

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Council
Date: 26 January 2023
Report for: Information
Report of: Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing and Equalities

Report Title

**6-month Corporate Report on Health, Safety & Wellbeing
– 1 April to 30 September 2022**

Summary

1. To provide information on council wide health and safety performance and delivery
2. To provide a summary of other key developments in relation to health, safety and wellbeing for the period 1 April – 30 September 2022

Recommendation(s)

1. That the report is noted.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Richard Fontana Strategic HR Lead – Health and Safety
Extension: 4919

Background Papers: None

Relationship to Policy Framework/Corporate Priorities	The Council's approach to managing health and safety at work is set out in the Corporate Health and Safety Policy. This includes the arrangements for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of employees and reporting on performance.
Financial	There are no foreseeable financial implications arising out of this report.
Legal Implications:	The work programme of audits carried out by the Health and Safety Unit, together with on-going policy/guidance developments, training provision and investigations of accidents and incidents are designed to continually improve compliance with health and safety legislation.
Equality/Diversity Implications	None
Sustainability Implications	None
Resource Implications e.g. Staffing / ICT / Assets	None

Risk Management Implications	A refocus on the fundamentals of health and safety management is being completed in 2022-23
Health & Wellbeing Implications	The Employee Wellbeing Strategy provides a framework for focused interventions to support the health and wellbeing of our workforce
Health and Safety Implications	See Legal section above. The continuing health and safety arrangements combined with the mechanisms for the provision of advice and guidance are all focused on sensible and targeted risk management.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council remains committed to high standards of health, safety and wellbeing for all staff, visitors, contractors, elected members and others who may be affected by our activities. This report covers the period 1 April-30 September 2022 and provides:
- Key health and safety performance information, highlighting proactive and reactive activities undertaken by the Health and Safety Unit (HSU) working with partners
 - Activities and initiatives delivered with partners to support our workforce under the ‘EPIC You – Health and Wellbeing Strategy’
- 1.2 After a challenging couple of years through the Covid19 pandemic and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our workforce, April 2022 saw the return to the offices for many of our colleagues.
- 1.3 Key strategic and operational groups brought together a multi-disciplinary team to manage and facilitate the effective and safe return of our staff. At the start of April 2022, all remaining general restrictions were removed, and we moved to the new phase of ‘living with Covid’.
- 1.4 HSU provides a targeted proactive programme of interventions to manage existing and emerging risks to the workforce and others affected by the Council’s work activities. Work for April-September 2022 included:
- The safe reintegration of staff to our offices
 - Conducting audits and health and safety support including the One Trafford Waste and Recycling Services, Bereavement Services and schools
 - A refocus on managing volatile incidents within our main council buildings
 - Providing a range of face-to-face health and safety training to 207 colleagues in addition to online training.
 - Collaborative delivery of a range of health and wellbeing activities and opportunities to the workforce under the EPIC You Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 1.5 Updates also continue to be provided to the relevant Corporate Directors and Joint Consultative Committees.

2. Proactive audits and support in council services and schools

2.1 Council service support

2.1.1 Reintegration support

As outlined in the previous *'Year End Corporate Report on Health, Safety & Wellbeing – 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022'* a multi-disciplinary team supported the effective and safe return of staff to our offices in April. Restrictions of space and occupancy were lifted, but the following measures and support are in place:

- Good ventilation in place through mechanical and natural means
- Regular cleaning regimes provided
- Sanitising stations remain in place in the offices and meeting rooms
- Refreshed intranet guidance and communications in staff and manager briefings
- Smart working styles supported in the office with collaborative workspaces and meeting room technology to support face to face and virtual meetings
- Processes in place for the assessment and provision of a safe workstation both at home and in the office.
- Workstation improvements at Sale Waterside, with improved desktop electrical socket provision throughout the building.

2.1.2 One Trafford Waste and Recycling Service audit

HSU supported the Council's One Trafford Client Team within 'Place' with a joint audit of the One Trafford Waste and Recycling Service. This forms one part of Trafford Council's arrangements as client to monitor the health and safety performance of Amey as contractor.

The audit evaluated standards of health and safety management through discussions with key service leads and employee representatives, reviews of paperwork and on the ground crew checks. The subsequent audit report provided a summary of findings and an action plan for areas for further development. Health and safety performance issues and updates on progress are discussed at One Trafford Partnership meetings with representatives from the Client Team and Amey Services.

2.1.3 Bereavement Services support

Bereavement Services have been receiving advice and support in a review of their health and safety arrangements at the crematorium and associated sites. This has included a health and safety self-assessment, on-site support and review of documentation. Arrangements such as risk assessments and general premises management arrangements are being supported.

