## 2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board:

- 2.1 Approves the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (E, H & I) Annual Health and Safety Plan 2024/25 update (Appendix 1) as specific to the areas of activity delegated to this Policy Board; and
  - 2.2 Notes that the Report and update on the Plan is also being presented to the Communities and Housing Policy Board and the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board to approve the elements covered within those Boards' remits.
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### **3. Background**

- 3.1. The Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (E, H & I) Department is responsible for the provision of everyday essential services, directly to the public of Renfrewshire, to other services within the Council and to community planning partners. These services are delivered by approximately 1,900 employees, employed on a full-time or part-time basis, with a gross expenditure budget of approximately £70.3 million.
- 3.2. The Department provides the following key frontline services:
- Operations: Neighbourhood Services, Fleet and Social Transportation, Waste and Recycling (to over 91,000 households and businesses).
  - Climate, Public Protection and Roads: supporting our communities through our Regulatory and Community Safety Services and supporting more than 849 km of roads and transport infrastructure.
  - Facilities and Property Services: (Hard and Soft Services) including PPP schools, cleaning/catering/janitorial services, public building (repairs, maintenance and compliance), Building Services and Property Services, a multi-disciplinary design team.
  - Housing Services: Tenancy Management, repairs, compliance and investment in housing stock (approximately 12,300 properties) and providing a wide range of advice and support to our tenants.
- 3.3 Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Services deliver universal services for over 180,000 Renfrewshire residents, helping to run our schools and care homes, providing 12,300 homes for social rent, protecting and enhancing our local environment through a wide range of initiatives and work to make Renfrewshire a great place to live and work.
- 3.4 Our services are delivered by a diverse, skilled and committed workforce of around 1,900 who deliver services 24/7 over 365 days a year. The health, safety and wellbeing of all our employees is of paramount importance.
- 3.5 Governance for Health and Safety is provided through monthly discussions at Environment and Infrastructure Senior Leadership Team meetings and quarterly CRMT (Crisis Resilient Management Team).
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### **4 Mid-year (6 month) Update on Environment, Housing & Infrastructure (E, H & I) Annual Health and Safety Plan 2024/25**

- 4.1 A wide range of work has been undertaken between 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 to promote and address health and safety areas or concerns and a high-level summary of this is outlined below:
- Currently Asbestos iLearn Training is being rolled out to all SFOs in Schools.
  - A “Safe access to work” process has been introduced which now means that all Soft FM employees must enter premises at the main entrance of the building and sign in when on site.
  - Two managers within Soft FM Support Services have completed Health and Safety training.
  - Legionella training and awareness seminar (to emphasise the importance of flushing outlets etc) was carried out by Soft FM Support Services to all Assistant Facilities

Managers (AFMs).

