



**REPORT of  
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**  
**PERFORMANCE, GOVERNMENT AND AUDIT COMMITTEE**  
**20 FEBRUARY 2025**

**HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE - QUARTER THREE 2024 / 25**

**1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To provide an update on health and safety statistics and activity during Quarter Three (Q3) (1 October to 31 December 2024)

**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 Q3 2024 / 25**

3.1.1 There were five accidents and incidents, five hazards and one near miss reported during Q3. All accidents involved members of the public. Two were of a more serious nature requiring paramedic assistance. Both involved falling over or into objects that were present on Maldon District Council (MDC) owned land. The incident reported was also significant, involving the collapse of a tree on parkland and damage to property.

<b>ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT REPORTS Q3 2024 / 25</b>			
<b>Event</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Person</b>
3-10-2024 (accident) Member of public tripped and fell over a boardwalk left on Hythe quay. Ambulance attended but refused. Hospital attendance for broken nose the next day.	Ownership of boardwalks (x3) could not be ascertained. Believed to be remnant of previous activities. All removed by MDC for disposal		Member of the public
10-10-2024 (accident) Member of the public had a fit in the reception area of the offices	MDC First aider attended (along with police staff). Ambulance called but stood down upon recovery	Not caused by MDC assets or work practices. Recorded as MDC first aider in attendance and on MDC property	Member of the public

<b>ACCIDENT/ INCIDENT REPORTS Q3 2024 / 25</b>			
<b>Event</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Person</b>
24/11/2024 (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 event and no defect found. Equipment determined to meet current BSEN 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
28/10/2024 (accident). Member of the public fell from bicycle and hit head on moveable concrete bollard. Significant head injury, transferred to hospital	MDC staff member gave first aid assistance. Accident investigated.	Non-RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013) reportable event as not caused by MDC assets or work processes.	Member of the public
24-11-24 (incident) Tree collapsed in promenade park during high winds, causing damage to zoo enclosure and narrowly missing visitors	Tree removed and area made safe / repaired. Incident investigated	Tree previously risk assessed by Essex County Council (ECC) and signed off as in acceptable condition for the period concerned. Risk assessment from zoo seen.	Member of the public

<b>NEAR MISS / HAZARD REPORTS Q3 2024 / 25</b>			
<b>Event</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Person</b>
11/10/2024 (hazard) No lead fire marshal hand-over upon leaving the site (as required by the fire and evacuation procedure)	Raised the issue with the officer's concerns and requested they ensure proper hand over in future	An identified lead fire warden must be present at the main offices during core opening hours	Employee
6/11/2024 (hazard) Pedestrian gate at parks depot found to be defective. Gate forms a part of the fire escape route	Use of gate minimised by use of alternative exit. Its functioning as a fire escape still possible. Gate repaired.		Employee
08/11/2024 (hazard) Carpet riser on stairs in main offices defective leading to trip hazard	Informed Facilities Officers. Area repaired.	Larger area now re-carpeted	Employee
21/11/2024 (hazard) During estuary shellfish sampling an officer become temporarily stuck in the mud/ sediment.	Officers retrieved successfully without additional assistance. Sampling at this location deemed too hazardous and terminated.	Request made to CEFAS (Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science) to change location of sampling.	Employee
12/12/2024 (hazard) Weed killer left out in publicly accessible area of main council offices.	Facilities officers alerted and substance removed to storage area.		Employee
12/12/2024 (near miss)	Identity of offender	Report involves	Employee

<b>NEAR MISS / HAZARD REPORTS Q3 2024 / 25</b>			
<b>Event</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Person</b>
Members of planning staff threatened by landowner regarding release of their dogs	unknown. Staff left the area as requested by the offender	unacceptable behaviour. UB report raised (but not included in Section 3.1.2.)	

3.1.2 There were four incidents of unacceptable behaviour reported. Two were in person and two received by e-mail. An additional unacceptable behaviour report, was received retrospectively after initially being reported as a near miss

<b>UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR REPORTS Q3 2024 / 25</b>			
<b>Incident</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Note</b>	<b>Method</b>
7/10/2024 Abusive and threatening behaviour when member of the public visited reception regarding housing provision.	No Action taken.	Incident is being followed up to determine if action is required.	In person
(9/10/2024) Member of the public abusive and threatening to council staff whilst in reception	Incident logged. Manager contacting Police for further advice.		In person
14/10/2024 Subtle threats made during an e-mail to housing staff	Incident logged		By e-mail
13/11/2024 Abusive e-mail sent to planning staff	Incident logged	Considered by managers for potential warning / sanctions. No update.	By e-mail

