

**Test Valley Borough Council  
Annual Health and Safety Performance Report  
2022 – 2023**

## **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 2022 to March 2023, 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.

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).

## **2.0 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 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.

## 2.1 **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 table 3 for a breakdown of incidents.

Proactive monitoring includes audits, risk assessment reviews, 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.

In the box below are the list of actions highlighted in the service submissions:

<b>Action</b>	<b>Service(s)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<u>Risk Assessments:</u>		
Generic office assessment under review Lone working procedures	<b>Finance &amp; Revenues</b>	Completed Feb 23 Procedures are available, but due for review.
Lone working procedures	<b>C&amp;L</b>	Under review due to smart phone app security concerns.
Task and generic risk assessments up to date	<b>H&amp;EH</b>	Certain assessments under review across all business areas of H&EH.
Lone working – procedures documented	<b>S&amp;I</b>	Process in place but need to have written policy.
<u>DSE assessments:</u>	<b>Finance &amp; Revenues</b>	Majority complete, some agile workers to do.
	<b>HR</b>	Completed March 2023.
	<b>H&amp;EH</b>	EH staff asked to review.

<u>Driving Safety</u> - licence checks, etc.	IT	Team managers reminded to review staff documents.
	HR	Completed March 2023.
	C&L	Management reviewing.

### **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.

## 2.2 **Corporate H&S Training**

There were two new first aiders trained and 10 employees underwent their statutory 3-year refresher training.

An initial discussion was held with the Chief Executive to discuss the future of first aid provision within Beech Hurst, which will be followed up by the new Corporate Health & Safety Manager.

Manual handling and ladder awareness training was completed for 26 employees, across a number of services.

DSE assessor training was completed for a nominated individual from each service.

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

## 2.3 **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:

**Table 1. Expenditure on Health and Safety**

<b>Purpose</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
First aider training and equipment	£1836	£2932	£2713
Equipment	£2790	£739	£129
Other safety related training	-	£2243	£1516
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4626</b>	<b>£5914</b>	<b>£4358</b>

## 2.4 Accident/Incident Data

For the period 2022/23, there were a total of 70 incidents. Of this total, three accidents were reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 15 were verbal abuse or intimidating behaviour incidents and 52 were non-reportable incidents these included 7 near misses.

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

**Table 2. Overview of incidents**

Type of incident	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Total number of non-reportable accidents	27	27	45
Total number of accidents reported to the HSE (RIDDOR)	3	3	3
Total number of verbal abuse / violent incidents	6	9	15
Total number of near miss incidents	4	4	7

2.4.1 The total number of incidents has increased by over one-third from the previous annual figures to 2022/23. The reason for this increase is due to the opening of Ganger Farm facilities with incidents being reported to members of the public (mainly related to sporting activities), and also a push on reporting incidents held within the Environmental Service in April 2022.

2.4.2 For the three 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.

**Table 3. Overview of incidents by service**

Service	Non-Reportable		Reportable		Aggressive / Violent		Near Misses	
	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23	2021/22	2022/23
Chief Executives (incl. HR)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Community & Leisure*	3	7	0	0	0	1	0	1
Environmental	19	30	3	3	1	3	3	4
Finance & Revenues (incl. CSU**)	0	0	0	0	4	6	0	0
Housing & Env. Health	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

IT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Legal & Democratic	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Planning & Building	1	2	0	0	0	3	0	1
Planning Policy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Property & Asset Management***	1	5	0	0	3	2	1	1
Strategy & Innovation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	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

2.4.3 As would be expected, there are more accidents within the Environmental Service due to the size of the workforce and hazards and risks associated with the work that is undertaken: waste collection, grounds maintenance, street cleaning, and vehicle repairs.

2.4.4 All except one of the non-reportable accidents within the Community and Leisure Service was due to injuries to members of the public whilst part of a sporting or leisure activity, at either The Lights or Ganger Farm.

2.4.5 There were three aggressive incidents that resulted in the perpetrator being added to the Violent Marker List.

### 3.0 Wellbeing and Mental Health Overview

Actions over the previous year include:

- A range of online and face-to-face learning opportunities targeted at employees and managers, including;
  - Neurodiversity workshops (for employees and line managers)
  - Suicide first aid workshops
  - iAct (positive mental health) for managers' course
  - Financial wellbeing webinars
- A series of webinars have been offered through SuperWellness, a nutrition-based training provider, who also provide monthly campaign materials across a range of wellbeing topics. Webinar topics have included:
  - Boost your energy
  - Musculoskeletal detective
  - Winter wellness
  - Sleep - practical steps for a good nights' sleep.
- A new Mental Health First Aider has been trained and has joined the team of MHFA's who provide immediate support to staff in the workplace.

- Regular drop-in sessions have been held with a local counsellor and MHFA in Portway and Bourne House depots.
- MHFAs / HR attended the Environmental Service's 'Service Days' to promote the Wellbeing offer to all operational staff, including the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Employee Support Service and wellbeing web pages.
- Monthly wellbeing campaigns, focusing on a range of topics, including mental health and suicide prevention, women's / men's health, summer/ winter health and financial wellbeing. Our larger campaigns have included:
  - Mental Health Awareness Week - a series of events were held across the borough, including health walks and coffee mornings.
  - World Mental Health Day – a quiz was held, promoting tips looking after mental health.
- 'Wellbeing Wednesday' e-newsletters have been issued on a monthly basis since May 2023, containing the latest wellbeing news.
- A Menopause Lunch and Learn session was held with a local menopause coach.
- Five menopause self-help books have been purchased and are available for loan by all staff.
- A range of social events has also taken place to promote social connectivity, as well as offering benefits to physical and mental health. Events have included arts and craft sessions and weekly spin classes at the leisure centre.

#### **4.0 Key Challenges for 2023/24**

Focus for the current year includes:

- A review of first aid and fire warden provision within Beech Hurst.
- Making health and safety a more visible function, by attending corporate inductions for new starters and providing Q&A training sessions at service meetings.
- A further review of the Health and Safety SharePoint page and refresh of basic policies within the health and safety manual.
- 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. 3<sup>rd</sup> party audits and reviews, to ensure that the Council is reducing risk and working to 'best practice'.