

# Corporate Annual Health and Safety Report

Financial Year  
2022/23



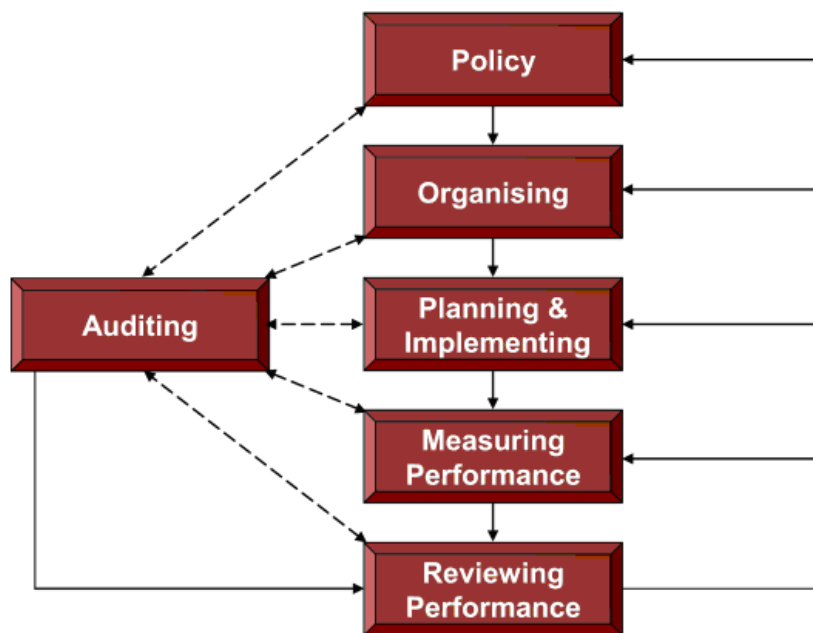
# CONTENTS

1. Summary
2. Corporate commitment to health and safety
3. Provision of competent health and safety advice and support
4. Systems in place to identify and assess risks to the organisation
5. Monitoring of contractors
6. Consultative arrangements
7. Corporate health and safety training
8. Proactive health and safety monitoring
9. Reactive health and safety monitoring
10. Progress against the action plan for 2022/23
11. Proposed plans and targets for 2023/24
12. Significant and emerging risks
13. Conclusion

# 1.0 Summary

Reviewing performance is an important part of health and safety management as it enables an organisation to learn from all relevant experience and apply the lessons. It is based on a systematic review of performance based on data from monitoring and audits of the whole health and safety management system.

Managing for health and safety (HSG65) a national standard for health and safety management, explains the plan, do, check, act approach and shows how it can help organisations like ours to achieve a balance between the systems and behavioural aspects of management. It also treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than as a stand-alone system.



In adopting this model, we ensure policies; procedures and systems are in place to meet the requirements of current legislation and best practice. Principal areas of work include an ongoing review of the safety management systems to ensure they are robust in light of legislation regarding corporate manslaughter and recommendations promoted by the Institute of Directors and Health and Safety Executive guidance ‘Leading Health & Safety at Work’ 2013.

Over the last fourteen years we have been working to strengthen the Council’s position in relation to health and safety management. This has been a process of gradually tightening up on our policies and procedures and ensuring that these remain relevant and up to date.

We now have improved systems for carrying out risk assessments and making sure that they are regularly reviewed; for tracking high risk lone workers; workstation assessments and for many other aspects of a good health and safety management system. The system remains live and continues to undergo a process of continuous improvement and review.

As noted in the body of this report, considerable work has taken place to ensure we remain ‘leading edge’ Councils from a health and safety perspective.



Our ongoing emphasis is on a sensible, risk-based approach, building health and safety into our normal way of working rather than regarding it as an 'add on' to ensure that we get it right and keep it that way.

The activities of the health and safety function have been previously subjected to a review by internal audit. Our arrangements have also been previously reviewed by Zurich our insurers who have categorised our approach to health and safety as good to best practice.

This report refers to key aspects of health and safety that occurred across High Peak Borough Council and Staffordshire Moorlands District Council. The report covers the period from the beginning of April 2022 to the end of March 2023.

The report also provides supporting statistical information in the appendices.

## 2. Corporate commitment to health and safety

Both Councils recognise their obligations under health and safety legislation and have declared their commitment to improving the health, safety and welfare of their employees and others within the corporate health and safety policy and supporting documentation.

Parts of the electronic health and safety portfolio have been reviewed during 2022-23. These reviews have taken account of changes in legislation, and changes in job titles, the policies that have been reviewed can be found in the body of this report.

Operational risk assessments must be continually reviewed to respond to challenges. Once reviewed these are shared with staff and the Trades Unions. A risk assessment challenge took place during this financial year, during which Heads of Service and others, reviewed their operational risk assessments.

All changes as above have been endorsed by the Alliance Leadership Team, and Corporate Health and Safety Compliance Group.



### 3. Provision of competent health and safety advice and support

The corporate health and safety function comprises of one post – being the full time 37-hour post held by the Corporate Health and Safety Manager, who manages the function. He is a Registered Safety Practitioner and Chartered Member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health and is a Graduate Member of the Institute of Fire Engineers.

The post holder is the ‘competent person’ as defined in the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.Regulation 7. He also leads on fire safety, emergency planning and business continuity planning across the two councils.

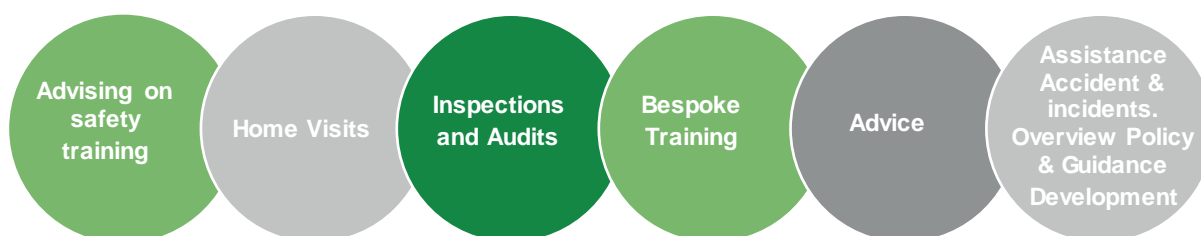
He oversees the operation of the policy and safety management system on behalf of the Chief Executive, and reports directly to him, they meet regularly.

When the Chief Executive is on leave, he reports to the Deputy Chief Executive.

He plays a vital role overseeing and promoting good health and safety management, ensuring accountability, and reviewing the way things are done. All actions are aimed at encouraging a positive safety culture within the Council, and that the function is seen as a tool to ensure goals are achieved and projects succeed, rather than being used as a restrictive one.

