



Health and Safety Update

Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Support Services and Strategy
Assistant Director: James Divall, Support Services and Strategy
Service Manager: Jess Power, Lead Specialist Strategic Planning
Contact Details: jessica.power@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462300

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Audit Committee on the strategic Health and Safety arrangements and provide monitoring data for the period of January to December 2022.

Public Interest

2. This report provides an update to the Audit Committee on Health and Safety at South Somerset District Council, focusing on monitoring of incidents/accidents and progress to date.

Recommendations

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

Background

4. 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.
5. 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.
6. The Health and Safety Working Group is the operational group on health and safety for the Council and is made up of a cross section of individuals from across all areas. It reports to the Health and Safety Steering Group. Both the Steering and Working groups meet regularly and oversee that health and safety is managed effectively at strategic and operational levels.



Policy and Reporting Developments

7. The Council's Health and Safety policy provides the framework for health and safety management at the Council.
8. The Health and Safety Steering Group representatives were tasked with overseeing the next phase of policy development. This included updating their service specific policies to align with the adopted corporate Health and Safety policy.
9. The Health and Safety Working Group has a detailed work programme with actions assigned to specific officers. The progress is regularly shared with the Steering Group and Senior Leadership Team.
10. The Health and Safety Steering Group recognised that several actions needed to be completed in advance of the move to the new Unitary in April 2023. A Health and Safety action plan was developed and is largely complete.
11. In accordance with the corporate Health and Safety policy the Lead Specialist Strategic Planning organised the annual Health and Safety audit. This is currently being undertaken by SWAP. (Note at the time of this draft report the results have not been provided).
12. The online reporting tool that was introduced in January 2022 has been further refined to enable Managers to monitor the levels of incidents and accidents in their service areas. The results from this high-level dashboard are regularly reviewed by the Steering and Working Groups to identify trends and help implement solutions and prevent incidents reoccurring.
13. In addition to the online reporting tool a 'tracker' has been further refined to help the Health and Safety team to monitor the actions identified as part of the incident/accident form. This ensures that follow up actions are completed by the appropriate Service Manager or Team Leader.

Training and Awareness

14. Members and staff were invited to complete the health and safety training on the Learning Management System.
15. Directors and Managers were asked to complete the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH) online courses. SLT undertook the IOSH Safety for Executives and Directors, and the Leadership Management Team undertook the Managing Safety course.
16. An in-person Corporate Manslaughter training event took place in December 2022. This was well attended by SLT and LMT.



17. In addition to the above courses, Managers ensure their staff have appropriate health and safety training specific to their roles.
18. A Communications Specialist joined the H&S Steering Group in 2022 and developed a communications plan for health and safety. Communications have gone out regularly to staff via the Staff Portal, the Teams channels, One Team Weekly editorials and staff awareness sessions.
19. Over the last six months the H&S Team has carried out site visits to talk to teams about their health and safety reporting and provided refresher training on the use of the online reporting tool.
20. In addition to site visits the H&S Team has continued to support teams with their personal safety devices and arranged several workshops to troubleshoot any issues.
21. Both sessions have been positively received by the service teams.
22. Additional temporary resources in the team enabled a focus on supporting the Environmental Services team based in the Lufton depot. This has helped to improve processes including the implementation of regular toolbox talks, assisting in the review of risk assessments, safe systems of work and reviewing the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) arrangements on the site. Whilst we have the resources, we are continuing to roll out this good practice across the Council.
23. In addition to this work the Health and Safety team has supported the roll out of changes to the first aid arrangements in Brympton Way.
24. A fire evacuation process called Tag-Evac has been rolled out in Brympton Way, Lufton and Petters House. All staff have been asked to complete the associated training.
25. The external Health and Safety Competent Person has been continuing to support the H&S team with any specific queries arising. This arrangement will cease as part of the new Unitary Council.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

26. The Lead Specialist – Strategic Planning represents SSDC on the Health and Safety LGR Sub Workstream. The group comprises of representatives from Somerset County Council, Mendip, Somerset West and Taunton and Sedgemoor District Council to ensure a Health and Safety function is prepared for Vesting Day.

27. The LGR Sub Workstream have driven work across the districts to join the County health and safety system ready for vesting day. Each district has requested all risk assessments that have not been reviewed in the past 12 months are reviewed and then transferred to the H&S system. Safe Systems of Work are also being reviewed and being entered in the system. COSHH assessments will follow.
28. The system will be rolled out to all staff across the districts to enable the review of risk assessments, along with the reporting of incidents and accidents. This work is ongoing as improvements are made to the system.