### 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.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Update / Progress</b>
<b>Emergency Procedures</b>	(i) To revise and improve the fire and evacuation procedure (and supporting hardware) at main MDC locations.	(i) Procedures still required for depot sites, but drills completed for 2024. (ii) Fire drill for Members now scheduled
<b>Unacceptable Behaviour</b>	(i) To revise the policy (ii) To improve system for reporting Unacceptable behaviour	(i) Draft shared with ELT (Extended Leadership Team) for input (ii) Drafted system for comment and trial use. System modified based on user comments. To be implemented
<b>H&amp;S (Health and Safety) Training</b>	(i) To determine H&S training requirements (Corporate and Teams)	(i) Training requirements determined with E-learning modules. To be circulated to managers for review. (ii) Decision to track progress of department completion via balanced

Subject	Action	Update / Progress
		scorecard report on a monthly basis. <b>Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.</b>
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	(i) To implement a new risk assessment register / master list	(i) Teams currently revising risk assessments to ensure they are robust and up to date. All risk assessments have been identified at both corporate and service level. <b>Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.</b>
<b>Lone Working</b>	(i) To revise lone working procedure and to ensure implementation of appropriate hardware to support these measures.	(i) Revised procedure drafted and circulated for comment.
<b>Audit / Inspection</b>	(i) To ensure service teams and work locations across MDC is in compliance with H&S Legislation	(i) Mini-audit of Parks and Maintenance depots now required. (ii) Observation of working practices to be established. <b>Reiterated as part of recent audit finding.</b>

### 3.3 Health and Safety Groups

3.3.1 A senior managers group and staff representatives' group for health and safety have been established and continue to meet to discuss relevant topics at the scheduled frequency. Items are raised and tracked as appropriate. H&S communications are being issued to staff via the One Team briefing, on noticeboards, as e-mails to relevant Supervisors and Managers and as news items on the H&S SharePoint Page.

