

## **Health and Safety Update**

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## **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update Audit Committee on the strategic Health and Safety situation and provide monitoring data for the period of January to December 2021.

## **Public Interest**

2. This report provides an update to the Audit Committee on Health and Safety at South Somerset District Council, focusing on monitoring and progress with the Council's Health & Safety Policy.

## **Recommendations**

3. That the Committee note the current update on health and safety as detailed in this report; and
4. That Members complete the Health and Safety training on the Learning Management Systems if they have not already done so.

## **Background**

5. South Somerset District Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of all its employees, Members and other persons who may be affected by the Council's activities.
6. The Audit Committee considers the health and safety performance of the Council annually. They delegate responsibility to the Health and Safety Steering Group for developing policies and systems, and for the regular management of health and safety matters. The Steering Group is made up of lead specialists/managers representing all service areas of the Council and reports to the Senior Leadership Team on a quarterly basis.
7. The Health and Safety Working Group is the consultative group on health and safety for the Council and is made up of a cross section of operational individuals from across all areas. It reports to the Steering Group. Both the Steering and Working groups meet regularly and oversee that health and safety is managed effectively at strategic and operational levels.

## **Health & Safety Monitoring**

8. Appendix One includes monitoring information, set out in tables and graphs.
9. Table 1 shows the number of reported accidents and incidents over a number of years, up to the end of 2021.
10. While there is an increase in the number of staff accidents compared with 2020 this is lower than the pre-covid period in 2019. This increase likely reflects the return to more normal working practices as the Covid lockdowns were lifted in 2021. There is also a notable drop in the number of reported accidents involving members of the public over the last couple of years.
11. While the levels of reported violence to staff incidents is showing lower than recent years, there is a possibility that the number of actual incidents may be higher than reported. Further work is therefore underway to raise awareness to staff of the importance of reporting incidents, including abuse via email communication and social media. Reporting helps to identify issues and take appropriate action.
12. Table 2 shows the reported incidents with a breakdown per quarter and indication of whether any incidents were reportable to the Health & Safety Executive, under RIDDOR (Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulation 2013).
13. Table 3 shows more detail of the staff only accidents during 2021, within which teams and any that were RIDDOR reportable. Environmental Services and Countryside remain the two teams with the highest rate of staff accidents because of the nature of their work.

## **Policy and Reporting Developments**

14. An updated corporate Health and Safety Policy was approved and adopted by Full Council in December 2021. This policy provides the framework for health and safety management at the Council. The Steering Group is now tasked with overseeing the next phase of policy development, focusing on updating service level policies to align with the adopted corporate policy.
15. The Working Group already has a detailed work programme with actions assigned to specific officers on the Group. The progress made on the programme is regularly shared with the Steering Group and the Senior Leadership Team. We have identified actions that need addressing, a new maturity assessment is being developed to understand more clearly the level of support needed per service area as well as the introduction of an enhanced corporate health and safety implementation plan. This work will also help us in the transition to the new Unitary Authority.



16. The Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning represents SSDC on the Health and Safety Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Sub-Workstream. The group comprises of Health and Safety representatives from Somerset County Council, Somerset West and Taunton, Mendip and Sedgemoor District Councils to ensure we are prepared for Vesting Day.
17. As part of our Work Programme at SSDC we have already improved the reporting and monitoring of incidents and accidents and the Council now has a new online reporting tool, which went live in January 2022. More information is captured in these new forms about the incidents / accidents and the following actions that are taken, or, need to happen. This will help managers to identify any issues and track and monitor progress with any areas in need of improvement, to stop similar accidents reoccurring. An online data dashboard has also been developed to give Managers access to high-level reported data and this analysis will also be reviewed regularly by the Steering and Working Groups.
18. All staff and Members have been invited to complete a training course for health and safety on the Council's Learning Management System. Managers are also asked to complete additional health and safety training and staff also undertake specific role related training for their area of work.

### **Financial Implications**

19. None.

### **Council Plan Implications**

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

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

21. None.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

22. As this report is for information and no decisions are being asked from Members an equality impact assessment is not required.