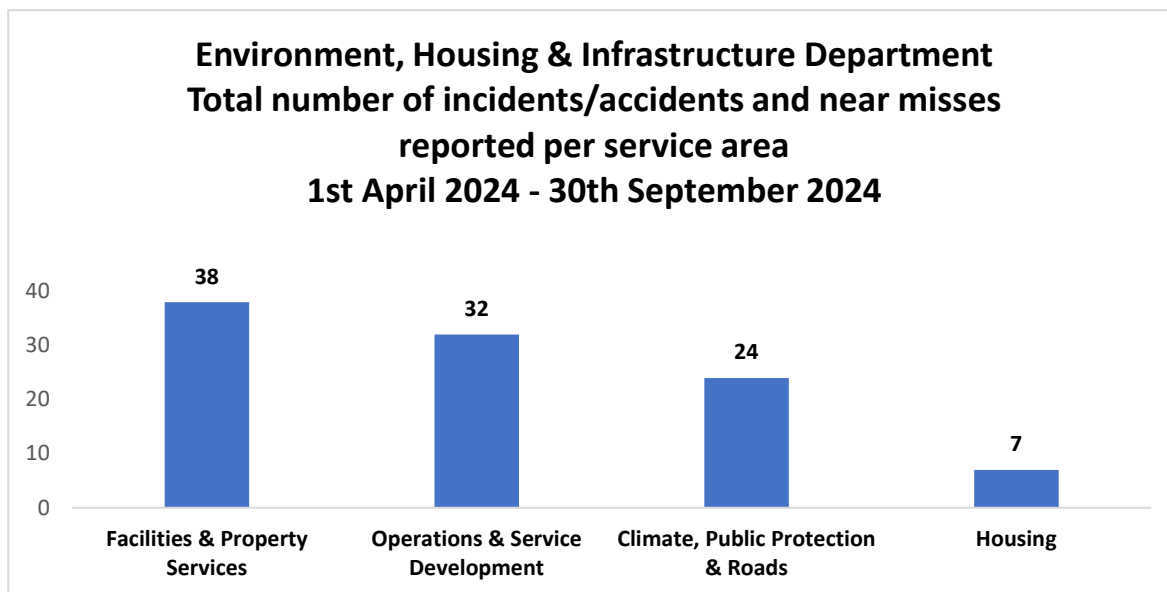
- Road Operations have completed equipment training for Road Resurfacing and Gully Cleaning.
- A review has been completed of all Risk Assessments and Method Statement for Road Operations and Street Lighting following integration of these operational services.
- A route optimisation exercise and training was completed prior to the Winter gritting operations starting.
- Refresher “Hands Off” training has been delivered to Soft FM Senior Facilities Officers (SFOs) throughout the summer break.
- In response to increased reports of verbal abuse against our employees, “Conflict Resolution” awareness and training, delivered by Police Scotland, is being completed by the Wardens Service.
- As a result of verbal and physical assaults on the Serious Organised Crime and Trading Standards team during enforcement duties there is now a new process for joint working with Police Scotland. Pre-visit checks are undertaken with Police Scotland, HMRC, Home Office and other relevant stakeholders, and where a Police presence is likely to be required to maintain order, the Team are schedule this directly with Community Policing. Full operational briefings are conducted with partners on these “Days of Action” to ensure all roles and remits are clarified. Operational processes have been rationalised to ensure Officers spend the minimum amount of time in premises where recoveries are being made, to reduce the possibility of escalation. These activities have also made use of our national tobacco detection dog resource, which assisted in making recoveries safer and quicker.
- There has been wide participation in the Asbestos Working Group to review asbestos management and procedures including a review on the treatment of textured wall and ceiling coatings (“Artex”) which has resulted in revised processes now in place to expedite removal when required.
- A review of Housing Service properties tagged as requiring two officer visits has been undertaken to ensure that information is up to date.

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## **5 Monitoring and Support Services**

- 5.1 The ongoing health, safety and wellbeing of employees and service users continues to be a priority for EH&I. The focus to promote an open, positive health and safety culture and to encourage employees and management to report all incidents, accidents and occurrences.
- 5.2 All reported incidents, accidents and occurrences are reviewed on a weekly basis, resulting in more accurate date. Every incident, accident or occurrence is investigated and associated risk assessments reviewed and amended where necessary.
- 5.3 From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 across E, H & I there were 101 incidents, accidents and near misses reported. The table below (Figure 1) shows the breakdown of these incidents by service area.

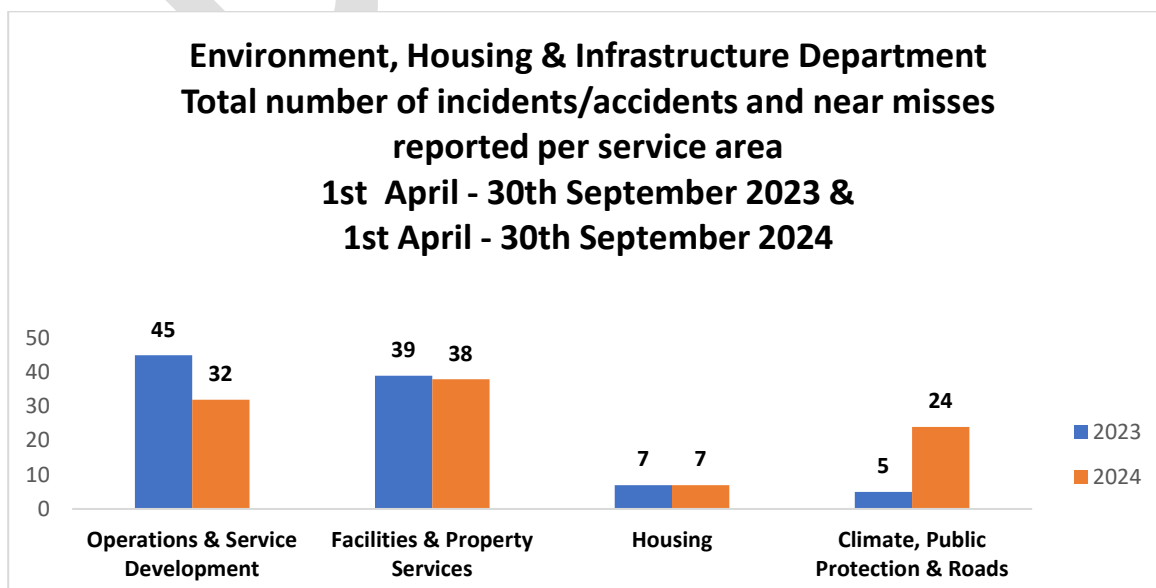
Figure 1: E, H & I 2024 Total number of Incidents/Accidents and Near Misses Reported per Service Area (01/04/2024 – 30/09/2024)



