



Health and Safety at Work

Health and Safety Strategic Plan

Update – June 2018

Introduction

This strategic plan is designed to promote the Council's vision, which is to build on our existing procedures to ensure health and safety remains as a cornerstone of the Council's activities and, with that, to achieve a record of workplace health and safety that leads the sector. The strategy builds on our success and develops the Council's health and safety management system.

The strategy sets out what we, as a Council want to achieve and further energise our approach to improving workplace health and safety for the future. We will own it, promote it and make sure it happens.

The Health and Safety Strategy 2017-20 has been developed to support the Council's aims and objectives as laid out in the Corporate Plan. It supports the strategic and operational management of the Council and looks to go beyond the traditional health and safety role of preventing harm. It commits the Council to continually improve the health and safety of its staff and any other person affected by its activities, it is not just about achieving compliance, but assisting in realising:

- Efficient, proactive and pragmatic ways of delivering health and safety
- A safe and healthy environment for staff and any other person affected by our activities
- A robust health and safety culture across the Council
- Effective means of protecting stakeholders, including staff and any other person affected by our activities from harm

The Health and Safety Unit will contribute with others how the health and safety management system might be strengthened and, where there are improvements that can be made, how they might be achieved. The strategy confirms the Council's intention to understand and value the contribution of its staff and others to improving health and safety, therefore we will continue to engage with everyone who can contribute to its success.

This is also a strategy about continuing to promote change. It is about doing things in new ways, getting others involved or even saying no in some cases.

The strategy builds on the strength of our relationship with our staff and our collective ambition to promote a healthy and productive workforce.

Background

The Council has an excellent safety record. This is due to the commitment of its staff at every level to make risk management relevant to the work place. That said, we cannot be complacent. Public attitudes to risk and redress, and blame and compensation have changed. The new challenges in health and safety are almost all health rather than safety but, crucially, the rate of improvement in safety has now slowed nationally.

Accordingly, communication remains vital within the Council. We have a developed health and safety culture, which is evidenced through the Corporate and Service Health and Safety Committee structure, the employee health and safety representative network and the open communication policy adopted by the Health and Safety Unit. This aims to improve the quality of our decision making, helping to confirm trust and achieve higher levels of recognition and respect for health and safety.

Our mission is to ensure all staff and elected Members work together to protect the health and safety of employees, visitors and contractors by ensuring that risks in the changing workplace are properly controlled. This will be done by:

- Providing information and advice, promoting and assuring a goalsetting system of health and safety management;
- Helping Council services to embrace high standards of health and safety and to recognise the social and economic benefits;
- Working with services to prevent failures in the management system; and seek to optimise the use of resources to deliver our health and safety mission and vision.
- Develop new ways to establish and maintain an effective health and safety culture in the face of financial pressures of the Council, so that all employees take their responsibilities seriously and that the workforce is fully involved and risks are properly managed;
- Achieve higher levels of recognition and respect for health and safety as an integral part of a modern, public sector organisation; and

- Exemplify public sector best practice in managing our health and safety resources.

This strategy has been developed through a process of consultation with managers and staff and the examination of available evidence on the effectiveness of health and safety management systems.

We have made significant advances in the development of our health and safety management systems, but we will;

- Continue to work with public and private sectors organisations to develop the provision of occupational health and safety support according to need. At the core of this support will be the principle of proactive management of health and safety risks.
- Will raise awareness and stimulate demand for these services and find channels to influence all groups within our workforce. We will continue to strengthen the role of health and safety in what our staff do as part of their everyday working life.
- Recognise the need to continue to make health and safety and its benefits widely understood and accepted by all within the Council.
- Communicate the moral, business and economic cases for health and safety. Appropriate health and safety management is an integral part of the Council's operations and, as such, is an enabler and not a hindrance.
- Aim to simplify the concept of risk assessment to make it relevant and available to all and to ensure a sensible approach to risk management. We have made it clear that risk assessment is a simple, relevant and effective tool.
- Support employees to spot issues and contribute to bring about real improvements. We recognise that employees influence a positive health and safety culture through their own actions and by accepting personal responsibility. Accordingly, we will encourage the voluntary expansion of workplace health and safety representatives across all service areas of the Council.
- Ensure workplace health and safety representatives operating in partnership with management remain an important part of realizing health and safety benefits. We recognize their valuable contribution and have both trades union and none trades union health and safety representatives active in the workplace.

The Corporate Health and Safety Unit plays an important role in the realisation of these objectives by promoting, coordinating and contributing to the Council's responsibilities to ensure the safety of anyone affected by the Council's services. Accordingly, the Unit will provide staff and Members with the support, advice and training they need to meet our legislative requirements.