One of the key roles this year was to provide support and guidance to acting Heads of Service and others to assist them with understanding and then undertaking their duties and responsibilities in managing health and safety within their respective teams and to offer support and advice in respect of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Some of the support provided includes:



### 4. Systems in place to identify and assess risks

New or significant changes in policy are agreed by the Alliance Leadership Team, the Trades Unions and the Corporate Health and Safety Compliance Group.

The cornerstone of health and safety is risk assessment. The risk assessment process is embedded within the Electronic Safety Management System and training is provided as required to ensure competent persons are available to undertake appropriate risk assessments.

The Chief Executive and Heads of Service are nominated ‘Safety Champions’ across the two councils. This role includes being responsible for the general co-ordination, implementation and monitoring of the health and safety policy and performance within their respective service areas.

The introduction of ‘safety champions’ ensures that health and safety issues are considered for all major projects at the concept stage, where interaction is essential to maintain standards without incurring additional costs and ensure ownership of health and safety at service area level.

The Chief Executive chairs the Corporate Health and Safety Compliance Group.

## 5. Monitoring of contractors

The pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) assessments for health and safety are carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Manager. Other staff are involved in assessing quality, finance, and other elements of this proactive process. This approach rigorously assesses suitability of prospective contractors wanting to work for the Council.

Unannounced health and safety inspections and performance audits take place to ensure the activities of our contractors are regularly monitored. Issues of non-compliance are brought to the attention of the procurement/contract monitoring officer for rectification. With major contracts, regular progress meetings take place where health and safety is a standing agenda item.

On occasions where contractors are found to be working in a non-complaint way, meetings are set up to offer advice and guidance to ensure health and safety standards are improved. Where there are cases of repeated non-compliance, following our 'lessons learned' review, contractors are not invited to tender for works until they can demonstrate significant improvements have taken place.

On larger construction projects where the full application of the CDM (Construction Design and Management Regulations 2015) applies; additional monitoring of contracts is also carried out by Principal Designers and CDM Advisers who are engaged by the Assets Team, and by Alliance Norse..

The CDM Adviser role is not a legal requirement but does offer competent advice and support to those overseeing major construction projects.

Several site audits and inspection of contractors working for both councils have taken place this financial year, the details can be found later in paragraph 8.1 of this report.

Most of the outcomes of the health and safety inspections and audits have been generally good.

## 6. Consultative arrangements

The Corporate Health and Safety Compliance Group is chaired by the Chief Executive and includes representatives from all medium to high-risk areas across the two councils, trades union, and staff representatives.

Microsoft Teams facilities are used during these meetings to reduce mileage and officer time.

The group has worked so far within the spirit of co-operation with consultation taking place on several key subjects including:

- Outcomes of planned health and safety inspections, internal and external
- Fire risk assessment findings, required actions, required improvements, and funding.
- Discussing issues of non-compliance
- Discussion and approval of revisions to corporate policies.
- Fire Authority Involvement at HPBC
- Health and Safety Compliance Audit Outcomes- 7
- Monitoring accident and near miss statistics, trends.
- Highlighting contractor management/ compliance/performance issues
- Water Safety Risk Assessments -HPBC
- Promoting health and safety across the two Councils
- Introduction of monthly fire safety checks in general needs housing accommodation
- Implications of the Social Housing White Paper, and the introduction of the Fire Safety Act 2021, Building Safety Act 2022 and the Fire Safety (England) Act 2022.
- Discussions relating to events taking place across the two Councils.

- Discussing mental health and well-being initiatives.

Four meetings are planned for the year 2023/24 coinciding with the Emergency Planning Compliance Group.

## 7. Corporate health and safety training

Each year the Corporate Health and Safety Manager organises, develops, and delivers several health and safety and emergency planning training courses. The courses are run throughout the year and are available to all staff.

Staff training is provided in line risk and in accordance with the Council's health and safety training matrix, to ensure our staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfil their roles.

Some training is provided 'on line' In this way training is given at a time convenient for the person being trained and gives us evidence that confirms those receiving the training have read and understood it.

This method of training reduces the resources required to deliver these courses and the time employees are away from their duties and provides evidence that the training has taken place.

With the lifting of COVID restrictions more face to face training took place during this year.

Further refresher training took place on fire safety at home, ergonomic safety, and safe DSE set up took place, for those 85% of our staff who are agile working from home.

Several specific health and safety courses and 3 civil protection courses were delivered throughout the year with 1150 training places provided and taken.

The courses provided included, adverse weather, working from home, accident reporting, inspection training, fire extinguisher in use training, first aid in the office, asbestos awareness, driving on council business, CDM Client duties awareness training, DSE Guidance, combatting work related stress, mental health first aid, and fire safety on line training.

## 8. Proactive health and safety monitoring

### 8.1 Audits

Health and safety audits are undertaken to identify, monitor and eradicate any potential risks associated with unsuitable equipment and/or procedures, and ensure compliance.

7 compliance audit/inspections took place of contractors working for us namely, A T Bone Ltd a contractor carrying out civil engineering works at Glossop Cemetery. Parkinson's PLC working on the refurbishment of Glossop Market Hall, Jackson and Jackson Ltd carrying out property rendering works in the HPBC area, and Restoration Projects carrying out restoration works at the Pavilion Gardens.

Full compliance audits took place of AES Alliance Environmental Services, the High Peak Theatre Trust who manage Buxton Opera House, a CDM Client compliance audit took place of Galliford Try the Principal Contractor constructing the Fairfield Common Roundabout.

The outcomes of most of the audits were good, with the outcomes requiring some improvements to a greater or lesser degree. In all cases follow up meetings have taken place to monitor progress, and there have been no occasions where the responses received have warranted further escalation or action.

All of the audit reports have been shared with the Alliance Leadership Team, the outcomes are also discussed at the Risk Management Group and the Corporate Health and Safety Compliance Group meetings.

## 8.2 Inspections

The purpose of workplace inspections is to proactively identify any safety issues that require remedial action, and to ensure we comply with legislation.

58 proactive workplace health and safety inspections, and 5 inspections of contractors' sites have taken place across the two councils.

The frequency of these inspections has been previously agreed with the Health and Safety Executive and is seen as 'about right' for the risks involved. These inspections have highlighted areas where improvements have been made and conversely highlight improvements to be made. This enables the two councils to manage, limit, and where possible, offset their potential for liability.

The regime of planned inspections includes all corporate buildings, parks, leisure centres and swimming pools; this coupled with site visits that highlight that our Council controlled companies and partners are working in accordance with industry standards. Where issues of non-compliance have been highlighted subsequent meetings have taken place to prioritise the actions required. Issues of non-compliance are also brought to the attention of our service partners at their operational meetings.

