



**REPORT of
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**
PERFORMANCE, GOVERNMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE
16 JANUARY 2025

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE - QUARTER TWO 2024 / 25

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an update on Health and Safety (H&S) statistics and activity during Quarter Two (1 July to 31 September 2024) (Q2).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members consider the accident and incident statistics and incidences of unacceptable behaviour reported;
- (ii) That Members consider progress of key health and safety themes (as per Section 3.2).

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 Q2 2024 / 25

3.1.1 There were four accidents and incidents, seven hazards and three near misses reported during Q2. One of the accidents involved a report from a member of the public but could not be investigated further due to receiving no further contact. Hazards continue to be reported at depot sites, supporting the need for routine inspections of these areas. One accident concerned a road traffic collision where a staff member was taken to hospital as a precaution.

ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT REPORTS Q2 2024 / 25			
Event	Action	Note	Person
15-7-2024 (incident) Member of Parks team caused minor damage to wooden play equipment when ride on mower clipped a supporting post.	Minor debris (wood splinters) cleared. Maintenance teams asked to inspect due to incident.	Noted that this play site equipment is inspected by Maintenance team on a weekly basis as routine.	Employee
20-08-2024 (accident) Insect / other / unknown bite to parks operative leading to infection and significant swelling of wound	Staff members advised to take antihistamine due to possible allergic reaction.	Lost time accident leading to two days absence. Non RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) event due to limited duration of absence	Employee

ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT REPORTS Q2 2024 / 25

Event	Action	Note	Person
14/08/2024 (accident) Member of the public reported young child (age unknown) being nearly strangled by play site equipment 'chains' whilst being supervised by the parent.	Equipment inspected as a result of the incident and no defect found. Equipment determined to meet current BSEN (British Standard European Norm) standards for such items.	Equipment inspected routinely by trained staff and annually by external contractor. Incident noted for further similar reports. Attempts to contact report owner unsuccessful.	Member of the public
27/09/2024 (accident). Member of staff involved in a road traffic collision whilst returning from a site visit. Staff Member taken to hospital by ambulance as a precaution. Lost time incident.	Accident investigated by the Police who concluded that member of staff was not at fault. Internal H&S investigation recommended improvements to site visit risk assessments (although this was not related to cause of the incident)	Staff member offered appropriate support (not accepted). Non RIDDOR reportable, as road traffic accident and not related to working practices on the road/roadside.	Employee

NEAR MISS / HAZARD REPORTS Q2 2024 / 25

Event	Action	Note	Person
31/7/2024 (near miss) Private event on barge (berthed alongside MDC (Maldon District Council) property) reported to have taken place where guests were inebriated and no crew member present.	Berthing guidelines stating rules re-issued to all barge operators using MDC property.	MDC was not informed of any accident or incident associated with this event, although potential for such is acknowledged.	Member of the public
14/08/2024 (hazard) First aid kits in Maintenance Depot offices expired	Informed Depot Supervisor. Kits re-ordered and replaced.	Key staff member (responsible for kit checks) absent. Use of an area inspection proforma (with routine checks) recommended.	Employee
14/08/2024 (hazard) Fire alarm/detection system not tested for over a month	Informed Depot Supervisor. System tested post report.	Key staff member (responsible for alarm testing) absent.	Employee
21/08/2024 (hazard) Tent/Gazebo peg found protruding from grassed area after smoke and fire festival held there the previous week.	Area inspected for further pegs – none found. Due to size of area concerned, it is accepted that the possibility of such items being left behind remains a possibility.	To monitor and report as necessary in response to future events. No further action proposed.	Employee
12/09/2024 (hazard) Whilst working late in the offices a member of staff reported doors on fire escape route	Member of staff spoke to the facilities officer. Request made by Health and Safety		Employee

