

Agenda Item 34.

TITLE	Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 27 July 2017
WARD	None specific
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR	Graham Ebers, Director Corporate Services
LEAD MEMBER	Norman Jorgensen, Executive Member for Environment

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Council has a legal duty to protect the health and safety of its employees and other people who come into contact with the Council's services e.g. service users, pupils, contractors etc.; the standard of that duty is set by law with employers required to do what is considered to be 'reasonably practicable'.

The effective management of health and safety is an essential part of good corporate governance; furthermore, the active management of accidents at work is essential, not only to protect our employees and others but to also minimise financial loss through employee absence and other direct and indirect related costs.

The legal responsibility and thus accountability for health and safety lies with the employer. In addition to service staff, the Authority is the employer in the case of community schools, community special schools, voluntary controlled schools, maintained nurseries and pupil referral units. In respect of foundation schools, voluntary aided schools, academies and free schools, the employer is their Governing Body.

Wholly owned subsidiaries of Wokingham Borough Council operate as separate companies and are employers in their own right; as such they must discharge their own health and safety statutory duties. The Council's Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17 does not include the health and safety performance of its companies; it is up to those boards to monitor and review their own internal health and safety performance.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is requested to:

- 1) note the corporate health and safety performance for 2016/17; and
- 2) endorse the approach described and the health and safety priorities for the current municipal year.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to introduce the Wokingham Borough Council Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17 for consideration by the Executive. Whilst not a statutory report, the preparation and issue of an annual health and safety report by a local authority (a health and safety regulator in its own right) in respect of its own internal health and safety reflects good practice and provides assurance to senior levels.

The annual report relates to occupational health and safety in respect of this Authority's services and community schools and provides:

- a summary of the corporate health and safety performance during the reporting year;
- an update on the progress made to date in respect of the corporate Health and Safety Plan which provides the mechanism for the formal follow through and tracking of actions to support the key objectives for health and safety; and
- for recommendations in relation to the corporate health and safety priorities for action during the current municipal year.

Background

The Health and Safety Annual Report 2016/17 is a high level report that looks back at internal health and safety performance during that period, highlighting the main achievements over the year and outlining key priorities for the current year.

The annual report is transparent; it provides stakeholders with information on health and safety performance to enable an understanding of the key issues facing Council staff and provides assurance to the Executive that the main risks have been identified, appropriately prioritised and are being adequately addressed.

The annual report is reviewed internally by various management and staff consultation groups. The Corporate Leadership Team and the central employee consultation forums for services and schools receive supplementary information in the form of statistical charts with data breakdowns, for example, by work area and hazard type to aid analysis, identification of trends and patterns and to support the ongoing development of suitable risk prevention strategies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	Yes	
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	Yes	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	Yes	

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

Cross-Council Implications

Health and safety is a cross cutting issue that should be given due consideration and be integrated into all the Council's decisions and priorities.

List of Background Papers

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and 'Managing for Health and Safety' (HSG65), a guide for employers published by the HSE.

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