

**Test Valley Borough Council
Annual Health and Safety Performance Report
2021 – 2022**

1.0 Introduction

Test Valley Borough Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy requires an annual report on health and safety performance and planning.

The Government's 'Revitalising Health and Safety' strategy document requires all public bodies to summarise their health and safety performance plans in annual reports, and that government (including local government) be exemplars of health and safety best practice.

This report summarises significant health and safety management activities over a twelve month period (April 2021 to March 2022) covering key achievements, council-wide statistics and developments for the year ahead.

The objectives of this report are to demonstrate Test Valley Borough Council's commitment to:

- Making public the Council's performance on health and safety, by publishing health and safety performance data;
- The ongoing effective implementation of the Council's health and safety policy, organisation and its associated arrangements;
- Monitor and measure health and safety performance, with a view to highlighting areas where the Council performs well and also areas for improvement;
- Openness and accountability in all of the council services; and
- Our responsibility for ensuring a safe and healthy environment for service users, members of the public, employees and contractors.

2.0 Executive Summary

The Council's health and safety function has delivered on its objectives during the year. A few highlights of the year are listed below:

- The reintroduction of face-to-face training
- A refresh to the staff Health & Safety information page on SharePoint.
- Accidents and incidents at a similar level to the previous year
- A Covid-safe election and count in May 2021 and March 2022
- A review of the method for advising properties with 'Dangerous Dogs'.

The Council's continued ability to manage health and safety in a good and proportionate manner reduces the likelihood of non-routine inspections by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

3.0 Risk Exposure and Strategies for Control

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. 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 (DSE)
- Slips, trips and falls
- Work related ill health, including work related stress
- The health and safety management of contractors
- Mental health

The new 'Agile Working' policy has also had to consider a number of health and safety implications regarding the suitability of equipment, work location and workstation set-up. These issues have previously been considered as part of the 'Homeworking' guidance, but the Agile Working policy considers additional places to work, including overseas.

A process has now been put in place to allow Councillors to obtain information regarding individuals who may be listed on the Violent Persons database. This is frequently communicated via the Members' Information Bulletins.

The Council continues to develop and implement appropriate strategies and systems to identify and record foreseeable risks and reduce them to as low a level as is reasonably practicable. These strategies are subject to periodic review and appropriate remedial measures, or adjustments, are made as necessary.

3.1 Monitoring

Risks are controlled using both proactive and reactive monitoring of the Council's health and safety performance.

Reactive monitoring is triggered by events including injuries, ill health, reports of damage or complaints whereby action is taken to prevent a reoccurrence. (See section 3.4 for a breakdown of incidents)

Proactive monitoring includes audits, risk assessments, site inspections and appropriate health and safety training. A couple of key areas are detailed below.

Annual Health and Safety Questionnaire Findings

The annual questionnaire was sent to Heads of Service and all were returned.

Below are listed the outstanding actions highlighted in the submissions

Action	Service(s)	Comments
Risk assessments – annually reviewed and staff consulted	Finance & Revenues C&L H&EH	In the process of review All being reviewed post-Covid and staff to confirm Review ongoing across housing
Hazard control measures documented and staff aware	P&B	Out of Hours, Lone Working and Site Visit policies being reviewed
Driving licence checks	Finance & Revenues IT	Driver declarations to be completed Documents under review

Workplace Inspections

The Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Group members have been tasked with performing regular inspections of their respective working areas. Inspections of the operational depots at Portway and Bourne House are conducted on a monthly basis by the Corporate Health and Safety Manager.

3.2 Corporate Training

There were 6 new First Aiders trained and 7 employees underwent their statutory 3-year refresher training.

Fire warden training was held for the first time in 3 years.

However, with the move to a new way of working, the provision of First Aiders and Fire Wardens within the main Beech Hurst office will require review in 22/23 to ensure that staff safety is not compromised as a result of changing work patterns.

The Environmental Service and Property and Asset Management Service carry out their own specific health and safety training as required for their staff roles.

3.3 Financial Resources

The annual budget is used to fund council activities such as staff training in health and safety matters and to enable the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Manager to be trained and kept abreast of developments in health and safety law and safety management practice.

The expenditure of this budget for the last 3 years is given in the table below:

Expenditure on Health and Safety

Purpose	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
First Aider training and equipment	£2338	£1836	£2932
Equipment	£1093	£2790	£739
Other safety related training	£1602	-	£2243
Total	£5033	£4626	£5914

The equipment purchased in 2021/22 again included masks and sanitiser for Covid protection.

3.4 Accident/Incident Data

For the period 2021/22, there were a total of 43 incidents. Of this total, 3 accidents were reportable to the HSE, 9 were verbal abuse or violent incidents and 31 were non-reportable incidents (these included 4 near misses).