NEAR MISS / HAZARD REPORTS Q2 2024 / 25			
Event	Action	Note	Person
being locked by facilities officers prior to the agreed office closing time.	Manager to Facilities Team Leader to leave internal doors unlocked, where security not affected. Action complied with.		
25/09/2024 (near miss) Staff of a contractor company were verbally abused by a member of the public regarding the release of their dog (collected as a stray animal) from the kennels	Relevant MDC staff met with contractor and advised they report the incident to the Police. Actions agreed with the contractor regarding risk assessments and protocols required to mitigate against such events in future.	Report involves unacceptable behaviour.	Contractor
25/09/2024 (hazard). Fire exit in the Park's depot was locked and not in compliance with current requirements for operation or signage.	Reported to the Depot Supervisor, Team Manager and Head of Service		Employee
25/09/2024 (hazard) First aid kits in the Parks depot had expired and required replacement	Reported to the site Supervisor		Employee
25/09/2024 (hazard) Spill kits within the Parks depot were found to be extremely dirty and soiled	Reported to the site Supervisor		Employee
25/09/2024 (near miss) A number of items of electrical equipment (work tools) that were in use showed PAT (Portable Appliance Testing) dates that had exceeded their annual inspection period	Reported to the Site Supervisor	Annual PAT test now conducted. Tools should be assessed to determine if more frequent testing should be conducted.	Employee

3.1.2 There were two incidents of unacceptable behaviour reported. One report concerned an interaction between officers and a member of the public whilst undertaking work in the district. One report was received due to an interaction via e-mail.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR REPORTS Q2 2024 / 25			
Incident	Action	Note	Method
1/07/2024 Abusive e-mail to elections member of staff by a member of the public, who could not meet their request due to restriction put in place by relevant regulations.	No Action taken.	Incident is being followed up to determine if action is required.	e-mail.

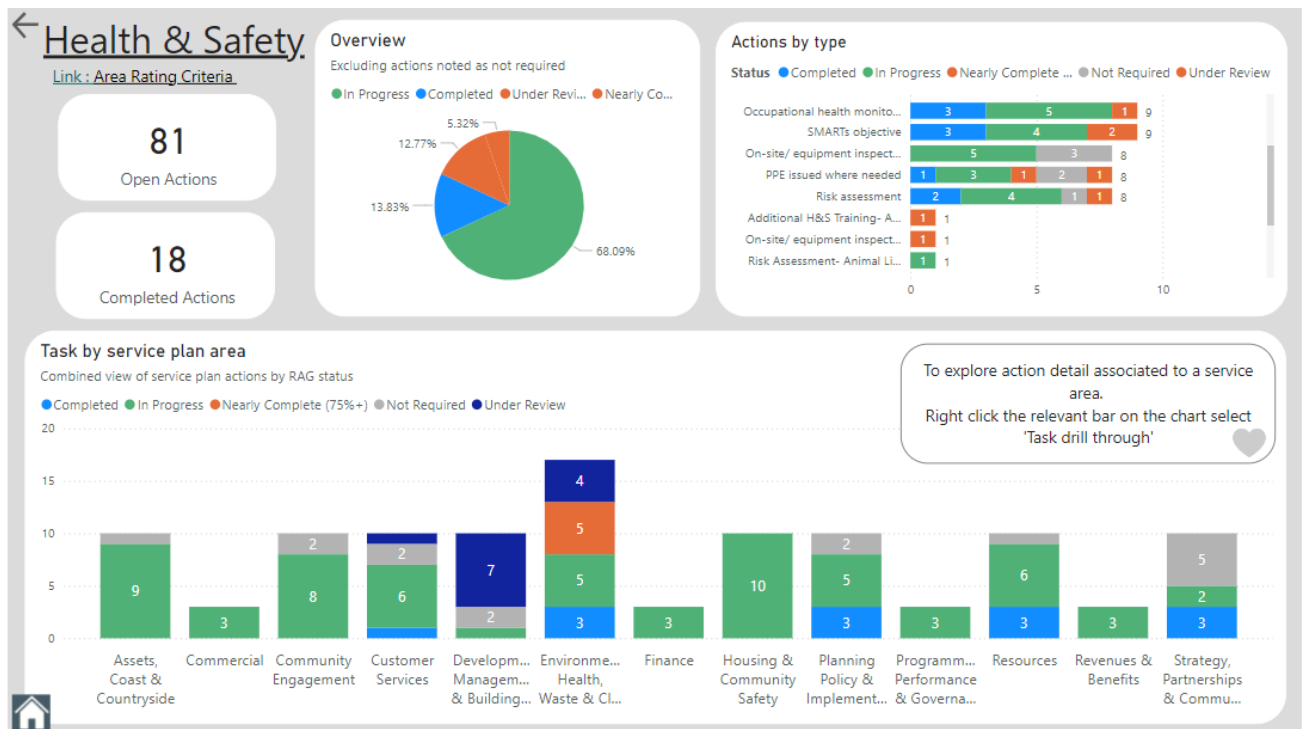
UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR REPORTS Q2 2024 / 25			
Incident	Action	Note	Method
(19/09/2024) Community Engagement Officers subject to verbal abuse by member of the public, who also took photographs of them, when they undertook a speed check on their vehicle.	Incident logged, along with registration number and vehicle type. Incident reported to the Police	Officers conduct task in pairs. Incident not reported using correct internal procedure. Staff Members informed.	In person

