

Agenda

Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Date: **Tuesday 29 August 2023**

Time: **5.30 pm**

Place: **Council Chamber**

For any further information please contact:

Democratic Services

committees@gedling.gov.uk

0115 901 3844

Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Membership

Chair Councillor Michelle Welsh

Vice-Chair Councillor Jim Creamer

Councillor Paul Hughes
Councillor Catherine Pope
Councillor Grahame Pope
Councillor Alex Scroggie
Councillor Jane Walker
Councillor Russell Whiting

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Responsibilities of committee:

Providing a forum for discussion and consultation between the Council and Trade Union representatives on matters affecting the Council's employees. Such matters to include but not limited to:

- 1) Employee terms and conditions; and
- 2) Employee health and well-being; and
- 3) Health and Safety of employees.

AGENDA

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- 2 **To approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2023** 5 - 6
- 3 **Declaration of interests**
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Report of the Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning
- 9 **Any other item which the Chair considers urgent**
- 10 **Exclusion of the public and press**
Exclusion of the public and press. To move that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the ensuing report on the grounds that the report involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 11 **Consultation closure - Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice** 41 - 48
Report of the Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning

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MINUTES JOINT CONSULTATIVE AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 6 June 2023

Present: Councillor Jim Creamer Councillor Catherine Pope
Councillor Rachael Ellis Councillor Jane Walker
Councillor Paul Hughes Councillor Russell Whiting

Unison: Susan Buchanan Craig Thomson (GMB)
Alison Hunt

Absent: Councillor Michelle Welsh and Councillor Alex Scroggie

Officers in Attendance: D Archer and B Hopewell

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Welsh.

2 TO APPROVE, AS A CORRECT RECORD, THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2023.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the above meeting, having been circulated, be approved as a correct record.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

None.

4 MINOR STAFFING CHANGES

The Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, informing the Committee of any minor changes to the establishment proposed by the Senior Leadership Team for implementation outside the formal full JCSC process but following consultation with trade unions. Such minor changes will not have wide organisation impact and will be authorised for implementation by the Chief Executive under delegated powers:

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

5 SICKNESS ABSENCE

The Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, informing the Committee of the current levels of sickness absence in the organisation and to examine trends.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

6 CURRENT STAFFING ISSUES

The Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning introduced a report, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting, informing the Committee of any issues of particular interest that relate to the Council's workforce.

RESOLVED:

To note the report.

7 ANY OTHER ITEM WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT.

None.

The meeting finished at 6.15 pm

Signed by Chair:
Date:



Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report 2022/23

Date: 29 August 2023

Author: Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Manager

Wards Affected

Borough wide

Purpose

To present the Corporate Health and Safety Annual report for the year 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 to JCSC.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

THAT:

The Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report 2022/23 contents be noted.

1 Background

- 1.1 Reporting on H&S performance is considered good practice by the Health and Safety Executive, the Institute of Directors and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).
- 1.2 This annual report summarises the challenges and achievements of the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Service during the financial year from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023 and presents some of the upcoming work streams for the service in 2023/24.

2.0 Considerations:

- 2.1 The Health, Safety and Emergency Planning service has operated in a state of flux during 2022 with several changes. The Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Officer left GBC in December 2021 and was

replaced, as an interim measure with a secondment arrangement, pending wider review of the service and its future delivery. Bolsover District Council were seconded to provide Health and Safety (H&S) advice and guidance. This commenced in January 2022 with 3 days support provided to GBC alongside an existing, in house, full time temporary H&S Technician post. Initially support from Bolsover was remote but moved to face to face support one day a week from April 2022. This arrangement continued until October 2022.

2.2 Due to available resource and the effort necessary to provide the pandemic response delivery, required during 19/20, 20/21 and 21/22 (from February 2020 to end of March 2022), there had been limited proactive Health, Safety, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity management within the Council. With the departure of the temporary H&S Technician in June 2022, the Bolsover team determined that the volume and breadth of work required at GBC was too great for them to continue working part time and remotely. Bolsover did agree to continue to support the Council until alternative arrangements for the function could be finalised and some additional, interim administrative support was provided to Bolsover by the Executive Support team from June to October 2022

2.3 Following presentation of a report and supporting business case from Bolsover, SLT took the decision to recruit to two full time in-house posts -a Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Manager (HSEPM) and a Health and Safety Adviser (HSA). These new roles commenced on the 18th October 2022. It had also been agreed that an Emergency Planning Officer, would be provided from Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) to support GBC for 2.5 days per week with Emergency Planning (EP) and Business Continuity (BC). After 2 rounds of recruitment, NCC have been unable to successfully appoint anyone to the post and at present they are not confident that this level of support can be provided. (Discussed further on page 7, 4.1.)

3.0 **Summary of Health and Safety key performance areas**

3.1 Items maintained in 2022/23 have included the quarterly Corporate Health and Safety (CHAS) group meetings to highlight corporate Health and Safety risks in consultation with departmental representatives and Heads of Service. The CHAS briefing notes have been reviewed and simplified to enable managers to digest the contents more easily. A headline overview document is now produced to enable the information to be readily cascaded to employees. Actions identified in the CHAS minutes are presented to SLT quarterly. Responsibility for completion of actions rests with the relevant Head of Service. Following a review of the group, the membership of CHAS does now comprise Heads of Service in order to ensure that the importance of health and safety is recognised at the highest levels of the Council and also greater scrutiny of CHAS actions is

now undertaken through Corporate Management Team. An example of the effectiveness of these new arrangements is the improvement during 2023 of the completion rates for actions that arise from the CHAS meetings.

The CHAS group has been active for several years and the original terms of reference are not readily available. These are now also being reviewed with a view to further increasing its effectiveness.

- 3.2 A programme of workplace inspections commenced in 2022. The inspections consider the physical state of the workplace and identify any areas for improvement required, with a SMART action plan provided. The Civic Centre, Jubilee Depot yard, Leisure Centres and Community Centres received a proactive inspection during 2022/23. A working group has been established to support completion of the Depot inspection action plan to ensure risks are adequately addressed and managed. This group meets monthly to progress actions and has been successful in driving change. The support received from the Waste, Fleet and Depot Manager in driving this change must also be acknowledged.

A plan has been formulated for 2023/24 to continue these inspections and expand scope to include Leisure Pavilions, Temporary Accommodation and Industrial Unit sites with visit intervals varying dependant on complexity of the site and risk presented.

- 3.3 Several procurement projects are required in the coming year including a refresh of Lone Worker devices and Occupational Health.

Lone worker devices are currently provided by Peoplesafe. Work is required to review the types and number of devices required for lone workers. Additionally, a review of current lone working arrangements across the Council is required. Robust procedures must be in place to monitor and manage lone working including the use of a buddy procedure and an escalation procedure. Once existing processes have been reviewed and refreshed, procurement can begin.

Occupational Health provision for both medical and surveillance purposes will be reviewed through a procurement exercise. Health & Safety will work with HR to ensure an appropriate provider is sourced for both parts of the service.

- 3.4 During 2022/23 it was identified that Hand Arm Vibration (HAV) management procedures were not fully embedded. The Control of Vibration at Work regulations have been in place since 2005 and issues have been identified around the control of paper monitoring forms, tool usage information and limitations, the formal recording of measurements and appropriate training for the operatives involved. Potentially this represented a serious risk to the Council.