5.4 Figure 2 below shows a comparison between 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023 and 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Although the total number of incidents/accidents and near misses (96 in 2023 and 101 in 2024) is broadly similar it should be noted that the significant increase in the number reported in 2024 within Climate, Public Protection and Roads is as a result of the number of incidents being reported from the Wardens Service in particular.

5.5 It is recognised that accurate reporting of incidents, accidents and near misses is important and there has been a drive to encourage reporting of incidents and the increase within Climate, Public Protection and Roads may be due in part to this work. As a result of this increased reporting and the number of verbal incidents in this area work is ongoing to provide additional support to employees including bespoke training and awareness raising around “conflict resolution” provided by Police Scotland.

**Figure 2:** E, H & I 2024 Total number of Incidents/Accidents and Near Misses Reported per Service Area (01/04/2023 – 30/09/2023 compared to 01/04/2024 – 30/09/2024)



- 5.6 Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) there were 7 accidents across E, H & I between 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024 comprising 1 dangerous occurrence, 1 specified injury and 5 “over 7-day absences”.
- 5.7 Supporting our employees and attendance is a key priority for EH&I and arrangements are in place to utilise the services of the Council’s Occupational Health provider. To date a number of referrals have been made by manager or employee self-referrals to the Occupational Health Service or employee counselling service including for early intervention, counselling, physiotherapy, cognitive behaviour therapy as well as Statutory Occupational Health benchmarking.

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## 6 E H & I Health & Safety Plan 2024/25 Actions Update (Mid-year)

- 6.1 The Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Health and Safety Action Plan 2024/25 set out a range of key actions that will be undertaken in 2023/24. A short update on these actions is set out as Appendix 1 to this report. It should be noted that for some actions work is not due to be undertaken until the second part of 2024/25 and that for many work will be ongoing throughout the year.

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### Implications of this Report

1. **Financial** – Potential exists for financial liability from property damage, civil or criminal prosecutions through the outcome of accidents and/or ill-health. This report demonstrates Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Services compliance and commitment to Health and Safety policies and procedures.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – This report supports Renfrewshire Council’s commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.
3. **Community/Council Planning**
  - *Our Renfrewshire is well* – EH&I will improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of employees through participation in the “HealthyWorking Lives” and “Your Health Matters” Programmes and any other corporate initiatives promoting wellbeing.
  - *Our Renfrewshire is safe* – EH&I will provide training and support to employees to allow them to develop within the organisation and to gain the skills and experience necessary to provide a quality service to our customers.
4. **Legal** – Environment, Housing and Infrastructure will continue to comply with all current statutory Health and Safety legislation and Renfrewshire Council Corporate Health and Safety policies and guidance.
5. **Property/Assets** – The maintenance of appropriate registers (eg Asbestos Register with respect of domestic Council properties) and an obligation to conduct workplace inspections.
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals’ human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
8. **Health & Safety** – This report supports and demonstrates Environment, Housing and Infrastructure’s commitment to ensuring efficient Health and Safety management across

the Department.