3.2 Health and Safety Actions

3.2.1 A number of actions have been set out below. Work continues to progress these, however those now completed have been removed.

Subject	Action	Update / Progress
Emergency Procedures	(i) To revise and improve the fire an evacuation procedure (and supporting hardware) at main MDC locations.	(i) Final procedure for main offices now approved. Communication with partners ongoing. (ii) Procedures required for Depot sites.
Unacceptable Behaviour	(i) To revise the policy (ii) To improve system for reporting Unacceptable behaviour	(i) Draft in progress (workshop held) Ongoing / No update. (ii) Drafted system for comment and trial use. System modified on user comments. To be implemented
H&S Training	(i) To determine H&S training requirements (Corporate and Teams)	(i) Training requirements determined. (ii) Decision to track progress of department completion via balanced scorecard report on a monthly basis. Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.
Risk Assessment	(i) To implement a new risk assessment register / master list	(i) Framework complete. (ii) Teams currently revising risk assessments to ensure they are up to date. Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.
Lone Working	(i) To revise lone working procedure and to ensure implementation of appropriate hardware to support these measures.	(i) Ongoing. Questionnaire to be issued to managers to establish current precautions in place across the authority. No update.

Department Performance for each assigned Health and Safety activity



3.5 Fire Risk Assessments

3.5.1 A contractor has been engaged to conduct reviews of the fire assessments for the main offices and cemetery chapels. Evacuation drills have been scheduled for the Maintenance and Parks depots.

3.6 Policies and Procedures

3.6.1 A revised Health and Safety Policy is in its final stages, requiring amendment to accommodate the new Leadership Structure. This will require Member approval in the coming months. The Fire and Evacuation procedure was approved in November 2024 and discussion with Partners is ongoing.

3.7 Health and Safety Inspections

3.7.1 No inspections have been conducted in the period. A schedule was agreed with leisure contractor regarding inspections in future, due to contract renewal. These are due to commence shortly. The accident and incident reporting data of the Council's main contractors continue to be monitored. **No further update.**

3.8 Legionella

3.8.1 No updates.

3.9 Training

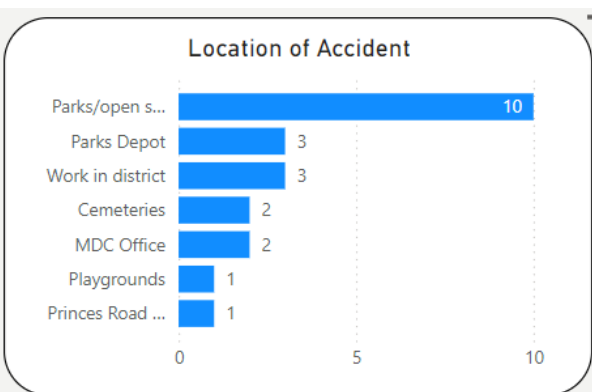
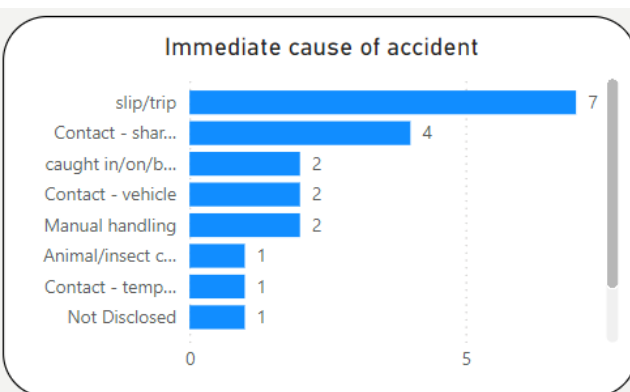
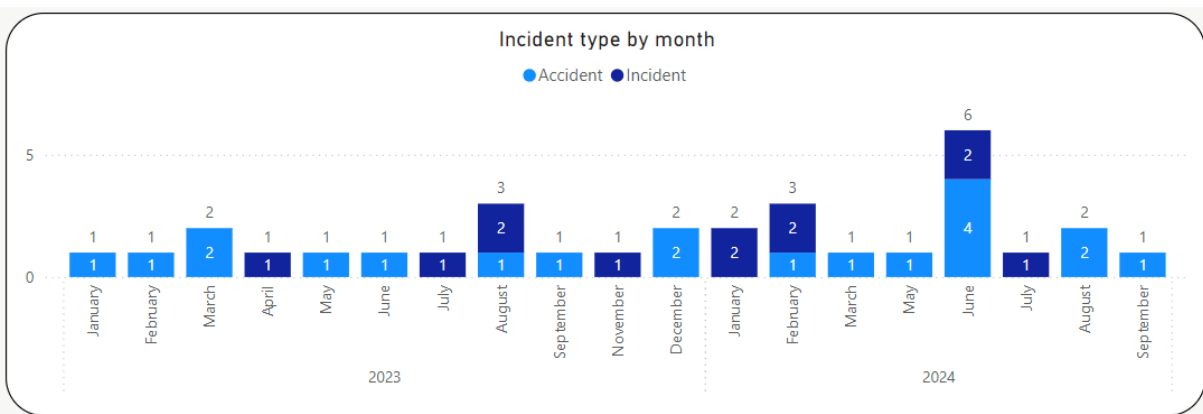
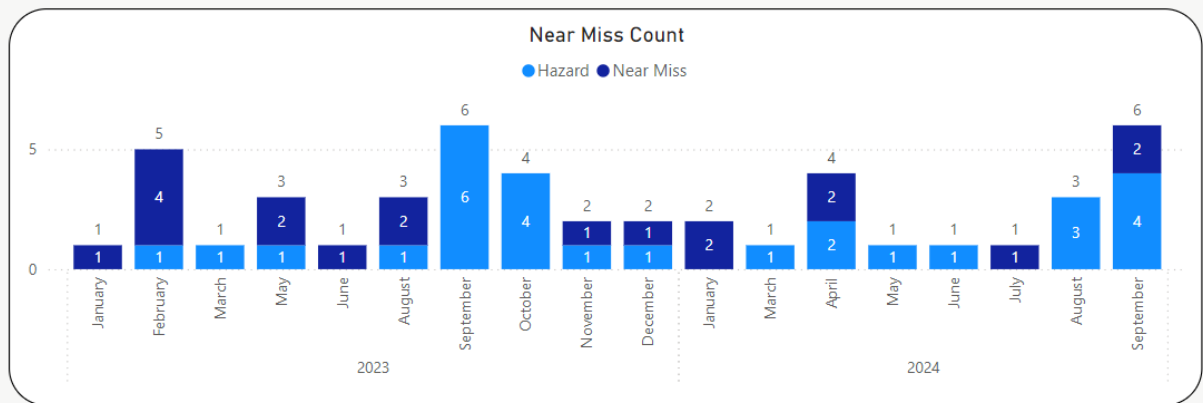
3.9.1 Departmental training has been agreed with a number of teams for the 2024 / 25 period. Corporate training is planned for Manual Handling and Ladder Safety with refresher sessions for Lone Working, Fire Warden and potentially, dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour. Toolbox talks for the Service Delivery teams have been suspended and await team input before resumption. A proposed schedule from the Service delivery teams is still awaited.

3.9.2 The E-learning training modules for Health and Safety training are awaiting implementation by the Council's E-learning support contractor. Those that will be mandatory for all staff will be prioritised for earliest implementation.

3.10 Accident-Near Miss Reporting

3.10.1 The number of accidents reported in the period was very low. This was surprising for the busy summer period. It is noted that grave digging operations were moved to a contractor during this period, however this is not thought on its own, to explain the trend.

Health & Safety Reporting



3.11 Health and Safety Audit

- 3.11.1 The Corporate Health and Safety Manager has been working closely with BDO (Internal Audit) to ensure the audit findings represent an accurate picture of the current health and safety management system and its associated arrangements. Much work has been undertaken since the creation of the Corporate Health and Safety Manager post; however it is acknowledged that there is still much work to do. It is felt that the findings reinforce the work that is being undertaken, with the actions presented in the audit report being in accordance with areas of focus highlighted in previous reports to the Performance, Governance and Audit Committee and senior managers meetings.
- 3.11.2 The report findings concluded that there were two high, three medium and one low priorities for action. An action plan to close out the areas identified in the report has been drafted with realistic timescales agreed with Assistant Directors. Updates will be given in forthcoming reports.

3.12 Priorities going forward

- 3.12.1 The priorities for the next quarter will be to continue to focus on the policies and procedures that present most risk to the council and its staff. Time will be dedicated to the close-out of audit findings, which will include amongst other things, revision of risk assessments, the re-establishment of inspections and implementing mechanisms to ensure greater clarity when reporting completion of health and safety training.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Accidents, near misses and incidents of unacceptable behaviour during Q2 2024 / 25 have been set out within this report.
- 4.2 Proactive work on the main health and safety themes continues. Additional health and safety improvements will continue to be implemented alongside close-out actions arising from the recent health and safety audit.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 Delivering good quality services

- 5.1.1 Good health and safety management of the workplace, for example, management of asbestos and legionella, helps provide a safer and healthier environment in which to live and work.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Good health and safety management reduces the number of accidents and injuries to both customers and employees alike. Reduced staff absence resulting from work related injuries or ill health ensures a better service is provided to customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Poor management of health and safety can lead to accidents, injuries, occupational ill health or

dangerous occurrences. This may result in avoidable sickness absence and these incidents may be investigated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This could result in prosecution with fines or custodial sentences and an award of costs if found guilty by the courts. In addition, the HSE has adopted a "Fee for Fault" policy in which it recharges the cost of investigations if liability is identified. Civil claims by individuals could lead to significant cost to the Council, both financial and resources to manage. These could in turn lead to increased insurance premiums. It can also lead to poor publicity, reputational damage and impacts on staff morale.

- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – No additional resources required, however, by managing health and safety, there should be less impact on financial resources as identified in (iii) above.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – No additional resources are required, however, additional processes / procedures to manage health and safety effectively will impact upon current resource capacity. The positive impact should be preventing accidents and ill health, having a mitigating impact.

Background Papers: None.

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