In addition to the corporate regime of health and safety inspections, monthly fire safety checks and quarterly health and safety inspections take place at the Retirement Living Complexes at High Peak Borough Council, and in the parking areas of all Leisure Centres. 22 inspections now take place a year.

All staff carrying out these inspections have been trained by the author of this report, and the processes work well.

### Closed Churchyards

In addition to the detail above 8 health and safety inspections and 1 pre transfer inspection of closed churchyards in the High Peak and Staffordshire Moorlands took place to support the Head of Service Commissioning.

Once a Church of England Churchyard closes for burials, the liability and maintenance of them mostly passes on to the Council under the 1972 Local Government Act.

A significant amount of work will be required to address many of the items raised, however it is hoped that in partnership with the Parochial Church Councils' and the diocese, closed churchyards can be effectively managed, and the significant risks, reduced, managed, or addressed.

The outcomes of the inspections are shared with the Head of Service Commissioning, the Parochial Church Council and Incumbent.

AES have site risk assessments for all of the closed churchyards, these are updated regularly.

## 9. Reactive health and safety monitoring

### 9.1 Accident and assault statistics

All accidents resulting in lost time 7 days or more that occurred across the two councils were investigated and corrective and preventative measures put in place as required. These are reported to



the Health and Safety Executive in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations.

A summary of accident information and accident category type is attached in the appendices at the end of this report.

There were 13 verbal assaults to staff. All Customer Services staff have received conflict resolution training, other key staff are to be offered this training.

The Non-Lost Time accident categories were, where two staff had slipped tripped or fell, one was a trapped finger, two were manual handling, and one resulted in a member of staff being sprayed with sap in the face whilst strimming.

New finer grade mesh face guards have been issued as a result of this accident.

|  | Alliance accidents |
|--|--------------------|
| (HSE) RIDDOR Reportable-LTA              | 1                  |
| NLT - (HSE) RIDDOR Reportable            | 6                  |
| Verbal Threats/Near Misses/Property fire | 13                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             | <b>20</b>          |

## Accidents to Members of the Public

There have been 4 accidents involving members of the public on sites for which the Councils are responsible.

All of the accidents resulted in the injured persons slip, tripping or falling. All sustained minor injuries resulting in first aid, and a toddler receiving dental treatment.

3 accidents occurred in locations managed by High Peak Borough Council, two occurred at the Pavilion Gardens and one at New Street, New Mills on a set of steps on housing land, and 1 at Brough Park in Leek where a lady slipped.

## Lost Time Accidents

A lost time accident refers to any incident that results in keeping an employee away from work for any period of time, as well as permanent disabilities and conditions that may prevent an employee from ever returning to the job or performing their regular work tasks.

1 lost time accident occurred to one of the Housing Repairs Caretaker during the clearing of a garden in a void property. A full and detailed investigation took place, and discussions took place with our insurers. Support was given to the employee whilst he was off work, and a detailed report was submitted to the Health and Safety Executive.

The employee transferred to the new Council controlled company in July 2022 and has since resigned from their employment.

| Service Area           | Lost days | Injury                      |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| Housing Repairs Team   | 97        | Manual handling and lifting |
| <b>Total days lost</b> | <b>97</b> |                             |

## 9.2 Enforcement notices, Fee for Intervention costs

Our relationship with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and two Fire Authorities continued to be good in 2022-23, with no enforcement action or intervention from them.

Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service have a new fire safety team. In order to ensure we maintain the good and established working relationship with them they were invited into the Council to familiarise themselves with the fire safety arrangements in place.

The outcomes of the visits were all good. The author of this report is a member of the Derbyshire Fire and Rescue's Housing Providers Fire Safety Group and meets with them quarterly to share best practise.

They also use Council buildings for exercising, this assists them in being familiar with our buildings, prior to any fire situation.

There have been no visits from Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service.

## 9.3 Dangerous Occurrences - Diseases

There were no dangerous occurrences reported during the period 2022-2023.

## 9.4 Achievement awards

The Council has not actively pursued any external achievement awards during 2022-23.

# 10. Actions undertaken during 2022/23

| Council                            | Title of Corporate/Service Objective  | Result of Action     | Priority H/M/L | Link to Corporate Plan  | Start Date | Deadline for completion | Lead Officer | Progress |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|----------------|---|------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Corporate Health and Safety</b> |   |                      |                |   |            |                         |              |          |
| <b>Policy</b>                      |   |                      |                |   |            |                         |              |          |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Review the Health and Safety Policy to reflect changes.   | Statutory Compliance | Medium         | All Aims  | Apr-2022   | Mar-2023                | DGO          | Achieved |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Review Electronic Health and Safety Portfolio regarding changes in legislation, structural changes. | Statutory Compliance | Medium         | All Aims  | Apr-2022   | Mar-2023                | DGO          | Achieved |
| <b>Measuring Performance</b>       |   |                      |                |   |            |                         |              |          |
| HPBC                               | Carry out an inspection of Cromford Court and Eccles Fold.  | Statutory Compliance | Medium         | Ensuring a Safe Place of Work and ensuring housing is fit for purpose | Apr-2022   | Mar-2023                | DGO          | Achieved |

|             |  |  |      |   |          |          |     |          |
|-------------|--|--|------|---|----------|----------|-----|----------|
| HPBC & SMDC | Carry out Fire Risk Assessments in all Corporate buildings, and at Eccles Fold and Cromford Court. | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/fire incidents | High | Ensuring a Safe Place of Work and ensuring housing is fit for purpose | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved |
| HPBC & SMDC | Carry out accident investigations over 7 day accidents   | Statutory Compliance-Limit liability                     | High | All Aims  | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved |
| HPBC & SMDC | Maintain a regime of planned Health and Safety Inspections   | Statutory Compliance                                     | High | All Aims  | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved |

## Planning

|             |   |   |        |  |          |          |     |                                 |
|-------------|---|---|--------|--|----------|----------|-----|---------------------------------|
| HPBC & SMDC | Develop at least 6 Tool Box Talks -Safety Alerts- News from the Court Briefings | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved 8                      |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Reduce accidents to less than <20 and reducing RIDDOR reportable to 0.          | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC        | Carry out 5 health and safety inspections of general needs housing units.       | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | Ensuring housing is safe and fit for purpose             | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Review the Arson Fire risk assessments 4 until properties are sold.             | Statutory Compliance                                | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Carry out health and safety training for housekeeping staff                     | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Not possible due to COVID 19    |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Carry out unannounced site inspections- contractors                             | Contractor Monitoring-Statutory Compliance          | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved 4                      |
| HPBC        | Carry out fire risk assessment training for the Housing Team                    | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Ensuring housing is fit for purpose/investing in staff   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Provide fire extinguisher training as required                                  | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| SMDC        | Carry out refresher workplace inspection training for Scheme Coordinators       | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2021 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC        | Carry out training for the Housing Repairs Team and Caretakers                  | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Review the Fire Safety Policy- in the wake of the Grenfell Tower Report         | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | High   | All Aims   | Nov-2023 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved                        |
| HPBC/ SMDC  | Review the Lone Worker Policy, response arrangements.                           | Statutory Compliance                                | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Awaiting new lone worker system |

|               |  |                      |        |  |          |          |     |   |
|---------------|--|----------------------|--------|--|----------|----------|-----|---|
| HPBC/<br>SMDC | Follow up complex ergonomic DSE-Self Assessments   | Statutory Compliance | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved  |
| HPBC          | Develop and deliver a Health and Safety Training Package for Carelink Staff                              | Statutory Compliance | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Not achieved  |
| HPBC/<br>SMDC | Develop and deliver an in depth asbestos training for the Assets Team and Parkwood                       | Statutory Compliance | High   | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved  |
| HPBC/<br>SMDC | Deliver health and safety inspection training for Parkwood staff carrying out inspections on our behalf. | Statutory Compliance | High   | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Not achieved due to staff changes and COVID restrictions. |
| HPBC/<br>SMDC | Carry out 6 water safety risk assessments  | Statutory Compliance | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved 15   |
| HPBC/<br>SMDC | Complete health and safety inspections of partner organisations.   | Statutory Compliance | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved but some were delayed.                           |

### Audit and Reviewing of Performance

|                |  |                      |      |   |          |          |     |              |
|----------------|--|----------------------|------|---|----------|----------|-----|--------------|
| HPBC &<br>SMDC | Carry out 7 Health and Safety Performance Audits - AES/Buxton Opera House.                                   | Statutory Compliance | High | Audit and Reviewing of Performance                              | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Achieved     |
| HPBC           | Carry out a health and safety compliance audit of the Leisure functions - Parkwood.                          | Statutory Compliance | High | All Aims  | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Not achieved |
| HPBC           | Carry out an audit to ensure fire risk assessments have been carried out in communal areas of housing blocks | Statutory Compliance | High | Ensuring housing is safe and fit for purpose/investing in staff | Apr-2022 | Mar-2023 | DGO | Not achieved |

### Other additional key actions

- Responded to three Councillor and 1 residents' complaints
- Developed Tool Box Talks
- Developed fire safety awareness signage, cards, and posters.
- Arranged familiarisation meeting with DFRS Fire Safety Team
- Gave advice on the (QBR) Queens Baton Run event
- Developed and presented Asbestos In Depth Training
- Gave fire safety advice to Parkwood Leisure
- Gave technical advice regarding fire alarm systems-Moorlands House and Municipal Buildings
- Attended the Derbyshire Water Safety Partnership meetings
- Developed 8 water safety risk assessments
- Chaired the Derbyshire Safety Group 2022-23
- Supported the Operation London Bridge arrangements- HM Queen's Funeral
- Revised the First Aid Policy
- Revised the Health and Safety Training Matrix
- Gave advice on the First Aid training module for staff
- Arranged winter preparedness 4 x 4 training
- Carried out radon monitoring HPBC and SMDC

- Completed the COVID Inquiry surveys with the Head of Organisational Development
- Developed and presented Duty Manager PowerPoint training
- Represented SMDC at National Exercise Flood EX 2022
- Carried out the AES Health and Safety compliance audit
- Re-wrote the Fire Safety Management Policy
- Provided Fire risk assessment training
- Participated in Exercise Pinecone
- Was involved in Winter pressures work
- Revise fire risk assessment form for housing fire risk assessments.
- Develop fire safety related articles for housing newsletter.
- Issued guidance regarding the Fire Brigade Union strike
- Develop a new fire log book.
- Revise home worker tool box talk
- Revised the corporate business continuity plans.
- Carried out 7 Enhanced DSE assessments

## 11. Plans and targets for 2023/24

| Council                            | Title of Corporate/Service Objective  | Result of Action  | Priority H/M/L | Link to Corporate Plan  | Start Date | Deadline for completion | Lead Officer | Progress |
|------------------------------------|---|---|----------------|---|------------|-------------------------|--------------|----------|
| <b>Corporate Health and Safety</b> |   |   |                |   |            |                         |              |          |
| <b>Policy</b>                      |   |   |                |   |            |                         |              |          |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Review the Health and Safety Policy to reflect changes.   | Statutory Compliance                                    | Medium         | All Aims  | Apr-2023   | Mar-2024                | DGO          |          |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Review Electronic Health and Safety Portfolio regarding changes in legislation, structural changes. | Statutory Compliance                                    | Medium         | All Aims  | Apr-2023   | Mar-2024                | DGO          |          |
| <b>Measuring Performance</b>       |   |   |                |   |            |                         |              |          |
| HPBC                               | Carry out an inspection of Cromford Court and Eccles Fold.  | Statutory Compliance                                    | Medium         | Ensuring a Safe Place of Work and ensuring housing is fit for purpose | Apr-2023   | Mar-2024                | DGO          |          |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Carry out Fire Risk Assessments in all Corporate buildings, and at Eccles Fold and Cromford Court.  | Statutory Compliance/Reduction in claims/fire incidents | High           | Ensuring a Safe Place of Work and ensuring housing is fit for purpose | Apr-2023   | Mar-2024                | DGO          |          |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Carry out accident investigations over 7-day accidents  | Statutory Compliance-Limit liability                    | High           | All Aims  | Apr-2023   | Mar-2024                | DGO          |          |
| HPBC & SMDC                        | Maintain a regime of planned Health and Safety Inspections  | Statutory Compliance                                    | High           | All Aims  | Apr-2023   | Mar-2024                | DGO          |          |
| <b>Planning</b>                    |   |   |                |   |            |                         |              |          |

|             |  |   |        |  |          |          |                    |                               |
|-------------|--|---|--------|--|----------|----------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| HPBC & SMDC | Develop at least 6 Tool Box Talks -Safety Alerts- News from the Court Briefings  | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Reduce accidents to less than <20 and reducing RIDDOR reportable to 0.   | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Review the Arson Fire risk assessments 4 until properties are sold.  | Statutory Compliance                                | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Carry out health and safety training for housekeeping staff  | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Carry out unannounced site inspections- contractors Council Controlled Companies   | Contractor Monitoring- Statutory Compliance         | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Provide fire extinguisher training and risk assessment as required   | Statutory Compliance/ Reduction in claims/incidents | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Review the Lone Worker Policy, once a new system is operational.   | Statutory Compliance                                | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO and Head of OD |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Follow up complex ergonomic DSE-Self Assessments   | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Provide contractor evaluation training   | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                | Done 24.04.23                 |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Deliver health and safety inspection training for Parkwood and other staff carrying out car park or other inspections on our behalf. | Statutory Compliance                                | High   | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr      | Mar-2024 | DGO                | Done 20th and 21st April 2023 |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Carry out 8 water safety risk assessments.   | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Provide IOSH Managing Safely Training for Heads of Service   | Statutory Compliance                                | Medium | Legal Compliance and Ensuring a well-motivated workforce | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |
| HPBC/S MDC  | Complete health and safety inspections of partner organisations.   | Statutory Compliance                                | High   | All Aims   | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                |                               |