Developing Key themes and key performance indicators of the Strategy

The key challenge for this Strategy is how to build upon the progress made from previous strategies and further embed health and safety into the operations of the Council. The ability to maintain the effectiveness of our health and safety management system gained through the significant progress achieved over the last few years is vital. The adoption of key themes and performance indicators will support and enhance what has been achieved to date.

The decision to adopt this approach is the result of the collaborative approach the Health and Safety Unit (HSU) has adopted while working with the various services within the Council. The themes will assist in achieving an improved balance between systems and behavioural aspects of management. In addition, it will ensure health and safety is an integral part of management generally rather than perceived as a separate additional aspect.

Making it Happen

The main responsibility for health and safety of staff and visitors rests with the Chief Executive and Heads of Service. The day to day operational management of health and safety is delegated to senior managers, line managers and supervisors. The HSU has a pivotal role to play in the development and monitoring/assurance of the implementation of the Health and Safety Strategy.

The HSU will work to enable and empower managers and others to actively manage health and safety with the same degree of expertise to the standards of other core business activities. Accordingly, the HSU will work closely with all Directorates, Trade Unions and other stakeholders to promote ownership of health and safety across the Council

During the first year of the plan (2017/18) the HSU has been focusing on targeting risk, including:

- i. Start of new internal safety audit program
- ii. Introduction of e-learning programs
- iii. Review of health and safety management system

For the remaining period 2018/20 as well as ensuring that the above has been achieved and maintained, the HSU will further develop our health and safety management system to ensure that it reflects the requirements of ISO 45001, the new International Standard for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems.

Key roles and responsibilities

In order for this strategy to be effective, management have certain roles and responsibilities:

Role	Responsibility
Chief Executive and Heads of Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner of health and safety strategy. • Review progress against plan • Ensure sufficient resources are allocated to achieve objectives
Directorates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective implementation of strategy within their sphere of influence • Report service/directorate progress against plan
Health and Safety Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor progress against plan • Report to CMT/CHSC

Theme 1: Leadership and Management

Successful health and safety management comes from the top of an organisation and health and safety leadership must also start here. Visible and active commitment from the Council, CMT, DMT's and managers to health and safety clearly demonstrate a commitment which will be embraced by other members of staff. Proactive management and ownership of health and safety is a clear indication of a positive health and safety culture.

The activities/key performance indicators necessary to promote this theme are:

1. Maintenance of an effective communication system through the Council's clear management structure
2. Continue to demonstrate that Health and Safety management is integrated in business decisions
3. Maintain the regular reviews of health and safety performance
4. Ensuring appropriate resources are provided allowing for effective management of health and safety
5. Ensuring all staff continue to receive appropriate induction and training
6. Ensure sufficient training and guidance is provided regarding leadership in health and safety
7. Ensure strategic health and safety aims are communicated and embedded throughout the Council

In order to achieve the above we will continue with our health and safety communication strategy with our progress illustrated by the actions on page 6 of this document.

Objective	KPI	Progress Indicator
1.1 Maintenance of an effective communication system through the Council's management structure	Record of corporate and service health and safety meetings, publication of health and safety briefings.	<p>Meetings are being held and accurate minutes are being kept.</p> <p>A representative from the Corporate HSU attends all scheduled Service Health and Safety Committee meetings.</p> <p>Regular publication dates are set and met for health and safety briefings.</p> <p>Regular reports are sent to CMT via the Director of Leisure and Environment.</p>

1.2	Continue to demonstrate that Health and Safety management is integrated in business decisions.	Inclusion of health and safety consideration as part of the decision making process.	Documented evidence is available to show that health and safety is being considered, e.g. contractor evaluation, health and safety risk assessments covering service provision etc.
1.3	Maintain the regular reviews of health and safety performance.	Health and safety management audit programme in place and audit areas and proposed dates communicated to managers.	The Health and Safety Management Audit programme has commenced with all managers submitting the self-assessment questionnaire to the HSU. Specific Service are audits have commenced i.e. Ranger Service, Admin and Elections, Caretakers and Refuse and Recycling.
1.4	Ensuring appropriate resources are provided allowing for effective management of health and safety.	Inclusion of appropriate health and safety consideration as part of the budget setting process.	Evidence of resource allocation for compliance with health and safety legislation is being gathered from the review of risk assessments and audit findings.
1.5	Ensuring all staff continue to receive appropriate induction and training.	All new staff complete the health and safety induction programme.	Records of completed training are up to date and reported to management.
1.6	Ensure sufficient training and guidance is provided regarding leadership in health and safety.	All senior managers complete safety for senior managers via e-learning package.	Records of training and guidance are up to date, with any additional training needs identified acted upon. The "West Lancs Manager" e-learning training package has been developed and will be deployed after final beta testing in September 2018.
1.7	Ensure strategic health and safety aims are communicated and embedded throughout the Council.	Strategy communicated to Council community on approval.	The strategy is available on the Health and Safety Gateway and accessible by all staff, paper copies are available for staff who do not have access to a computer. The health and safety management audit includes sections which allow checking of staff understanding of the Strategy and checks to ensure that managers are effectively implementing the objectives.

