

HEALTH AND SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT (2024/25)

Introduction and Overview

The Council recognises that managing health and safety is as important as its professional and service responsibilities.

The purpose of the Council's health and safety statement and policy is to provide a framework from which a safe and healthy working environment can be maintained.

This is achieved by continuously following, developing, and reviewing safe systems of work for Officers, the general Public, Visitors, Members and Contractors.

While legislation exists which places a statutory duty on the Council as an organisation to ensure the above is maintained, all Officers, Visitors, Members, and Contractors should recognise that they also have a legal duty to adhere to all policies that are in place to protect their health and safety.

This health and safety report brought to this Full Council covers the period from April 2024 to April 2025; this will be described in this Annual Report as the financial year 2024/25.

1. Corporate Governance

Elected Members of the Council shall ensure that suitable resources are made available.

Whilst deploying the necessary strategic direction to implement the Council's health and safety responsibilities and monitor, via reports, the overall performance of the Council's health and safety management systems.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will take overall responsibility for health & safety across the Council and lead in setting corporate policy and direction.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are responsible for the management of risks at a strategic level.

The Heads of Service are accountable for ensuring the risks created by their service area's activities are managed. They particularly should ensure that risk assessments are being regularly carried out by those responsible for them.

The Managers, Team Leaders and other Supervisory Officers have day-to-day responsibility for managing the health and safety of the people under their control. This includes carrying out risk assessments and sharing them with the relevant people.

The Safety & Resilience Officer will be responsible for the distribution of information and advice for effective management on health and safety matters.

All Officers (Including those listed above)

Will:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by what they do and do not do.
- Follow any training they have received and take part in any health and safety training offered.

- Not intentionally, or recklessly, interfere with or misuse anything that serves to protect safety, health, or welfare.
- Co-operate with the Council in matters related to health and safety.
- Report any injuries, ill health or near misses immediately.
- Always follow all safe systems of work.
- Raise any concerns they have with their direct line manager if they think the work or inadequate controls are putting anyone's health and safety at serious risk.

2. Statistical Information

Accident Statistics: The tables below detail the number of accidents, incidents and near misses.

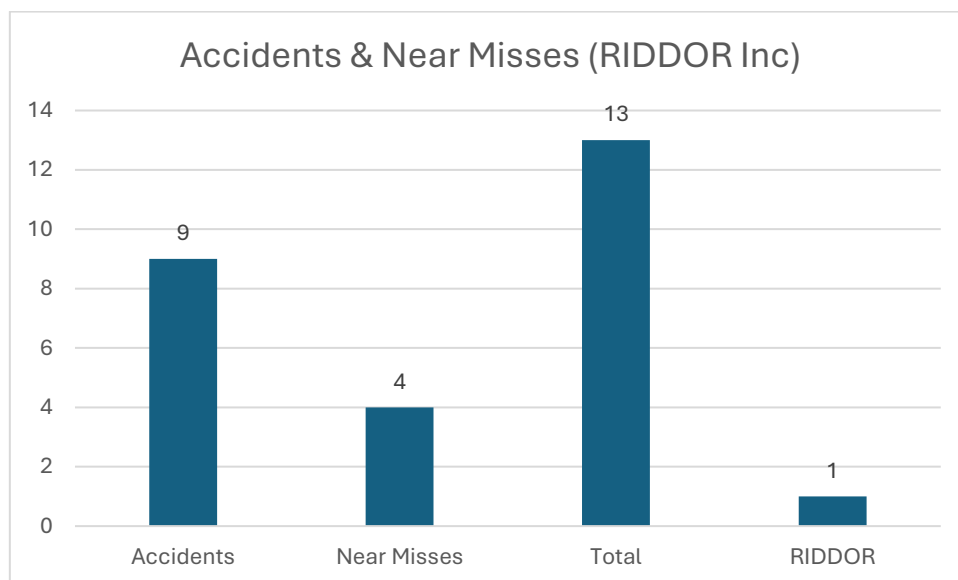


Table 1 2024-25 Accidents, Near Misses & RIDDOR

As shown above in **Table 1**, There were 9 accidents in 2024/25, 1 of which was reportable under RIDDOR, and 4 near misses, totalling 13 incidents.

In the previous year, 10 accidents occurred, 1 of which were reportable, and 21 near misses were recorded. This is a total of 31 incidents.

This means that we have seen a 10% reduction in accidents, an 81% reduction in near misses and RIDDOR remain constant with no change. This is a total reduction of 58% in incidents.



