



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL



Health and Safety Annual Report 2021–2022

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South Kesteven District Council
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INTRODUCTION

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of South Kesteven District Council's Health and Safety performance during the 2021/22 financial year. This report will also cover business continuity and emergency planning actions for the same financial period.

The council's health and safety performance overall in this period can be categorised as strong, with continued improvements across the authority and in particular within the identified higher risk areas. Despite the lifting of restrictions regarding Covid, the council has maintained a strong approach to the control and spread of the virus and has been able to continue to provide services without impacting the health or safety of staff, members, service users and residents.

Accident numbers for the council remain consistent with previous years and have seen a further reduction in reported accident numbers and in accidents of a type reportable to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) under Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). At the time of completing this report the HSE investigation for Riverside remains open and as a result no conclusion or actions can be reported on. The Council has approached the HSE for updates on the matter and while a report was expected earlier in the year this has not been made available as yet.

Business continuity and emergency planning responsibilities have in the past 12 months been incorporated into the remit of Corporate Health and Safety. Both these areas have seen a sustained period of demand over the last two years. Prior to incorporation within this service area, they were continually tested during the height of the pandemic. While the performance during that period was of a high standard, some areas for improvement have been identified and enacted. These are detailed later in the report.

1.1 The Health and Safety Management Approach

As previously established, the direction for health and safety is set by Cabinet Members involvement in setting corporate priorities and insight of health and safety across the council's activities, is welcomed and integral part to this process. The Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Senior Management Team (SMT) have overall responsibility for ensuring sufficient time and resources, making sure these are available to council officers to fulfil health and safety responsibilities and provide staff with any additional support. Members and staff at every level carry a moral, legal, and financial obligation to adhere and actively support health and safety.

1.2 Corporate Health and Safety Role

The Corporate Health and Safety team's role has grown since the last annual report. Its core function remains to provide support and advice to all staff and members of the council on matters of health, safety, and welfare and to provide and maintain safety policies along with a suite of corporate arrangements and guidance to improve understanding of safe practice and to provide internal checks and audits on safety related areas. In addition to this the role also now encompasses Housing compliance and will include working to improve Asbestos, Fire, Legionella, Gas and Radon safety.

It is the responsibility of the Health and Safety team to monitor accidents and trends, ensuring investigations are prompt and appropriate. Should it be required at any point the Health and Safety

team will notify the HSE, or other relevant bodies of any reportable matters and coordinate the council's cooperation and response.

2.0 BUSINESS CONTINUITY & EMERGENCY PLANNING

2.1 Business Continuity

During the height of the pandemic it was identified that the council had excellent business continuity responses and was able to adapt to the situation with little or no service interruption. However, the plans and impact analysis held at service levels, which outline actions to take and how to manage the response, were not updated to include the lessons learned during this challenging time. This could have resulted in key information being lost as staff moved on from the authority and this gap in knowledge would have presented a risk to the management of future service interruptions.

In order to manage this, the emergency plan and the service level business impact analysis have been reviewed and strengthened during the last 12 months; to capture this learning. In addition to this a number of sessions have been programmed to deliver business continuity awareness training to the senior team and other officers.

In June of this year, an exercise to test business continuity plans was performed within Housing Services which simulated the loss of all information technology; with the increase in cyber-attacks, this is a risk being faced by every business. The response demonstrated that the service was able to continue to provide services with only small impacts, but also identified important improvements that are being implemented.

2.2 Emergency Planning

The emergency planning team of the Council has responded to several challenges over the last 12 months. In addition to the Covid responses, they have attended both tactical and strategic coordination meetings with the Local Resilience Forum partners to provide information and best practice identified through shared learning to senior team.

They have continued to provide the general "day-to-day" support such as flooding response and providing information and flood defence to parish councils and residents, as well as supporting emergency services when requested.