Comparisons for the last 3 years are given in the table below:

Overview of incidents

Type of incident	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Total number of non-reportable accidents	50	27	27
Total number of accidents reported to the HSE	1	3	3
Total number of verbal abuse / violent incidents	23	6	9
Total number of near miss incidents	5	4	4

- 3.4.1 The total number of incidents reported remains relatively unchanged year-on-year.
- 3.4.2 The reportable incidents that were notifiable to the HSE were all due to ‘an accident that resulted in an employee being absent from work for more than 7 days’, as a result of a minor injury.
- 3.4.3. As would be expected, there are more accidents within the Environmental Service due to the hazards and risks associated with the work that is undertaken.
- 3.4.4 There was one aggressive incident that resulted in the individual being added to the Violent Marker List and a further incident where the customer was written to advising of their unacceptable behaviour
- 3.4.5 Usually, the greatest number of aggressive or violent incidents is attributed to the Property and Asset Management Service and this is mainly directed at the parking Civil Enforcement Officers. There were three incidents recorded in the 2021/22 period where the Body Worn Cameras were activated.

3.4.6. During 2012/22, the greatest number of aggressive incidents were reported by CSU. Of the 4 incidents recorded, 3 were due to aggression over the telephone.

A full breakdown by service is given in the table below:

Overview of incidents by service

Service	Non Reportable		Reportable		Aggressive / Violent		Near Misses	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Chief Executives (incl. HR)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community & Leisure*	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Environmental	24	19	2	3	1	1	4	3
Finance & Revenues (incl. CSU**)	1	0	0	0	2	4	0	0
Housing & Environ. Health	0	3	1	0	2	1	0	0
IT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal & Democratic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning & Building	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
Planning Policy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property & Asset Management***	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	1
Strategy & Innovation	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A	0

* 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 Guildhall and tenants within TVBC run buildings e.g. Beech Hurst

4.0 Wellbeing and Mental Health Overview

There have been a number of activities to promote and protect employee wellbeing and mental health including:

- A range of on-line and face to face learning opportunities targeted at employees and managers, including;
 - Menopause training for Line Managers.
 - Domestic Abuse (separate sessions for line managers and employees)
 - iAct (Positive Mental Health) for managers
- A series of webinars (which are also available on playback) have been offered through SuperWellness, a nutrition-based training provider, who also provides campaign materials across a range of wellbeing topics. Topics have included:
 - Understanding and Embracing the Menopause
 - Beating Anxiety
 - 7 Nutritional Habits of Highly Effective People
 - Boosting your Energy

- An additional Mental Health First Aider has been trained
- Regular drop-in sessions continue to be held with a local counsellor and Mental Health First Aider in Portway and Bourne House depots.
- Promotion of a new Employee Assistance Programme via Legal & General (our insurance provider) – offering access to a 24/7 helpline, legal advice, podcasts, videos, mini health checks on a full range of wellbeing topics.
- Relaunch of wellbeing webpages, enabling these to be accessed outside of the workplace (password protected).
- HR and our Wellbeing MT Champion held a series of workshops with all staff across the Council to promote the work of the Wellbeing Group, seeking feedback and ideas on what else our workforce want the Council to offer.
- Monthly wellbeing campaigns, focusing on a range of topics, including alcohol awareness, cancer prevention, sun awareness, diabetes awareness, financial wellbeing. Our larger campaigns have included:
 - ‘New Year, New You’ – A month of daily tips and activities to start the New Year and develop new healthy habits.
 - Mental Health Awareness Week - Held a series of events across the borough, including health walks, picnics, coffee and cake mornings.
 - On Your Feet Britain – Held a series of health walks across the borough
- Launch of ‘Wellbeing Wednesdays’ – a new monthly e-newsletter which is sent to all employees via email, promoting wellbeing activities and tips to stay fit and healthy.
- The Community Engagement Manager has been trained to deliver Suicide First Aid training and sessions are being rolled out across the organisation.
- Awarded the StandTogether Charter Mark from the Ben Cohen Foundation – Whilst this is focused on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, there are strong links with the Employee Wellbeing agenda.

5.0 Key Challenges for 2022/23

Focuses for the current year include:

- A review of First Aid and Fire Warden provision within Beech Hurst
- A further review of the Health & Safety Sharepoint page and refresh of basic documents such as the Risk Assessment template.
- Ensuring that health and safety remains a focus for all and that staff use the resources available to them
- Making further use of the resources available through our insurers i.e. 3rd party audits and reviews, to ensure that the Council is reducing risk and working to ‘best practice’.