### Audit and Reviewing of Performance

|             |   |                      |      |   |          |          |                                |                |
|-------------|---|----------------------|------|---|----------|----------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| HPBC & SMDC | Carry out 1 Health and Safety Performance Audits - The Springs Centre or Parkwood Leisure Centre  | Statutory Compliance | High | Audit and Reviewing of Performance                      | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO                            |                |
| HPBC        | Develop an audit protocol that ensure the Council is meeting the new fire safety requirements, and the requirements detailed within the social housing act. | Statutory Compliance | High | All aims and including compliance with new legislation. | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO Head of Housing and Assets | Done June 2023 |

|      |  |                      |      |  |          |          |     |                 |
|------|--|----------------------|------|--|----------|----------|-----|-----------------|
| HPBC | Carry out an audit to ensure fire risk assessments have been carried out in communal areas of housing blocks | Statutory Compliance | High | Ensuring housing is safe and fit for purpose/ investing in staff | Apr-2023 | Mar-2024 | DGO | Done April 2023 |
|------|--|----------------------|------|--|----------|----------|-----|-----------------|

## 12. Significant and emerging risks

### Significant risks within the Council

Due to the diverse work of the Council, a variety of potential risks are present.

#### Asbestos

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As asbestos in many forms is prevalent in many Council buildings and our housing stock, we must ensure that the asbestos is risk assessed, surveys are provided, and management carries out annual inspections where this is required under our 'duty to manage'. This is to ensure that the asbestos stock remains safe and is well managed.

Management surveys are also carried out in communal areas of retirement living complexes, general needs accommodation, and refurbishment and demolition surveys domestic properties where construction work is carried out.

Our corporate policy on the management of asbestos details the arrangements for managing asbestos. Individual responsibilities are allocated within the policy.

Following the formation of Alliance Norse our current Asbestos Policy requires updating to ensure the new arrangements for ensuring compliance are reflected in it.

The Interim Head of Assets is leading on this along with the development of an asbestos management plan, and an asbestos register, supported by the Assets Team and colleagues from Alliance Norse.

Several new asbestos 'management surveys' were provided during 2022-23.

The management of asbestos across the two Councils is managed by the Assets Team supported by Alliance Norse and competent contractors.

One member of the Assets Team and a staff member within Alliance Norse holds the nationally recognised P405-The Management of Asbestos in Buildings course. This ensures key staff have the practical knowledge and skills to manage asbestos in buildings and have a sound knowledge base to audit asbestos removal projects.

Where it is cost effective and practicable to do so, and as part of major refurbishment projects the removal of higher asbestos containing materials is considered to reduce the risk of exposure. Removals will be undertaken by licensed contractors.

#### Legionella

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Our corporate policy on the management of Legionella was updated and issued in January 2021.

It is currently being reviewed again by the interim Head of Assets, to reflect the new working arrangements with our Council controlled company Alliance Norse.

Given that there is a risk of Legionella developing in our water systems, we must ensure that the risk of Legionella is assessed, and management (through our contractors) carry out annual inspections, temperature readings, and treatment and replacement of systems as required.

Alliance Norse, and their contractors now carry out all monitoring for us through their preferred contractors – Alliance Norse Ltd use their agent Houseman Environmental.

Our Alliance Norse, property services team and Houseman Environmental (for non-corporate properties) carry out regular monitoring to ensure full compliance with the policy. Surveys and risk assessments are reviewed regularly, and temperature monitoring is carried out monthly by trained persons.

Considerable work was also undertaken, and is continuing, in areas such as asbestos management and Legionella management. The regular inspection regime and follow up audits, along with the development of an Asset Management Plan, are assisting us in progressing with the required improvements in these areas. This is an important step towards minimising the risks posed by these health hazards.

Those fulfilling roles as detailed within the policy.

New legionella risk assessments will be commissioned in 2022. Competent support in this area now forms part of our joint venture with Alliance Norse which is monitored by the Assets Team.

## Fire Safety

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Given the age and condition of some of the Council buildings a low to medium risk of fire exists.

From 2005 there was a legal requirement on Councils to carry out fire risk assessments and review these annually, that requirement was updated in 2021.

This, process along with the building condition surveys, statutory testing, regular inspections, and staff training, helps us to mitigate fire risks.

In 2023 the Fire Safety Management policy was again updated, by the author of this report and a new fire risk assessment pro forma introduced. These changes came about following the introduction of the Fire Safety Act, 2021, The Building Safety Act 2021, and The Fire Safety (England) Act 2022.

In addition to this with the introduction of the Social Housing Bill ( to be made an act in 2023) High Peak Borough Council in particular will now have to evidence the following, where the fire safety legislation, and Social Housing ( Bill) Act applies.

- Fire risk assessments are in place, and these are reviewed annually or after material change or a fire situation.
- External wall inspections, and balcony inspections following the PAS9980 standard are carried out
- Flat entrance fire door inspections, where two or more properties share a communal corridor are carried out, and defects are addressed. This also applies to leasehold properties
- Tenants must be regularly consulted on fire safety issues, requiring the Council to detail how they will ensure their homes are safe.
- Fire safety signage must be updated to reflect the specific evacuation strategy, and other fire safety issues, such as fire safety on balconies.
- Develop a monitoring protocol that will assist the Council in confirming it is meeting the above requirements.

All our Retirement Living Complexes (High Peak Borough Council), and all our corporate buildings and communal areas of flats, have a detailed fire risk assessment these are reviewed regularly.

It is anticipated that the planned L1 Part 6 fire alarm improvements at Queens Court, Fairfield, Cromford Court, Whaley Bridge, Eccles Fold, Chapel en le Frith, and Marian Court, Buxton will be



complete by the end of this financial year. The other Retirement Living Complexes will be completed by 2024.

