

Test Valley Borough Council's Corporate Annual Health and Safety Report 2015 - 2016

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report covers the year April 2015 to the end of March 2016 and its aim is to demonstrate Test Valley Borough Council's commitment to:
- a. Protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees, contractors, volunteers, clients, service users and members of the public.
 - b. The on-going effective implementation of the Council's health and safety policy, organisation and arrangements.
 - c. The monitoring and measurement of the Council's health and safety performance, with a view to highlighting areas of good performance and areas for improvement.
 - d. Making public the organisation's performance in health and safety matters.

During this year, the corporate health and safety function transferred from the Environmental Health business unit to the Environmental Service.

2.0 Risk Exposure and Risk Control

- 2.1 Health and safety is part of the Council's Risk Management Strategy, focussing on the risks of injury and ill-health potentially arising from the range of activities which deliver the Council's services.
- 2.2 The range of health and safety risks identified includes;
- Lone working
 - Violence and aggression towards staff, from the public
 - Transport and road risk
 - Electrical safety
 - Fire
 - Manual handling
 - The use of display screen equipment
 - Slips, trips and falls
 - Work related ill health, including work related stress
 - The health and safety management of contractors
- 2.3 Risks are controlled using both proactive and reactive monitoring of the Council's health and safety performance. Proactive monitoring includes audits, risk assessments, site inspections coupled with appropriate health and safety training. Reactive monitoring is triggered by events including injuries, ill health, reports of damage or complaints whereby action is taken to prevent a reoccurrence.
- 2.4 Management within the organisation is supported by a number of specialists including the Council's Health and Safety Officer, the Environmental Health manager, Occupational Health specialists, counsellors, ergonomists, professional trainers, consultants and the Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service.

3.0 Employee Awareness, Involvement and Consultation

- 3.1 The Council’s Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group is composed of service representatives from management, staff and the trade unions and it is chaired by the Strategic Human Resources Manager. The group meets quarterly to discuss health and safety issues and review accident statistics. A reminder is issued annually to advise employees to raise any issues with their manager and/or health and safety representative. A reminder is also issued approximately two weeks prior to each meeting.
- 3.2 Details of the Council’s health and safety policies, procedures and documentation are available to all employees on the organisation’s intranet. In addition, employees receive specific health and safety induction training, as appropriate, when joining the organisation.
- 3.3 A list of potentially violent and/or abusive persons is available on the intranet, along with an aggressive dogs list, to those services who have indicated a need. The lists are password protected and are regularly reviewed and updated (a new password is issued with each update). The names and addresses of offenders are removed after a period of one to three years depending on the type of abuse, as long as there is no recurrence of the unacceptable behaviour during that period. To ensure that employees are aware of the risks and how to protect themselves, a reminder is issued annually regarding lone working.
- 3.4 It is appreciated that some employees do not have access to the Council’s intranet. In these cases, managers ensure that safety information is communicated in an appropriate manner and hard copies of information is provided.

4.0 Financial Resources

- 4.1 The Environmental Health business unit, within the Housing and Environmental Health Service held the corporate budget for health and safety during 2015/16. The annual budget is used to fund council activities such as staff training in health and safety matters and to enable the Council’s safety advisor to be trained and kept abreast of developments in health and safety law and safety management practice.
- 4.2 The expenditure of this budget for the last 3 years is given in Table 1.

Table 1 – Expenditure on Health and Safety

Purpose	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
First Aider training and equipment	£1230.00	£1436.00	£2609.21
Equipment	£832.44	£185.00	£3125.00
Safety Representative training	£810.00	£550.50	£697.07
Subscriptions	£425.00	£595.00	£435
Dealing with aggressive people training	£1506.00	-	-
Occupational Health	£356.92	£138.99	-
Safety officer training	£290.00	£125.00	-
Total	£5,449.92	£3,030.49	£6866.28

5.0 Monitoring and Reviewing Performance

5.1 Corporate achievements:

- A review and refresh of the health and safety intranet page. Regular updates are ongoing.
- Internal audit conducted a review of the health and safety procedures within a number of services. (See 5.3 for further information).
- The annual health and safety audit questionnaire was completed by all services within the Council. (See 5.4 for further information).
- A continued review of the Health and Safety Manual.
- Regular use of the Staff Information Bulletin to increase health and safety awareness.
- An ongoing review of the Council's lone working policy and procedures, including a new risk assessment approach.
- The establishment of a multi service working group to explore and implement a suitable corporate lone worker monitoring system.

5.2 Corporate training provided:

- The Council has continued to provide training for new first aiders and refresher training, where appropriate.
- An e-learning induction course is available for new starters to complete and is also available as a refresher for established employees.
- E-learning courses are also available for fire awareness, personal safety and DSE workstation assessment.
- The Environmental Service carries out its own specific health and safety training on a regular basis.
- Health and Safety training in specialist areas is arranged on request.