Theme 2: Competence

Effective health and safety management requires competence at every level. Competence, in this context, is the ability for every member of staff to recognise the most foreseeable risks, particularly the serious risks, and have the ability to take steps to control them. For large and complex organisations, such as the Council, competence also means having health and safety practices, procedures and standards which are used consistently across the organisation.

The activities/key performance indicators necessary to promote this theme are:

1. Use of competent staff to ensure all policies and procedures are up to date and reflect best practice in the sector
2. Making sure internal policies, procedures, guidance and advice are understood and easily accessible to staff and, where applicable, visitors and contractors
3. Staff are aware of how to access competent advice
4. Use of appropriate risk management/risk assessment techniques across all directorates/service areas
5. Ensuring comprehensive training programs and opportunities are available to staff

The activities/key performance indicators necessary to support staff are:

1. Extend the e-learning system to reflect training needs in relation to competence.
2. Develop specific face-to-face training relating to specific risks

Objective		KPI	Progress Indicator
2.1	Use of competent staff to ensure all policies and procedures are up to date and reflect best practice in the sector.	Development of health and safety competency matrix for each job category.	The development of a competence matrix has commenced. This will be implemented during service specific health and safety management audits.
2.2	Making sure internal policies, procedures, guidance and advice are understood and easily accessible to staff and, where applicable, visitors and contractors.	Development and deployment of learning and development tools and information sources suited to the needs of all levels of staff within the Council.	An IOSH training course has been organised for CMT and relevant senior managers on 27/09/18. Usage statistics from the Learning Pool training software will be examined to identify the impact of the online training resource on health and safety awareness in staff. (Also see Section 5.2)
2.3	Staff are aware of how to access competent advice.	Level of contact established between staff and the HSU.	The HSU are actively promoting an open door policy regarding the provision of advice and guidance to staff. The Unit routinely attends all service health and safety meetings.
2.4	Use of appropriate risk management/risk assessment techniques across all directorates/service areas.	Level of use of the health and safety risk management tools and forms provided by the HSU on the Health and Safety Gateway.	The number of Health and Safety forms being received electronically has increased, but some hard copies are still being received. The HSU will remind staff at service health and safety meetings.
2.5	Ensuring comprehensive training programs and opportunities are available to staff.	Number of appropriate HS courses available to staff.	We have implemented a planned H&S training programme based on a training needs analysis gleaned from the annual risk assessment review. Statutory H&S training needs are being met. Requests for a wide variety of health and safety training in all formats has increased since the initial distribution of the health and safety management audit self-assessment questionnaire. These will help to drive the development of the training programme.
2.6	Extend e-learning system to reflect training needs in relation to competence.	New modules developed and introduced.	Progress in this area is dependent on the implementation of the competency matrix programme. (See Section 2.1)
2.7	Develop specific face-to-face training relating to specific risks.	New modules developed and introduced.	Course development is planned based on the results of the annual risk assessment review and health and safety management audit.

Theme 3: Risk Management

Effective and proportionate risk management should ensure both legal compliance and the safety of staff. The activities/key performance indicators necessary to promote this theme and support staff are:

1. Continue to proactively identifying all hazards across the Council
2. Further improve the risk management framework to ensure effective use and adoption
3. Ensure that health and safety is always an integral part of the planning and review processes at Council and also directorate/service area levels
4. Ensure the effective implementation of the Council's fire safety management system and associated safety standards
5. Develop a suite of lagging / leading health and safety performance indicators.
6. Ensure all aspects of the Council's activities is audited within the stated period
7. Evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of existing risk management methodology
8. Improve reporting, recording and investigation of accidents and incidents

