

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

**On: 14 November 2018**

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

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**Heading: 2018/19 Mid-Year Report on the Health and Safety activities within Renfrewshire Council.**

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**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.
- 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. Recommendations**

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

- 3.1 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 factors influence 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.
- 3.2 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 key role. To be truly effective, health and safety must be an everyday process and an integral part of the workforce culture at all levels across the Council.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 The Council recognises the continual importance of co-operating and linking all the relevant initiatives, policies, procedures and opportunities.

- 3.5 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 number of accidents/incidents reported for **employees** between April-August 2018 inclusive are 284, RIDDOR reportable incidents were 9. Within this figure were 184 reports of violence and aggression (148 reported by Children's Services and 31 with Renfrewshire HSCP the next highest). The nature of the violence and aggression reported is quite distinct between services.

For **non-employees** the accident/ incidents reported for the same time-period is 437 with 5 RIDDOR reports and 5 separate incidents of non-employees being taken to hospital. For the latter this is ill-health orientated not related to work activity. The support and involvement of employee first-aiders is acknowledged.

Incidents are investigated in the first instance by supervisors/ managers in order to prevent a re-occurrence or at least to minimise the consequences.

- 3.6 The provision of appropriate health and safety training continued throughout the period. The programme offered by the health and safety section included:

#### **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 several premises across the Council including Social Work residential units and school establishments. Over the past 6 months 34 delegates have been trained.

#### **Mindfulness Course and Mental Health First Aid**

Training for both courses has been undertaken over the past 6 months as part of our development of preventative approach to employee well-being. The mindfulness course training attracted 45 delegates and a Mental Health First Aid Course attracted 11 delegates. More training is planned during the next

#### **British Heart Foundation (BHF) cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) Training**

CPR is a potential lifesaving medical procedure which is given to someone who is in cardiac arrest. It helps to pump blood around the person's body when their heart can't. The CPR training was offered to employees as a life skill.

The Health and Safety Section arranged with Business Support to bring the BHF to train staff following on from the successful training earlier in the year. training. On this occasion 39 staff received the CPR training.

Overall 129 health and safety training places were taken up by Council employees from April – September.

At the time of writing 3-day Health and Safety Management courses are being provided to supervisory staff.

- 3.7 In order to meet legal requirements and current best practice, several health and safety policies, guidance and strategy were developed or revised. These include:

- Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-22
- Asbestos Policy

Several other health and safety policies and guidance are in the process of revision including Hand Arm Vibration, Fire, Violence and Aggression, Stress.

- 3.8 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 for them to review health and safety performance.

The CHSC approved the Terms of Reference for the Committee with the agreement of the Trades Unions and management representatives in our September 2018 meeting.

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.

3.9 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.

3.10 The Health and Safety Section supports the CPU in vetting council contracts from a Health and Safety perspective. From April to September 2018, 13 Low Risk evaluation contracts and 80 High Risk evaluations were vetted during this period. The section failed 17 evaluations. Most of concerns were eventually remedied.

CPU work closely with the Health and Safety Section where any concerns may arise ensuring that the council vetting process remains robust.

3.11 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.

3.12 The Health and Safety Section continue to manage the council's participation 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 October 2017, with the award submission up for review in October 2018.

3.13 The Health and Safety Section continue to provide specialist support to the Events team and other groups. An Officer from the Health and Safety Section acts as Event Safety Officer for the Council. Between April-September 2018 the following events were planned and successfully completed.

- St Mirren Football Team (Paisley)
- Paisley Food & Drink Festival
- British Pipe Band Championships
- Renfrew Gala Day
- Barshaw Gala Day
- Sma' Shot Day
- Fire Engine Rally (Johnstone)
- Open Doors (Abbey Drain event)

The Section are currently working with the Events team planning for the forthcoming Autumn and Winter events.

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.

This standard is being withdrawn and replaced with ISO 45001. This is an international standard, ensuring enhanced compatibility with other standards, such as ISO 9001 and 14001.

Discussions are ongoing concerning the possibility of moving towards the new standard.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Continuing to improve health and safety performance will reduce accidents/occupational ill health and associated costs.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - This report supports the Council's commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of employees.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – This report and plan supports the objectives contained within the community and council plans.
4. **Legal** - The council will continue to comply with current health and safety legislation.
5. **Property/Assets** - 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** - Not applicable.
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 as it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health & Safety** - This report supports and demonstrates the council's commitment to ensuring effective health and safety management.
9. **Procurement** - 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** - This report supports the overarching management of risk within Renfrewshire Council.
11. **Privacy Impact** - Not applicable.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** - Not applicable.

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#### **List of Background Papers** None

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