To address this risk training has been carried out, the monitoring sheet has

been refreshed (including the filing and storage of records) and the process of adding Vibration information onto tools has begun. Reinvestment has been made in the Reactec HAV monitoring system the equipment supplied on a 3 year managed contract. The serviced contract provides peace of mind regarding ongoing maintenance, replacement of faulty items and Reactec supported software updates. A full roll out is expected in due course.

Once fully implemented, the management system for HAVs **must** be maintained. This has been highlighted as a priority for PASC.

- 3.5 Some benchmarking of employee accident statistics has been completed with Bolsover and North East Derbyshire District Councils in 2022. GBC figures are very low compared to these similarly sized councils, indicating there may be an issue with under reporting of accidents. The breakdown of GBC employee accidents for the calendar year is shown at Appendix 1 and is a sum total of 25 for the year. In comparison Bolsover District Council recorded 43 to the end of October only with North East Derbyshire recording 31 in the same period. A comparison chart is provided at Appendix 2.

The Health and Safety team have conducted site visits to PASC and Waste teams to begin to break down possible barriers and open up communications in relation to accident reporting. All managers have also been asked to remind employees about the need to report accidents on AssessNet, (the Council's health and safety software), through the CHAS group.

To enable front line workers to report accidents, incidents and near misses more readily, the Health & Safety team have produced QR code stickers. These will be placed in staff areas within buildings. They will also be displayed in works vehicles. Employees with a data enabled mobile device can connect to the accident reporting portal and make a report directly "at the time" without the need to wait and report via a Supervisor.

Reporting of member of the public accidents remains robust – please see the chart at Appendix 3.

- 3.6 Health and Safety Awareness training has been relaunched with an online presentation available to those with network log in credentials. Face to face sessions have been provided to facilitate this training with frontline workers. In 2023/24, face to face sessions have been scheduled quarterly and advertise through the room booking system.

Training has been maintained for key areas such as First Aid and Water Safety for Park Rangers.

"How to" sessions via Teams, have commenced to support colleagues with

the continued use of AssessNet.

A programme of Health and Safety training will be developed during 2023/24 focussing on broad spectrum topics such as Manual Handling, Ladder usage, Lone Working etc. This will not cover service specific training.

Since being in post late 2022, The Waste, Fleet and Depot Manager has identified gaps in the induction and training regime in place for Waste services.

Health and Safety will aim to support the WFD Manager and Supervisor to develop and deliver a suite of toolbox talks and a robust induction process. To be implemented efficiently and effectively this will be treated as a separate project within the team's work programme. It has been identified by the WFD Manager that capacity will need to be identified within that team to develop the necessary robust induction process. It is an area of risk to the Council if proper processes are not implemented as a priority.

In addition to the need to recognise the importance of training, another potential risk to the Council relates to methods of operation on its glass collection round. Currently the majority of glass collected for recycling, is collected in boxes at the kerbside. These boxes have a 45 litre capacity but this does not limit the weight of items inside them. The boxes can be easily overloaded and stacked higher than the sides of the boxes. This both increases the weight and the possibility of items slipping from the stack and breaking.

Current methods of operation for emptying the boxes takes a loader through a full range of body movement from floor level to above shoulder height. This range of movement can be potentially harmful as the capacity to lift is greatly reduced when loads are held away from the waist. The lifting action involves stooping and twisting movements which adds to the potential hazard when conducting a lift.

The weight of the boxes will vary according to what type of glass is included. A 45 litre box can hold approximately 50 empty bottles weighing 500 grams each. If these are sparkling wine bottles, the weight of each rises to 900 grams. So a full glass recycling box can weigh between 25kg and 45kg.

On the glass collection rounds the task is repetitive and frequent.

It can be seen from the MAC chart at Appendix 4 that such frequent lifting at these weights can be very hazardous. With the higher estimate of weight, the operations are clearly within the purple zone – as noted on the chart, they represent a serious risk of injury and operations must be improved. Harm is likely in the form of manual handling injuries such as

strains or sprains or cuts and abrasions from contact with broken glass.

The noise on the glass round is also hazardous. According to Waste Industry Safety and Health forum data, operatives being exposed to peak levels of 110 decibels and a typical daily dose level of a minimum of 90 decibels. These levels exceed the exposure limit value of 87 decibels.

In order to minimise the risks associated with the manual handling of glass collection boxes, the most effective solution would be to change the method of operation so that glass collection forms part of a mixed recyclables collection in a wheeled bin. This reduces risks from handling and from noise and is a method of operation adopted by a number of councils locally.

This would however reduce income, with a loss of recycling credits for glass collected. It would mean capital outlay was necessary because a new Refuse Collection Vehicle would need to be purchased and new wheeled bins would be necessary for each household within the Borough. It would be appropriate to consider collection via this method prior to when it becomes necessary to replace those vehicles that have reached the end of their useful life.

The future waste strategy for Nottinghamshire in line with the Environment Act 2021 requirements, will influence how to address this issue. The act notes that all recyclable waste streams are to be collected separately unless this is not economically or technically practicable. As an interim measure to mitigate against risk at a lower cost, the WFD Manager has suggested that a rolling replacement of 45 litre boxes with a 38 litre version could be implemented, subject to funding availability. Stipulations could be made and communicated to the public that glass recycling will not be collected unless a lid is used and the box correctly closed. This would reduce overloading of the boxes. This action would require a change to the published Waste and Recycling Policy consulted on in 2022. The WFD Manager will work with the Head of Environment to enable this. The policy additionally states that households can apply for a second glass recycling box and this should be promoted to households known for overloading boxes. The WFD Manager will work with Supervisors to ensure crews identify these locations.

The HSEPM has spoken previously to the WFD Manager regarding the rotation of crews onto the glass round. Rotating different crews onto this round will provide greater periods of rest and repair after exertion. A common statistic related to manual handling notes that for every hour of heavy manual work, the body needs 6 hours to properly repair. Historically glass collection is an unpopular round with crews. Several existing employees have been moved off glass permanently and onto other, wheeled bin collection rounds. The pool of those available to be rotated is quite small.

The WFD Manager reports that rotating crews will not work operationally because each round is mapped differently and when a crew is not familiar with a round, it generates more missed bins and customer service issues. It has been necessary from an operational perspective to employ a crew solely to man the glass collection rounds.

Workers on the glass collection round should be routinely offered physiotherapy and / or sports massage to encourage recovery and repair from any damage incurred during their work. Health and Safety will liaise with HR to see if this can be arranged.

Hearing health surveillance is conducted on the Waste crews and will identify any harm done over time. Hearing protection provided to the crews has been reviewed. The protection must be carefully chosen so as to reduce the hazardous noise but still permit the workers to hear road noise and retain awareness of their working environment.

Specialist assistance has been sought from Arco and a trial is being arranged of attenuating ear defenders. In addition, ear plugs from a different supplier, offering similar attenuation have been identified. A trial has been requested for these items also. Furthermore, the HSEPM will ask the Nottinghamshire Risk Management Group of advisers if their councils collect glass waste separately and if so, what receptacles are used and what PPE is offered to crews.

In order to mitigate against the potential risk to the safety of employees the method of operation for glass collection should be formally reviewed and revised methods of operation implemented that are reasonably practicable.