The most significant challenge presented in this period was the work undertaken to support the Afghan Bridging Hotel that was established in Grantham in September 2021. With little notice, the team were called upon to support the process and facilitate the smooth running of the initial intake of guests and worked closely with emergency planning colleagues from LCC. The emergency planning team from South Kesteven then took the lead as on site liaison working with partners from other districts, The NHS, Department for Work and Pensions and the Home Office.

The team maintained a daily presence for several weeks, this was beyond scale of anything previously required and at times very demanding, both physically and emotionally. The response provided by the EP team during this time was praised by all partner agencies on numerous occasions and should be recognised and commended.

The experience and learning from this have increased the ability of SKDC to respond to future incidents and provide a real time test of procedures. As noted later in the report this has also highlighted a training opportunity which will be programmed for 2022/23.

3.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY TRAINING

Providing suitable training for employees is a legal requirement and essential to ensuring employees can work safely, this also provides management with a level of assurance that their teams are health and safety competent and confident in their roles. Employee training needs are identified in one-to-ones, as well as previously defined training required for a particular role and risk assessments.

The ability to provide a range of training options online has allowed the council to continue to meet its legal and moral obligations in these areas.

To support the new hybrid style of working, the councils display screen equipment training (DSE) will be migrating to a new platform. This will provide enhanced information and advice for colleagues on working at numerous locations and advice will be tailored to the options selected by the individual and will ensure the most suitable workstation set up advice is available. This was planned for completion by July 2022.

While the initial plan was to incorporate all online training in one platform, the learning management system (LMS) will not be able to support the creation of individual display screen equipment risk assessments, which is a requirement in the regulations.

As with previous years, Corporate Health and Safety organised the following training during 2021/22.

- Health and Safety (induction for new employees);
- Workstation Safety Plus (mandatory online training for all DSE users);
- Fire Safety Awareness and Manual Handling to be provided through the new LMS;
- Fire Warden (training needs for all council workplace premises);
- First Aid at Work (3-days and 2-days refresher);
- Conflict Resolution (training is provided as identified and required);
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Awareness (training for those working with hazardous substances, i.e. cleaners);
- Accident Investigation training (provided in house for those with responsibility to investigate) introduced in 2022;
- Business Continuity training (provided in conjunction with LCC EP team) to the senior team and rolling out to team leaders.

4.0 ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

Services are responsible for reporting, recording and investigating accidents and incidents that occur within their own service area and any involving the public. In significant incidents, Corporate Health and Safety may assume the lead on the investigation. The council must identify the root cause of an incident and reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence. All health and safety incidents must be submitted to the Corporate Health and Safety team, who oversee a central database and provide assurance to the council that suitable and sufficient investigations are taking place, proportionate to the level of incident.

4.1 Accident and Incident Trends

There was a total of 40 reported accidents in 2021/22, this is a reduction of nine on the previous year's accidents. This reduction is welcomed and while a nil accident target remains unlikely; given the number of staff and activities the council undertakes; the reduction can only be taken as a positive.

Manual handling and slip, trip or fall incident numbers remain constant and are usually the most common causes of accidents within SKDC, outside of vehicle related accidents. Controls and mitigations are in place in those areas with a higher likelihood of these incidents occurring, but even then, the council must accept that some incidents will occur. With over 200 staff working in roles that require a significant amount of manual handling and work outside of an office environment, this is not unexpected.

Incidents of this nature often involve an element of human behavioural failure. Prompt and thorough investigation of incidents is crucial to identifying not only opportunities to strengthen existing measures, but to highlight behavioural trends which may be contributing to incident rates.

The incident at Riverside involving council contractors and Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) remains open and HSE investigations are ongoing.

4.2 Accident and Incident Numbers and Charts

Chart A shows the number of reported accidents/incidents over the last three years for internal council work - related activities and in most areas, there is a clear reduction.

The council's accident numbers have been broadly consistent since 2015/16 and have shown a downward trend. While previous concerns have been raised regarding reporting and accuracy, this continued consistence should provide some assurance that figures are accurate and moving in the direction that we would expect with a growing positive health and safety culture.