5.3 Internal audit findings

Health and safety is subject to periodic reviews undertaken by the internal audit team.

It was the opinion of the auditor that 'while there is a basically sound system, there are weaknesses which put some of the control objectives at risk.'

Examples of good practice and what is working well:

- The Council has a statement of General Safety Policy supported by policies for specific risks demonstrating the Council's commitment to health and safety.
- There is a comprehensive Health and Safety Manual available to all staff on the intranet.
- Processes are in place for incident reporting and health and safety is overseen by a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group chaired by Human Resources.
- Recruitment and induction processes effectively incorporate health and safety awareness.
- Health and Safety training is provided to all staff through e-learning.

- Regular role specific training is provided in high risk areas notably in Environmental Services, who carry out routine audits and annual health surveillance checks.
- The Council has appropriate insurance to cover health and safety.
- Health and safety is embedded in the project management process.
- Fire prevention measures are in place.

Table 2 details a number of control weaknesses that were highlighted along with the agreed actions to be implemented and the current status.

Table 2 – Audit improvement areas and actions to be taken

Control weakness	Agreed action to be taken	Risk Owner	Status
The Statement of General Safety Policy is not reviewed and refreshed periodically.	H&S policy statement to be updated, signed by Chief Exec & Leader and placed on notice boards & intranet.	Health and Safety Officer	Completed
The annual self-assessment has not been conducted this year which usually serves as a reminder to management of their responsibilities.	Assessment to be updated by H&S officer, to then be distributed to and completed by all Heads of Service.	Health and Safety Officer	Completed
Risk assessments are not reviewed and up to date (P&B and P,P&T).	All RAs will be reviewed and diarised for future years.	Heads of Planning Policy and Transport. Head of Planning and Building and	Completed for PP&T. To be completed by P&B 31 Dec 2016
Contractors insurance is not checked prior to work commencing.	A checklist to be developed to be used time a contract is let.	Head of Estates and Economic Development	Completed
Legionella testing and records do not comply with policy.	Practice to be reviewed and aligned with the agreed Legionella policy.	Head of Estates and Economic Development	Completed
The Building Maintenance Cyclical Works spreadsheet is not up to date.	The spreadsheet is to be reviewed and simplified and aligned to the risks applicable in each building.	Head of Estates and Economic Development	To be completed by 31 March 2017

Observations of health and safety practises, including personal protective equipment (PPE), are not formally recorded.	Staff to be retrained and inspection records to be retained.	Head of Planning Policy and Transport	Completed
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Agreed actions are recorded on the ‘Covalent’ system and reported through Performance Boards. An exception report detailing outstanding actions is produced by the audit team every 6 months who then follow up with the responsible officer recorded on Covalent.

5.4 Annual health and safety questionnaire findings

The annual health and safety questionnaires were sent to Heads of Service and all forms were returned confirming that procedures were in place to maintain good health and safety standards.

A number of services had a few outstanding actions:

- 2 services had further work to complete on their standard risk assessments
- 4 services had further staff training to ensure that staff were aware of the risk assessment findings and control measures
- 2 services had further work to complete on putting full control measures in place
- 1 service confirmed that their training records could be improved.

5.5 Accident / Incident data

5.5.1 For the year 2015/16, there were 81 accidents or incidents. Of this total, 3 were accidents reportable to the HSE, 19 were abusive/violent incidents and 59 were non-reportable incidents (these included 8 near misses). See Table 2 for details. All of the reportable incidents were notifiable to the HSE due to the length of absence from work rather than any severity of injury.

5.5.2 A full review of accident documentation highlighted that violent incidents from one quarter in 2014/15 had been overlooked. The figures have been amended in the table below. (See Table 3)

5.5.3 The overall trend continues to show a reduction in the numbers of incidents, near misses and notifiable accidents with a 14% total decrease compared with the year 2014/15. (See Chart 1)

5.5.4 As would be expected, there are more incidents within the Environmental Service due to the hazards and risks associated with the work that is undertaken. See Table 4 for breakdown by service.

Table 3 – Number of Incidents

Type of incident	2013/14	2014/15*	2015/16
Total number of non-reportable incidents	64	53	51
Total number of incidents reported to the HSE	6	5	3
Total number of abusive/violent incidents	21	28	19
Total number of near miss incidents	5	8	8

*Previously reported data has been amended.