9. **Procurement** - None
  10. **Risk** – This report supports the overarching management of risk by Renfrewshire Council.
  11. **Privacy Impact**- None.
  12. **COSLA Policy Position** – Not applicable
  13. **Climate Risk** – None
  
  14. **Children’s Rights** – Not applicable
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#### **List of Background Papers**

- (a) Background Paper 1: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board (20<sup>th</sup> May 2024), RiskReport – May 2024
- (b) Background Paper 2: Health and Wellbeing Plan (For all council employees),

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Department (Service Development) for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Gill Darbyshire, Senior Service Development Manager, [gill.darbyshire@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:gill.darbyshire@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

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## Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Annual Health and Safety Action Plan 2024/25 (Mid-Year Update)

Service Area	Title of Action	Due Date	Update
<b>Operations and Service Development</b>			
<b>Neighbourhood Services</b>	Service managers to review all risk assessments related to tasks completed and ensure they are updated, relevant and meet the needs of employees.	31/03/2025	All risk assessments have been reviewed, updated and refreshed.
	Refresh and deliver health and safety training in the fundamentals of safe working including manual handling, risk profiling, safe systems of work and regular toolbox talks.	31/03/2025	All staff within the summer programme of works were re-inducted, this included manual handling, SSOW and risk profiling. Training records were recorded
	Review and refresh the induction process for all employees, ensuring training records are completed, updated and relevant to the role	31/03/2025	This has been completed. All records are stored electronically.
	Develop current Safe Systems of Work for tasks ensuring they are communicated with employees.	31/03/2025	This has been completed and was used to support the induction process above.
	Contribute to the development of the Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) working group, support the implementation of the guidance document and aid the referral process for employees identified through routine monitoring and screening.	31/03/2025	HAVS consultant was appointed in June 2024. Employees have all been screened and findings / actions completed. Work is ongoing from consultancy report to ensure HAVS is managed appropriately.
	Review all fire safety documentation in premises managed by Neighbourhood Services and update as required.	31/03/2025	Work is underway with fleet manager to review all fire safety operating procedures in depots. We continue to work proactively to action any areas of fire safety highlighted through internal audits.

<b>Fleet and Sustainable Transport</b>	Ensure that all HGV vehicles have an Operator Licence (O licence) undertakings obligation to be roadworthy as shown by the pass rate at MOT for the fleetmaintenance schedule.	31/03/2025	All 70 HGV vehicles are on the O licence and display O licence disk in vehicle. MOT schedule is up to date with year-to-date pass rate of 95%.
	The Fleet Compliance Team will provide gate checks both internally and, on the roadside, to ensure that fleet compliance is being adhered to by the fleet drivers.	31/03/2025	Compliance Team have conducted 120 gate checks against an annual target of 240 with a pass rate of 100%.
	As part of the driver performance within all operational departments, ensure the appropriate training is being provided and recorded.	31/03/2025	150 Driver CPC training courses achieved year to date with 35 drivers achieving “outstanding”. Aim is to have all Driver CPC training completed by 31/09/2025.
	As part of the driver performance within all operational department, ensuring all fleet vehicles are on the fleet tracking system and reports, detailing driver behaviour, are sent to the operational line managers.	31/03/2025	All 270 Fleet vehicles and 260 hire vehicles are logged on our new tracker system. Work has started to prepare monthly reports for some departments and this will be further extended to all Departments by 31/03/2025.
	Ensure a fleet asset management plan and driver handbook are created and distributed to operational departments.	31/03/2025	Drivers Handbook and asset management plan review are in progress but on target to be completed and distributed by 31/03/2025
	Ensure that all areas of the Underwood Road Depot are secure and employee access are enabled.	31/03/2025	Underwood Road Depot improvement plan is ongoing and on target for completion for 31/03/2025.
	Ensure that the Underwood Road Depot has an updated fire plan and that all signage within the depot is visible to all employees and members of the public.	31/03/2025	Underwood Road Depot improvement plan is ongoing and on target for completion for 31/03/2025.
	Ensure all Underwood Road Depot users are consulted on a regular basis and kept up to date with the ongoing Depot works.	31/03/2025	Underwood Road Depot users, (H&S) meetings are being scheduled monthly for the rest of the year to consult users on a regular basis.



