



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

## **Governance and Audit Committee**

Tuesday, 24 September 2024

Report of Councillor Philip Knowles  
Cabinet Member for Corporate  
Governance and Licensing

# **Annual Health and Safety Report 2023/24**

### **Report Author**

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### **Purpose of Report**

This report presents the annual Health and Safety report for 2023/24. It provides an overview of South Kesteven District Council's management of health and safety. It summarises progress made and areas of focus for the coming year and identifies the accident rates and types for this period. This report includes the Emergency Planning and Business Continuity actions and plan for that same period.

### **Recommendations**

#### **That the Committee:**

- 1. Note the attached Health and Safety report for the period 2023/24.**
- 2. Provide comments or feedback to assist with maintaining the effectiveness of the Council's health and safety arrangements.**

### **Decision Information**

Does the report contain any  
exempt or confidential  
information not for publication?

No

What are the relevant corporate  
priorities?

Effective council

Which wards are impacted?

(All Wards);

## **1. Implications**

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

1.1 There are no specific financial comments arising from this report

*Completed by: Paul Sutton Interim Head of Finance and Deputy S151 officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

1.2 Failure to comply with health and safety requirements can result in significant legal implications for the authority. There are no such implications arising from this report to bring to the attention of the Committee.

*Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer*

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

1.3 Failure to comply with Health and Safety could have significant reputational and financial impact should an incident occur, and a claim is made against the Council. Having robust health and safety measures in place will protect the employees, and members of the public, and provide strong mitigation in the event of a claim.

*Completed by: Tracey Elliott, Governance & Risk Officer*

### ***Diversity and Inclusion***

1.4 Whilst Health and Safety requirements are necessary to manage risk, the Council must be mindful of its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. Therefore, due regard must be paid to any reasonable adjustments required (where practical) by staff and Members in the delivery of their duties. No adjustment that would risk the safety of an employee, elected Member or contractor could be considered and therefore officers would need to work to ensure all suitable alternatives were explored to provide an equitable outcome for all.

*Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager*

## ***Human Resources***

- 1.5 The annual Health and Safety report holds significant implications for Human Resources. There is a clear link with employee wellbeing and ensuring people have the right working environment that does not jeopardise their physical or mental health. There are also links with employment laws, employee productivity, absenteeism and employee satisfaction. Insights derived from the report inform the training and development plan enabling the Council to address specific skill gaps and ensure employees are adequately trained and equipped to manage health and safety.

*Completed by: Fran Beckitt, Head of HR*

## ***Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing***

- 1.6 Inadequate Health and Safety policies, processes and controls would pose a risk to employees' mental health and wellbeing. There is a clear link between the two and so it's important that the health and safety and wellbeing strategies align.

*Completed by: Fran Beckitt, Head of HR*

## **2. Background to the Report**

- 2.1 The Health and Safety Annual Report for 2023/24 (attached at Appendix A) demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to monitoring safety and ensuring it provides transparency with regard to safety standards and implements controls to not only manage but improve safety wherever possible. Members will be aware that the council provides a number of services which present a higher risk level than others and a number of sites which are open to the public which can present their own challenges.

## **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 The annual report highlights an increase in the number of reported accidents linked to Council activities or at Council operated locations. The increase in the number of reported accidents was forecast and is linked to several factors noted in the report.
- 3.2 This report invites feedback from Members of the Governance and Audit Committee.

## **4. Other Options Considered**

- 4.1 To note the report.

- 4.2 For individual Members or the Committee to provide comments or feedback to assist with maintaining the effectiveness of the Council's health and safety arrangements.

## **5. Reasons for the Recommendations**

- 5.1 The Management of Health and Safety is a legal requirement which also carries a moral and financial obligation to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of any persons who may be impacted by failings in safety management. Failures could not only lead to injury and loss but could see the Council facing Civil and Criminal actions.

This report is presented to the Governance and Audit Committee on an annual basis.

## **6. Appendices**

- 6.1 Appendix A Annual Health and Safety Report 2023/24