Chart 1 - Accidents and incident trends

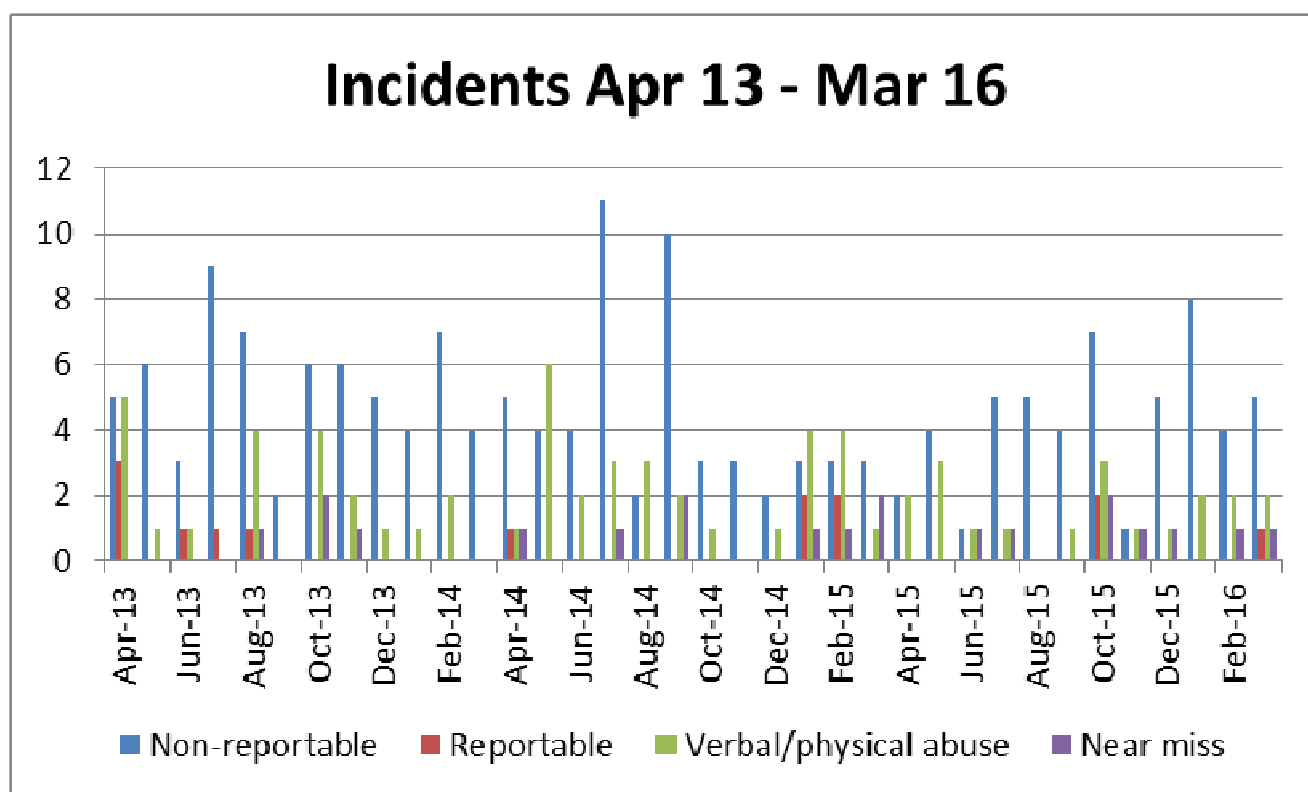


Table 4 – Accidents by Service 2015/2016

Service	Non reportable		Reportable		Abusive/Violent		Near misses	
	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15	2015/16	2014/15
Chief Executives (incl. HR)	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community & Leisure*	3	10	0	1	2	2	2	1
Customer Services**	5	1	0	0	3	4	0	1
Environmental Services	30	31	2	3	2	2	5	4
Estates & Economic Development ***	2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Finance	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Housing & Environ. Health	6	3	0	0	5	6	0	0
IT	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal & Democratic	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning & Building	3	2	0	0	1	3	1	1
Planning Policy & Transport	1	0	0	0	5	8	0	0
Revenues	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	1

* Includes incidents to the public at TVBC owned leisure facilities and at the Lights

** Includes incidents to the public whilst in the reception areas

*** Includes incidents to the public at TVBC owned properties e.g. the Guild Hall

6.0 Key Challenges for 2016/17

- Establishing the corporate health and safety function firmly within the Environmental Service.
- Ensuring that health and safety remains a focus for all and that staff use the resources available to them.
- Full implementation of the lone worker policy and devices (where requested).
- Establishing a core group within high-risk services to communicate best practice and drive forward health and safety policies.
- Evaluation and revision of e-learning packages.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The Council's continued ability to manage health and safety in a good and proportionate manner reduces the likelihood of Test Valley Borough Council receiving a routine inspection by the HSE, as HSE inspectors tend to focus their resources on high risk industry sectors or on those businesses with a poor compliance track record.
- 7.2 The absence of regulatory inspections makes it ever more important for the Council's positive, pro-active approach to continue and to ensure that new legislation and good practice are incorporated into the organisation's day to day management and culture.