



Health & Safety Update

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Purpose of the Report

To update Audit Committee on the strategic Health and Safety situation.

Public Interest

This report provides an update to the Audit Committee on Health and Safety at South Somerset District Council, focusing on monitoring and the results of an external maturity assessment.

Recommendations

That the Committee note the current update on health and safety as detailed in this report.

Background

The Council has a One Team approach to health and safety, with both a Steering Group and a Working Group. The Steering Group leads on governance and sets the strategy, whereas the Working Group is responsible for the operational level of health and safety. Under normal circumstances, both Groups normally meet at least quarterly, however this past year this was disrupted by Covid-19. Both Groups are now back to meeting regularly again (roughly every 6 weeks) to focus on health and safety.

Health & Safety Monitoring

The table and chart below show the number of reported accidents and incidents over a 5-year period. The numbers show an overall drop against 2019 data, however the COVID19 situation is likely to have had some impact on this, with most staff working from home.

One area that is concerning is the increase in violence to staff. While it has only gone up by one over the past year, it has increased from 8 to 23 over the past two years. Initial investigation suggests this is largely down to the fact of more staff reporting incidents than previously, particularly verbal abuse in person and over the phone.

The number of near misses and RIDDOR reportable were also similar to previous years and more investigation and analysis is required.

The Working Group is revising the current incident (accident) form to include further information about follow up actions and investigations so that this will further help to identify trends and areas in need of improvement within teams to stop similar accidents reoccurring.

Health & Safety Data

Table & Graph 1 - Summary Table and Graph from 2015 to 2020 (Jan-Dec)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Violence to staff	16	7	16	8	22	23
Staff Accidents	38	34	39	36	44	25
Public Accidents	8	10	11	12	22	5
Near Misses	2	1	5	5	2	5
RIDDOR (Diseases)	0	0	0	0	0	0
RIDDOR (Accidents)	0	1	0	2	4	3

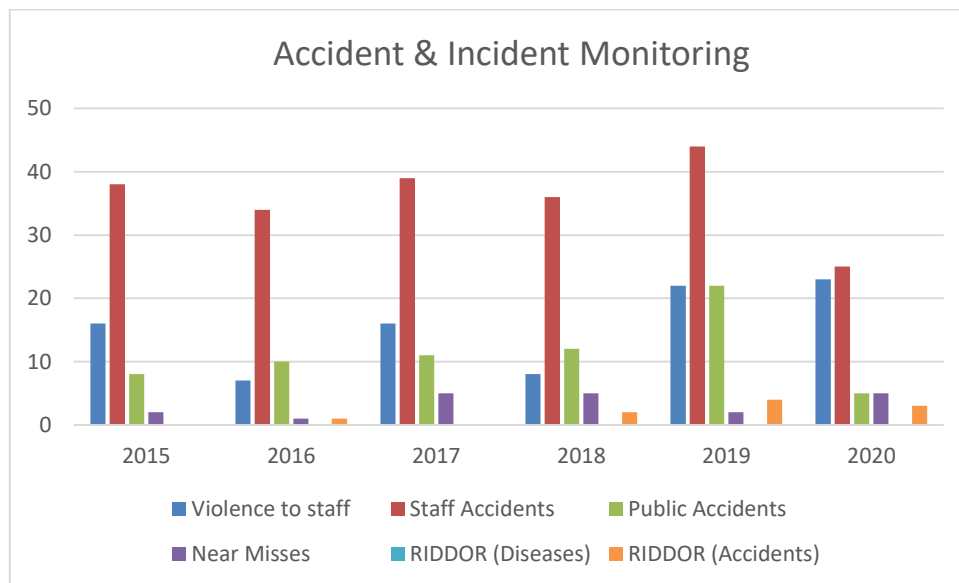


Table 2 – Reported incidents in 2020

Near misses	5
Accidents involving staff (For break down see next table)	25
Accidents involving the public	5
Incidents Involving Violence to Staff	23
RIDDOR	3
Total	61

Table 3 – Analysis of Accidents involving staff

Service Group/Team	No.	Outline
Octagon & Westlands	2	1 x injury to hand 1 x minor burn
Countryside	5	2 x cut 1x twisted ankle 1x burn 1x impact
Environment Services	16	2x back injury 1x burn 4x cut 3x impact 2x needle 3x sting 1x twist/sprain
Engineering & Property	1	1x cut
Locality	1	1x twist/sprain
Total accidents involving staff:	25	

Near misses: 3 incidents happened at a Countryside location including an attempted theft of charity money box at Ninesprings café, the sighting of a poacher with a gun at Ham Hill, and a branch falling on an angler's tent at Chard reservoir. One at Lufton involving a sharps box. The fifth involved damage to private property that did not result in injury.

RIDDOR: There have been 3 reportable injuries. One due to a fractured bone in the foot, and 2 due to an injury which resulted in an absence of more than 7 days.

Public accidents: Three of the accidents were slips, trips and falls and one was a minor cut. Four incidents were at the Octagon/Westlands, the other was at Ninesprings.

Violence to staff:

9 were verbal abuse, (6 of which were over the phone).

5 damage to property (3 of which at Ham hill)

7 incidents where individual's feared for physical personal safety or felt intimidated by activities,

2 incidents that led to physical violence and injury (Westlands Ballroom).

Health & Safety Maturity Assessment

In order to ensure that SSDC achieves the best Health and safety standards, our liability insurers, Zurich have undertaken a 'critical friend' maturity assessment. The main review work was completed during November with findings and

recommendations received in December. This has been reviewed by the both our health and safety groups, as well as our Senior Leadership Team.

Overall, the report concluded:

- SSDC demonstrated a commitment to developing a practical and effective approach to health and safety management.
- At departmental/service level, SSDC was able to evidence good safety management controls and resilience including formalised policies, documented training records, robust use and review of operational risk assessments, safe systems of work and accident/incident investigation procedures.

However, the assessment recommended risk improvement actions relating to the following:

- Competent person(s)
- Strategic planning
- H&S policy
- Risk assessment and safe systems review
- Permit to work
- Monitoring and audit

In order to look to address the actions identified, the next step will be to work with an external specialist consultant to review issues and set a plan for improvement. This work will be undertaken in partnership with the SSDC H&S Working Group under the leadership of the H&S Steering Group and reported to the Senior Leadership Team every quarter. A budget of £20,000 has been identified from within existing resources for these Health & Safety improvements.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.

Council Plan Implications

Aligned to our Council Plan values of empowering a confident, flexible workforce

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

To be taken into account in work relating to the six Risk Improvement Actions above.

Background Papers

None.
