

**AGENDA FOR
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**



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To: All Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors : N Bayley, J Southworth, A Arif, R Bernstein,
C Birchmore, R Gold, G Marsden, E Moss, T Pilkington,
D Vernon and D Green

Dear Member/Colleague

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

You are invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held as follows:-

Date:	Tuesday, 3 September 2024
Place:	Council Chamber, Bury Town Hall
Time:	7.00 pm
Briefing Facilities:	If Opposition Members and Co-opted Members require briefing on any particular item on the Agenda, the appropriate Director/Senior Officer originating the related report should be contacted.
Notes:	

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider whether they have an interest in any matters on the agenda and, if so, to formally declare that interest.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of 30 minutes has been set aside for members of the public to ask questions on matters considered at the last meeting and set out in the minutes or on the agenda for tonight's meeting.

4 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

Questions are invited from Elected Members about items on the agenda. 15 minutes will be set aside for Member Question Time, if required.

5 MINUTES *(Pages 3 - 6)*

Minutes from the meeting held on 24TH July 2024 are attached.

6 NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICES *(Pages 7 - 16)*

Report from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care attached.

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT *(Pages 17 - 86)*

Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR Report is Attached

8 URGENT BUSINESS

Any other business which by reason of special circumstances the Chair agrees may be considered as a matter of urgency.

Minutes of: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 24 July 2024

Present: Councillor D Vernon (in the Chair)
Councillors N Bayley, J Southworth, A Arif, R Bernstein,
C Birchmore, R Gold, G Marsden, E Moss, T Pilkington and
D Green

Also in attendance: Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director of Strategy and
Transformation, Neil Kissock, Director of Finance, Leader
Eamon O'Brien, Chloe Ashworth, Democratic Services, Haroon
Asghar, Policy Officer, Josh Ashworth, Democratic Services

Public Attendance: No members of the public were present at the meeting.

OSC.1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for the Meeting

Councillor Vernon welcomed Councillor Southworth and Councillor Gold as new members to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

OSC.2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

OSC.3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

OSC.4 MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

OSC.5 MINUTES

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th March 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

OSC.6 CORPORATE PARENTING CHAMPION

It was agreed:

1. Councillor Green be appointed as the Corporate Parenting Champion.

**OSC.7 YEAR END/QUARTER FOUR CORPORATE PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT
2023/24 AND SUBMISSION OF THE PRODUCTIVITY PLAN**

Councillor Vernon welcomed Councillor Thorpe to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in his new role as Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation. Councillor Thorpe, along with Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director of Strategy and Transformation, and Neil Kissock, Director of Finance, provided an overview of the Quarter Four Corporate Plan Performance Report for 2023/24 and the Productivity Plan submission. The report covered full-year performance, delivery monitoring for the Corporate Plan, updates on priority delivery, key performance indicators (KPIs), actions to carry over to the 2024/25 Corporate Plan, and the Productivity Plan for submission to central government in July.

Councillor Thorpe acknowledged his new role, emphasizing his intent to understand the Council's desired impact, align it with objectives, and challenge Cabinet colleagues on their portfolios. He noted the financial challenges faced by councils like Bury, which rely more on central government grants than council tax revenues and mentioned the new government's commitment to multi-year settlements and the "Let's Fix It Together" campaign, which aims to review council funding levels.

In response to a member's question about the lack of cross-referencing KPIs, Councillor Thorpe committed to including footnotes or references in future reports. He also mentioned plans for a more visual and precise presentation of KPIs in the 2024/25 reporting, linked closely to Corporate Plan priorities.

Addressing the decline in KPIs for the Council's top priorities compared to 2022, Councillor Thorpe highlighted the focus on improving school performance, attendance, and attainment for children on Free School Meals, supported by the Antipoverty Strategy. Regarding the decrease in business enterprises, he noted the decline reflects national trends due to COVID-19 and economic pressures. The local Economic Development Strategy aims to support town regeneration and promote business opportunities.

Responding to concerns about the time taken to process new benefit claims, Councillor Thorpe acknowledged the need for improvement and mentioned potential investments in new technology to automate processes and reduce pressure on teams. The cost-of-living crisis and the Household Support Fund have increased benefit demand. Councillor Bernstein raised concerns about the corporate plan's partnerships in education. Kate Waterhouse emphasized shared values and accountability within partnerships through the "Let's Do It" outcomes framework. Councillor Birchmore questioned the effectiveness of investments in tackling mortality causes. Councillor Thorpe discussed the development of local neighbourhood profiles in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and targeted interventions such as smoking cessation and cancer screening programs.