- 3.7 Health and Safety and Property Services have put considerable time and effort into developing fire procedures for the Civic Centre and ensuring they can be implemented effectively. This included writing a new guidance document, installation of new fire assembly point signs, room checker wallets installed in corridors in each fire zone, checking and providing contents for the folders, issuing guidance for meetings, ensuring training is provided for use of the Evacuation Chair, issuing guidance for Elected Members and briefing this out.

This has been challenging as fire safety legislation requires the building to be confirmed as empty, so far as is reasonably practicable, following an evacuation. This relies on a suite of Fire Wardens (or Room Checkers) but these are not available in the building due to agile working.

The procedures require significant cooperation between managers in each fire zone to ensure a room checker is available.

Several further revisions have been made to the procedure which has caused delays in rolling it out. Work has commenced with Communications to produce a series of short information films to assist with this roll out and

ensure all stakeholders are informed.

3.8 AssessNet has been retained as the Council's Health and Safety software management system for a further 2 years.

A system upgrade has been applied with e-learning courses added to each module to facilitate ease of use. Additionally, there have been changes to increase security during the log in process.

The upgrade has also presented opportunities to further expand utilisation of the system with the introduction of a mobile app. This will enable workers in the field to access risk assessments, log accidents, incidents and hazards, increasing the robustness of Health and Safety arrangements. For these frontline services, it would remove the need to have folders of risk assessments available which have to be reviewed, updated and reprinted – an onerous task. In some cases it is unclear which set of risk assessments teams are working from. Up to date, regularly reviewed risk assessments are a pivotal item looked for by the HSE during investigation.

In order to maximise the opportunity for these efficiencies then it would be necessary to provide each PASC team with a data enabled smartphone or tablet at an estimated total cost of around £2,200 per annum.

The HSEPM will liaise with the PASC Operations Manager to determine the how best this necessary change to some mobile devices might be made within a reasonable timeframe.

Ongoing housekeeping and maintenance is required on the AssessNet system as there are a number of risk assessments for each area that need to be archived e.g.: Covid assessments, one off event assessments. Support has been offered to managers to assist with this. Some of this work has been done by the HSA

Keeping the system up to date with risk assessment reviews remains a challenge. This is part of the ongoing housekeeping and maintenance required.

Templates have been provided by the previous HSEPO but some risk assessments have not been adapted for use by the service that requires them. Users seem reluctant to remove examples provided in the template even where they are not relevant to the task being assessed.

Health and Safety have been looking at ways of simplifying the risk assessment process for lower risk service areas. In the first instance the HSEPM has sat with managers including Legal, Customer Services, Housing and Welfare Manager to review their content and make relevant what is there.

Furthermore, a single team activity risk assessment template has been formulated for lower risk services. This has been trialled by the EGR team and discussed at their team meetings. Although the template still must be adapted to cover the differences between teams, it means that many subjects are covered in one risk assessment. This means fewer risk assessments to communicate, fewer to review and sign off making the management process much simpler.

This new template will be carefully rolled out in due course. As the assessment covers a wide scope of topics, it is vital that adaptations are made. Higher risk activities such as Lone Working will still require their own detailed assessment and associated procedures.

On an annual basis, Heads of Service are asked to complete a statutory declaration to confirm that they understand when risk assessments are to be reviewed, confirm all those overdue for review will be prioritised in the following financial year and they consider risks to be controlled. This is a requirement of the Council's insurer to manage the insurance premium and limit the potential for an insurance claim occurring. During the investigation necessary as part of a claim, if the declarations have not been completed or found to be false, this could result in the insurance being invalidated. The Council would still be responsible for any costs or compensation but with no insurance cover, representing a significant financial risk.

For the financial year 2022/23, the declaration form was simplified for Heads of Service and the declaration satisfactorily completed for the insurance renewal.

- 3.9 The Occupational Health Surveillance process has been subject to a lack of process consistency with 4 changes of system administrator in the past year. The Council is however meeting its legal obligations and duty of care towards employees. For the financial year 2022/23 10 clinics have been delivered or are planned, this is compared to 6 clinics in 2019/20 and 8 clinics in 2020/21. This increase may have resulted from the changes in administration with some catch ups required but the situation will be closely monitored moving forward.

A review of employees requiring Occupational Health Surveillance will be completed in due course. This will likely extend into 2024/25 work

- 3.10 Inclusion to the Employee Protection register remains low. At the end of Quarter 1 2023/24, 5 entries remained on the EPR of which 2 were locations and 3 were people.

A review is scheduled for Quarter 4 of 2023/24 on the EPR process to determine if it is user friendly, remove possible barriers and encourage employees to report potentially violent, abusive or distressing situations

experienced during the course of their duties.

- 3.11 The statement of intent and organisational roles and responsibilities for managing Health and Safety were more clearly defined as part of a Health and Safety policy review. These documents were approved by SLT and circulated to Heads of Service. No comments have been received back.

These two parts of the Health & Safety policy clearly identify where responsibilities lie for the management of Health and Safety and should be reminded to senior managers at regular intervals, to embed the Health and Safety process.

4.0 **Brief Resume of Emergency Planning and Business Continuity work**

- 4.1 The EP and BC workload will remain with the HSEPM and the HSA. NCC have agreed to provide a critical friend role, on an ad-hoc basis, to ensure appropriate plans, policies and guidance are in place and fit for purpose. This will form part of a review of Emergency Plans due to take place in 2023/24. The lack of support with Emergency Planning has been identified as an increased risk on the corporate risk register going into quarter 4 of 2022/23, however steps are being taken to lower the risk through improved control measures including the delivery of business continuity training as detailed below.

- 4.2 Business Continuity training has been conducted with managers and Heads of Service, focussing on the impact and aftermath of a cyber-attack. Additionally a video presentation, produced by Copeland Borough Council on how they were affected by and what they learned from, a major cyber-attack, was shared with managers to keep the topic alive.

A workshop to facilitate Business Continuity Plan writing took place in May. Plans are due to be reviewed by the Corporate Management Team at a meeting on the 30th August. This will look for overlaps in the process and where departments will be required to work together to ensure the recovery of business as usual e.g.: loss of Depot premises.

Findings from the Business Continuity and Emergency Planning audit have been finalised. As expected, this has highlighted areas for improvement and this framework will be closely adhered to as the review of Business Continuity arrangements continued.

This work will involve ensuring Business Continuity Plans are completed by all teams, provision of a Corporate BCP and a review of the BC policy document which lays out how BC will be managed by the Council. This is due to be completed by the end of the year 2023/24.

- 4.3 With regard to the Council's Emergency Plan, contact details are amended on an approximately 6 month basis to ensure they are refreshed as the organisation changes. Some processes detailed within the plan have been

noted to be out of date such as the provision of MTPAS phones and as such a review of the full plan is required. This is due to be completed in the year 2023/24.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 It is proposed that the contents of the Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report 2022/23 above, be noted.

6 Alternative Options

- 6.1 Not to present an annual Health and Safety report, in which case JCSC will not be updated on H&S activity across the Council.

7 Financial Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. Individual recommendations may incur additional budget requirements but these will be addressed when necessary approvals are required.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Council must comply with a number of statutory obligations in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and other H&S legislation, Health and Safety Executive Guidance, Approved Codes of Practice and other industry best practice.

9 Equalities Implications

- 9.1 There are no equalities implications directly arising from this report.

10 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 10.1 There are no carbon reduction/environmental sustainability implications directly arising from this report.