For corporate buildings the findings of the fire risk assessments are shared with the Assets Team who raise issues requiring action with Alliance Norse.

Employees are provided with regular fire safety training and 274 employees have received 'fire safety on line' training over the last 12 months.

A common theme across our corporate buildings and partner buildings relates to; old fire detection systems requiring replacement, or an increased regime of servicing, a need to introduce recorded inspections of fire doors, upgrade fire doors, carry out compartmentation surveys, and improve fire spread generally by improving compartmentation standards.

We liaise regularly with both Fire and Rescue Services, this approach has led to a positive working arrangement, with no advisory letters or enforcement issues.

During this financial year there have been no near misses or fires in any of our corporate buildings.

### **Domestic Housing property fires**

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There was a fire in a HPBC domestic property at Whitwell Green, Gamesley.

As this property had a sprinkler system installed the damage caused by the fire was minimal, and the tenant suffered no injuries.

### **Radon**

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Radon levels at Buxton Town Hall are currently maintained at a level below the average action level of 300 Becquerels.

The 32-year-old radon remediation system is serviced by a specialist contractor every spring, with filters changed every six months. There have been no significant issues with the radon remediation unit this year.

Ongoing radon monitoring will be carried out throughout the year to monitor radon trends.

Previously radon levels in the Staffordshire Moorlands area have been very low, a further check of these was carried out during winter 2022, the outcomes in every case resulted in low readings with no further action required.

Radon in corporate buildings is overseen by the author of this report, and further reports are issued as the results are received and remedial action is taken as is required by the external contractor.

Radon in the HPBC housing stock is managed by the Assets Team supported by a competent contractor through Alliance Norse.

### **Home Working**

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With 85% of our workforce are working from home, guidance has been developed and issued to ensure our staff remain safe whilst working at home.

This has included:

- Enabling staff to take furniture and ICT equipment home to enable them to work from home
- Heads of Service reviewing deadlines to potentially re-order work priorities where appropriate.

- The development of an Agile Working Policy to offer some staff the option of continuing to part work from home utilise homeworking where appropriate.
- Ensuring Self DSE Assessments are carried out, and the actions from these are progressed.
- Supporting staff to work safely at home, enabling them to work their hours around home demands where operationally possible.
- Issuing fire safety and first aid guidance to staff to ensure the fire safety and first aid arrangements at the 'work place' are not compromised.
- The Council has also responded to ensuring staff working from home are not compromising their musculoskeletal health. This was achieved by producing a revised homeworkers checklist for staff, tool box talks, safe systems of work and has included several home visits.
- If staff cannot afford to work from home given the increase in heating/living costs, or have feelings of social isolation, our employees also have the option to work from any of the offices.

## Employee Well Being

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The Councils are committed to improving and sustaining the health and wellbeing of its employees, through supporting a healthy and productive workforce that is highly engaged with the overall objectives of the Council.

We do this by placing importance on preventative health initiatives, providing tools and support to encourage people to stay fit, happy, and healthy.

### Flu Vaccinations

During last winter, 93 employees had free flu vaccinations arranged by the Council.

### Musculoskeletal and ergonomic issues

We continue to recognise that musculoskeletal problems can be a reason for sickness.

We continue to encourage staff to complete the Self DSE assessment process and seek professional support where issues of concern are highlighted. 7 ergonomic home visits took place during the last financial year to ensure staff are not a risk from musculoskeletal and other problems.

2 staff were referred to Occupational Health and as a result, reasonable adjustments in both cases were put in place.

### Mental Health and Wellbeing

Both Councils recognise that mental ill-health is a health and safety issue for both Heads of Service, and employees; it acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing work place stressors wherever possible.

A mental health awareness training session took place in September 2019 and subsequent training has recently been provided for staff who are our designated 'mental health first aiders'.

Our staff and mental health first aiders have access to the staff support facility through to Occupational Health should they require this.

The purpose of this role is threefold, being able to recognise the early signs and symptoms of common workplace mental health illnesses, having the necessary skills to have a supportive, non-judgmental conversation with those who need it, and possessing the knowledge and confidence to guide colleagues to the appropriate professional support if they require it.

For those staff agile working, we have maintained a regular dialogue with staff through tool box talks and the 'Keeping you Informed' electronic newsletter, and the Monthly Team Briefings' who may have been affected by home working, and potential mental health concerns, issuing guidance on where to find help and support.

### Occupational Health support

The external Occupational Health provider has continued to meet the organisation's requirements for dealing with and promoting health at work issues.

The core functions of Occupational Health are work-health assessment screening, support, sickness absence management and health promotion.

The Occupational Health service also provides a proactive health surveillance programme.

60 referrals have taken place this year. 12 were stress/ mental health related- please note of the stress/ mental health it was 8 employees 4 of which had further appointments.

## 13. Conclusion

I am pleased to produce my fifteenth Annual Health and Safety Report for 2022-23.

We have come a long way in establishing our Electronic Health and Safety Portfolio in 2009 and have embedded a 'positive safety culture' across the two councils.

As the focus on service delivery changes to those of a service commissioning body, we must continue to develop our existing positive safety culture, to ensure that it will be robust enough to positively impact on the environments in which our staff work.

We must all strive to further reduce the numbers of incidents within our work places and stand up to scrutiny from both external enforcing authorities and internal scrutiny, whilst providing a sensible and cost-effective approach to managing risk.

It is imperative that we continue to ensure and demonstrate that our staff have the skills, knowledge, training, and experience to fulfil their respective roles. We must ensure those commissioning services have the skills to act as the competent Client.

Being able to demonstrate a commitment to health and safety, competency through effective record keeping is vital to any defence.

We are now in a good position to be able to demonstrate we have a good health and safety record; however, we must not lose focus or become complacent, and must remain ready to prepare for future changes in legislation and guidance and respond to these accordingly.



Among our biggest challenges ahead relates to our ability to evidence full compliance in the wake of the introduction of three pieces of fire safety /building safety legislation, and the introduction of the Social Housing Act during the next financial year.

It is imperative that we have systems and procedures in place that enable us to be in a position to confirm our compliance, as failure to do so could result in enforcement action, and a negative affect on our reputation.

The continued support and leadership of the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Heads of Service, Managers, staff, and Elected Members is the key to driving forward health and safety standards. This in turn assists us in reducing accidents, reducing ill health, and improving the working environment.