Councillor Gold supported combining the finance and transformation portfolios and suggested additional scrutiny and training for councillors on Team Bury. Kate Waterhouse addressed homelessness, linking it to societal changes and the cost-of-living crisis. Councillor Green sought clarification on the housing waiting list and specific overcrowding cases. Councillor Bayley raised poverty issues, and Councillor Thorpe suggested these be addressed by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Pilkington discussed the need for agile planning in response to government changes and stressed being ambitious yet prudent to build trust. Addressing the decrease in Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) in Operations and Corporate Functions, Councillor Thorpe explained that increased staffing and investment in social care services were necessary due to a negative Ofsted judgement and to prepare for a CQC inspection. Reductions in other areas impacted capacity but were necessary to deliver £30M in savings over three years.

Councillor Pilkington celebrated community groups like Ramsbottom Civic Pride and their positive impact, encouraging engagement with local groups. The agenda item concluded with a discussion on member development group training and the potential inclusion of Team Bury at a future date.

It was agreed:

- 1 That the report be noted
- 2 The Member Development Group to consider a training session on understanding of Team Bury
- 3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee provide a suggestion for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider poverty impacts on Children and Young People.
- 4 Housing Sufficiency be discussed at housing subgroup

OSC.8 BUDGET UPDATE REPORT

Councillor Thorpe, Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation supported by Council colleagues, Kate Waterhouse, Executive Director Strategy and Transformation and Neil Kissock, Director of Finance provided an overview of the Budget Update Report. The report covered the following items:

- The 2023/24 revenue outturn position.
- An updated Medium-Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) position for 2024/25 to 2026/27.
- The updated Net Budget for 2024/25.
- The final reserves position as of 31 March 2024.
- The 2023/24 capital outturn position
- An update to members on the Finance Improvement Plan
- Sets out the work plan to close the budget gap

Neil Kissock, Executive Director of Finance, reported on the outturn position, indicating significant financial challenges in local government, particularly in children's services. He highlighted that these pressures are in line with national trends and are accounted for in the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the 2024/25 budget. Despite a substantial budget gap, efforts are ongoing to explore cost-reduction options and reduce reliance on reserve funding.

Addressing questions about finance and transformation, Neil Kissock explained that the September Cabinet update will review the first quarter's revenue and capital programme forecast outturn position. This review will restate the 2024/25 capital delivery programme to reflect slippage from 2023/24 and assess the deliverable scale of the programme for the current financial year. He noted that the slippage had resulted in a revenue underspend due to lower borrowing costs than forecast. The September Cabinet meeting will evaluate in-year performance, while the November meeting will update the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and outline budget proposals for 2025/26.

Councillor Thorpe emphasized the importance of prudent financial management and questioned resource allocation within the reconstructed portfolio. Council Leader Eamon O'Brien highlighted the need for balanced Cabinet roles, focusing on skills, interests, and current needs, and stressed that finance should drive corporate performance with clear, resource-driven strategies.

Councillor Pilkington discussed collaboration opportunities with other authorities on SEND and school transport. Council Leader Eamon O'Brien identified potential in public transport to meet demand, suggesting exploring public ownership of a bus company to provide reliable, cost-

effective home-to-school transport. This issue will be raised at the network committee due to persistent overspending in SEND home-to-school transport. Councillor Pilkington also mentioned challenges in transport arrangements and work patterns, particularly for hard-to-fill roles, suggesting improvements in home-to-school transport and expanding services to other public sectors.

Councillor Moss expressed concerns about the Children and Young People budget, noting the 2024/25 budget's assumption of one hundred and fifteen placements is unrealistic given the current one hundred and twenty-one placements. Members suggested reviewing the forecast for placements and potential overspend, with an update report to be included in the September Cabinet meeting.

In response to a question about the council's ledger update, it was noted that the current financial system is nearing the end of its life. A business case for a cloud-based ERP Finance Management System is being developed, expected to improve services and financial efficiencies. The proposed implementation timeframe is eighteen months, with a potential go-live date of 1 April 2026, subject to member approval.

