

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
5 NOVEMBER 2018

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update the Committee on performance with regard to corporate health and safety compliance within the first six months of 2018 and allow Members to scrutinise the work that has been done.

2.0 Background Information

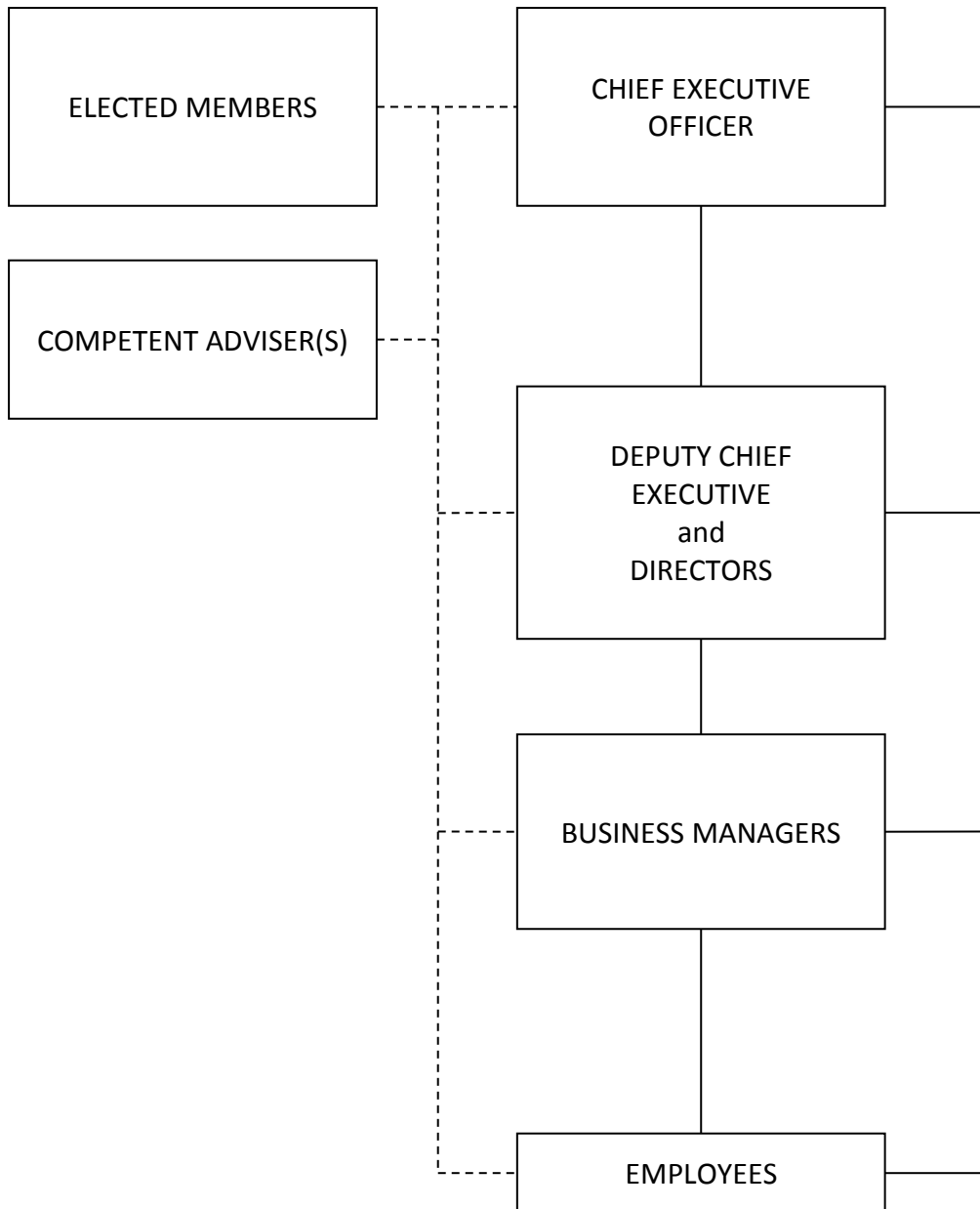
2.1 The Council's Corporate Health & Safety Policy sets out the responsibilities of various posts within the organisation. Elected Members provide the Council with leadership and strategy direction and determination in the allocation of budgets to enable services to be delivered. Because of their influence on budgets and policy decisions, elected Members can affect how health and safety is managed. Therefore elected Members, when carrying out their functions, shall ensure:

- a) The provision of such resources, that are necessary, for securing the health, safety and welfare of the council's employees and anyone else who may be affected by its undertakings.
- b) That the decision making process they employ includes and considers risks to employees and others in the decisions they make.
- c) The Chairman of the Homes & Communities Committee shall be the lead elected Member for corporate health and safety.

2.2 As part of fulfilling this responsibility Members are given the opportunity to receive an update report on current performance around compliance with our corporate health and safety responsibilities and duties.

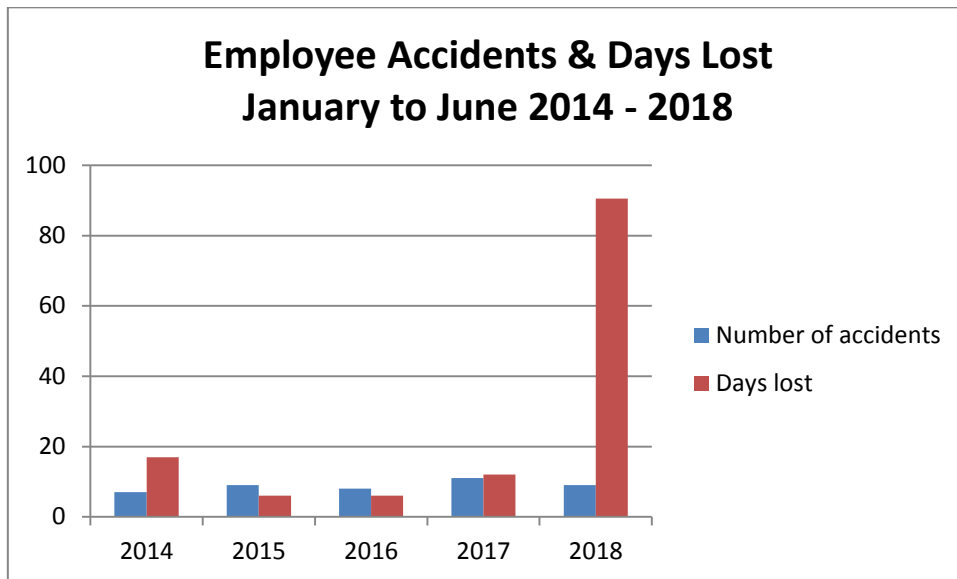
2.3 The diagram below shows the structure of how the health and safety responsibilities and accountabilities are set up. The solid black lines show the route of responsibility whereas the hashed lines illustrate the route of accountability.

————— = Responsibility
----- = Accountability



3.0 Accident Statistics

- 3.1 A total of thirteen (13) accidents were reported for the period between the 1 January 2018 and 30 June 2018. Four of the thirteen accidents involved non employees with the remaining nine accidents involving employees.
- 3.2 Five of the nine employee accidents resulted in time off from work which totalled 90.5 lost working days. Whilst the number of employee accidents is comparable with previous years, the days lost is greater than expected. This increase in lost days is mainly due to the loss of 38.5 working days by a single individual. The graph below illustrates this data over the previous five years reporting period (January to June inclusive).



- 3.3 Four of the nine employee accidents occurred within the Waste, Litter & Recycling Business Unit and accounted for 89.5 lost days. The remaining lost day was within the Parks & Amenities Business Unit.
- 3.4 Four employee accidents resulted in notification to the Health & Safety Executive. Notifications were triggered due to the amount of time taken off as a direct result of the accident rather than type or severity of the injury. This is the largest number of notifications undertaken since accident legislation was updated in 2013 and reduced the need to report lower level accidents.
- 3.5 As explained above there were four reported non-employee accidents. These involved visitors to the Palace Theatre/ National Civil War Centre and Castle House.

Violent Incidents

- 3.6 There are currently ten entries within the Council's Potentially Violent Person Risk Register. This register records the details of people who have presented a risk to our staff and who potentially continue to present a risk. It exists to act as a point of reference for officers who may have to deal with potentially violent members of the public.
- 3.7 Five reported incidents have been entered since 1 January 2018. Four of the five new entries are incidents involving partner agencies customers at Castle House. The remainder involved a resident who became verbally aggressive with a refuse inspector after staff had refused to collect a contaminated silver bin.
- 3.8 Since relocating to Castle House in September 2017 we have experienced an increase in the number of violent incidents directed towards our staff and incidents of violence and aggression that involve our partners. The graph and table one below show the comparable data since our move into Castle House. These figures should be read alongside an acknowledgement that footfall at Castle House has increased significantly. During the period January to July 2018, when compared to the same period in 2017, we have experienced an eighty percent (80%) increase in our footfall.

