

Report to SLT / JCSC

Subject: Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report 2025/26

Date: 3rd June 2026

Author: Health, Safety Adviser

Wards Affected

Borough wide

Purpose

This report seeks to provide an update on the council health and safety compliance in line with legislation,

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendations

THAT:

The Corporate Health and Safety Annual Report 2025/26 contents be considered and any recommendation (shown in bold) be agreed.

1 Background

- 1.1** Both criminal and civil law apply to workplace health and safety. As an employer, Gedling Borough Council has a duty to protect employees and others from harm arising from its activities. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action by the Health and Safety Executive under criminal law and civil claims for compensation from those affected.
- 1.2** Reporting to top management 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). It's an integral part of ISO 45001 health and safety management system.
- 1.3** This annual report summarises the challenges and achievements of the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Service during the financial year from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026 and presents some of the upcoming work streams for the service in 2026/27. This report will also be

presented to the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee and Cabinet.

2.0 Proposal

2.1 Summary of Health and Safety key performance areas

2.11 Quarterly reporting:

Items maintained in 2025/26 have included quarterly reports, to provide oversight of corporate Health and Safety, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity risks to the Corporate Risk Board, consisting of senior officers. This board replaces the dedicated Corporate Health and Safety meeting.

Board representatives are expected to cascade key messages to their respective teams, recognising that effective health and safety management should start with effective health and safety leadership and be driven from the top down.

2.12 Inspections

A programme of workplace inspections has continued during 2025/26, with a risk-based inspection schedule determining frequency of inspections.

Inspections cover Leisure Centres, Community Centres, Pavilions, Civic Campus and Jubilee Depot. Property Services, Leisure Services and Health and Safety worked collaboratively to ensure non-compliances are rectified.

Inspections at Jubilee Depot were paused for much of 2025/26 to allow for a refreshed approach. With the new management team now in place, this work has recommenced and will be progressed through the 2026/27 inspections programme to support timely completion of actions and sustained compliance.

2.13 Accident reporting:

Building on work done in previous years, Accident Reporting and Investigation training was carried out with managers, team leaders and supervisors but with limited success.

Benchmarking activities with other local authorities indicate Gedling are still under reporting.

Most accident reports continue to come from Leisure Services who generally have a good culture of reporting both accidents and near misses. Concerns were identified in one centre regarding near miss

lifeguard reporting, but this has since been addressed

Reporting across the wider authority remains inconsistent. Some Civic Centre based services are proactive in this whilst others delay in reporting - particularly where multiple reports are required.

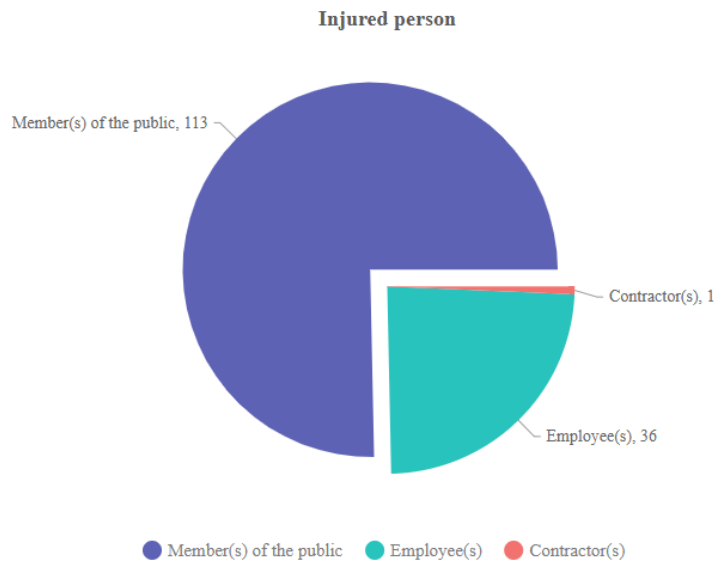
Reporting of accidents in the highest risk areas of Waste, Parks, Cleansing and Fleet remains low despite providing frontline operatives with direct access to the reporting system. When reports are made, quality remains poor with scant detail and no investigation carried out unless prompted by H&S. Additionally, near miss reporting is non-existent representing a risk for the Council with missed opportunities for early intervention to prevent an accident.