2.1.4 Safe delivery of elections

The elections were again supported to deliver successful arrangements for polling stations, postal votes and the count. With Covid restrictions removed, measures remained in place to support hand hygiene, cleaning and ventilation at the venues and ensuring staff who were unwell did not participate in the arrangements.

2.1.5 Managing volatile incidents in our buildings

HSU, estates and emergency planning teams are collaborating to improve the security and wellbeing of staff at Trafford Town Hall and Sale Waterside. This project is being refreshed post-pandemic, with consideration to data including:

- Independent security reports through our insurer
- Incident reports of violence and aggression including a review of an incident in July 2022.

Table 1 summarises the actions taking place.

Table 1: Key security issues being progressed

Area of work	Action
Security staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased security presence• Implemented standard operating procedures i.e. daily checks, patrols, incident log recorded• Improved communication arrangements• Staff communications to introduce the security team
Active procedural measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review of response procedures to incidents e.g. general response, use of interview rooms, panic button procedures.• Improved management of visitors attending our buildings (lanyards, supervision, sign in/out)
Physical security measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritising investment to key risk areas and scoping physical works based on data and incident reports
Training and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preparing staff security communication for the workforce e.g. incident reporting and key security awareness messaging• Identifying appropriate awareness training for key roles and the general workforce
Data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuing to review incident reports, concerns and security staff data to inform further actions

2.1.6 Sit-stand desk opportunities

As teams have now returned to our offices, we are revisiting the opportunities for some sit-stand desks to be made available at Trafford Town Hall and Sale Waterside. They allow the user to work periodically sat down or comfortably in a standing position. There are several known wellbeing benefits to working in this way including reducing potential back pain, improving circulation, mood and energy levels and preventing ill health conditions through more 'active' working. Two styles of desks are currently being evaluated and service consultation is taking place to inform on the best type of desk and locations for them to be installed.

2.2 Schools Support and SLA Delivery

2.2.1 School SLA delivery through the pandemic had been through 'virtual/remote' audit provision. All schools under the SLA were aided with a monitoring toolkit to assist them in reviewing their health and safety performance. This was supported with HSU advice and information via the telephone, email or Microsoft Teams. Site visits were still available where required. for consistency, this service continued to the end of the school SLA Year in August 2022. Seven fire management visits took place between April and September.

- 2.2.2 In addition to the audit support, schools continued to have access to:
- Accident reporting and investigation support.
 - Unlimited advice and guidance through our duty officer system.
 - Access to school specific guidance on our SLA portal (*As well as general safety topics, this included emerging issues such as the production of 'Hot weather guidance for schools' to support them during the July heatwave*)
 - Access to a range online health and safety training.
- 2.2.3 The school Health and Safety SLA year 2021-22 closed in August with 77 schools having received competent support. Currently, 80 schools have purchased the Health and Safety SLA for 2022-23, including all our community schools. The breakdown of schools is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Breakdown of school SLA buy-back

School Type	Number
Community	38
Voluntary Controlled	1
Voluntary Aided	21
Independent	2
Academy	18
Total	80

- 2.2.4 HSU will be returning to delivering on-site visits for the audit programme throughout the year and are recommending that schools select the 'full management audit' option for 2022-23.

3. Health and Wellbeing Support

- 3.1 The wider HR Service in conjunction with partners and staff groups has continued to deliver a range of interventions for our workforce and provide, promote and signpost a wealth of support in line with our *EPIC You* Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 3.2 The legacy impact of the pandemic and other recent factors such as the cost of living and financial concerns have continued to drive wellbeing as an integral and vital aspect of staff support. The strategy and operational group to support that strategy, have been reviewed and refreshed in 2022.
- 3.3 Table 3 summarises the themes and interventions that have been delivered during April to September.