11 Appendices

- 11.1 Appendix 1 – Chart to show the total number of employee accidents from Jan 2022 to Dec 2022

Appendix 2 – Chart to show results from number of accidents reported benchmarking

Appendix 3 – Chart to show Breakdown of reported accidents by person type

Appendix 4 – MAC tool load / weight frequency graph

12 Background Papers

12.1 None identified.

13 Reasons for Recommendations

13.1 To ensure SLT is updated in respect of Health and Safety activity across the Council.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

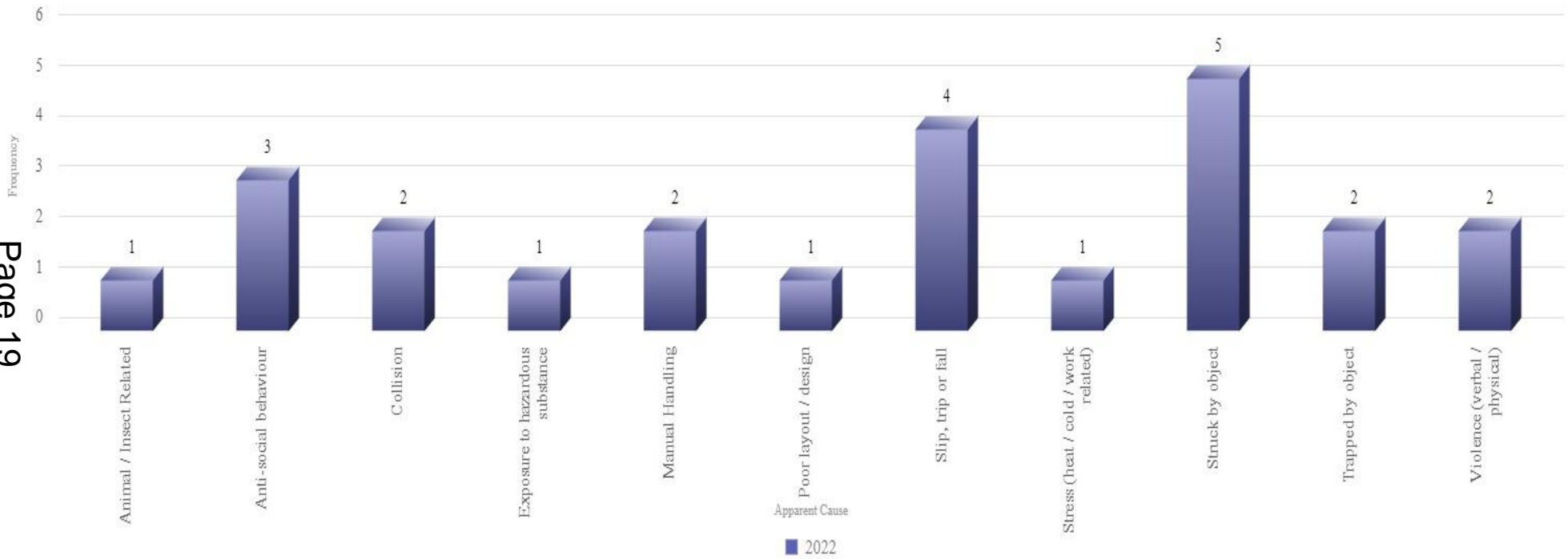
Date: 16.08.2023

**Approved on behalf of the
Monitoring Officer**

Date: 16.08.2023

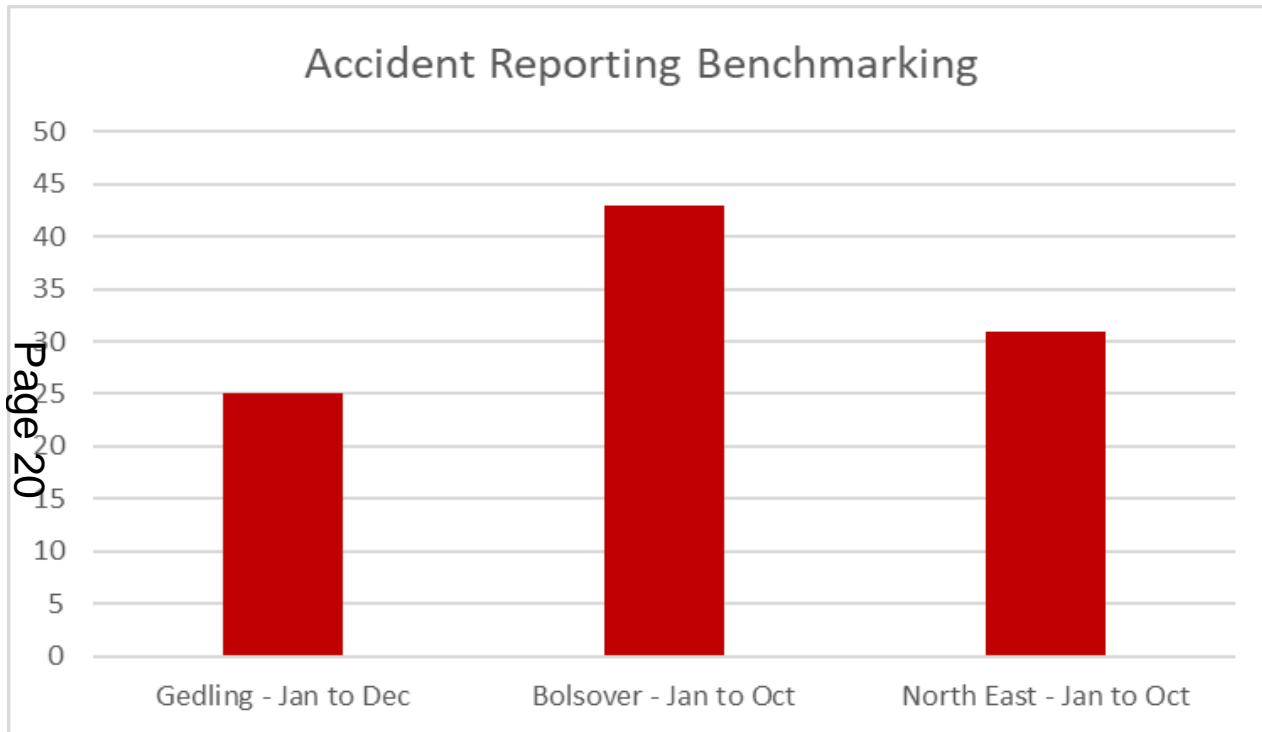
Appendix 1
Total number of Employee accidents from Jan 2022 to Dec 2022