This in turn has led to an increase in the corporate risk level around accident reporting towards the end of the year. A change in mindset and workplace culture is required, and it is noted that current management are working closely with HR to proactively facilitate this. Workplace culture is difficult to shift, and it may take years for this to show via improved accident reporting.

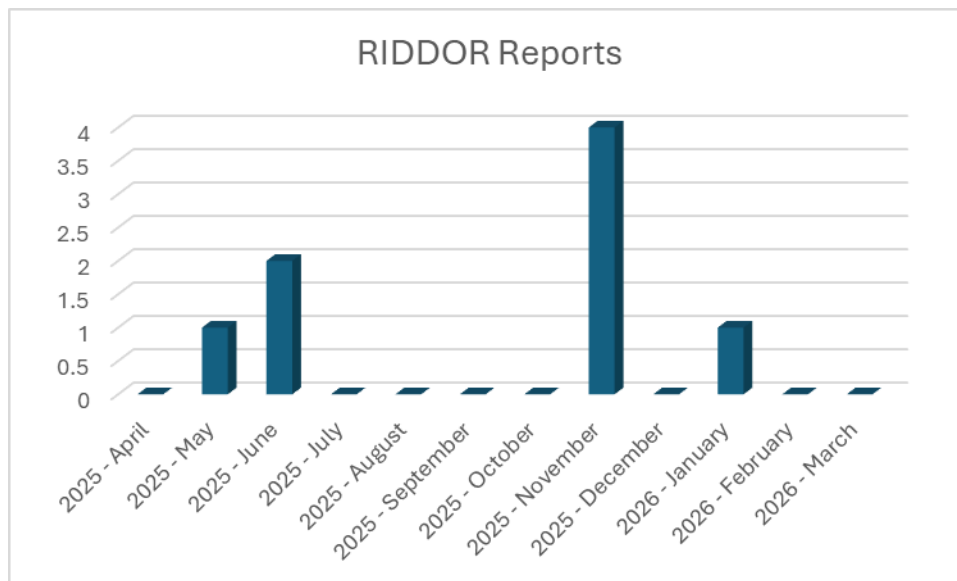
To support managers, the Health and Safety team has revised the Accident Reporting and Investigation Guidance and will deliver further training to reinforce responsibilities and improve investigation standards. Continued leadership engagement is necessary to help ensure immediate, underlying and root causes are identified so that effective controls can be implemented to prevent recurrence

2.14 Epidemiological analysis of accidents April 2025- March 2026

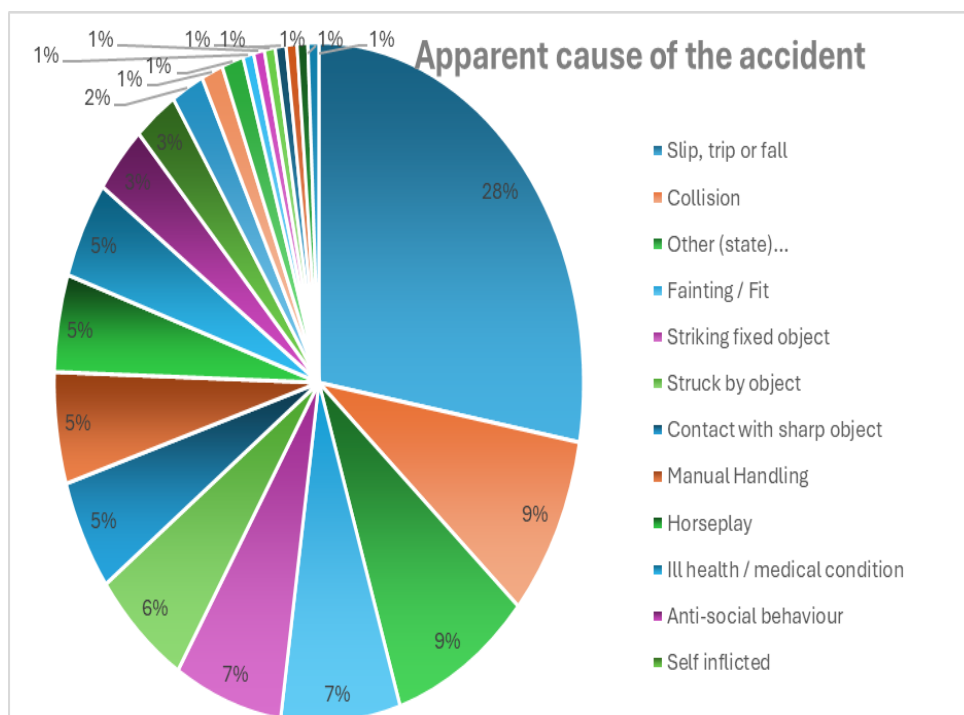
Analysis of reported incidents shows that the majority of injuries during the reporting period involved members of the public (113 incidents), with a smaller number affecting employees (36 incidents). This reflects the public-facing nature of many council services and highlights the importance of maintaining robust controls to manage risks to both employees and service users.