Councillor Bayley raised concerns about the security of cloud-based systems compared to traditional methods. It was explained that cloud systems have security benefits, but on-site systems also have advantages if properly managed. Data security will be discussed further in the upcoming audit meeting.

Councillor Marsden inquired about intrusion parameters and responses, citing a recent system outage during a penetration test. The discussion acknowledged hacking risks and disruptions, emphasizing the need for robust security measures and addressing instances of cybercrime, such as email cloning.

It was agreed:

1. The report was clear and informative
2. To get the data regarding potential cyber threats
3. Interested on raising revenue and collection and where income streams coming from and dividends from airport to be included.

OSC.9 FORWARD PLANNER

Attached for information only.

OSC.10 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

COUNCILLOR D VERNON
Chair

(Note: The meeting started at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.53 pm)

Classification: Open	Decision Type: Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 04 September 2024
Subject:	PART A- Tender of Neighbourhood Housing Support Services- Supported Accommodation and Floating Support Services	
Report of	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Care	

1 Summary

- 1.1 Following the [Cabinet report on the 4th April 2024](#), approval was given to the Community Commissioning Division to engage in a tendering exercise for supported accommodation and floating support for people that require housing related support. After review and procurement, this further report requests the approval for the division to award two contracts- 1) Supported Accommodation and 2) Floating Support, both within Neighbourhood Housing Support Services.
- 1.2 Neighbourhood Support Housing Services provide short term, outcome focused interventions to vulnerable adults. These services will support individuals to build resilience and independence, improve health and wellbeing, ensure stability of accommodation, maximise income and support meaningful and economic activity.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The recommendations are for Cabinet to:
- Award Adullam Homes a 4-year contract for Supported Accommodation
 - Award Calico Enterprise a 4-year contract for floating support
 - Enter a 4-year arrangement (1st October 2024- 31st September 2028) for both services, including a 1-year extension- subject to performance and review.
 - Delegate finalisation and sealing of these contracts including any clarifications to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director for Health and Care.

3. Reasons for recommendation(s)

- 3.1 There has been a significant increase in the number of single people that require tenancy related services and households that require interventions to sustain their tenancies. Rough sleeping and single homelessness has increased locally, due to numerous factors.
- 3.2 There is a need for supported accommodation for single people and floating support for households to reflect rising homelessness in the borough, regionally and nationally. Services must be fit for purpose, to

prevent people from failing in their tenancies and provide housing solutions that develop independent living skills and improve quality of life in the community.

- 3.3 A tendering exercise has been completed to reflect the award to Adullam Homes and Calico Enterprise, which delivers both quality and savings to the Council.

4 Alternative options considered and rejected

- 4.1 Procurement rules did not allow any further extensions to previous contractual arrangements. Therefore, the only option is to engage in a procuring process, which provides an opportunity to review what the landscape of supported and floating support should look like to ease homelessness pressures in Bury.

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5 Background

- 5.1 Following approval by [Cabinet on the 4th April 2024](#), the Commissioning Division commenced a review of supported accommodation and floating support provision. This was required to complete a robust procurement and tendering exercise to meet the needs of people who require housing related support in Bury.
- 5.2 As extensively and clearly evidenced in the report, the number of people that have complex needs has significantly increased over the last 3 years. This has meant that services have had to accommodate people with complex and diverse needs to ensure that needs are met.
- 5.3 Increased homelessness and more people struggling to sustain their tenancies, strongly suggests that there is a need for the continuation of supported accommodation for single people and childless couples over 18 years old and floating support services for all residents of Bury, including single people, childless couples and families with dependent children. Floating support will be tenure neutral, which includes people that are living in social housing, private tenancies and those that are owner occupiers.

6 Consultation of Neighbourhood Housing Support Services

6.1 Stakeholder Consultation

6.2 Two Stakeholder Events were held in February and March 2024, the total number of stakeholders consulted was 38, this included potential bidders, residents and key partners including Homelessness and Housing Services, Probation, Community Mental Health Team, Bury Achieve and partners in voluntary and faith sector. The slides from these events can be found in the Appendix section.