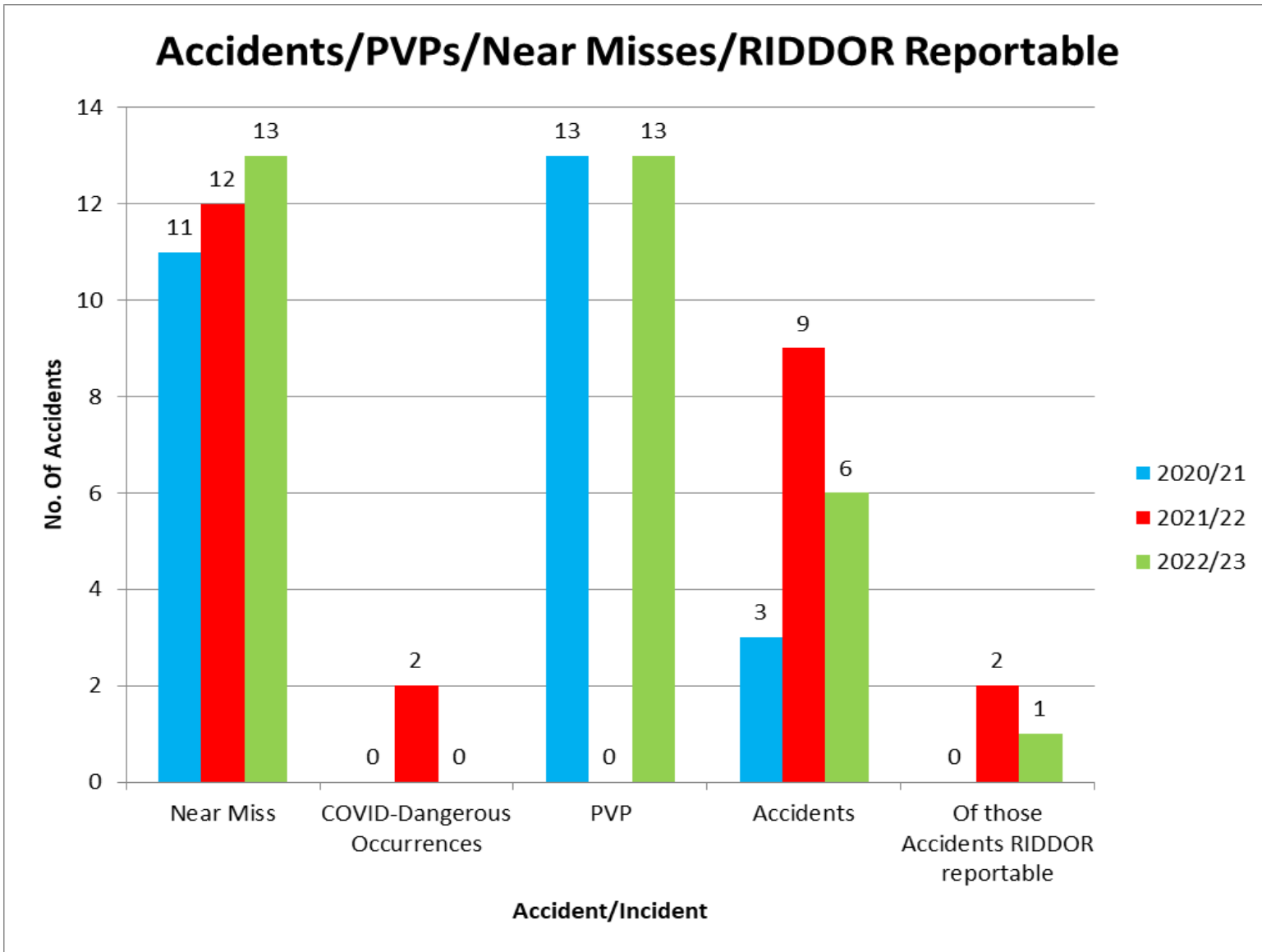
I believe that the best way we can show our staff that we care is to be concerned for their personal health, safety, and wellbeing. This has never been more important to us than throughout the past two years were we faced an unprecedented challenge to keep all our staff safe and healthy.

Thankfully those challenges have abated.

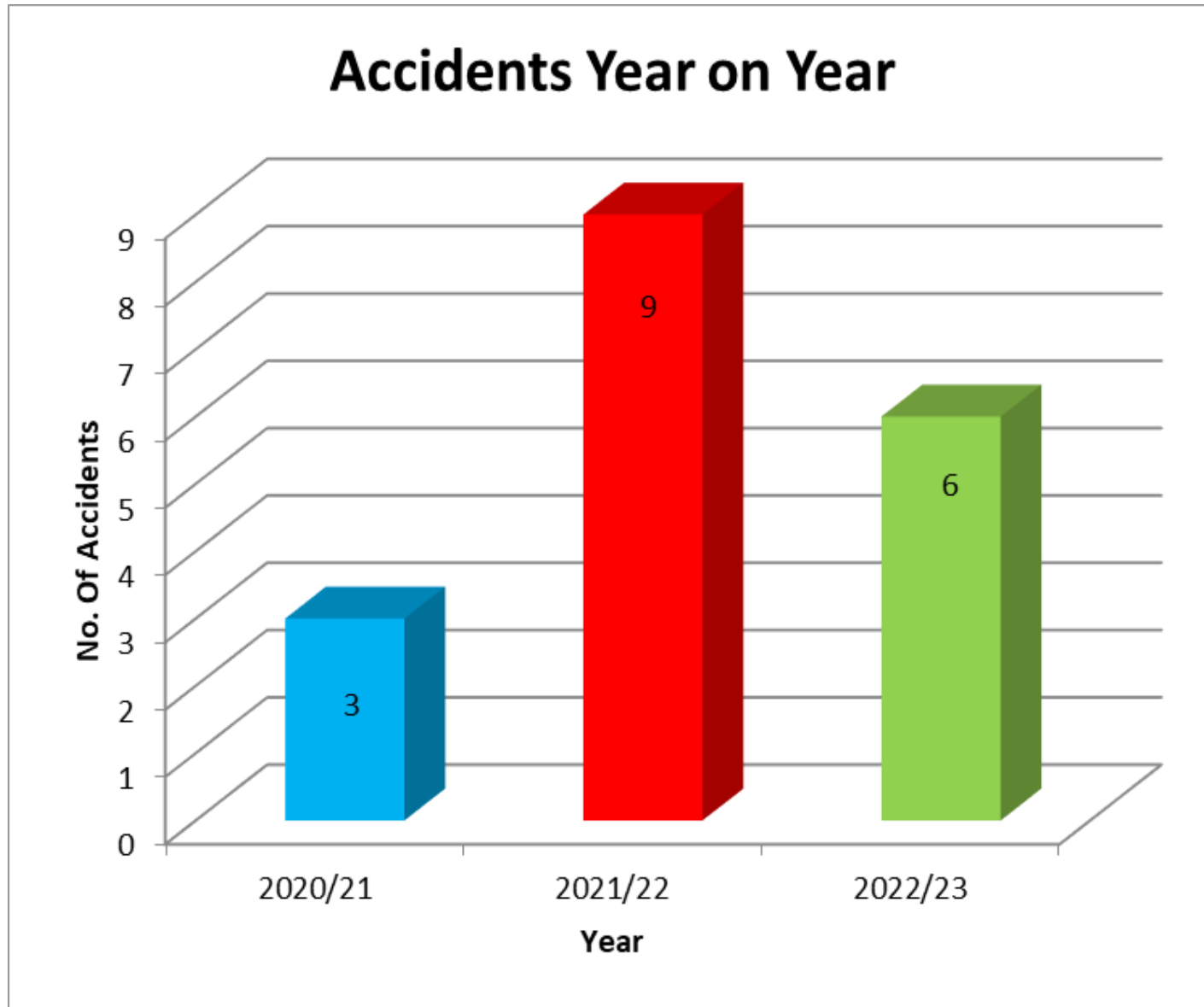
We must remain committed to promoting health and safety and to supporting our staff to be the best they can be and adapt and learn innovative ways to enrich the health, safety, and wellbeing of our staff over the coming year.