A small number of RIDDOR-reportable incidents were recorded during 2025/26, with occurrences spread unevenly across the year and a peak in late autumn. Overall RIDDOR numbers remain low, indicating that serious incidents are infrequent.



Analysis of accident causes shows that slips, trips and falls remain the most common contributor to incidents, accounting for around a quarter of all reports. Manual handling, collisions and contact with fixed or moving objects also feature prominently. The spread of causes highlights a combination of workplace conditions, task-related risks and behavioural factors, reinforcing the need for continued focus on housekeeping, safe systems of work, training and effective supervision.



2.15 Risk control and mitigation

The Internal Audit of Health and Safety highlighted risk assessment compliance as an area for development across the organisation. Strengthening consistency in hazard identification and the application of controls will further enhance protection for employees and others affected by council activities.

In response, risk assessment training for managers was delivered in April 2025. The Health and Safety Adviser has since worked collaboratively with services to review, rewrite and strengthen the quality of risk assessments across 10 service areas. Work is continuing with incoming management to further improve arrangements for Parks, Cleansing and Transport.

As part of risk mitigation, Health and Safety continue to deliver a comprehensive Health Surveillance programme working closely with HR to address identified issues.

A focus area during the year has been HAVs management. A monitoring system is now in place (electronic and manual) to provide coverage across all relevant activities. Rotation of tasks, a low-vibration purchase policy, training and risk assessment contribute to this control system.

2.16 Drug and Alcohol Testing

As part of risk mitigation measures and improving standards to drive culture change, Environmental Services have conducted several drug and alcohol testing sessions. The testing has been conducted at random and with cause. This is in line with procedures set out in the Substance Misuse Policy for safety critical roles, as identified and detailed in the Employee Handbook. Further details are provided in the Appendix 1 to this report.

2.17 Training:

Health and Safety Awareness training forms part of the Council's mandatory training programme. Other mandatory Health and Safety training includes Fire Safety and Awareness which was delivered during the year. Further work will focus on reinforcing accountability so that roles and responsibilities are consistently understood and applied.

Health and Safety maintain a corporate training plan for topics such as manual handling, affecting 2 or more service areas and delivery has been inline with this plan.

Health and Safety facilitated the formal qualification of cemetery operatives under the City and Guilds Cemetery Operatives Training Scheme following making a successful business case for modern, hydraulic, metal shoring.

To build resilience within higher-risk teams, budget approval has been secured to fund the IOSH Managing Safely course. This training will support managers, supervisors and team leaders to strengthen their understanding of risk assessment, including hazard identification, selection of appropriate controls, workforce consultation, recording significant findings, and the importance of sign-off and review.

2.18 Employee Protection Register

Reporting of aggressive and/or abusive incidents has increased during 2025/26, reflecting stronger awareness and improved use of reporting routes. It is also an acknowledgement of society becoming increasingly more aggressive as noted in a recent NHS report [NHS England » Frontline NHS staff facing rise in physical violence](#) This will be an ongoing challenge faced by public facing employees.

The improved reporting however has enabled timely and proportionate action to manage unacceptable behaviour through the Unacceptable Behaviour Policy and the Employee Protection Register. Tools used include warning letters, single points of contact, limited methods of contact

and, in extreme cases, use of body-worn cameras.