Table 3 EPIC You Health and Wellbeing Activities and Support

Activity	Details
Trafford Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trafford Staff Mental Health First Aid Network: Promoting our trained volunteers who are a point of contact if colleagues are experiencing a mental health issue or emotional distress. We have 14 mental health first aiders. • Trafford Employee Assistance Programme: 24/7, easy to access confidential support. Unlimited access to information and counselling
Tea and Talks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tea and Talk sessions hosted monthly by our mental health first aiders aimed at supporting staff to connect and take some time out from pressures of work and home life.
Staff Support Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training: Recent training on domestic abuse has been made available for managers with plans to introduce more training on menopause awareness following feedback from colleagues. • 'Let's Talk' Sessions: Recent Leaders 'Let's Talk' sessions have included a focus on financial wellbeing, with signposting to internal and external resources and sources of support that colleagues can access, as well as tips for leaders to help them to start a conversation on this topic with their team members. • Mindful Mondays – A colleague from Childrens Services, who has completed mindfulness training, is running a monthly mindfulness drop-in session for staff, each session has a different theme and includes some mindfulness practice. • EPIC Manager Health and Wellbeing Module: Launch of this module as part of the EPIC Manager programme to ensure managers are able to support the wellbeing of their teams.
Wellbeing campaigns and events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Staff Active Travel Group promoted and ran 'Cycle September' encouraging active travel • We have planned activity for Talk Money Week (7-11th November) including 2 lunch and learn sessions from the Money and Pension's Service and Welfare Rights team
Health and Wellbeing Guidance and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In response to the cost of living crisis we have worked with staff networks and Family Information Service, to provide a central resource of 'cost of living' information, resources and support. This is held on the Trafford Directory which is linked from our wellbeing intranet page and is regularly updated.

4. Accident statistics

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 Reviewing incidents and overall accident data is an important aspect of our monitoring arrangements. It helps check that our health and safety arrangements are working and can identify where further support and measures are required.

4.1.2 During the six-month period of this report, we have seen a slight increase in incidents reported but they are comparable to the previous year. The total number of incidents for April-September reported to the HSU was 68 compared to 63 incidents in 2021. Tables 4 and 5 provide a breakdown of these incidents by service area, directorate and type of accident.

Table 4: Numbers of accidents by directorate and service area

Directorate	Service Area	No of incidents
Adults Services	Adults Neighbourhood Teams	5
Total		5
Childrens Services	Education Standards, Quality and Assurance	12
	Childrens Social Care	1
Total		13
Strategy and Resources	Catering Operations	3
	Access Trafford	1
Total		4
Place	Regulatory Services	2
Total		2
Schools	Special Schools	35
	Community Schools	9
Total		44
Total Accidents		68

Table 5: Type of accident by directorate

Type of accident	Directorates – See Key Below							Total
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	
Contact with hot surface/substance	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Hit by moving, flying or falling object	0	0	0	0	0	1	4	5
Hit something fixed or stationary	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other kind of incident	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
Physical Assault	4	7	0	0	0	0	24	35
Road Traffic Collision	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Slipped, tripped, fell on same level	0	4	0	0	0	2	5	11
Striking against object	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3
Trapped	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Verbal assault, threats or Intimidation	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	8
Totals	5	13	0	0	2	5	43	68

A – Adults
C - Finance and Systems
E - Place
G – Schools

B – Childrens
D - Governance & Community
F - Strategy and Resources

4.2 **Types of accidents**

4.2.1 As in previous years, violence and aggression accounted for the majority of incidents and in similar trends to that reported in 2021. Physical assault (including a wide range of physical incidents due to aggressive behaviour) accounted for 35 incidents compared to 28 in 2021. These occurred in adults social care, special schools and Trafford transport provision when managing challenging behaviour. Focused work to consider these continuing incidents includes:

- Working with a Special School to review their recently updated behaviour management strategies to assess the potential positive impact on reducing incidents.
- Supporting TTCU with a review of their service delivery in response to incidents and reviewing the training needs of their staff to manage challenging behaviour.

4.2.2 There were 8 reported incidents of verbal assault, threats or intimidation (as was reported in 2021) again mainly related to special schools. One significant incident involved a physical security breach at Trafford Town Hall which was used to inform the improved security work outlined in point 2.1.5.

4.2.3 Slips and trips accidents accounted for 11 incidents and mainly occurred within a school or school catering environment. These involved a variety of circumstances and were not related.

4.2.4 Of note, is that April-September 2022, saw no reports submitted for moving and handling injuries. This is very encouraging given the substantial amount of work delivered for moving and handling assessment/training and also workstation assessment support.

4.3 **Rate of reportable injuries to staff**

4.3.1 Positively there were no incidents that were reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) to the Health and Safety Executive during the period covered by this report.

5. **Continued delivery of health and safety support services**

5.1 In addition to the targeted service and school support outlined, HSU have continued to provide health and safety guidance in the following areas.

5.2 **Guidance review and update**

The following guidance detailed in Table 6 has been completed or is currently in progress.

Table 6: Key work programme actions completed or being progressed by HSU

Area of development	Actions	Status
Corporate and school guidance review	Risk Assessment Guidance for Managers Updated	Completed
	Reintegration guidance for staff in place to reflect 'Living with Covid' and general infection control principles	Completed
	Fire policy updated	Completed
	Fire safety guidance for premises managers updated	Completed
	Fire safety evacuation for persons requiring assistance is being reviewed and updated	In progress
	Schools hot weather guidance provided	Completed
Fire Evacuation arrangements	Review of fire precautions and fire register arrangements for our Council buildings following reintegration of staff	Completed

5.3 Training

The HSU has continued to work with the Learning and Development Team to provide essential training as detailed in table 7.

