

**Committee and Date**

Cabinet

20th November 2024

Item

Public



Annual Report on Health & Safety Performance for 2023 -2024

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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):	Cllr Gwilym Butler, Finance & Corporate Support		

□ 1. Synopsis

This report reviews the Health and Safety performance of 2023-2024. It details the key Health and Safety data for the Council, progress on last year's Annual Report and identifies key priorities for 2024-2025. Health & safety legislation requires employers to have competent health & safety advice and appropriate systems in place to manage health & safety

□ 2. Executive Summary

2.1 Progress within Health & Safety for 2023/2024:

- No enforcement action against the Council
- On-going work supporting Agile Working and staff Wellbeing
- Asbestos and Legionella surveys and risk assessments completed across all Council sites.
- Occupational Health support medical clearance for new starters, management referrals supporting staff and managers and management of seasonal flu voucher scheme.
- There is a slight increase in the number of minor accidents compared to last year. The reasons remain very similar, manual handling seeing a small increase.

- There is a reduction in the number of RIDDOR (The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) accidents, compared to last year, however, the main reason is still Slips, Trips and Falls.
 - More near misses reported, which is positive and proactive.
 - 'Healthy Working' is a module used for the online training and assessment programme for Display Screen Equipment (DSE) users. This has now been "rolled out", along with Single Sign On, and is actively being used. Risk levels are reducing based on the training and programme being followed. Work has been done to signpost managers to FAQ's and guidance with regard best-value procurement options whereby staff require DSE equipment as a result of assessment.
 - Compliance review of council premises to ensure statutory cover in place for Fire and First Aid.
 - Delivery of Flu vouchers to relevant staff for the winter flu season.
- 2.2 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) refer in their guidance that Councillors have an important role to play in managing Health and Safety, including responsibility for local policies. While not in day-to-day control, councillors need to satisfy themselves that risks are considered as part of their decision-making process and are sensibly managed.

□ **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet Members consider the contents of the report and note that:
- A. progress has been maintained during 2023-2024 on managing health safety and wellbeing across the Council.
 - B. Agreed actions for 2024/25 are included in section 7.

Report

□ **4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal**

- 4.1 The development and delivery of the Council's Health and Safety Policy associated arrangements and risk assessments are the key process in managing the Council's Health and Safety Risks.
- 4.2 The opportunities and risks arising are assessed on an ongoing basis, whenever legislation changes, or there is reason to review considering Health and Safety incidents.
- 4.3 The Health and Safety performance information that follows and is included in the appendix gives a summary of what the Council has implemented currently and plans for the coming year.

□ 5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Shropshire Council is currently managing an unprecedented financial position as budgeted for within the Medium Term Financial Strategy approved by Council on 29 February 2024 and detailed in our monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. This demonstrates that significant management action is required over the remainder of the financial year to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all Cabinet Reports provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. Where non-essential spend is identified within the Council, this will be reduced. This may involve
- scaling down initiatives
 - changing the scope
 - delaying implementation, or
 - extending delivery timescales.
- 5.2 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report. There may be future financial implications in respect of the actions for 2024/2025 although these will be approved by Senior Managers before they are progressed, to ensure that legislative requirements and best current practice are followed.

□ 6. Climate Change Appraisal

- 6.1 The report has no direct effect on climate change outcome, however supporting health and safety e-learning can help reduce carbon emissions from staff travel and building use which make a significant contribution to our carbon footprint. As noted in the previous report, if extreme weather events continue to become more prevalent, this may impact on Health and Safety issues for both staff and the public. No effect is expected on renewable energy generation or carbon offsetting.

□ 7. Background

- 7.1 In line with best current practice, the council is reporting on its health and safety performance, providing information on challenges facing the council, progress with work plans and key priorities for the coming year. In line with the Shropshire Plan, our key objectives are aligned to the Four Healthies as outlined in Appendix One.
- 7.2 The key agreed actions for Shropshire Council for 2024/25 are:
- Auditing/compliance - Identification of weaknesses or gaps in arrangements and review of whether appropriate management arrangements are in place and confirmation that adequate risk control systems exist. (Activities and working environments)
 - Development work using Power BI to make Health and Safety data easier to analyse and with the outcome of a single version of the truth for data.

- Roll out of Health and Safety E-Learning for schools via Leap into Learning, with the aim of augmenting, not replacing (required face to face training). Designed to simplify interim refresher training.
- Staff and Member Protection Register – implementation of corporate system to coordinate and collate risk information relating to Potentially Violent Persons and premises of concern relevant to service areas.
- Further work has started to support members in the course of their duties on staying safe, whilst out and about and also online.
- Review of council's Management Training courses for Health & Safety to enable managers to do it more simply and in time effective way. Course for School Leaders in development and options being assessed for corporate managers.
- Hybrid/homeworkers have suitable and sufficient workstations. Cardinus re-assessments will enable and support this.

□ 8. Additional Information

8.1 Refer to **Appendix 1**.

□ 9. Conclusions

9.1 The report shows that over the last 12 months, a business-as-usual approach to Health & Safety has been our priority. Regular engagement with service areas over the Health & Safety management has been positive and ongoing dialogue with Union colleagues has also been maintained. The full roll out of the Cardinus Healthy Working Programme was a success and laid foundations that will be built upon with scheduled annual refreshers. The team has continued to provide support and advice in challenging financial conditions as services undergo reviews and resize to align with the council we need to be. However, it remains crucial to maintain health & safety management in accordance with appropriate compliance.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Local Member: All

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Health & Safety Annual Report 2023-2024