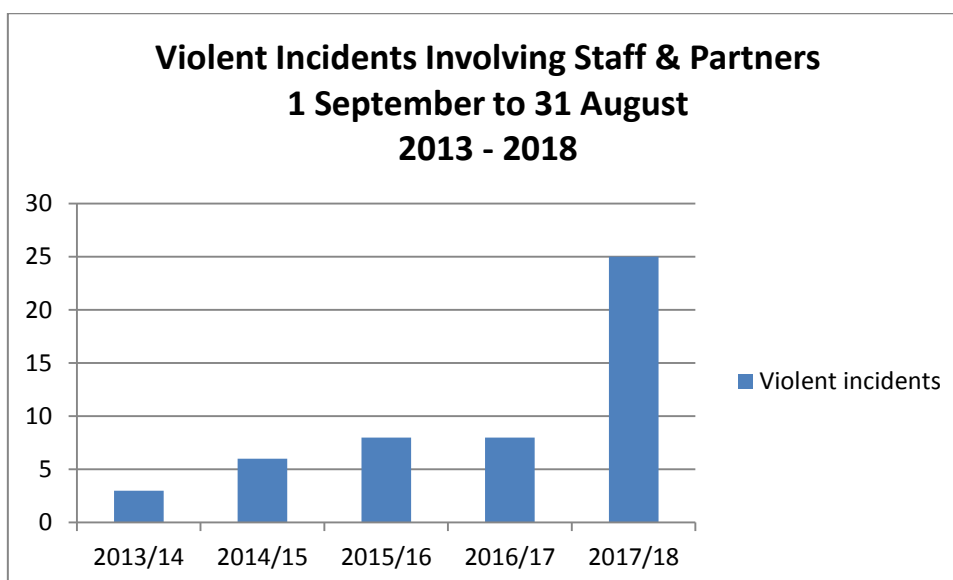


Table One – Violent and Aggressive Incidents

	September 2017 to August 2018 (Castle House)	September 2016 to August 2017 (Kelham Hall and Town Hall)	Percentage Increase
No of Incidents	25	8	212.5%

3.9 Factors affecting this figure since being located in Castle House are;

- Managers are located with their staff during opening hours which was not the case when we worked out of the Town Hall. This has resulted in a greater awareness of the need to report these incidents formally rather than dealing with them in an informal manner.
- Security Officers are now located in the building which means that more incidents are observed and responded to.
- The partner agencies that are co-located in Castle House deal with a client base that have an increased level of vulnerability and risk.
- Increased footfall into Castle House.

Significant Incidents

3.10 **Newark Road Rage Incident.** A refuse collector was deliberately struck by a vehicle and his team were subsequently attacked and threatened with a hammer following a road rage incident. Refuse vehicle CCTV has proven useful and there were several witnesses who have provided evidence. The Police conducted an investigation into the matter but so far have not been able to positively identify the assailants and consequently there has been no subsequent prosecution.

3.11 **Electrical Incident, Castle House.** A serious electrical incident occurred in February when an electrician touched a live mains conductor, located within a distribution board, whilst completing unfinished works at Castle House. This caused a significant power outage and produced smoke which activated the building's fire alarm which subsequently led to a full fire evacuation of the building. Fortunately nobody was hurt.

- 3.12 As requested by Corporate Management Team (CMT), the Business Manager – Asset Management has subsequently reviewed contractor management arrangements for Castle House. CMT have also received reports regarding this matter and assurances regarding the implementation of controls to prevent a reoccurrence.
- 3.13 **Suspected Synthetic Cannabinoid Incident, Castle House.** During a recent incident at Castle House a small number of staff were affected by fumes released from a bin believed to be containing synthetic cannabinoids. It is believed that this was deposited by a customer visiting the Department of Work & Pensions.
- 3.14 The substance was removed and disposed of. All staff made a full recovery without any lasting effects. The Police were informed but unfortunately were unable to determine the exact nature of the substance.
- 3.15 The individual suspected of depositing the substance has been formally written to and warned that we will not permit him access into Castle House if it is suspected that he is carrying or is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. He has also been added to the Potentially Violent Persons Risk Register.
- 3.16 Further training is currently being developed for frontline staff to help identify the signs of possible users of synthetic cannabinoids and how to appropriately respond if they believe the substance is identified.
- 3.17 **Street Name Plates.** A cast iron heritage street name plate, located at height, recently fell off a building located within central Newark. On inspection it would appear that the signs original fixings had failed. Work was immediately undertaken to determine any other plates at immediate risk of failure and identify the extent/condition of signs across the district and deal with these.

Significant Work Undertaken

- 3.18 **Health and Safety Policy.** As in accordance with the requirements of relative legislation the Council's Health and Safety Policy has been reviewed and agreed with Joint Consultative Committee and CMT.
- 3.19 **Finger Traps.** Following a recent accident at Vicars Water Visitor Centre, where a small child trapped the end of his finger between a door and its frame, risk assessments of all similar public areas have been undertaken. This work has identified the need for the installation of further door finger guards to high risk areas. The work is being managed and undertaken by Asset Management.
- 3.20 **Health and Safety Software.** The Council currently uses a software system to help manage its risk assessments and safety compliance. This system is many years old and has been reviewed to assess whether or not it is fit for purpose. The view of the Risk Management Group concluded that the system needed replacing and consequently we have assessed a number of systems and are currently in the final stages of testing prior to purchase

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 None of the incidents reported had any equality implications identified at the time. Incidents which involve any of the 'protected characteristics' set out under the Equalities Act 2010 would be taken account of as part of any investigation.

5.0 Financial Implications FIN18-19/1247

5.1 There are no direct financial implications from the recommendation within this report. Where appropriate, analysis of the incidents and resultant improvements to prevent reoccurrences can reduce the financial exposure of the Council.

5.2 An effective health and safety management system, in which risks are identified and either eliminated or reduced will result in a reduction in costs to the organisation.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note the content of the report and consider the actions taken to deal with health and safety issues that have arisen across the Council's activities over the past 6 months of the financial year 2018/19.

Reason for Recommendation

To allow the committee to satisfy themselves through the process of scrutiny that corporate health and safety is being adequately managed and resourced across the authority.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Ben Adams on Ext 5232

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