

Report of:	Director of Legal and Governance Services (Monitoring Officer)
Submitted to:	Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee
Date:	16 March 2023
Title:	Health and Safety: Annual Assurance Report 2022
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Strategic priority:	Quality of service
Key decision:	No
Why:	Not applicable
Urgent:	Not applicable
Why:	Not applicable

Executive summary

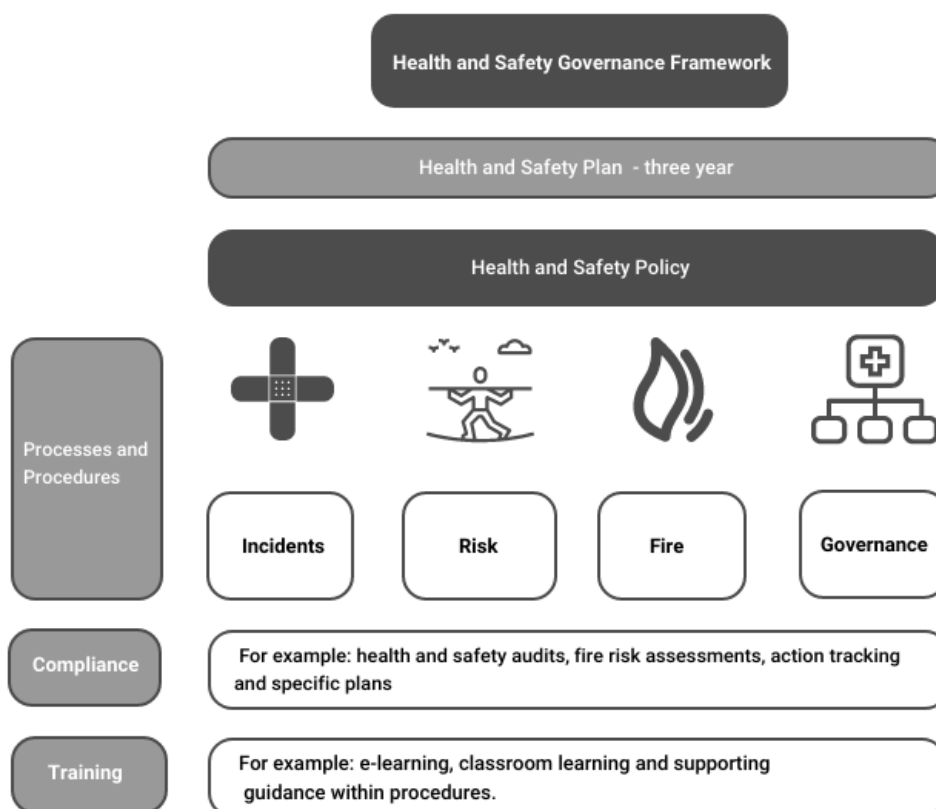
This report sets out the arrangements in place to ensure the Council meets its legal obligations in relation to health and safety. The report sets out the Health and Safety governance framework, actions delivered during 2022 and planned actions for 2023.

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to outline the Council's approach to health and safety management and summarise activity in the past year and planned activity for 2023, in order to provide the Committee with assurance that the Council has robust arrangements in place, as required by the Health and Safety Act 1974.

Background and relevant information

2. Health and safety management is the collective responsibility of all elected members and officers of the Council, with key statutory responsibilities falling to the Chief Executive and management as the employer.
3. The Council has in place the following governance framework structure to oversee health and safety, ensure compliance with legal requirements and deliver ambitions in relation to Health and Safety.



Progress in delivering the Plan during 2022

4. The Health and Safety Plan within the above diagram sets out the Council's plans in relation for a three-year period and is supported by an action plan which is reviewed annually. Progress on these actions is set out below.
5. The digitised health and safety management application (My Compliance) has continued to be developed and its processes embedded within day-to-day risk management.

6. As a significant level of data has been built up in the system it has enabled the Council to improve the intelligence it can develop from:
 - incident reporting and investigation;
 - health and safety audits;
 - fire risk assessment; and
 - action tracking.
7. This has been used to improve understanding of the impact of violent incidents, unblock systematic issues to improve compliance and increase Officer and Member visibility and oversight.
8. Regular reviews of underpinning documentation with the governance framework are undertaken. During 2022 the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) procedures were refreshed.
9. Reporting content for oversight of health and safety has also been refreshed, utilizing the new capabilities of My Compliance and Power BI to enable reports to focus on the lessons to be learned, trends and areas of concern, while providing assurance as to the robust datasets in place to track health and safety compliance.
10. A key focus of the team during 2022 has been the ongoing transition from Covid-19 to the new way of working and ensuring appropriate health and safety measures are embedded within that, as well as supporting the move of a significant number of staff and Members to Fountain Court.
11. The Council continues to deliver training and support to staff to ensure compliance with health and safety obligations and understanding of roles and responsibilities. In addition to the suite of e-learning materials that were already available to all staff, during 2022:
 - Leadership and Management Team members attended an accredited one day IOSH Leading Safety Course
 - face-to-face incident investigation awareness, evacuation chair and fire warden courses were delivered to supplement e-learning
 - e-learning resources were refreshed to enhance Manual handling training.

Health and safety activities for 2023

12. During 2023, further work will be undertaken to build on progress made within the previous action plan as part of the Council's commitment to continual improvement in health and safety management.
13. The health and safety unit will continue to monitor and assist in developing the digital solution linking Power BI and My Compliance, to further develop business intelligence capabilities.
14. The following policies and procedures will be produced, reviewed and uploaded onto the intranet:
 - Personal Protective Equipment policy;

- Noise procedure; and
 - Vibration procedure.
15. To be compliant with legal duties, the Council must have in place a Legal register which provides details of legislation applicable to the Council. A gap analysis is currently underway to map leads for pieces of legislation, policies and procedures in place to regulate compliance and any gaps in those. Once complete and verified, actions will be brought forward if necessary to provide assurance around compliance.
 16. Detailed health and safety plans for each type of premises will be produced, incorporating both premises and service area health and safety considerations to further strengthen the Council's arrangements.
 17. Underpinning the procedures and training, as set out in the governance structure, are a series of audits that allow the Council to test compliance with health and safety good practice. These will continue to be delivered during the year, outcomes and actions tracked and used to shape future priorities.

Member and Officer Oversight

18. In addition to this annual assurance report to this committee, information on health and safety compliance is reported on a quarterly basis to:
 - Departmental teams
 - The Leadership Management Team
 - The Corporate Health and Safety Steering Group which comprises Members and Trade Union representatives.

What decision(s) are being recommended?

19. That the Committee notes the arrangements in place to manage health and safety within the Council, progress within the last year, and plans to further strengthen those arrangements.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

20. To support the Committee to discharge its responsibility to maintain an overview of arrangements in place to ensure good governance.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

21. Not applicable.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

22. Health and safety management is a part of corporate governance, and the Council has a legal duty to ensure arrangements comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety Act 1974.

Strategic priorities and risks

23. Health and safety management positively impacts on the following risks within the Council's risk registers that relate to the management of health and safety in the workplace.

Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection

24. There are no direct implications from this report on equality and diversity.

Financial

25. There are no new direct financial considerations in relation to health and safety management as a result of this report. By having robust plans in place, the Council will mitigate the reputational and financial risks from health and safety incidents as far as reasonably practicable.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

26. Not applicable.

Appendices

None.

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date
Corporate Affairs and Audit Committee	Health and Safety: Annual Assurance Report 2021	31 March 2022

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