With the move to agile/home working there remains a possibility that accidents have occurred in the home, but have not been reported, as the link to this being an accident at work was not recognised. Accident reporting has been simplified in the last 12 months and additional training for investigation of incidents and causes has been developed and is being provided by Corporate Health and Safety to support those with reporting responsibility. It should be noted that there has been an overall improvement in the quality of reports being received, but it is key that officers are allowed the time to investigate accidents properly. A thorough investigation will not only help prevent future incidents but will save officer time and council resources from unnecessary wastage.

The most notable absence within SKDC accident figures, is that of near miss reporting. There have been no near miss reports in the last two years and although possible, it is unlikely this is an accurate reflection of the position. The Corporate Health and Safety team have continued to instil the importance of this type of incident information and CMT have supported by driving this message through their teams. The new investigation training further reinforces the importance of this type of reporting. Ultimately SKDC can only act on the information it receives and continue to push this message with all officers.

Street Scene has seen a reduction in accidents numbers from 39 to 34. This is a 13% reduction on the previous year. This service areas accident numbers still account for the majority of incidents and in total it is 85% of all recorded accidents in SKDC.

The area operates over 120 staff and a fleet in excess of 30 vehicles on any given day and at least five days a week, so this number while high, is not unexpected.

Vehicle incidents within Street Scene are down slightly on last year and all but one incident was of a type that would be described as a significant incident. This is not to down grade the potential of vehicle incidents and the council should always strive for reductions in all types, but as previously reported, the majority are made of minor scrapes and wing mirror damage. This is quite often the result of operating in very busy and confined roads during collection activities.

The significant incident was investigated by Corporate Health and Safety and a number of actions have been implemented to remove the likelihood of reoccurrence.

Table 2 provides a breakdown by service area and type of accident for the periods 2020/21 and 2021/22. Accidents have fallen across the board, but despite the fall in vehicle incidents they still account for almost half of all council accidents and carry with them the potential for repair, insurance and third party claim costs. This must remain an area of focus for the council and all measures should be taken to continue to reduce these.

Regardless of the context, the council, its officers and members have a legal, moral and financial responsibility to constantly review all its activities and procedures and to drive safety improvements wherever practical.