Employee Accidents by type



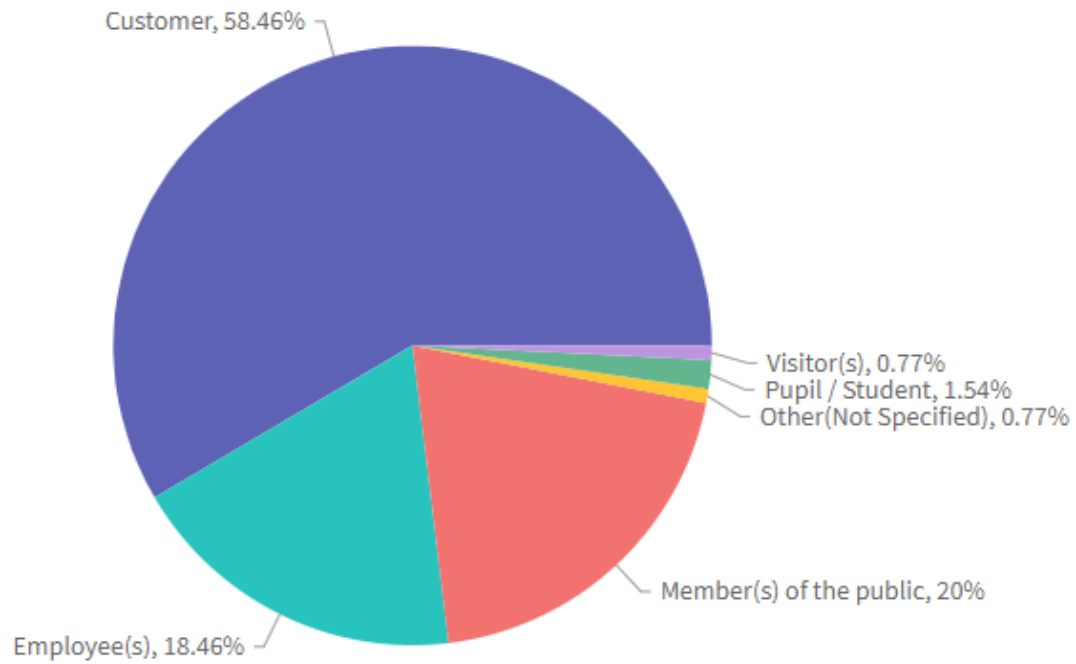
Appendix 2

Chart to show accident reporting benchmarking results.



Appendix 3
Breakdown of reported accidents by person type

Accidents by Person type



● Customer ● Employee(s) ● Member(s) of the public ● Other(Not Specified) ● Pupil / Student ● Visitor(s)

Appendix 4

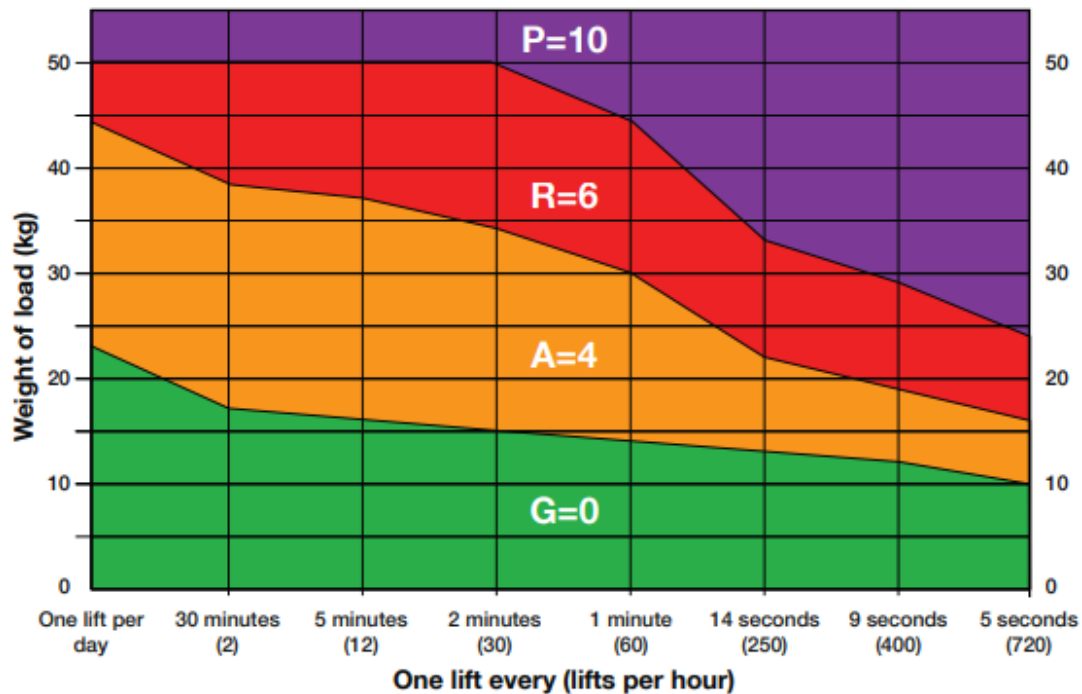
MAC Tool load/weight frequency graph.

A Load weight/frequency

Note the weight of the load and the frequency (or repetition rate) of the lifting operation. Read the risk band from the graph below and enter the colour band and numerical score onto the score sheet.

If the colour band is purple you should examine the task very closely as it may represent a serious risk of injury and must be improved.

Load weight/frequency graph for lifting operations





Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Current staffing issues (Standing Item)

Date: 29 August 2023

Author: Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning

1. Purpose of the Report

This is an information item highlighting to the Committee, any issues of particular interest that relate to the Council's workforce.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Summary of current issues

3.1 National pay

Background:

National pay award changes apply from 1 April each year. It is often now the case that settlement is achieved some months after the application date.

On 30 January this year a pay claim for NJC employees (most employees of our Council) was tabled by UNISON, GMB and UNITE for an award of:

- RPI (10.7%)+2% on all grades; so a pay rise of 12.7%
- A minimum rate of £15 (our current local minimum is £11.18)
- Other changes to terms and conditions including a reduction in the working week by two hours, additional welfare leave and application of a home working allowance.

The JNC for Chief Executives has also submitted a pay claim for a rise in salary not less than the equivalent to the percentage award that will be applied the top pay point in the national NJC scale.

For the JNC for Chief Officers the claim was for a pay rise of RPI+2% and an additional two days' leave.

Currently, settlement has not been achieved for any of the groups other than Chief Officers (for our Council this means Directors and Heads of Service) for whom a national pay offer of 3.5% has been accepted by the Employees' Side.

The Employers' Side has made a "full and final offer" to NJC employees of an increase of £1,925 per annum (pro rata for part time).

Current position (at time of writing committee papers; 9 August):

GMB has confirmed it will conduct disaggregated industrial action ballots of its NJC 'Green Book' members in some councils. The organisations to be targeted for strike ballots will be notified in the next few weeks, in line with the requirements of legislation.

The strike ballots will open on 12 Sep and close on 24 Oct (eight months after the National Employers' unanimous, full and final pay offers were made on 23 Feb).

As notified previously, UNISON's strike ballots closed on 4 July. Legislation requires that industrial action can only be taken where a turnout of 50% or more is achieved with a majority voting for action. This threshold was passed in a number of employers but most of these were smaller employers. Consequently, UNISON is now awaiting the outcome of Unite's strike ballots (the last of which close tomorrow, Fri 28 Jul) before announcing its next steps. Both unions are expected to signal their intentions during August.

The position relating to Chief Executive's pay is also still to be determined with no progress currently being made.

Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Reporting of the Gender Pay Gap (as at 31 March 2023)

Date: 29 August 2023

Author: Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning

1. Purpose

To ask committee to note the content of the Gender Pay Gap information that has been reported.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Introduction and background

From 2017, any organisation that has 250 or more employees must publish and report specific figures about their Gender Pay Gap.

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings.

Attached at Appendix 1 is the reporting information approved for publication by Corporate Management Team including a supporting narrative. This details the Council's Gender Pay Gap information as at the "snapshot date" of 31 March 2023. This information has been uploaded to the government's central website as well as that of the Council. The information will also be included in the Council's next Pay Policy Statement.