Table 7: Training delivered April-September 2022

Course/Training	Number of Courses	Number Attended/Trained
Emergency First Aid at Work	3	19
First Aid at Work (3 day)	3	18
First Aid at Work refresher	1	3
Moving and Handling & Fire Safety Awareness (Supported Living)	4	39
Fire Evacuation Chair Training	2	4
Moving and Handling Induction (Adults)	4	17
Moving and Handling induction (TTCU)	1	7
Moving and Handling Risk Assessment Training	2	2
Moving and Handling Quickmove equipment training	3	28
Online General Manual Handling	-	18
Online Health & Safety in the workplace	-	112
Online Health and Safety: Health and Social Care	-	37
Team Teach (positive behaviour management)	3	26

5.4 Requests for service

HSU have continued to respond to a high level of requests for advice and support as staff reintegrated back into the workplace from April 2022 and also other complaints, incidents or enquiries relating to health and safety at work issues.

5.5 Display screen equipment (DSE) assessments

A total of 20 complex DSE (computer) workstation assessments have been carried out by the HSU for employees. These included supporting colleagues working from home and those with more complex health needs.

5.6 Events consultation

HSU act an internal consultee for any organised events taking place on Council land. They also provide advice and guidance for events organised by the Council and attend multi-agency safety advisory groups as required. This includes the review of risk assessments and event safety plans for an event to be managed and run safely. The number of events to be reviewed April-September 2022 increased post-covid (43 applications). In addition to the usual range of events taking place (community fetes, sporting events, outdoor productions etc.), May saw an increase in events for the Queen's Jubilee.

5.7 Moving and handling support

5.7.1 The Moving and Handling Lead has delivered and coordinated a comprehensive range of support across our Adults and Children's Services to provide staff with the competence and training in moving people safely. This protects both our staff and service users.

5.7.2 As detailed in Table 7, a substantial programme of moving and handling training has been delivered including:

- Induction and updates for Ascot House and Care at Home staff. This continues to be supported with an online moving and handling training and support package. Specific new equipment training has also been provided to staff in Ascot House.
- Awareness training for all Supported Living staff (also includes fire safety awareness delivered in conjunction with the Fire Lead)
- Trusted assessor training was delivered just before April 2022, involving working collaboratively with the TLCO to deliver innovative training that enables social care staff to order assessed equipment needs quickly and relieve the pressures on hospital discharges. This was monitored and a new cohort is being considered currently for further training.

5.7.3 There has been a dramatic increase in moving and handling referrals from schools for children with special educational needs as they started the new school year. There were 20 cases supported by the Council's Moving and Handling Lead and Consultant.

5.8 **Fire safety**

- 5.8.1 The Health and Safety Advisor (Fire Lead) has continued to deliver a range of fire support to services to ensure we meet our duties under relevant fire legislation.
- 5.8.2 Fire safety evacuation information and briefings have been provided as staff returned to our offices in April. Regular communications have also been provided through the year on the arrangements in place.
- 5.8.3 Fire evacuations drills were completed at both Trafford Town Hall and Sale Waterside to test the fire arrangements in place at our main administrative buildings. Fire drills were also completed at Timperley, Hale and Altrincham libraries, the latter being a joint exercise with the NHS, with the library being based within an NHS building.
- 5.8.4 The Fire Lead completed 5 fire risk assessments at school premises and also supported with fire consultation for new building works within two schools.
- 5.8.5 HSU have been working with our Estates Team and Amey through the One Trafford Partnership to review fire risk assessment provision in line with our corporate responsibilities for the Trafford Estate.

A revised programme of identified fire risk assessments is now underway for our Corporate Estate to ensure we maintain our legal duties under fire legislation.

6. **Conclusion**

- 6.1 The report has highlighted a range of health, safety and wellbeing work and interventions that continue to be delivered as our workforce have reintegrated to our offices. There has been a refreshed focus on our proactive auditing and support programme for services and schools as well as specific projects to improve the safety, security and wellbeing of our workforce.
- 6.2 There has also been preparation for the launch of a health and safety initiative to re-energise and engage with services on health and safety fundamentals post pandemic. This includes dedicated bite size resources, monthly communications, and audit programme.
- 6.3 Further details of this initiative and an update of the corporate safety and wellbeing programme will be provided in the end of year report.