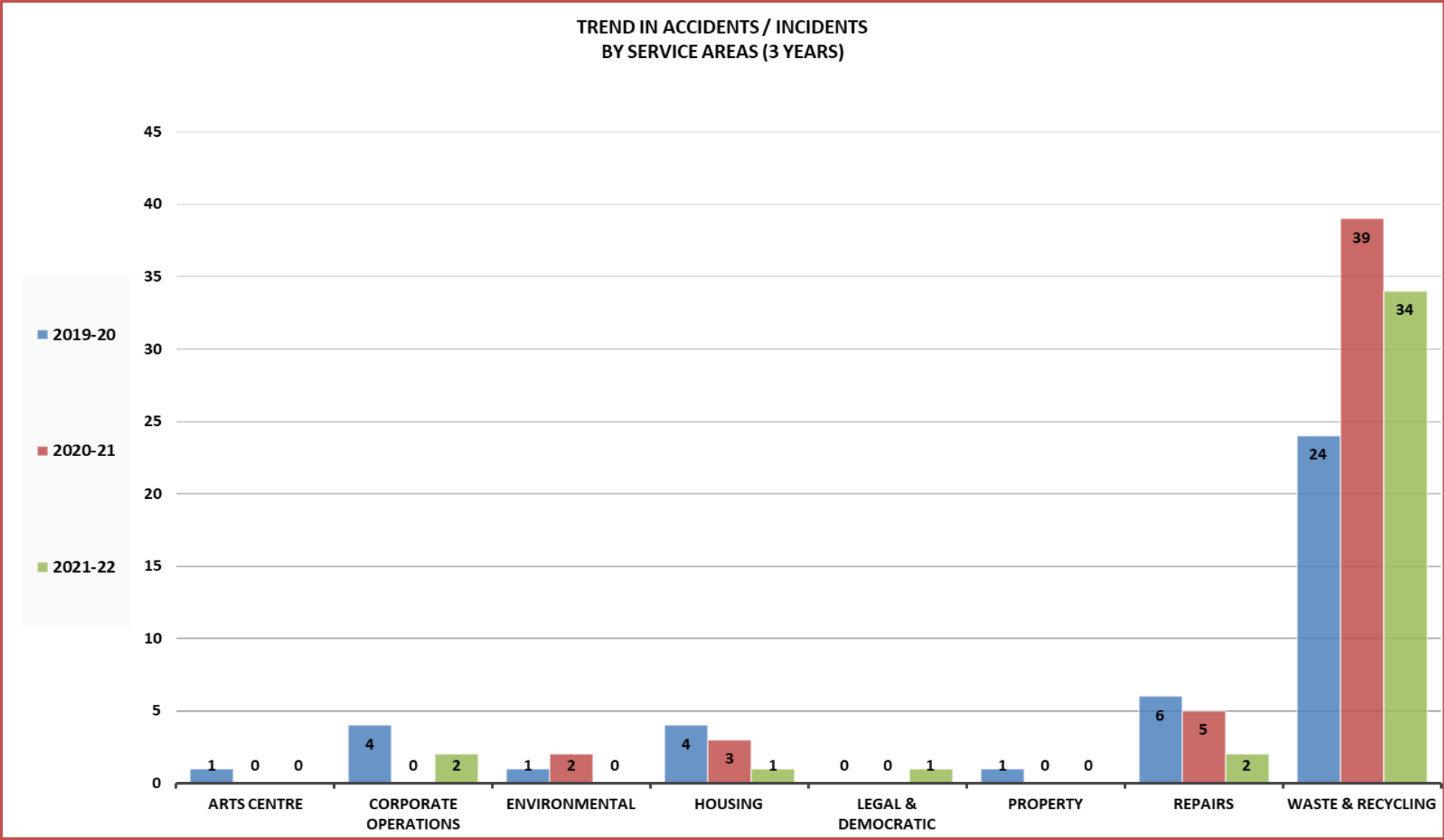


CHART A - This chart shows the accident numbers by service areas over the last 3-years.

CATEGORY	2020/21	% OF TOTAL	2021/22	% OF TOTAL
Bruising/Grazing	1	0.02	0	0
Cuts/Lacerations	2	0.04	0	0
Contact with moving machinery	0	0	2	0.05
Falls from height	0	0	2	0.05
Injured while handling an object	0	0	5	0.13
Manual Handling	6	0.12	3	0.08
Needlestick	0	0	2	0.05
Neurological (Epileptic fit)	0	0	1	0.03
Slips/Trips/Falls	11	0.25	4	0.10
Sprains/Strains	6	0.12	0	0
Struck Against	0	0	1	0.03
Unacceptable Behaviour	1	0.02	1	0.03
Vehicle Accidents/Incidents	22	0.45	19	0.47
TOTALS	49		40	

TABLE 1 - Comparison by Accident Type 2020/21 - 2021/22

CATEGORY	ARTS CENTRE		CORPORATE OPERATIONS		ENVIRONMENTAL		HOUSING		LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC		REPAIRS		STREET SCENE		TOTAL	
	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22	2020/21	2021/22
Bruising/Grazing							1								1	
Cuts/Lacerations													2		2	
Contact with moving machinery														2		2
Fall from height														2		2
Injured while handling an object												1		4		5
Manual Handling											2		4	3	6	3
Needlestick														2		2
Neurological														1		1
Slips/Trips/Falls							2	1		1		1	9	1	11	4
Sprains/Strains											3		3		6	
Struck Against														1		1
Unacceptable Behaviour					1									1	1	1
Vehicle Accidents / Incidents				2	1								21	17	22	19
TOTAL	0	0	0	2	2	0	3	1	0	1	5	2	39	34	49	40

TABLE 2 - Comparison by Service Area 2020/21 - 2021/22

4.3 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)

RIDDOR regulations require certain specified accidents, ill health and dangerous occurrences to be reported to the relevant enforcing authority, being the HSE.