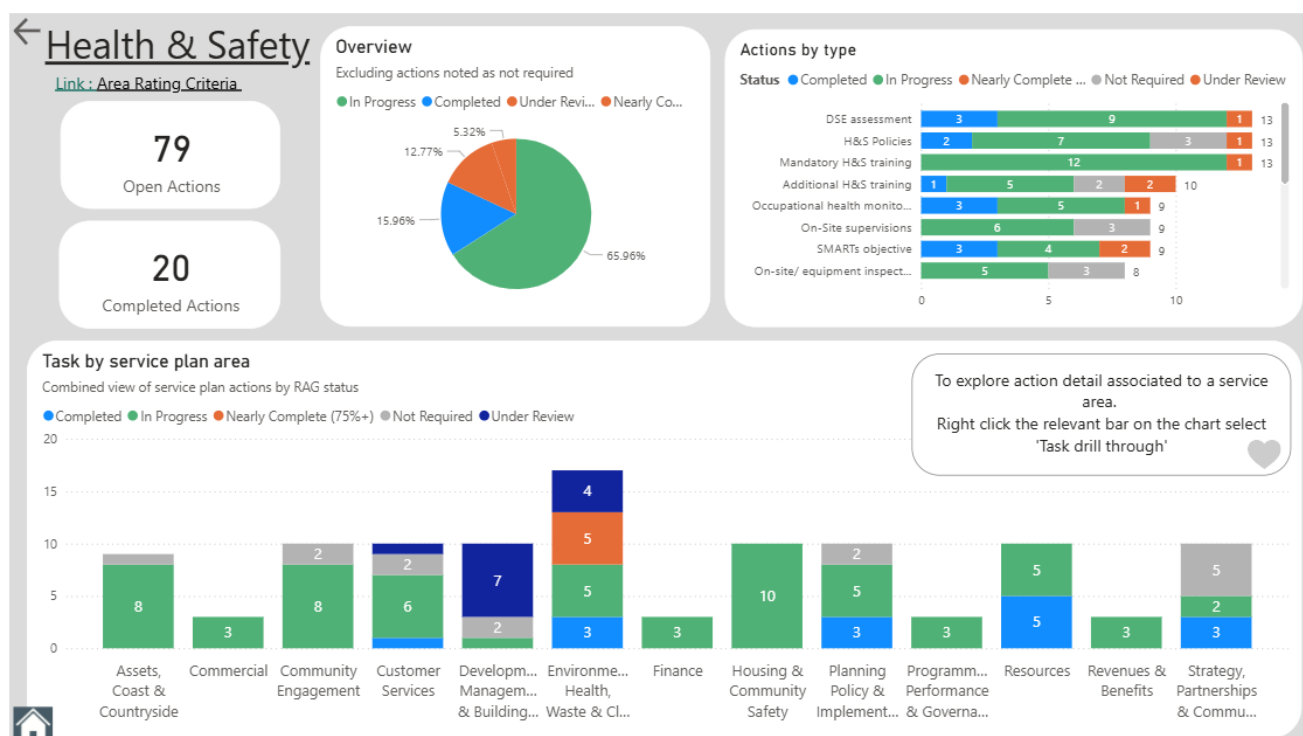
### 3.4 System Resources

3.4.1 Activities to embed health and safety within Corporate Service Plans are being refined. Service areas have been graded in accordance with their health and safety risks (see below) and assigned tasks in accordance with this. Performance against the ten key tasks is now being monitored but requires greater visibility. Work is being carried out to establish health and safety reporting as part of the 'balance scorecard' reporting process which will identify where progress is not sufficient and further focus is required.

**Table of Departmental Health and Safety Activities vs Risk Grading**

Risk Level	H&S Policies	Mandatory H&S training	DSE assessment	Risk assessment	SMARTs objective	Additional H&S training	On-site/ equipment inspections	On-Site supervisions	PPE issued where needed	Occupational health monitoring requirements
Low	✓	✓	✓	Under remit of Corporate H&S RA'S	H&S objectives available for use					
Medium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**Department defined performance against each assigned Health and Safety activity**



### 3.5 Fire Risk Assessments

3.5.1 A contractor is continuing to progress its review of fire risk assessments for the main offices and other MDC assets. Evacuation drills were performed at the main offices and depots. Actions were shared with relevant teams for the depot sites.

### 3.6 Policies and Procedures

3.6.1 The revised Health and Safety Policy was finalised and endorsed by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT). A report was prepared for and considered at the Strategy and Resources Committee held in January 2025.

### 3.7 Health and Safety Inspections

3.7.1 An inspection of Blackwater Leisure Centre was undertaken, and feedback provided to the centre manager regarding roof access arrangements. No further inspections were conducted in the period.

### 3.8 Legionella

3.8.1 The Council's contract with its current provider for the flushing and monitoring of water systems was reviewed by the assets and maintenance teams with input provided by the Corporate Health and Safety Manager.

### 3.9 Training

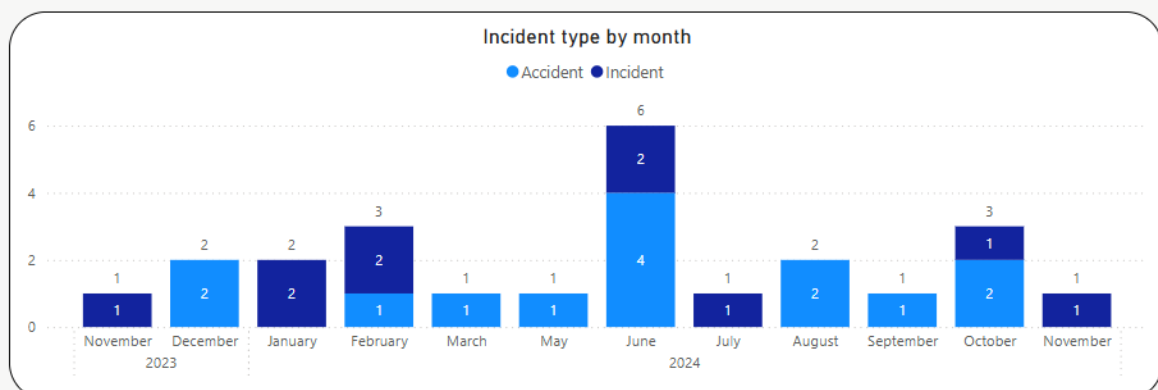
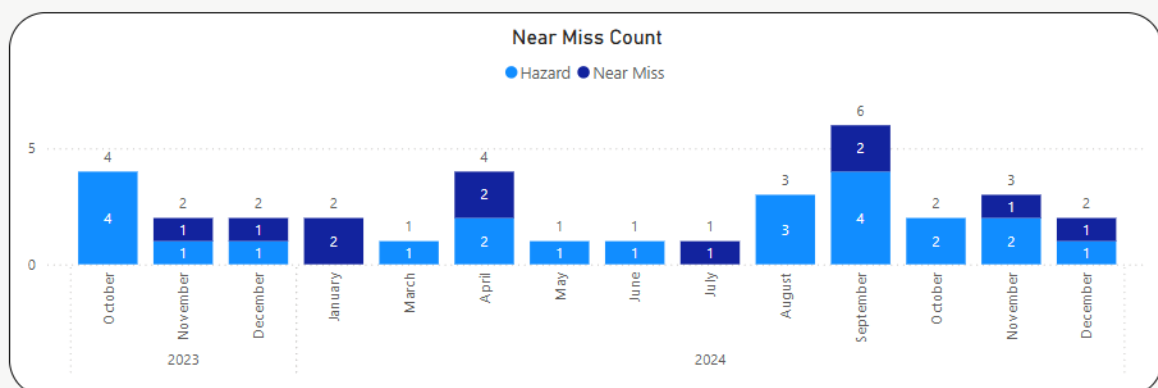
3.9.1 Departmental training has been agreed with a number of teams for the 2024 / 25 period. Corporate training is planned for Manual Handling and Ladder Safety with refresher sessions for Lone Working, Fire Warden and potentially, dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour. Toolbox talks for the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