**David G Owen**  
**August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

## Appendix 1



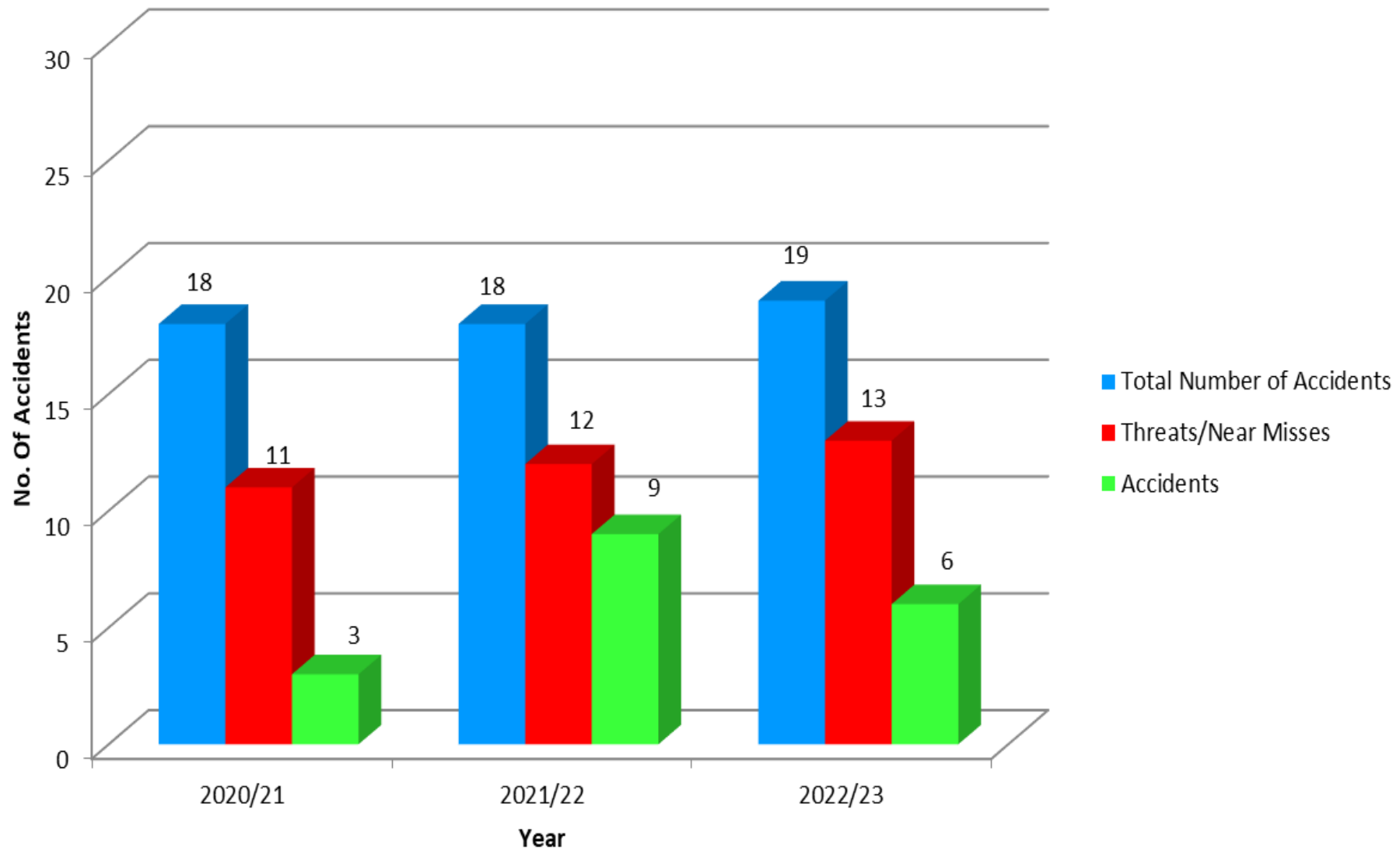
## Appendix 2



## Appendix 3 – Report Categories

| <b>Accident/Incident Totals</b>             |                  |                |                |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------|
|   | <b>2020/2021</b> | <b>2021/22</b> | <b>2022/23</b> |
| <b>Total Number of Accidents/Incidents</b>  | <b>18</b>        | <b>18</b>      | <b>19</b>      |
| <b>Breakdown of numbers</b>                 |                  |                |                |
| Threats/Near Misses                         | 11               | 12             | 13             |
| Accidents                                   | 3                | 9              | 6              |
| <b>Of those Accidents RIDDOR reportable</b> | <b>0</b>         | <b>2</b>       | <b>1</b>       |

## Accident by type





| Type of Accident                                 | 2020/2021 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|--|-----------|---------|---------|
| Contact with Machinery                           | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Exposed to Dangerous Substance                   | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Fall from Height                                 | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Hit by Vehicle                                   | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Hit by Flying/Moving Object                      | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Hit by something Static                          | 0         | 1       | 1       |
| Eye injury                                       | 0         | 1       | 0       |
| Manual Handling                                  | 0         | 2       | 3       |
| Slip/Trip/Fall                                   | 1         | 4       | 2       |
| Physical Assault                                 | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Contact with electricity or electrical discharge | 0         | 0       | 0       |
| Other type of accident                           | 2         | 0       | 0       |
| Threat   | 0         | 3       | 13      |

## Type of Accident/Incident