The council last year had five reportable incidents. This financial year the council reported as detailed below. Both were reportable due to a clear seven day or more incapacitation however, the first incident was also classified as a specified injury as it resulted in a fracture to the individual. Neither have resulted in further action or contact.

RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations)

SECTION	ACCIDENT	REPORTED	TRIGGER (Over 7 days or specified injury)	PERSON EXPOSED	DESCRIPTION OF INJURY	HAZARD TYPE
Legal and Democratic	29-04-2021	10-05-2021	Specified injury	Employee	Tripped while moving around desk, fractured wrist and scaphoid bone.	Slip/Trip/Fall
Street Scene: Commercial Waste	09-07-2021	14-07-2021	Over 7 day absence	Employee	Pulled shoulder - Rotator Cuff damage - Moving 1100 LTR bin	Injured while handling an object

TABLE 3 – RIDDOR Summary of Accidents Reported

4.4 Leisure Centres

Table 5 shows the number of incidents at each leisure centre, along with the number of visitors and overall accident rates.

Previous years have shown a consistently low accident rate across the four sites (Deepings remains closed at this time) in last years report this was predicted to continue once reopening was permitted and based on the current figures from the three open sites, this can be taken as accurate.

Although there is little difference in the location accident rates, the sites of Bourne and Deeping have always had the higher accident rates and have been between 0.05 and 0.07 for the last four years with data. Without greater investigation this report is unable to provide a conclusive reason for this difference, although age and condition of the buildings and activities operated at the site would likely feature in the reasons.

Footfall per Incident 2021 - 2022				
Area	Footfall	Accidents	Visitors per Accident	% Rates
Bourne	120,769	70	1725	0.06
Stamford	62,779	14	4484	0.02
Grantham	289,675	71	4080	0.02
Total	473223	155	3053	0.03

Footfall per Incident 2020 - 2021				
Area	Footfall	Accidents	Visitors per Accident	% Rates
Bourne				
Deepings		Closed because of Covid-19 (No figures)		
Stamford				
Grantham				
Total	0	0	0	0.00

Footfall per Incident 2019 - 2020				
Area	Footfall	Accidents	Visitors per Accident	% Rates
Bourne	176,591	100	1766	0.06
Deepings	251,485	92	2734	0.04
Stamford	142,577	50	2852	0.04
Grantham	598,569	138	4337	0.02
Total	1169222	380	3077	0.03

Footfall per Incident 2018 - 2019				
Area	Footfall	Accidents	Visitors per Accident	% Rates
Bourne	191,518	128	1496	0.07
Deepings	283,782	174	1631	0.06
Stamford	159,632	71	2248	0.04
Grantham	663,732	100	6637	0.02
Total	1298664	473	2746	0.04

Footfall per Incident 2017 - 2018				
Area	Footfall	Accidents	Visitors per Accident	% Rates
Bourne	182,871	84	2177	0.05
Deepings	282,721	198	1428	0.07
Stamford	156,164	53	2946	0.03
Grantham	668,745	158	4233	0.02
Total	1290501	493	2618	0.04




TABLE 5 : Leisure Centre Accident Rates (over 5 years)

5.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Along with the measures below, a quarterly dashboard of performance indicators as in **Appendix 2**, is shared with CMT and Heads of Service and covers accidents and incidents, quarterly monitoring activities and any trends identified or areas which require increased focus, as in **Appendix 1**.