2.19 Guidance Review

During the 2025/26 financial year, the Health and Safety Team undertook a review and rewrite of several key guidance documents to ensure they remain current, effective and aligned with legislative requirements and operational practice. These included Asbestos Management Guidance, Civic Centre Fire Safety Guidance, Accident Reporting and Investigation Guidance, Lone Worker Guidance. Additionally, supporting wider emergency planning needs, the Cold Weather Plan has been refreshed to incorporate learning and strengthen arrangements.

2.2 Brief Resume of Emergency Planning and Business Continuity work

2.21 Emergency Planning

During 2025–26, significant work was undertaken to strengthen the Council's ability to respond effectively to incidents. This was supported by the development of two key documents: the Major Incident Plan, which sets out Gedling Borough Council's arrangements and response when a major incident is declared, and the Emergency Handbook, which provides practical guidance to support delivery of the plan.

In addition, the Council's emergency response arrangements were strengthened with the implementation of on-call senior leadership rota, bringing Gedling line with neighbouring authorities. This ensures that emergency decisions can be made promptly and at an appropriate level.

A dedicated Microsoft Teams channel was introduced as a place to store response documentation and plans and to support communication and oversight during periods of response.

2.22 Business Continuity

During 2025–26, additional work was undertaken to strengthen Gedling Borough Council's business continuity arrangements to ensure the Council is able to maintain critical functions during and following disruptive events, such as natural disasters, cyber-attacks or supply chain failures. Effective business continuity planning provides assurance that the Council can continue to deliver essential services to residents during such periods of significant disruption.

Business continuity planning is a statutory requirement for Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

As part of this work, a cyber incident exercise was carried out to test the

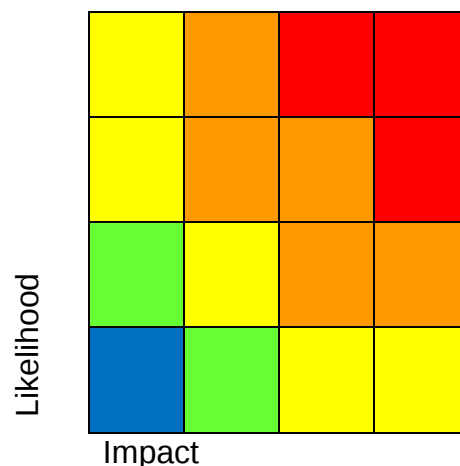
effectiveness of existing Business Continuity Plans. A structured debrief followed the exercise, identifying lessons learned and required follow-up actions. These actions are being progressed to further strengthen organisational resilience and preparedness.

2.3 Summary:

During 2025/26, the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning (HSEP) Team has focused its capacity on the highest-priority workstreams to ensure delivery and maintain strong oversight. This has included the Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Manager leading key emergency planning activity to strengthen the Council's ability to respond to and recover from emergencies, while the Health and Safety Adviser has maintained momentum on delivery of the health and safety work programme.

As a small team, we have continued to work closely and communicate effectively with services and stakeholders to keep key actions moving forward and support delivery of the departmental work plan.

Using the corporate risk matrix applied across Council and Service Area risk registers, the HSEP function is currently rated 6, representing an improvement on the previous year. This reflects ongoing work by the team and continued focus on ensuring health and safety and emergency planning are embedded in day-to-day activity as practical tools for reducing the likelihood and impact of workplace accidents and significant incidents.



3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative would be not to present an annual Health and Safety report; however, this would reduce routine visibility of H&S activity and progress for SLT. The report is also shared with JCSC and Cabinet to support continued awareness of health and safety work across the Council.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 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.

5 Local Government Reform Implications

- 5.1 Monitoring Health and Safety performance across the organisation in this way put the Council in a strong position, able to identify the Health and Safety risks in its business and objectively assess them. This ensures risks stay visible throughout the LGR process, can be highlighted within the new H&S team structures and ensures that the safety and health of employees is considered during the change process.

6 Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix 1 – Drug and alcohol testing statistics

7 Background Papers

- 7.1 None identified.

8 Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1.1 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:

**Approved on behalf of the
Monitoring Officer**

Date:

