

**BRENTWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

**CORPORATE  
HEALTH AND SAFETY  
PERFORMANCE REPORT  
2015 - 2016**

Approved by the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee 21st June 2016

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## INTRODUCTION

This performance report now produced annually is a review of the Council's health and safety progress over the past year and covers the period from April 2015 to March 2016. Although there is already quarterly reporting of the condition of corporate health and safety to CLB/MST and a quarterly corporate health and safety committee, there is a need to produce an annual report to ensure that all Members are aware of the condition of the Councils' compliance to date together with continual work in progress to improve standards particularly within high-risk areas.

In general, there has been a very positive response to improving the Council's health and safety culture and systems during the past year. This has been demonstrated by the support and progress made by The Head of Paid Service, the Corporate Leadership Board (CLB) and the Senior Management Team (SMT) in engaging with health and safety along with the respective service areas. This has involved much joint working between the corporate health and safety advisor and the service areas to review and develop their systems and initiate improvements to increase compliance.

Putting health and safety on to a stronger footing and being able to demonstrate compliance provides significant benefits to the Council. In the main these are reduced sickness absence, improved employee wellbeing and performance, reduced enforcement action as well as reduced insurance claims.

A risk based approach has been the driving force in improving the status and culture of health and safety across the Council. This has involved working with managers and supervisors, to identify the risks within their service and put appropriate controls in place. Considerable work has been undertaken at the council's depot with a review of their top level risks and development of risk assessments and systems to manage the activities they deliver. Services such as refuse collection, grounds maintenance, street scene, parks and open spaces and the depot workshop have all seen improvements to their health and safety systems. Additional work with other service areas such as Housing, Planning and Corporate Services has also taken place. This has involved reviews of existing health and safety systems such as lone working arrangements and risk assessments, the cautionary contacts register, fire procedures and First Aid arrangements together with support of the Town Hall remodelling proposals.

This performance report also provides statistical data laying out in detail the work so far achieved which will enable direct comparison from hereon. It remains the intention of this council to improve its health and safety compliance in all significant areas '*so far as is reasonably practicable*' within the manpower and pecuniary resources at its disposal.



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April 2016

## **1.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS**

### **1.1 Health and Safety Policy**

The health and safety policy is a legal requirement and is fundamental to the Council's health and safety management system. It has been reviewed and updated in the past year and the statement of intent signed by the Head of Paid Service. The review incorporated an update of the council's organisational structure and respective employee responsibilities. It also places greater emphasis on the council's health and safety standards, contractor management, and an amendment to the process of consultation with employees. The revised policy was approved by the Policy, Finance and Resources committee in February 2016.

## **2.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY STRUCTURE AND REPORTING**

### **2.1 Corporate Leadership Board (CLB)**

The Corporate Leadership Board has been informed of the status of health and safety compliance during the last financial year through quarterly health and safety compliance reports. The overall picture is one of improvement in compliance with the development of and implementation of risk assessments and improvements to work systems. The reports also contain an overview of topics demonstrating improvement of the Council's health and safety systems such as statistics on the number of training courses attended by employees to improve competency and reviews of systems and procedures. In addition, actions have been identified for all relevant managers given their responsibility for delivering within their service areas.

### **2.2 Health and Safety Committee**

The Health and Safety committee continued to meet quarterly in 2015/16 and helps to provide focus and co-ordination to the overarching objectives for improving health and safety within the Council. The minutes and actions from these meetings were distributed to committee members and all health and safety coordinators for feedback to their respective service areas and are available on the Intranet and health and safety Microsite. The main principles applied to these meetings was to develop the Council's health and safety system, to enable a greater sharing of information with committee members, Union representatives and all employees. To this end consultation with employees took place with new and revised standards and documents. Also the Committee aims to understand and improve the organisational risks, to empower the health and safety Co-ordinators to support their respective service area and to up skill them. A Chartered Institute Environmental Health level 2 Health and safety qualification was delivered to the Co-ordinators to provide rounded knowledge on health and safety requirements. The objective was to assist them in proactively engaging with their service area and raise standards, as well as improving the health and safety culture and compliance.

### **2.3 Service Area Team Meetings**

During the financial year Corporate Leadership Board (CLB) agreed that health and safety would be included as an agenda item at all service area team meetings. The aim was to raise the profile of health and safety and, to engage with all staff to improve their awareness of the current systems in place within their service area and enable staff to share and exchange information. Health and safety co-ordinators for these service areas are ideally placed to support this initiative and communicate information from the Health and Safety Committee to the service areas.

## **3.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS**

### **3.1 Brentwood Council Standards**

Brentwood Borough Council has produced a range of Health and Safety Standards to assist managers and employees to implement the legal requirements as defined by law. A review of the current standards on the Health and Safety Microsite has been undertaken to identify which need to be updated. This is usually prompted by one of the following; legislative changes, Health and Safety Executive reviews of Approved Codes of Practice or changes in practice. During this report's financial year, the Managers' Health and Safety Handbook was reviewed, revised and improved in consultation with managers. The Handbook defines line manager responsibilities and actions to support them in their role to manage the risk of common hazards in the workplace. Following consultation with Managers this was agreed and adopted. In addition the Health and Safety Induction Standard and Managers' Checklist was also updated to improve clarity on when the form should be used and where the completion of induction should be recorded on the Health and Safety Microsite. The First Aid Standard has also been revised to include the use of the defibrillator following training for First Aiders in its use. Other Standards have been identified for review during the current financial year.

One of the key statistics that assists with identifying the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Management system as well as the Standards is the Incident Report Form. With a new Incident Report Form and updated Standard produced in the previous year this has aided better reporting of incidents and near misses. It has also helped capture incidents and aid reviews of risk assessments and work practices. In addition, the form now has enhanced line manager involvement with incident investigation and outcomes, as well as manager awareness and support for remedial action, to prevent recurrence. This is coupled with a more reliable 'online' reporting system along with a paper version of the form to enable front line staff who do not have access to a computer to complete the form. It also provides a more proactive approach to injury and ill health reporting.

## **4.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY MICROSITE**

### **4.1 Improving Communication of Health and Safety Information**

Several web pages of the Microsite have been updated and refreshed to improve engagement and communicate new information. These are:-

- The front page has updated details of new and revised standards and web pages to support managers and employees.
- The Health and Safety Policy webpage has been improved and updated, to help employees understand the importance of this policy and reflect the revised Corporate Health and Safety Policy 2016 as well as a link to this document.
- A new Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) webpage has been devised to help improve communication and arrangements for the emergency evacuation of impaired persons who may be on the Council's premises. This in conjunction with a new online PEEP form aids efficient completion and communication of this information.
- The health and safety training webpage has been updated and induction training has been added to enable a record of initial first day training as well as on going safety

training for employees. The Health and Safety Induction Standard has also been updated to reflect the changes in the organisation.

- The 5C's Contractor Management webpage has been updated and information improved to enable a better understanding of how the 5C's system for contractors' works and what managers and custodians for premises are expected to do. In addition, all the blank templates for the premises files have been reviewed and updated.
- The Health and Safety Handbook for Managers web page has been revised and updated to reflect the launch of the Handbook.
- The First Aid and Fire Marshal Information web page has been revised and updated to reflect the organisational arrangements.

## **5.0 RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK CONTROL**

### **5.1 Health and Safety Risk Assessments**

Considerable time and resources have been invested in the past year identifying and producing risk assessments to support service delivery and manage significant risks arising from those activities. In particular, the approach adopted has been to focus on the higher risk activities within the Council within the Street Scene and Environment services. Support has been given to refuse collection and disposal, grounds maintenance, street scene operations, cemeteries, parks and open spaces as well as the Depot Vehicle Workshop. Further work has also been undertaken with Housing, Planning, Electoral Services and Asset Management to ensure the significant risks of service delivery are being identified and controlled. Where an incident takes place and it is found that for significant risks there wasn't a risk assessment in place this has been prioritised as part of the investigation and remedial work undertaken to prevent recurrence. Also, all existing risk assessments are reviewed on an annual basis or when an incident occurs. All completed risk assessments have been added to the Council's Intranet Health and Safety Microsite Matrix. Following the production of the risk assessments all required controls to manage significant risks from the activity are put in place. In addition to these assessments, further assessments to support activities such as the Mayor's Firework event, Remembrance Day Parade, Lighting up Brentwood, and Pregnant employees have been developed. Furthermore, a drive to improve Display Screen Equipment (DSE) assessments was also undertaken resulting in 98% compliance overall.