<p><b>Waste and Recycling</b></p>	<p>Service managers to review all risk assessments related to tasks completed and ensure they are updated, relevant and meet the needs of employees.</p>	<p>31/03/2025</p>	<p>A review of the current Risk Assessments to identify any updates that may be required and to understand if they are fit for purpose has been completed. These all need to be refreshed so are currently being updated to suit new ways of working, updated processes and procedures and incorporated into a new Risk Assessment format.</p>
	<p>Refresh and deliver health and safety training in the fundamentals of safe working including manual handling, risk profiling, safe systems of work and regular toolbox talks.</p>	<p>31/03/2025</p>	<p>A number of “toolbox talks” have been delivered to all operatives over the summer months which include a range of safe working topics. These will continue on a regular basis. Topics covered this period include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drivers site safety rules at Transfer Stations</li> <li>• Incident and Accident Reporting</li> <li>• Vehicle Access and Egress</li> <li>• Operating bin lifts</li> <li>• Emergency stop procedures (Refuse Collection Vehicles – Bin Lifts)</li> <li>• Driver Responsibilities</li> </ul>
	<p>Review and refresh the induction process for all employees, ensuring training records are completed, updated and relevant to the role.</p>	<p>31/03/2025</p>	<p>All new starts currently undergo appropriate training for their role (including any safety training on using equipment, and iLearn courses for office based employees). Ongoing work includes looking to introduce a new induction that will include depot safety. This will be refreshed to align with any changes as a result of the current review of the depot traffic management plan.</p>

	Refresh manual handling training for all staff.	31/03/2025	We are progressing with a train the trainer scheme for manual handling training. This will be rolled out over the coming months. Initially staff on each shift will receive train-the-trainer and will roll out to all employees within Waste Services.
	DSE Equipment assessment to be carried out for all staff.	31/03/2025	DSE assessments are currently carried out at staff induction and again following any location moves.

<b>Service Development</b>	Increase representation at the Health and Wellbeing Forum, ensuring that there is a named representative or substitute at each meeting.	31/03/2025	Work is ongoing to ensure there is a named representative at each Health and Wellbeing Forum meeting and future meetings will be planned in advance to facilitate this.
	Ensure mental health “Z” cards are delivered to all frontline employees and are included in the inductions for new members of staff	31/03/2025	“Z” cards were issued to all frontline staff
	Encourage employees to complete health and safety and welfare modules on i-Learn and attend training courses as required (eg Personal Safety, Violence and Aggression, Mental Health First Aid, Wellbeing etc.	31/03/2025	All employees are encouraged to complete health and safety and welfare modules as part of annual reviews and discussions.
	Promote and health and safety incident reporting system and encourage reporting of incidents and near misses.	31/03/2025	Ongoing as part of health and safety training and promotion.
	Monitor and review the number of workplace accidents and ensure appropriate action is taken to prevent future incidents.	31/03/2025	All workplace incidents are reviewed by the service daily. A weekly meeting takes place with Corporate Health and Safety and all workplace incidents for the week are discussed and reviewed.
	Develop a 3-year rolling Departmental audit plan which consists of 6 audits per year.	31/03/2025	Complete.

### Facilities and Property Services

<b>Facilities Management (Hard FM)</b>	Work collaboratively with Health & Safety colleagues to ensure Guidance Booklet for Statutory Inspection and Maintenance is relevant and is up to date.	31/03/2025	Ongoing – H&S team have subscribed to 'Barbour'. Further development will be required and equally, engagement with all stakeholders/services.
	Ensure onsite training is carried out within properties that have with sprinkler systems to ensure routine checks are carried out.	31/03/2025	Training ongoing with the relevant sites – on track.
	Procure new contract for the inspection and maintenance of fire dampers across the estate.	31/03/2025	Tender documents with CPU. Contract due to be awarded by end of 2024.
<b>Facilities Management (Soft FM)</b>	Ensure all accidents/near issues are recorded on Business World within the agreed timescales.	31/03/2025	Ongoing
	Monitor iLearn mandatory courses for new and existing employees	31/03/2025	Ongoing, mandatory courses are completed as part of new Induction Training for all employees in Soft FM
	Embed the new Absence Management process into Soft FM with support from HR.	30/09/2024	New process in place for all new absence – complete
	Link Gritting Plan to GIS Mapping and CAMIS	31/03/2025	Ongoing