Table 2 Total Incidents by Service Area

In **Table 2** above, it is shown that 4 incidents related to Corporate Assets, 4 related to the Waste Operations, 2 related to Customer Services, 2 related to Democratic Services and 1 related to Strategic.

Operational teams typically record more incidents due to greater hazard exposure.

This is not to say the Council should expect to have incidents, but if they are occurring, this where they are likely to occur.

Investigations into the above resulted in altering the administrative controls and increasing training for service areas for example;

- Not storing materials under areas where bumps to the head could occur.
- Implementation of visual aids to prevent slips, trips and falls.
- Manual handling awareness training for operational staff

RIDDOR: There was one reportable accident in 2024-25: a canvasser that had their hand bitten by a dog while posting canvassing forms. As a result, additional training was given to canvassers about dog awareness via risk assessment, the risk assessment was updated and all canvassers are made aware of the risk assessment and sign it before taking canvassing documents to deliver.

3. Key Activities 2024/25

The following list shows several areas in which the Safety & Resilience Officer has supported in during the financial year of 2024-25. It is important to note these would have been possible to achieve without the cooperation and support from fellow Officers at all levels.

- Review of the risk assessment at Brocks Hill to improve the welfare facilities for the Volunteers.

- Review of the risk assessment at the Cemetery to improve the welfare facilities for the Sexton and assistant.
- Improved chemical store at the Depot to ensure compliance with the COSHH regulations.
- Improved housekeeping at the Depot.
- 89% of all serious AN defect reported by our insurance company across play parks have now been repaired, the remaining 11% are currently being actioned.
- 100% of all serious AN defect reported by our insurance company in the workshop have been repaired, also 100% of BD (Fix when reasonably practicable) defects have also been repaired within the workshop.
- **NB:** AN - *This status indicates a defect has been identified that poses (or could pose) a risk of injury.*
- Evacuation chair training has been completed at the Depot.
- The vehicle pit at the Depot has been defined as a confined space and progress is being made to ensure compliance with the Confined Space regulations, by the purchasing of equipment and training the relevant people in rescue from Confined Spaces.
- Operational awareness courses are complete and are being delivered (Health and Safety induction, Fire Awareness, COSHH Awareness, Manual Handling Awareness, HAVS Awareness, Noise Awareness, Lone Working Awareness & Working at Height Awareness), 150 certificates for the above have already been delivered with more to come this year.
- All external certification for courses such as first aid, fire Marshall etc are in date.
- An additional two members of staff have received IOSH Managing Safely training which contributes to a positive safety culture.
- ProtectUK training has been rolled out to all front facing staff which ensure compliance with Martyn's Law, further training for key partners is to be delivered.
- An audit of our Lone Working protection system was carried out by an external third party, of which we received Significant assurance which means that There is a generally sound framework of governance, risk management and control designed to meet the objectives of the system under review, and controls are generally being applied consistently.
- 16 Health and Safety policies have been approved and are live, with 13 others currently in the approval stage. Once these are approved, this will ensure that we have solid policies that all Officers can refer to, to ensure complete compliance with all legislation.

4. Risks

		Impact >				
		Negligible (1)	Minor (2)	Moderate (3)	Severe (4)	Major (5)
Likelihood >	Certain (5)					
	Likely (4)			2	4	1 & 3
	Possible (3)					
	Unlikely (2)					
	Rare (1)					

Risk No	Description
1	Ongoing compliance with our insurance reports and monitoring of defects. The next financial years round of inspections will begin soon and it is vital we ensure that any Defects are closed out in a timely manner.
2	Ongoing training schedule for operational staff which includes volunteers.
3	Continuous improvement at our operational site of the Depot is vital to ensuring the most severe accidents are avoided.
4	Occupational health programme is to be implemented in conjunction with HR.

5. Action Plan 2025/26

Following on from the highlighted areas of risk going into the financial year of 2025-26. The following actions will be completed.

1. Close off all AN defects promptly, make them safe, and conduct a risk assessment upon identification.
2. Continue scheduling operational and volunteer training until all required courses are delivered.
3. Monitor the depot via an action plan. Hold regular meetings to drive continuous improvement and resolve issues.
4. In conjunction with HR, the identification of employees who will require an occupational health surveillance programme will be carried out and implemented.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of health and safety at all levels is becoming increasingly important. The first reason above all others is that nobody should be injured in their line of work.

Second, there is a constant increase in costs associated with accidents and incidents, third the legal consequences can be felt at all levels if required and finally, the reputational impacts are huge.

The work that will take place in the coming financial year of 2025/26, will build upon the previous years of good work by all the Council's Officers and Members, and will lead to a more informed proactive and positive safety culture.