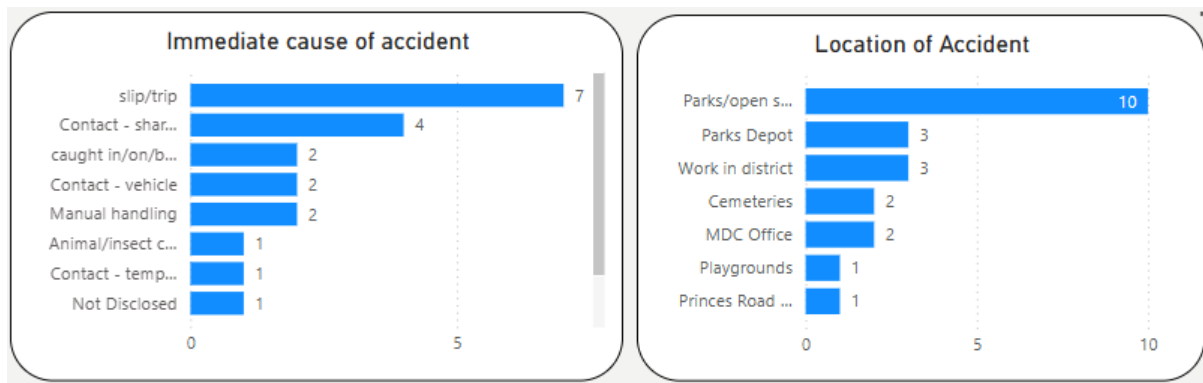
3.9.2 The e-learning training modules for H&S are now available on Connect & Learn. An initial three priority training modules are being trialled. All other training modules have been assigned to relevant staff groups and will be presented to Managers for their feedback shortly.

### 3.10 Accident-Near Miss Reporting

3.10.1 The number of accidents reported was slightly elevated compared to the previous quarter but was still low. The period saw a number of accidents by members of the public over which MDC has limited control.

## Health & Safety Reporting





### 3.11 Health and Safety Audit

- 3.11.1 In December, there were 3 targets due for the Health and Safety Audit Action Plan. These concern the cataloguing of risk assessments and revision to the accident and incident policy and reporting tools. These were all completed.
- 3.11.2 All risk assessments have been recorded on a central register and are in the process of being reviewed and updated by Head of Service / Managers.
- 3.11.3 The H&S Policy was finalised, a report completed and presented to the Strategy and Resources Committee held in January 2025.
- 3.11.4 The Accident and Near Miss reporting form was updated to include a section for where the incident was reported to a Manager prior to being submitted via the form in SharePoint.

### 3.12 Priorities going forward

- 3.12.1 The priorities for the next quarter will be to continue to focus on tasks set out in the Audit Action Plan including work to review, and revise where necessary policies and risk assessments. Work will continue on improving visibility and accountability for health and safety in work teams by ensuring that progress is monitored and reported through the Health and Safety Managers Group, CLT+ and the Performance, Governance and Audit (PGA) Committee.

## 4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Accidents, near misses and incidents of unacceptable behaviour during Q3 2024 / 25 have been set out within this report.
- 4.2 Proactive work on the main health and safety themes continues and good progress is being made.
- 4.3 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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