Objective	KPI	Progress Indicator
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3.1	Continue to proactively identifying all hazards across the Council.	Risk assessment programme developed and in place.	The annual risk assessment review has been carried out in the majority of service areas.
3.2	Further improve the health and safety risk management framework to ensure effective use and adoption.	Increased user involvement in the development of the health and safety risk management framework.	Active user driven health and safety risk management programme gleaned from the findings of the risk assessment reviews and HS management audit findings.
3.3	Ensure that health and safety is always an integral part of the planning and review processes at Council and directorate/service area levels.	Documented evidence of the inclusion of relevant health and safety matters.	Evidence needs to be gathered to show the positive impact health and safety considerations have made during the processes service level planning and review. This is to take place during 2018/19.
3.4	Ensure the effective implementation of the Council's fire safety management system and associated safety standards.	Implementation of fire risk assessment programme for all Council owned buildings.	A full review/update of all fire risk assessments is being carried out by fire safety consultants on behalf of Housing and Inclusion.
3.5	Develop a suite of lagging / leading health and safety performance indicators.	Suite of indicators developed.	Discussion document has been produced and will be circulated to Senior Managers and the Corporate Health & Safety Committee for comment.
3.6	Ensure all aspects of the Council's activities are audited within the stated period.	Areas audited according to audit plan.	Audit programme has started.
3.7	Evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of existing risk management methodology.	Evaluation carried out and improvements implemented.	The risk management framework is under review and any changes reported to the Corporate Health & Safety Committee.
3.8	All service areas to carry out an annual risk assessment review.	Annual risk assessment review carried out by service managers between September and January.	The majority of service areas have carried out risk assessment reviews completed and documentation updated. Any gaps have been reported accordingly with the Head of Service.
3.9	Improve reporting, recording and investigation of accidents and incidents.	All RIDDOR events reported and investigated.	Levels of reporting investigation noted. No adverse outcomes from enforcement agency follow-up.

Theme 4: Wellbeing

Positive health and wellbeing can reduce absenteeism, improve physical fitness and mental alertness and as a result increase productivity.

The activities/key performance indicators necessary to promote this theme and support staff are:

1. Promote, encourage participation and support initiatives that enhance occupational health and wellbeing for staff.
2. Promote, encourage participation and support initiatives that enhance occupational health and wellbeing
3. Improve the collection and understanding of ill-health and sickness absence data

Objective	KPI	Progress Indicator
4.1 Promote, encourage participation and support initiatives that enhance occupational health and wellbeing for staff.	Greater awareness amongst staff of occupational health and wellbeing issues.	To link with the initiatives set out in the councils Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
4.2 Promote, encourage participation and support initiatives that enhance occupational health and wellbeing.	Participation in WLBC'S wellbeing initiative.	Consultation required with HR and Leisure Services. This will take place during 2019/20.
4.3 Improve the collection and understanding of ill-health and sickness absence data.	Standardised reporting and recording system introduced.	Consultation required with HR to obtain data. This will take place during 2019/20.

Theme 5: Collaboration

Collaborative relationships

Successful health and safety management is a collective responsibility in which all members of staff must play a part. This responsibility must be embedded through clear demonstration of management standards. The activities/key performance indicators necessary to promote this theme and support staff are:

1. Develop initiatives to encourage collaborative working
2. Ensuring appropriate communications channels exist for the dissemination of all health and safety information
3. Ensure all aspects of the Council’s activities is audited within the stated period
4. Develop occupational health and safety system in accordance with OHSAS 18001 principals
5. Evaluate the effectiveness and suitability of existing risk management methodology
6. Improve reporting, recording and investigation of accidents and incidents
7. Maintain effective and efficient management and control of contractors.

Objective	KPI	Progress Indicator
5.1 Develop initiatives to encourage collaborative working.	Progress made establishing joint working between employee representatives, management and the HSU.	The need for effective joint inspections, task based risk assessments and more health and safety initiatives has been identified. Discussions are taking place with all interested parties to develop and implement a meaningful programme of events to satisfy this objective. The result will be provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.
5.2 Ensuring appropriate communications channels exist for the dissemination of all health and safety information.	Increased take up of available health and safety resources.	Once the results of the health and safety management audits have been analysed the HSU will have a greater understanding of the health and safety awareness throughout the workforce, this will be supported by risk assessment reviews and training outcomes. (also see Section 2.2)
5.3 Establish links with Council community to ensure health and safety awareness is embedded.	Quarterly update reports and annual meetings with managers.	Increased awareness and ownership of safety system will be evidenced by the results of the health and safety management audits, risk assessment reviews etc.
5.4 Utilise technological solutions to improve compliance monitoring and reporting arrangements.	Solutions reduce burden of compliance monitoring.	We have improved compliance recorded with the introduction of secure intranet based records management.
5.5 Encourage effective working of Trade Union Safety Representatives.	Regular meeting with Trade Unions and effective consultation arrangements.	There has been increased workforce representation, but such representation at Corporate Health and Safety Committee meetings needs to be consistent. Accordingly, the HSU is developing a programme to promote participation in joint health and safety inspections.
5.6 Maintain effective and efficient management and control of contractors.	All contractors engaged by the Council have been subject to a health and safety management system/competency assessment evaluation.	All contractor health and safety documentation is evaluated prior to the commencement of work and the results published on the Health and Safety Gateway. Effective co-operation and consultation is being maintained with contractors regarding WLBC expectations.