Report to Corporate Management Team

Subject: Reporting of the Gender Pay Gap (as at 31 March 2023)

Date: 21 June 2023

Author: Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning

2. Introduction and background

Originally a central government requirement started in 2017, any organisation that has 250 or more employees has to publish and report specific figures about their gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average earnings of men and women, expressed relative to men's earnings.

The data to be collected, relevant at 31 March 2023 is the:

- Mean gender pay gap
- Median gender pay gap
- Mean gender pay gap in bonus pay
- Median gender pay gap in bonus pay
- Percentage of males and females in each of the four pay quartiles.

Employers must both:

- publish their gender pay gap data and a written statement on their public-facing website
- report their data to government online - using the gender pay gap reporting service.

Organisations must publish within a year of the snapshot date.

2. Proposal

Below is the data for this organisation as at 31 March 2023.

It is proposed that the following data is published as required together with the proposed narrative that follows the data.

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Mean gender pay gap;	2.9%	3.79%	4.67%	2.53%	1.31%	5.13%	2.99%
Median gender pay gap;	4.8%	-1.51%*	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.92%
Proportion of men with bonus**	0.8%	1.17%	1.79%	1.37%	1.05%	0.00%	0.00%
Proportion of women with bonus**	0.4%	0.37%	0.68%	0.69%	0.66%	0.97%	0.96%
Mean bonus** gender pay gap	32.1%	18.8%	1.72%	1.67%	1.72%	n/a	n/a
Median bonus** gender pay gap	-47.0%*	1.84%	1.84%	1.65%	1.82%	n/a	n/a
Percentage of males and females in each of the four pay quartiles:							
Upper quartile:							
men	50.0%	49.62%	50.69%	49.66%	49.66%	49.34%	47.68%
women	50.0%	50.38%	49.31%	50.34%	50.34%	50.66%	52.32%
Upper mid-quartile:							
men	53.0%	44.62%	46.53%	44.83%	47.30%	48.68%	54.90%
women	47.0%	55.38%	53.47%	55.17%	52.70%	51.32%	45.10%
Lower mid-quartile:							
men	41.4%	50.00%	47.92%	56.85%	48.30%	45.75%	45.10%
women	58.6%	50.00%	52.08%	43.15%	51.70%	54.25%	54.90%
Lower quartile:							
men	47.8%	51.13%	49.31%	49.32%	49.32%	44.74%	48.37%
women	52.2%	48.76%	50.69%	50.68%	50.68%	55.26%	51.63%

* A minus figure indicates that the median pay for women is higher than it is for men

** For the purpose of reporting, market supplement payments are included as "bonus payments"

Narrative

In summary, the gender pay gap remains low and is easily within the parameters that might be expected for similar public sector organisations.

The quartile distribution is well-balanced in the upper quartile although staffing changes over the year has led to a reversal in profile in the upper mid-quartile with the proportion of men now being slightly higher than women for the first time in five years.

Women are now also represented as a greater proportion in both of the lower quartiles.

The overall median pay gap is now at its greatest since the start of data production. More men earn at or above the median than women. This may be due in a large part due to the recent structural reviews in Environmental Services in which a large number of posts, mainly in posts predominantly held by men, have been reviewed in terms of content and consequently grade (pay).

The fact that the overall mean gender pay gap remains low suggests that when taken as a whole, the average (mean) pay for female employees is similar to that of pay for male employees. The proportion of women in better-paid jobs does then seem to be healthy.

Although the data contained within the analysis is not a matter of concern, the organisation will continue to be aware of the need to aspire to a gender-neutral state in terms of both mean and median pay differential.

Although the mean percentage gender pay gap for bonus payments (market supplement payments) does strongly favour men, the median bonus gender pay gap strongly favours women. The percentages though are fairly meaningless due to the very small sample size; (three employees; one woman, two men). This small sample has skewed the statistics. Should market premia be used more due to the financial pressures that may be present due to the very competitive labour market then the equality impact of such “bonus” payments will need to be considered.

The organisation considers itself to be caring and recognises the complex needs of its employees through the practical application of supportive working practices. Practical measures to support such statements include the adoption of flexible working arrangements implemented through its employment policies. Other policies have also been introduced to support women in the workplace such as the “Menopause in the Workplace Policy”. The Equality Policy (Employment) was also reviewed in early 2021 and the Fostering-friendly Policy was introduced towards the end of 2022. This year the Council’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion corporate training programme has been launched with the full roll-out due in 2023-24.

Although the organisation does not yet have a neutral mean gender pay gap, the gap continues to remain low relative to many other businesses. This positive position reflects the organisation that we aspire to be; a fair place to work and one in which supportive employment policies go hand-in-hand with an established and transparent job evaluation scheme. A risk to the ability to further improve the mean gender pay gap is that the organisation is relatively small and the change in occupation of a few of the Council’s most senior posts could have a material effect on the outturn. A watching brief will be maintained each year and should the outturn worsen to a point of concern then an appropriate action plan will be identified.

4. Recommendation

Corporate Management Team is recommended to:

- Note the gender pay gap information
- Approve the wording of the proposed narrative
- Approve the upload of data and narrative to the appropriate government web site.

- Forward this report to the JCSC for information
- Include the data and the narrative into this year's Pay Policy Statement (which will be uploaded onto our own web site).
- Notify the content of the report to the Portfolio Holder for Life Chances and Vulnerability

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Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Information item: Minor changes to the Establishment agreed outside the formal full JCSC process (Standing Item).

Date: 29 August 2023

Author: Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning

1. Purpose of the Report

This is a standing information item highlighting to the Committee any minor changes to the Establishment proposed by the Senior Leadership Team for implementation outside the formal full JCSC process but following consultation with trade unions. Such minor changes will not have wide organisational impact and will be authorised for implementation by the Chief Executive under delegated powers.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Background

Prior to the minor changes being implemented local trade unions are always consulted. Should there be concern raised during this consultation about any proposal made, the proposal would be taken out of this "shortened process" and placed before the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee for full consideration. All new posts have been job evaluated through formal arrangements.

4. Summary of proposals

Since the last JCSC meeting and at the time of papers being written there have been two staffing proposals affecting the permanent Establishment that have been considered by Senior Leadership Team outside the full JCSC framework;

4.1 Waste Services

There has been a minor structural change that has, in effect, upgraded a post of Light Goods Vehicle Driver from Band 3 to Band 5 in response to additional duties and responsibilities being applied to the post including the use of in-cab technology to improve efficiency of operation.

4.2 Legal Services

Following several unsuccessful attempts to recruit into existing posts in the Legal Team the structure has been revised to reintroduce a Legal Trainee and to amend existing posts to be career-graded. The intention is to be able to better retain our existing staff and also to provide opportunity to recruit at a lower pay level and then to "grow our own".

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Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: **Sickness Absence: summary of current trends**

Date: **29 August 2023**

Author: **Head of HR, Performance and Service Planning**

1. Purpose of the Report

This is an information item to inform the Committee of the current levels of sickness absence in the organisation and to examine trends. Relevant data is shown at Appendix 1; officers will present a verbal report on the context of this data.

As part of the introduction of this item officers will also highlight to the Committee through verbal report, any matters of particular current interest in respect to absence management.