HEALTH AND SAFETY TARGET/PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Staff attendance at Corporate Health and Safety induction	100%	100%	100% Virtual
Number of staff RIDDOR notifications to the enforcing authority	19	5	2
Number of staff lost days as the result of accidents (<i>based upon information received</i>)	184.5	250	169

TABLE 4 - Target Performance Indicators

SERVICE AREA	INCIDENTS OVERVIEW AND STATUS	
	<p>RED - Immediate action AMBER - Increased monitoring and review GREEN - No further action</p>	
Repairs & Improvements : DWO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 Accident ▪ Type : Slip/Trip/Fall ▪ Injury Description : Sprained ankle ▪ Broader Cause :Behaviour/Human Error 	
Street Scene : Waste & Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 Accident ▪ Type : Vehicle Incident ▪ Injury Description : No injury ▪ Broader Cause : Cause :Behaviour/Human Error <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1 Accident ▪ Type : Manual Handling ▪ Injury Description : Laceration to the face ▪ Broader Cause : Behaviour/Human Error 	
SKDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nil near miss incidents reported. While there has been a drop in accidents which is positive, the absence of any near miss reports for the size of organisation and activities is unusual. ▪ The Corporate Health and Safety team continue to reinforce the importance and provide support/information. 	

APPENDIX 1 – Exert from Quarterly Dashboard

6.0 SERVICE PLAN 2022-2023

6.1 Health and Safety Plan

The Health and Safety action plan remains a constant in that it will continue to provide support and professional advice to all areas of the council and provide training such as the accident investigation training as required. It will continue to maintain and grow the corporate suite of information, arrangements and policies in order to develop the safety culture and reduce risk so far as practicable.

In order to improve the access of safety information and to support service areas in storing, recording and timely updating of risk assessments or safe systems the Health and Safety team will review options for the provision of a safety management system and provide feedback to CMT on the possible solutions.

All of the outstanding risk audits noted in last year's report for service level assessments, have now been completed.

It is recommended that the identified high risk service areas remain on an annual review program, to be undertaken by Corporate Health and Safety, in addition to any externally provided reviews which may be commissioned.

Lower risk areas i.e. predominantly office based service areas, should move to every two years for review by the Health and Safety team. This recommendation is based on the low risk nature of the work and the very low frequency of accidents and incidents within these areas.

The creation of risk assessments and the identification and mitigation of risk is a legal requirement and remains integral to the prevention of injury or accidents and the preservation of health. Should information or accident trends suggest the need for this to be reversed, it can be enacted with little notice.

6.2 Business Continuity and Emergency Planning

As noted, the overarching business continuity plans for the council have recently been reviewed, as have the service level impact analysis assessments. It is anticipated that there will be some changes this year to the responsibilities and levels of competence required by authorities like SKDC as a Category 1 responder and once these are made available to the team the plans will be reviewed and updated as required.

The team will continue to work closely in partnership with our LCC emergency planning colleagues, to strengthen the ability to respond to business risk and events. This will ensure that service provision remains strong during any event with the potential to cause loss or interruption of services.

Additional training sessions will be provided to officers in the authority to improve understanding and awareness of the critical role this forward planning plays in maintaining our services to the public. The exercise performed within the Housing service area will be extended to other service areas over the coming year and will focus on those areas identified as critical in the council's plan.

Business continuity plans should remain an annual review as a minimum or following a significant event or incident of business interruption. The team will undertake audits of service area assessments based on this annual target. The exercising of business continuity plans will be expanded and will initially focus on those services identified as high risk / critical services.

As well as training in business continuity, members of the senior team and on call officers will be attending refresher courses in both tactical and strategic coordination of emergency events and gold commander training.

The council already operates a strong on call response, which has been repeatedly tested over the last 12 months and this increase in training will provide greater resilience. With more officers able to respond to and take effective control of emergency incidents, or act as liaison with partner agencies to support and protect residents of SKDC; this will allow the council to continue to meet its moral obligations, as well as those placed upon us in the Civil Contingency Act.