Health & Safety Monitoring

29. Appendix One includes monitoring information, set out in tables.
30. In summary, since January 2022 the Council had a total of 89 incidents and accidents reported. While this shows an increase in the number of reports from 2021 this is still lower than pre-covid figures in 2019. This trend is seen across most of the historic data in Table 1. It is worth noting that the number of reports for members of the public increased by more than two-fold between 2021 and 2022, however this is likely attributed in part from increased public activities following the lifting of covid restrictions, along with increased awareness by staff, and ease of access, of the new reporting procedures.
31. While the amount of violence to staff incidents is showing the same as 2021 and lower than some previous years, the anecdotal evidence is that the number of actual incidents still may be higher than is being reported. Work continues with staff to help raise awareness of the importance of reporting incidents, including abuse via email communication and social media, in helping to identify issues and take appropriate action, including wellbeing support.
32. The data in Tables 2 to 7 has not previously been reported in the same way due to the new form data capture so there is no direct historic comparison. However, even with one year of data it allows for greater understanding of what is happening than previous reporting formats, where in terms of locations and within which service area.
33. The new form has enabled more categories for the type of incidents to be captured and when through the year this happens. As shown in Table 3, which shows the type of staff incident reports, charted by month, it highlights cuts/abrasions are one of the more common types of injuries, along with bruising. However, it also highlights where injuries may be more prevalent at certain times of year, and where targeted action in the future could help to reduce incident rates. For example, there were 4 sting related injuries during the summer months (all relating to wasp / bees). The appropriate service(s) were able to evidence this trend and adjust guidance and training to heighten awareness of increased risks at certain times of the year.



34. Table 4 provides detail of the business units within Directorates for each of the employee incidents/accidents. This helps to identify which business areas may require additional focused supported. Environmental Services and Leisure & Recreation remain the two business areas with the highest rate of staff incidents, largely due to the nature of their work. However, Customer Connect also tracks third highest, but has very different causes for reports, with the greatest number of incidents of abusive / threatening behaviour than any other business area. See Table 5 showing the types of Abusive / Threatening Behaviour incident reports. Table 6 provides a breakdown of the types of Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) made to the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and for whom those reports were made, were they for staff or members of public.
35. As previously highlighted, there has been an increase in the reporting of near misses. Table 7 shows the breakdown of these incident types, with operating tools equipment / machinery as the highest hazard reported.

Financial Implications

36. None.

Council Plan Implications

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

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

38. None.

Equality and Diversity Implications

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

Background Papers

40. None.

Appendix One

Table 1 – Summary of Reported Incidents 2015 - 2022

Historic Data -Tables							
Year	Near Misses	Public Accidents	RIDDOR (Accidents)	RIDDOR (Diseases)	Staff Accidents	Violence to staff	Total
2015	2	8	0	0	38	16	64
2016	1	10	1	0	34	7	53
2017	5	11	0	0	39	16	71
2018	5	12	2	0	36	8	63
2019	2	22	4	0	44	22	94
2020	5	5	5	0	26	23	64
2021	11	8	6	0	40	14	79
2022	13	20	5	0	37	14	89

Table 2 - Types of Incidents Reported 2022

2022 Data

Type Of Incident	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Abusive / Threatening Behaviour	2	3	1	2	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	5	18
Damage to property	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	1	8
Injury	5	8	3	4	2	4	5	5	3	4	4	4	51
Non-Injury First Aid Incident	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	2	1	1	8
Non-Injury Self-Harming Risk	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	4
Total	7	12	4	6	5	6	9	10	4	8	7	11	89

Table 3 – Type of Incidents For Employees 2022

Type Of Incident	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Abusive / Threatening Behaviour	2	2	1	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	14
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Damage to property	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Injury	3	6	2	4	2	2	4	5	2	2	2	3	37
Back Injury	1	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Bite Wound	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Bruise	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	5
Burn	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cut or abrasion	1	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	3	10
Eye Injury	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Heat Exhaustion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Impact	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	4
Puncture Wound	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Sting	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
Twist or sprain	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Injury First Aid Incident	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	4
Fainting	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Hazardous Substance	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
Total	5	9	3	6	2	4	6	8	2	3	3	6	57

Table 4 – Employee Incidents by Directorate 2022

Directorate	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
Commercial Services & Income Generation	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Commercial Property, Land & Development	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Income Opportunity Development	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Place & Recovery	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	4
Arts & Entertainment	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	4
Service Delivery	2	5	1	3	0	2	3	5	1	1	1	3	27
Building Control	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Customer Connect	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8
Environment	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	2
Housing	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Leisure & Recreation	0	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	9
Locality	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	5
Revenues	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Strategy & Support Services	3	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	1	1	2	1	24
Breavement Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	3
Environment Services	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	19
Legal	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Strategic Planning	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	5	9	3	6	2	4	6	8	2	3	3	6	57

Table 5 – Types of Abusive / Threatening Behaviour 2022

Who Was Harmed?	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Contractor	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Abusive / Threatening Behaviour	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
Verbal abuse face to face	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Employee	2	2	1	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	14
<input type="checkbox"/> Abusive / Threatening Behaviour	2	2	1	2	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	3	14
Verbal abuse face to face	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	8
Verbal abuse in writing	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Verbal abuse telephone	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Member of Public	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<input type="checkbox"/> Abusive / Threatening Behaviour	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Verbal abuse face to face	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total	2	3	1	2	0	1	1	3	0	0	0	5	18

Table 6 - RIDDOR Reports 2022

Type of RIDDOR report	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Non fatal accidents to non-workers (eg members of the public)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
Member of Public	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	3
<input type="checkbox"/> Over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Employee	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Total	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	1	1	5

Table 7 – Types of Near Misses 2022

Please state the type of near miss?	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	Total
Fire Hazard		1		2				3
Hazardous Substance or Materials			1					1
Narrow Escapes						2	1	3
Operating Equipment Tools or Machinery	1	1				1	1	4
Risky Behaviour						1		1
Slips and Trips							1	1
Total	1	2	1	2	3	3	1	13