<b>Building Services</b>	COSHH assessment system required for operational use. Decisions on the existing system on –going.	31/03/2025	Decision on the existing system ongoing
	Review all risk assessments across the business and update as required.	31/03/2025	Building Services are currently working to review and update risk assessments across the business. This has been delayed due to long term sick leave.
	Continue to roll out on-line and toolbox talks to the frontline staff on areas of health and safety/health and wellbeing.	31/03/2025	Completed. Booklet and z card distributed and signed for across the workforce.
	Ensure there is ongoing CPC training to ensure all staff are appropriately qualified for driving duties.	31/03/2025	Working with Fleet and Sustainable Transport to ensure all CPC training is up to date. Courses are ongoing as required.
	Ensure mental health booklets and “Z” cards are delivered to all frontline employees and are included in the inductions for new members of staff. Completed	31/03/2025	Completed
	Work with the Corporate Health and Safety Team to promote/revie and update where required across the business.	31/03/2025	Monthly operational health and safety meetings in place. 6 weekly department level meeting led by Head of Service in place.
	Promote and health and safety incident reporting system and encourage reporting of incidents and near misses.	31/03/2025	All incidents are recorded on the BW system as required.
	Continue to develop the on-line and toolbox talks for the operatives and staff.	31/03/2025	Working with others across the council to develop bespoke I learn training. Several already developed and others at the final stages of assessment.
	Ensure all CPC licences are up to date and renewed as required.	31/03/2025	Working with Fleet & Sustainable Transport to ensure all CPC licences are up to date.

<b>Property Services</b>	Ensure all Technical Unit Officers have a valid Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card and training is arranged for new officers/expired certification.	31/03/2025	All Technical Unit Officers CSCS cards are renewed on a 5 year basis. However, the certification process has recently been revised to account for applicant's professional qualifications and background. Work is ongoing with Corporate Health & Safety Team to agree on how the new system is applied to TU officers. This will be in place by March 2025.
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### Climate, Public Protection and Roads

Climate and Public Protection	Review and transfer all risk assessments for Public Protection to the new risk assessment template.	31/03/2025	Service Managers have progressed the review of risk assessments and on schedule to complete by 31/3/25.
	All public facing staff in Public Protection to complete violence and aggression training.	31/03/2025	All mandatory training courses have now been completed by office based staff. Teamtalks are being developed for frontline staff in conjunction with HR &OD.
	Develop and implement a staff induction pack	31/12/2024	A draft staff induction plan has been developed as part of the onboarding process and will be finalised by 01/12/2024.
	Stress management training to be carried out.	31/03/2025	In progress. Police Scotland will be delivering a bespoke "Conflict Management" course for our Community Support Service in October 2024.
	Complete specific risk assessment for handling XL Bully Dogs.	30/06/2024	A protocol is being developed with colleagues in Police Scotland and once concluded the appropriate risk assessment can be completed.

<b>Roads and Transportation</b>	Review and update risk assessment within roads.	31/03/2025	All risk assessments for Road Operations and Street Lighting have been concluded
	Arrange phone and SOS function in winter maintenance vehicles and wider road fleet.	31/03/2025	Complete. SOS function in place and drivers have work mobiles.
	Arrange SVQ winter maintenance training.	31/03/2025	Complete.

### Housing Services

<b>Housing Services</b>	Undertake a regular programme of risk assessment and safe systems of work reviews.	31/03/2025	Service managers are progressing with the review of risk assessments and are on schedule to complete by 31/03/25.
	Compile departmental risk assessment and safe systems of work register.	31/03/2025	Service managers to engage with Corporate Health & Safety to identify good practice in creating register.
	Undertake a regular programme of health and safety training and information sharing for all employees.	31/03/2025	Complete. Training programme and records in place.
	Undertake violence aggression training for all at risk employees.	31/03/2025	Complete. iLearn module in place for relevant employees.
	Monitor accident trends and statistics to identify risk and provide, as far as practicable, for its prevention/reduction.	31/03/2025	Ongoing.
	Promote the use of Mental Health First Aiders within Housing Services	31/03/2025	Promoted corporately and by Service Managers.
	Record and report on all health and safety related training.	31/03/2025	Training records in place but to be reviewed for consistency across Housing Service areas.