

Agenda Item 28.

TITLE	Health & Safety Annual Report 2023-24
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on Thursday, 26 September 2024
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Chief Operating Officer - Sally Watkins
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Resident Services, Inclusion and Fighting Poverty - Rachel Bishop-Firth

PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)

To share the annual report for Health and Safety for 23/24 with the Executive for approval.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive notes the internal health and safety performance for 23/24; and the priorities in the report which have informed the action plan for 24/25 and will shape action plan for the next municipal year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report relates to the Council's internal health and safety performance during the period between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024 and covers the Council workforce, where the Council is legally the employer, which includes maintained community schools, special schools, voluntary controlled schools, nursery schools and pupil referral units.

The details included in this report do not include the health and safety performance or services provided to academy schools or Wokingham council partners as part of shared services.

A total of 343 incidents were reported across the organisation (combined reports from schools and services).

Overall, the health and safety performance of the Council during 2023-24 should be viewed in a positive light due to the low number of serious employee incidents i.e. those that require notification to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR).

BACKGROUND

The Health and Safety Annual Report 2023/24 is a high-level report that looks back at internal health and safety performance during the financial year's twelve-month period, highlighting the main achievements over the year and outlining key priorities for the current year and beyond.

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 together with assurance to the Executive that the main risks have been identified, appropriately prioritised and are being adequately addressed.

The annual report is owned by the Corporate Health and Safety Board, reviewed internally by staff consultation groups and the Corporate Leadership Team.

Looking forward – our health and safety priorities for 2024-25

- To support the delivery of a back-to-basics programme, with the aim of empowering our employees.
- The health and safety management systems will be reviewed in whole to simplify processes, promote a clear safety culture and in turn support service delivery to the community in the safest ways possible through a clear understanding of the Plan, Do, Check, Act approach wherever possible.
- Ensure our employees are equipped with the necessary skills, tools and knowledge they need to deliver safe services from the moment of induction into the Council.
- Continue to take a sensible, proportionate approach to managing the hazards associated with our work activities forward action plan.
- The health and safety board will be responsible for monitoring and ensuring delivery of actions related to the forward plan.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces unprecedented financial pressures as a result of; Brexit, the war in Ukraine and the general economic climate of rising prices and the increasing cost of debt. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are optimised and are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

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

Other Financial Information

There are no financial implications from this report.

Legal Implications arising from the Recommendation(s)
This Report and the decision making process arising from the same has been considered by the Legal Officer within the context of (i) the Constitution and (ii) public law. The Legal Officer’s overview of this Report is limited to ensuring as best as possible any legal implications which would lead them to be concerned about risks of JR. The Legal Officer has not had the opportunity to double check the underlying law, guidance and process underpinning the purpose of this Report.

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation
not applicable

Public Sector Equality Duty
Due regard has been given to WBCs Public Sector Equality Duties

Climate Emergency – *This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030*
Not applicable.

Reasons for considering the report in Closed Session
Not applicable

List of Background Papers

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