### **5.2 Consultation on Risk Assessments**

An important part of the risk assessment process is employee consultation. This has two effects:-

- First, to engage with the employees to develop health and safety awareness;
- Secondly, to ensure that all known significant risks from the employee perspective are included in the assessment and appropriate controls added. This enables good communication of health and safety risks and safe methods and systems of work.

This is a vital element to ensure employees engage, support and adhere to the controls put in place. With more complex risks in high risk activities, this process may take longer but improves the health and safety culture and systems of the Council, which reduces employee ill health,

costs to the Council, improves employee wellbeing and reduces the potential for fines and legal action.

Further work continues in risk assessment production and improvements to work activities to ensure the Council's activities are well managed. As a result, the Council is in a better position regarding compliance with its statutory duty and is able to manage the risks more effectively.

## **6.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING**

### **6.1 General Health and Safety Training**

Proactive investment over the past year has been given to support training of employees to manage the risks inherent within their service and to develop competency. This contributes to a positive health and safety culture, better efficient safe working practices, employee wellbeing, as well as reducing incidents.

Training by type undertaken during the year includes: -

- Manual Handling Training - 43 trained
- H&S Awareness Training – 11 trained
- Safe use of Refuse Collection Vehicles – 8 trained
- Safe use of Ride on Mowers – 2 trained
- First Aid training – 9 trained
- Defibrillator Training – 9 trained
- Evac Chair Training – 11 trained
- Fire Marshal Training – 1 trained

The health and safety training matrix has seen a significant increase in the number of employees attending training. In the last year a broad range of service areas have attended training. In particular, Street Scene and Community and Housing Services, have attended training as well as Electoral Services, and Corporate Services too. The Health and Safety Awareness Training has included all the Service Areas of the Council. This needs to be recognised and applauded as demonstrative of good practice and a proactive approach to health and safety. All certificates from training are collated and put on the H&S Training Matrix to demonstrate competency. This provides excellent evidence of compliance.

### **6.2 Health and Safety Induction Training**

During the year the Health and Safety Induction process has been reviewed and revised to develop a standard approach for new employees and for existing staff who change roles within the authority. The main purpose is to enable the best possible start for the employee in their role and provide key information and documents that they will need to be aware of. As well as improving the Induction Standard and Managers Checklist the induction will now be recorded on the health and safety training matrix. This supports best practice and fulfils the Council's legal duty to ensure key information, instruction and training is provided to employees.

## **7.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

### **7.1 Employee Wellbeing and Staff Health Days**

In recognition of this specific area, staff wellbeing is being developed as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other professional organisations nationwide have recognised the benefits of a healthy and productive workforce.

To help improve employee wellbeing two health days were held in during the year to encourage healthier lifestyles and to enable staff to participate in activities that supported initiatives such as Sports Relief and Mental Health with Fitness in Mind. A range of activities were organised to give employees an opportunity to engage with physical, informative or relaxing activities to improve their wellbeing. Following on from the success of the event some of the activities are being continued to encourage more long term health benefits from participation in these activities.

In addition to supporting the Staff Health Days the Council also hosted Mental Health Awareness training for employees to raise awareness of the concerns that can develop in the workplace. This was facilitated by Brentwood Print and gave a good overview of how to recognise mental health and possible routes to support respective colleagues in that situation. This work will be built upon in the coming year.

## **8.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTIONS**

### **8.1 Contractor Inspections**

During the year health and safety inspections took place in Housing Services to monitor the effectiveness of contractors whilst undertaking building work in the Borough. Where issues were identified these were notified to the site supervisor for resolution and also communicated to the contractor's senior management. The inspections supported the overall aim to ensure that building work being undertaken on behalf of the Council was managed and statutory duties fulfilled, by the contractor and the Council.

## **9.0 HSE ENFORCEMENT AND NOTICES**

There were no HSE prosecutions or notices issued to the Council in this reporting period.