### **Background Papers**

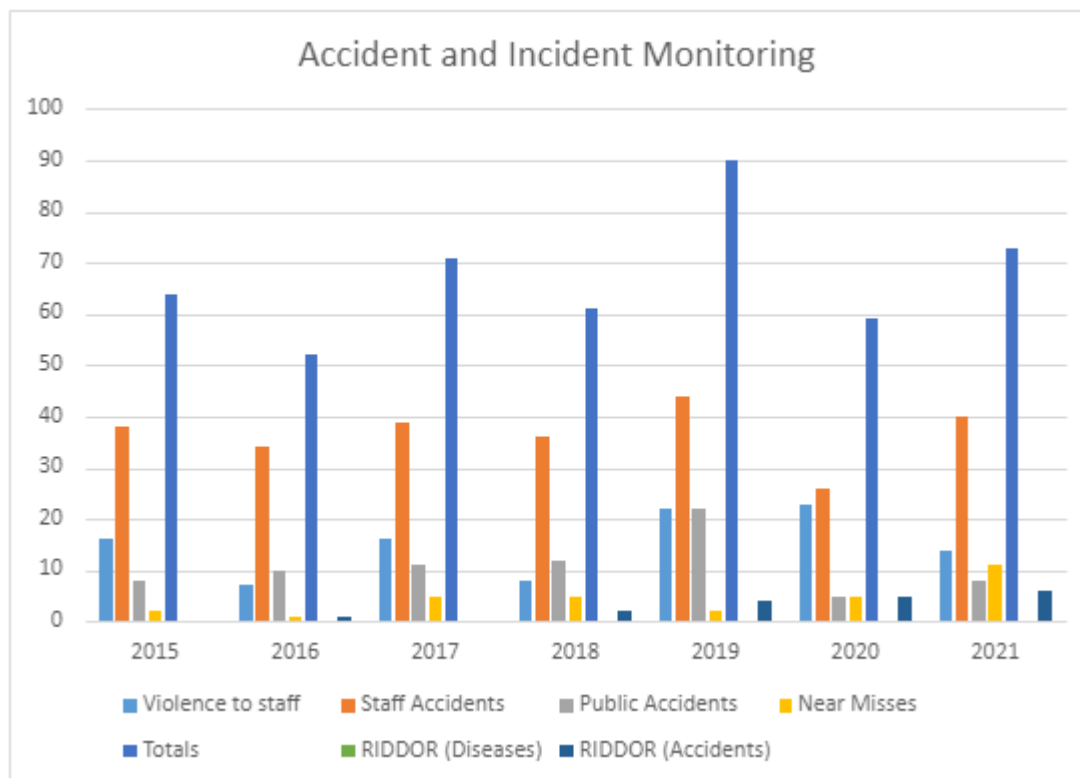
23. None.



**Appendix One**

**Table 1 (and linked graph) - Summary of reported incidents yearly.**

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Violence to staff	16	7	16	8	22	23	14
Staff Accidents	38	34	39	36	44	26	40
Public Accidents	8	10	11	12	22	5	8
Near Misses	2	1	5	5	2	5	11
Totals	64	52	71	61	90	59	73
RIDDOR (Diseases)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RIDDOR (Accidents)	0	1	0	2	4	5	6



**Table 2**  
**Summary of reported incidents for 2021 (January to December 2021)**

Count of Incidents Reported		Years	Quarters			Grand Total
		2021				
		Qtr1	Qtr2	Qtr3	Qtr4	
Incident category	RIDDOR Reported?					
Near miss		7	2	2		11
Public	Yes				2	2
	No		1	4	1	6
<b>Public - Total</b>			<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
Violence To Staff	No	6	1	2	5	14
<b>Violence To Staff - Total</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>14</b>
Accident To Staff	Yes	2	1	1		4
	No	11	9	8	8	36
<b>Accident To Staff - Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>73</b>

N.B The numbers in bold font are the totals for sections



**Table 3 – breakdown of accidents involving staff for 2021 (including RIDDOR)**

Service Group/Team	No	Outline
<b>Environmental Services</b>	28	2 x eye injury 5 x cuts - minor cuts 5 x back injury (2 RIDDOR reportable) 5 x twist/sprain - minor slips and trips 5 x impact - minor injuries to fingers involving equipment (1 RIDDOR reportable) 2 x burn - from machinery 3 x needle 1 x fall
<b>Countryside</b>	7	4 x cut - minor cuts 1 x break - fall incident whilst holding machinery (1 RIDDOR reportable) 2 x back injury
<b>Sport &amp; Leisure</b>	1	1 x impact - minor injury to fingers involving equipment
<b>Locality</b>	1	1 x impact - minor due to slip and trip
<b>Service Delivery</b>	2	1 x cut – minor 1 x Repetitive Strain Injury
<b>Arts &amp; Entertainment</b>	1	1 x burn
<b>Total accidents involving staff:</b>	<b>40</b>	

**Near misses:** 11 incidents: 1 x regarding misuse of machinery at Lufton. 1 x Vehicle damaged, 1 x Livestock incident, 3 x Fly Tipping, 2 x Vandalism, 1 x needle found, 1x water contamination and 1 x Machinery caused stone to break car window.

**RIDDOR:** 6 reports: 3 x 7 day absence, 1 x fracture, 2 x Public Accident

**Public accidents:** 3 x medical conditions that required first aid, 1 x gang related violence, 3 x fall and 1 x play park injury.

**Violence to staff:** 14 incidents of verbal abuse; 8 of which were over the phone, 6 face to face