



Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority

Meeting and date: Fire Authority, 8 December 2021

Report title: Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2020/21

Lead Member: Councillor Keith McLean

Report sponsor: AC Calum Bell, Head of Protection, Assurance and Development

Author and contact: Ali Quinton, aquinton@bucksfire.gov.uk

Action: Noting

Recommendations: That the Authority note the health, safety and wellbeing performance as detailed in the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report for 2020/21.

Executive summary: The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report covers the period 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 including:

- COVID-19 pandemic
 - Statistical overview
 - Employee Wellbeing
 - Risk Management
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Financial implications: If risks are not managed and controlled effectively, they can potentially lead to serious injury and breaches of legislation which can have significant financial implications by way of claims or fines for the Authority. In terms of the pandemic, should the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) conduct a spot COVID audit which finds failings or if they receive a complaint from an employee, they will carry out an investigation and will issue fines to organisations who do not have the required social distancing, personal hygiene and cleaning regimes in place. There is also the potential for reputational damage.

Risk management: Risk management involves understanding, analysing and addressing risk to ensure the Service can achieve its objectives. The COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges in terms of managing the associated risks especially as some of the additional activities carried out by employees have been outside of their usual role. Robust measures remain in place across all authority sites to mitigate the risks to staff, visitors and contractors and to protect our staff when they are in the community, so far as is 'reasonably practicable'.

Legal implications: The safety management system is well embedded throughout the Service and its performance is subject to regular audit by peer fire and rescue

services to ensure it remains fit for purpose, as well as ensuring compliance with legislation. If this scrutiny does not take place, it is possible that breaches of health and safety legislation may occur. The pandemic initiated the implementation of additional legislation by the Government which the Service has and will continue to comply with. It has also highlighted the importance of adherence to Section 2 (Employer responsibilities) and Section 7 (Employee responsibilities) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Privacy and security implications: A Data Protection Impact Assessment for this report exists and has been reviewed. There are no personal details provided in this report and statistical data is generic rather than specific to protect the identity of those involved. The data collected as part of personal injury safety events is name, date of birth, gender and home address when required for Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) reporting – a legislative requirement.

Duty to collaborate: The additional activities undertaken by employees in the response to the pandemic have been part of wider collaboration between partner agencies and local authorities, these include South Central Ambulance (SCAS), Buckinghamshire Council and Milton Keynes Council. Additionally, a mutual assistance agreement was set up between the three Thames Valley fire and rescue services Health and Safety departments in terms of business continuity in the event of a loss of staff due to the pandemic.

Health and safety implications: Since the start of the pandemic the primary focus has been to mitigate the risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Procedures and guidance for staff have been implemented based on the Government’s ‘Working Safely with COVID-19’ documents. Risk assessments have been written and existing ones reviewed, and additional measures have been put in place to support staff in terms of mental health and wellbeing. Normal work activities and existing projects have continued wherever possible.

Environmental implications: N/A

Equality, diversity, and inclusion implications: The data collected as part of personal injury safety events is name, date of birth, gender and home address when required for RIDDOR reporting. Where the number of personal injury safety events is so low that there is the potential for affected individuals to be identified, they are reported generically rather than specifically.

Consultation and communication: As this is a report on Health, Safety and Wellbeing for the year 2020/21 there is no requirement to consult with other stakeholders.

Background papers:

Appendix	Title	Protective Marking
1	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2020/21	