2. Recommendation

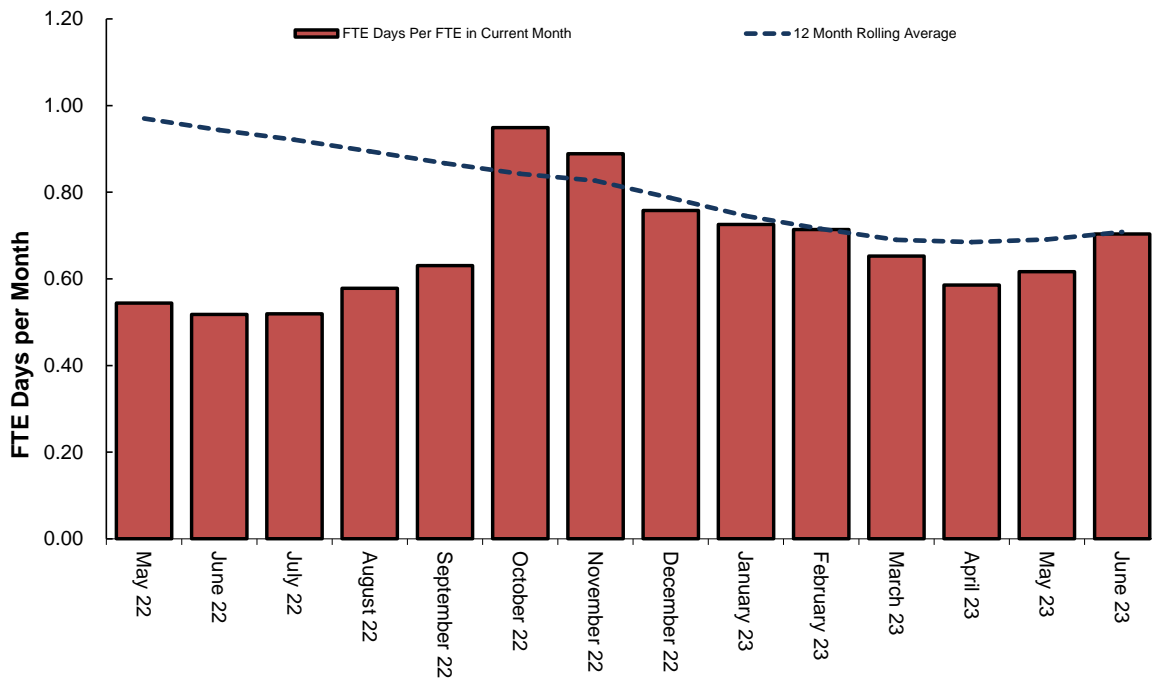
The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Summary of key data

- The summary of trends graph in Appendix 1 shows the outturn for absence for the full year up to June 2023 at 8.50 days. Although an increase on the previous quarter and previous month's outturn, this remains a good result and is still below (better than) the target of nine days. The Council has been below target since January.
- Active management of long-term cases of absence continues with regular training being offered to managers to help them to effectively support employees back to work. Clearly, as can be seen in table that shows the analysis of long and short-term absence for June, it is particularly important to pay attention to such absences as long-term sickness currently accounts for almost 70% of days lost. The number of cases of long-term absence has risen from five to nine between this and last quarter.
- The increase in the number of long-term cases of absence seems to have had a material effect on the rate of absence which stood at 8.28 days at the end of last quarter.
- In order to help support people to remain at work the Council provides an Employee Assistance Programme that gives 24/7 access to a range of "talking therapies" either telephone-based or in person and also access to a local physiotherapy service through HR referral.

Summary of trends graph; year to date June

Summary of Trends



Month	Total Absence %	12 Month Average (%)	FTE Days per FTE in Current Month	FTE Days per FTE 12 Month Average	FTE Days per FTE per Month Average
May 22	2.59	4.36	0.54	11.64	0.97
June 22	2.35	4.31	0.52	11.32	0.94
July 22	2.47	4.19	0.52	11.05	0.92
August 22	2.63	4.09	0.58	10.73	0.89
September 22	3.00	3.98	0.63	10.40	0.87
October 22	4.52	3.90	0.95	10.11	0.84
November 22	4.04	3.82	0.89	9.92	0.83
December 22	3.99	3.70	0.76	9.44	0.79
January 23	3.46	3.54	0.73	8.94	0.75
February 23	3.57	3.42	0.71	8.58	0.72
March 23	2.84	3.28	0.65	8.28	0.69
April 23	3.25	3.23	0.59	8.22	0.69
May 23	3.08	3.27	0.62	8.29	0.69
June 23	3.20	3.34	0.70	8.50	0.71

Year to date absence data, by service area with six month trend

Days Lost Per FTE Employee: Year to June 2023

Year to date trend

Service	Section	Fte At Start	Fte At End	Average Fte	No Emps Sick FTE	FTE Days Lost	FTE Days Lost per FTE	% Rate of absence	Days lost 1 month ago	Days lost 2 months ago	Days lost 3 months ago	Days lost 4 months ago	Days lost 5 months ago	Days lost 6 months ago
Corporate Resources	Customer Services	18.95	18.78	18.86	15.24	529.39	28.06	11.22%	27.92	27.51	24.74	24.79	23.17	22.37
	Democratic Services and H&S	6.91	10.30	8.60	4.61	16.69	1.94	0.78%	3.27	3.91	3.77	4.03	4.64	4.38
	Financial Services	12.04	11.73	11.89	5.93	52.77	4.44	1.78%	4.45	4.44	4.40	5.17	6.03	5.38
	HR, Performance and Svs Planning	4.74	4.95	4.84	1.59	6.58	1.36	0.54%	1.36	1.36	1.36	2.95	2.95	2.80
	Information & Communications Technology	8.00	7.59	7.80	3.00	79.00	10.13	4.05%	10.13	10.39	12.75	12.63	11.13	9.63
	Legal Services	4.46	4.65	4.55	1.81	2.81	0.62	0.25%	0.62	0.80	4.29	4.92	4.42	4.60
	Revenues	12.17	12.17	12.17	5.72	105.22	8.65	3.46%	6.98	5.45	4.12	3.68	3.38	3.59
		3.00	2.00	2.50	1.00	64.00	25.60	10.24%	16.80	7.60	0.80	0.67	0.67	0.67
Service Total:		70.26	72.17	71.22	38.90	856.47	12.03	4.81%						
Environment, Communities & Leisure	Community Relations	4.95	3.95	4.45	1.65	14.43	3.25	1.30%	3.79	3.79	3.41	3.41	3.41	4.07
	Leisure Services	52.53	55.23	53.88	28.92	346.96	6.44	2.58%	5.80	5.97	5.75	6.43	6.94	8.07
	Parks and Street Care	49.61	49.61	49.61	27.84	642.62	12.95	5.18%	13.41	13.31	14.41	15.01	16.79	17.99
	Public Protection	28.11	30.68	29.39	13.26	168.36	5.73	2.29%	5.52	5.12	4.97	4.69	4.64	4.54
	Transport and Waste	60.04	60.58	60.31	30.99	419.86	6.96	2.78%	6.85	7.37	7.98	8.33	8.33	9.71
		3.00	2.00	2.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		198.24	202.05	200.14	102.65	1592.23	7.96	3.18%						
Regeneration, Development and Comms	Communications	4.50	4.50	4.50	2.00	8.00	1.78	0.71%	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.48	1.48	1.48
	Development Services	16.69	15.69	16.19	4.00	100.00	6.18	2.47%	6.18	6.18	6.18	6.18	5.99	5.99
	Economic Growth and Regeneration	3.73	5.54	4.64	1.00	10.00	2.16	0.86%	2.16	2.10	2.34	2.29	0.46	0.00
	Facilities- Community Centres	2.81	2.81	2.81	2.00	134.24	47.76	19.10%	42.68	37.37	29.47	33.55	36.34	39.61
	Planning Policy	4.05	3.05	3.55	0.84	8.18	2.30	0.92%	2.30	2.30	2.30	2.02	2.02	1.93
	Projects	0.00	1.00	0.50	1.00	1.49	2.97	1.19%	2.97	2.97	2.97	2.97	0.00	0.00
	Property	9.15	10.80	9.97	2.70	73.78	7.40	2.96%	7.20	7.27	8.01	8.73	10.45	12.36
	Welfare Support	16.02	18.25	17.14	7.43	51.89	3.03	1.21%	3.02	2.93	3.10	2.88	3.89	3.77
	3.00	3.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	
Service Total:		59.96	64.64	62.30	20.97	387.57	6.32	2.49%						
Grand Total:		328.46	338.86	333.66	162.52	2836.27	8.50	3.40%	8.29	8.22	8.28	8.58	8.94	9.44