## 10. ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORTING

Fig 1: Table of Accidents/Incidents reported by Service Area

Service Area		Corporate Services and Finance	Street Scene & Environment	Environmental Health	Planning & Development	Housing Services	Legal & Governance	Business Transformation	Revenues and Benefits	TOTAL
Month	Person Type									
Apr 15	Employee	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
May 15	Employee	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
June 15	Employee	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
July 15	Employee	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Aug 15	Employee	0	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	5
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sept 15	Employee	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
	Non Employee	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	3
Oct 15	Employee	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nov 15	Employee	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Dec 15	Employee	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
	Non Employee	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Jan 16	Employee	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	0	5
Jan 16										

Service Area		Corporate Services and Finance	Street Scene & Environment	Environmental Health	Planning & Development	Housing Services	Legal & Governance	Business Transformation	Revenues and Benefits	TOTAL
Month	Person Type									
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Feb 16	Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mar 16	Employee	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Non Employee	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total by Service Area	Employee	1	15	0	3	8	0	2	0	30
	Non Employee	0	2	0	0	6	0	0	0	8
Total		1	17	0	3	14	0	2	0	38

### 10.1 Incidents by causation

Fig 2: Table of causation of incidents

Type of Incident	Struck By or Against	Verbal abuse and threatening behaviour	Slip/Trip/Fall	Contact with sharp or hot object	Road Traffic Accident	Manual Handling	Spatial Awareness	Near Miss	No Injury Incident	Total
No. of incidents and accidents	4	12	11	3	1	3	1	2	1	38

## 10.2 Incidents by Types of Injury

Fig 3: Table of injury types

Type of Incident	Cut	Stress/Anxiety	Muscular Sprain/Strain	Bruise/Graze	Burn/Scald	Near Miss	Total
No. of incidents and accidents	8	11	8	7	2	2	38

## 10.3 Incident Trends

**Commentary:** Corporate Health and Safety have reviewed all these incidents and discussed with the respective line managers where improvements can be made to prevent recurrence. Such improvements are recorded on the individual accident forms as a permanent record of the action taken. The number of accidents shown against Street Scene & Environment as well as Housing Services reflects a range of incidents that have been investigated and where controls have been improved.

Better reporting of verbal abuse and threatening behaviour (as requested in the Action Points from the last CLB quarterly report) by Housing Services, Street Scene and Environment and the Customer Contact Centre is to be commended. This has led to better analysis of incidents of this type as well as increased use of the Council's Cautionary Contacts Register.

Statistically, slips, trips and falls are historically known to account for a higher proportion of incidents within most organisations. On average, they cause 40 per cent of all reported major injuries (HSE). In this year's report, this incident type only occurs on eleven occasions which statistically is only 29 per cent. Most slips, trips and falls resulted in minor bruising and grazes.

Muscular sprains and strains are at a low level due to the significant investment in manual handling training across the organisation. This is to be commended as line managers have sought to proactively promote safe practice and encourage attendance for training.

Cuts are as a result of slips, trips and falls as well as human behaviour when using equipment or carrying out a task incorrectly. This is rectified through the proportionate incident investigation.

## 11.0 RISK ASSESSMENTS ON THE HEALTH AND SAFETY MATRIX

Statistic/Name of Service	Corporate Services	Street Scene & Community	Planning & Environmental Health	Housing & Benefits Services	Finance	Customer Services
No. of Risk assessments on the Matrix	4	26	14	2	4	5
No. of additional assessments required	4	20	0	8	0	0
No. of Safe System of Works (SSOW) on the Matrix	0	6	2	1	0	2

**Fig 4: Table of Risk Assessments and Safe System of Work (SSOW) produced by Service Area**

### 11.1 Risk Assessment Development

**Commentary:** Further work is being undertaken with Street Scene & Community with three assessments out for consultation and a further eleven assessments currently in production. Housing and Benefits Service are needing at present to produce eight assessments and currently have two produced which are out for consultation with staff. Other Service areas have been identified for support, such as Corporate Services, Election Services and Civil Enforcement. Included in the Matrix is the current assessment of the required additional assessments that need to be produced by the respective service areas. This will change as time progresses but may well increase to reflect risks from the introduction of new activities or via a review of risks in a service area.