

To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 21 November 2024

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Finance and Resources Health, Safety and Wellbeing Mid-Year Performance Report

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the health, safety, and wellbeing activities and interventions that have taken place during the period 1st April 2024 to 30th September 2024.
 - 1.2 This report demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to ensuring the ongoing health, safety, welfare, and wellbeing of our employees. It supports the aims of the Council's People Strategy 'Our People, Our Future', the Council's Values and contributes to the delivery of Best Value outcomes.
 - 1.3 The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended) places 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.
-

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the following health, safety and wellbeing activities and performance of the Council.
-

3 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Activities and Performance

- 3.1 The Council works in collaboration with a range of key stakeholders including Trade Unions, Services, One Ren, Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board (RVJB), Scotland Excel and the NHS to review our policies and guidance documents in line with statutory compliance, as well as business needs. Recent examples include Asbestos Management, Working Safely at Height, and Control of Smoking at Work.
- 3.2 As part of the Council's procurement process, the Health and Safety team review documentation from suppliers when they tender for Council contracts. During the reporting period, the team assessed 45 high risk contracts and 18 low risk contracts.
- 3.3 Since the last report to members, there has been 1 visit by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 2 visits by Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and 6 visits by Scottish Fire and Rescue (SFR). These visits were in response to reported incidents, none of which resulted in enforcement action.
- 3.4 The Council's Health and Safety team continues to drive and progress the fire, health and safety arrangements within the corporate fire working group. All adult, children's and respite units have had refreshed fire risk assessments completed during the reporting period. Approximately 15 risk assessments were carried out and the remedial actions identified will improve the overall safety performance of the buildings and its users.
- 3.5 Protecting the mental health and wellbeing of our workforce remains a key priority as defined in the Council's new Health and Wellbeing Plan. The number of Council trained and accredited mental health first aiders has now increased to 91. The Council's mental health first aiders support our workforce by initially providing a safe space to discuss mental health concerns and available specialist support in areas such as financial or psychological wellbeing.
- 3.6 The Council also offers support to employees who are experiencing mental ill health related issues such as anxiety, grief, depression, as well as offering Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Since the last report to members, 706 referrals were made to the Council's Occupational Health Service and Timefortalking Counselling Service.
- 3.7 The Council works closely with its Occupational Health provider to deliver its Health Surveillance programme. The programme provided focused support mainly to employees within Environment, Housing and Infrastructure and Children's Services. Since the last report, there were 264 appointments, covering a mixture of audio, hand arm vibration, skin, respiratory and workplace functionality. There have been no RIDDOR reportable diseases reported to the HSE during the reporting period.

- 3.8 The Council's Health and Safety team provides professional advice, guidance, and support to the Council's construction activities and during the reporting period there were 21 construction site visits. The team are supporting major Council projects such as: Paisley Grammar, City Deal, Dargavel, St James's Primary School and Castlehead High School as well as other smaller projects within the school estate.
- 3.9 The Council's Workplace Inspection Programme which looks at the welfare and safety arrangements across the Council's estate has significantly progressed since the last report to members, with the Council's Health and Safety Team carrying out 86 site visits, 14 safety inspections and 47 audit visits.
- 3.10 In support of the Council's Corporate Events Plan, the Health and Safety Team were involved in the planning and delivery of major events such as the Food Festival, Renfrew Gala Day, Barshaw Day, SMA Shot day and the recent Halloween festival. Upcoming events include Winterfest and local Christmas lights switch on's.
- 3.11 To support employee wellbeing, 4 Rentalks were delivered to the workforce in the reporting period providing information and guidance on menopause and men's health. The Council also supported World Menopause Month in October signposting the workforce to support available and general awareness. Future Rentalks planned include Improving your work life balance, safer gambling support and CBT.
- 3.12 Over the reporting period there were 410 health and safety incidents involving employees reported, largely to do with violence and aggression, which reflects the national picture. 17 of these incidents were reported to the HSE. All incidents are fully investigated, and preventative actions are put in place to prevent a recurrence.
- 3.13 During the reporting period, 31 Freedom of Information requests / Subject Access requests were responded to.
- 3.14 As part of our ongoing commitment to health and safety assurance, the Council is currently working in partnership with Savills, to carry out an external health check on the health and safety management arrangements and performance, at both a corporate and a service level. It's anticipated that the health check will be complete in the coming weeks, with an update on the outcomes being provided to members in the next progress report.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Continuing to improve health and safety performance will reduce accidents/occupational ill health, claims or prosecutions and the costs associated with this.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** This report supports the Councils commitment to the health, safety, and well-being of Renfrewshire Council employees.
3. **Community/Council Planning –**
 - *Our Renfrewshire is well* – this supports our workforce who live in Renfrewshire.
 - *Our Renfrewshire is safe* – good health and safety practices provide safe services.
4. **Legal** - This report will support the Council's continued compliance with current health and safety legislation.
5. **Property/Assets** -Ensures compliance.
6. **Information Technology** -The E-management systems require to be facilitated through the Council's Businessworld system.
7. **Equality & Human Rights**
 - (a) 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 because for example 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 document supports and demonstrates the council's commitment to ensuring effective health, safety, and well-being management.
9. **Procurement** - Demonstrates compliance and governance.

10. **Risk** - low impact as legal and statutory requirements are being maintained.
11. **Privacy Impact** – not applicable to this report.
12. **Climate Risk** - Continuing to improve health and safety performance may reduce incidents which can have an environmental impact.
13. **Children’s Rights** - none
14. **Cosla Policy Position** - None

List of Background Papers

- (a) None

Author: Steven Fanning, Strategic Lead Partner (Health & Safety)
Finance and Resources,
telephone 07747790211
e-mail steven.fanning@renfrewshire.gov.uk