Current month's absence data, by service area with six month trend

Days lost per FTE employee: June 2023

Current month trend

Service	Section	Fte At Start	Fte At End	Average Fte	No Emps Sick FTE	FTE Days Lost	FTE Days Lost per FTE	% Absence	Days lost 1 month ago	Days lost 2 months ago	Days lost 3 months ago	Days lost 4 months ago	Days lost 5 months ago	Days lost 6 months ago
Corporate Resources	Customer Services	18.78	18.78	18.78	2.96	26.30	1.40	6.37%	2.27	2.13	0.63	1.59	2.46	2.46
	Democratic Services and H&S	9.30	10.30	9.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.09	0.00	0.54
	Financial Services	11.73	11.73	11.73	0.50	5.00	0.43	1.94%	0.45	0.27	0.09	0.00	1.63	1.56
	HR, Performance and Svs Planning	4.95	4.95	4.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Information & Communications Technology	7.59	7.59	7.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	2.25	2.50	2.75	1.25
	Legal Services	4.65	4.65	4.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.17	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Revenues	12.17	12.17	12.17	1.81	20.27	1.67	7.57%	1.53	1.33	0.81	0.41	0.00	0.17
		2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	22.00	11.00	50.00%	11.50	8.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		71.17	72.17	71.67	6.27	73.57	1.03	4.67%						
Environment, Communities & Leisure	Community Relations	3.95	3.95	3.95	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Leisure Services	56.23	55.23	55.73	3.95	42.59	0.76	3.47%	0.45	0.89	0.50	0.28	0.32	0.30
	Parks and Street Care	48.61	49.61	49.11	1.00	22.00	0.45	2.04%	0.53	0.46	1.19	1.10	1.26	1.55
	Public Protection	31.11	30.68	30.89	0.76	9.27	0.30	1.36%	0.41	0.39	0.44	0.70	0.42	0.49
	Transport and Waste	60.58	60.58	60.58	6.00	65.12	1.07	4.89%	0.57	0.34	0.97	1.04	0.43	0.15
		2.00	2.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		202.48	202.05	202.27	11.71	138.98	0.69	3.12%						
Regeneration, Development and Comms	Communications	4.50	4.50	4.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.67	0.00	0.00	1.11
	Development Services	15.69	15.69	15.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.86
	Economic Growth and Regeneration	5.54	5.54	5.54	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.69	0.42	0.00
	Facilities- Community Centres	2.81	2.81	2.81	0.65	14.27	5.08	23.08%	5.31	4.80	5.31	5.14	6.66	5.08
	Planning Policy	3.05	3.05	3.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.19
	Projects	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Property	10.69	10.80	10.74	0.27	5.95	0.55	2.52%	0.28	0.00	0.08	0.48	0.40	0.03
	Welfare Support	17.44	18.25	17.84	1.43	5.08	0.28	1.29%	0.09	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.94	0.33
	3.00	3.00	3.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Service Total:		63.72	64.64	64.18	2.35	25.30	0.40	1.79%						
Grand Total:		337.38	338.86	338.12	20.33	237.85	0.70	3.20%	0.62	0.59	0.65	0.71	0.73	0.76

Long term (20 days+ in month)/ short term sickness analysis for June 2023

Analysis of Short and Long Term Absence - June 2023

Head of Service	Section	No Occurrences Long Term	Total No Occurrences Absent	Long Term FTE Days Lost	Total FTE Days Lost	Long Term as a % of Days Lost	Long Term as a % of Occurrences
Corporate Resources		1	1	21.52	21.52	100.00%	100.00%
	Customer Services	1	4	21.52	25.72	83.67%	25.00%
	Financial Services	0	1	0.00	4.95	0.00%	0.00%
	Revenues	1	2	17.84	20.27	88.00%	50.00%
Head of Service Total:		3	8	60.89	72.46	84.02%	37.50%
Environment, Communities & Leisure	Leisure Services	1	9	10.13	40.58	24.96%	11.11%
	Parks and Street Care	1	1	21.52	21.52	100.00%	100.00%
	Transport and Waste	2	6	43.05	63.66	67.62%	33.33%
Head of Service Total:		4	16	74.70	125.77	59.40%	25.00%
Regeneration, Development and Comms	Facilities- Community Centres	1	1	13.32	13.32	100.00%	100.00%
	Property	1	1	5.95	5.95	100.00%	100.00%
	Welfare Support	0	2	0.00	4.99	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total:		2	4	19.26	24.26	79.41%	50.00%
Grand Total:		9	28	154.86	222.50	69.60%	32.14%

Long term (20 days+ in month)/ short term sickness analysis for March 2023

Analysis of Short and Long Term Absence - March 2023

Head of Service	Section	No Occurrences Long Term	Total No Occurrences Absent	Long Term FTE Days Lost	Total FTE Days Lost	Long Term as a % of Days Lost	Long Term as a % of Occurrences
Corporate Resources	Customer Services	0	2	0.00	11.16	0.00%	0.00%
	Democratic Services and H&S	0	1	0.00	0.82	0.00%	0.00%
	Financial Services	0	1	0.00	0.82	0.00%	0.00%
	Information & Communications Technology	0	1	0.00	17.61	0.00%	0.00%
	Revenues	0	2	0.00	9.77	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total:		0	7	0.00	40.19	0.00%	0.00%
Environment, Communities	Leisure Services	0	12	0.00	29.13	0.00%	0.00%
	Parks and Street Care	2	7	42.07	58.26	72.21%	28.57%
	Public Protection	1	3	9.09	13.00	69.91%	33.33%
	Transport and Waste	1	8	22.50	55.10	40.84%	12.50%
Head of Service Total:		4	30	73.66	155.50	47.37%	13.33%
Regeneration, Development	Communications	0	1	0.00	2.94	0.00%	0.00%
	Facilities- Community Centres	1	1	13.92	13.92	100.00%	100.00%
	Property	0	1	0.00	0.81	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total:		1	3	13.92	17.67	78.80%	33.33%
Grand Total:		5	40	87.59	213.36	41.05%	12.50%

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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