6.3 Key highlights from stakeholder events

- ★ Clear pathways and partnerships are required.
- ★ Drop-ins in the community for people to access floating support have been working well.
- ★ Floating Support Services should remain tenure neutral.
- ★ Self-referrals work well.
- ★ Contract length needs consideration, as short contracts do not enable providers to establish themselves in localities and offer job security to their staff.
- ★ Shared accommodation is not for everyone, more dispersed self-contained housing stock is required. Some high-risk tenants need their own front door.
- ★ 24/7 staffing needs to be considered in supported accommodation.
- ★ Time frames needed for move-on into settled accommodation need to be longer.
- ★ Time frames needed for community support once a person moves to independent living need to be longer to improve success.
- ★ Avoid duplication of services.
- ★ Gap – recovery / abstinence housing options.
- ★ Lack of available move on accommodation can mean people are staying in supported accommodation longer than needed.

6.4 Customer Consultation

6.5 Consultation with current and previous customers of Adullam and Calico took place during March and April 2024. This included:

- Private face to face sessions with 7 people.
- Two group consultation sessions with 23 people.
- Microsoft Forms surveys were sent out and 41 responses were received.

A total number of 71 customers were consulted.

6.6 A Microsoft Forms Survey was used to capture people's views both face to face and electronically using a QR code for those that preferred this:



A link to the survey results is below:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/AnalysisPage.aspx?AnalyzerToken=HzMWNyaMbZ9d1FNTBSEXcWIPSQcn2xYC&id=0DG3s8CYC0SHZY1kZKjtgstDFycYNz1BsvFLwrIT1nBUN1RGQUg5VzM1UVpFWjUwSzISRTg5TFY0Wi4u>

6.7 **Key highlights to consider for supported accommodation:**

- ◆ Shared accommodation works for some; seeing others, having someone to talk to, cook and eat with is helpful in reducing isolation and loneliness.
- ◆ Self-contained accommodation would be better for some, shared can be overwhelming.
- ◆ Sharing with people that use substances and alcohol can be difficult for those trying to stop.
- ◆ Consideration needs to be given to those from different cultural backgrounds.
- ◆ All shared accommodation should have en-suites.
- ◆ Some residents have mobility problems and need accessible ground floor accommodation.
- ◆ Not being allowed visitors is frustrating, especially for those who want family or their children to visit. Families are a support network that can keep people on track.
- ◆ Moving out can be lonely- some felt support after moving on should be longer than 4 weeks; it should be flexible around the person, and they should be able to dip in and out based on need to prevent spiralling into crisis with bills and loneliness.
- ◆ In shared accommodation it can feel scary and frightening when staff are not around at night and weekends.
- ◆ Mixed gender accommodation was not considered a problem.
- ◆ People want help to access courses and voluntary work.
- ◆ Those leaving prison need support at the gate, housing is the number one priority. If that's not there, there is high risk of re-offending, drug misuse and feelings of no hope.
- ◆ People want support to get involved in the community, groups and education to establish interests, connection, hope and stop reoffending and drug use.
- ◆ 9 months move on target should be flexible around the person and the ready to move form not being able to be submitted sooner is unhelpful as it takes so long to get people registered and bidding and there are limited available properties.

6.8 **Key highlights to consider regarding floating support:**

- ❖ Floating support being available at drop-ins in the community, virtually and over the phone work well. Positive feedback about this being good because people can access help and advice when needed with understanding letters, making phone calls, managing debts, rent arrears, evictions, signposting, and a listening ear.
- ❖ Shared view that non-judgemental, caring, knowledgeable staff that are available when needed is helpful.
- ❖ Joint working with other agencies is good.
- ❖ Translating information into other languages is helpful, and enrolling people on ESOL course.
- ❖ Support to access training and education and leisure is good.
- ❖ Shared view that being able to access floating support has improved people's health and wellbeing and helped sustain their tenancies by maximising benefits and managing debts and accessing their community.

6.9 Floating support drop-in sessions in the community were attended and the following key observations were made:

- Wide range of services joint working; putting people in contact with the right person is good; however, potentially some duplication.
- Primary benefit of offering drop-in support in localities is that people are talking to each other, developing community connections, given a hot drink/ meal/ food parcel and other donated items such as toiletries.

6.10 Following extensive consultation and findings detailed [in the report on the 4th April 2024](#), tender documents were developed (see Appendixes section). Key highlights from both tenders are:

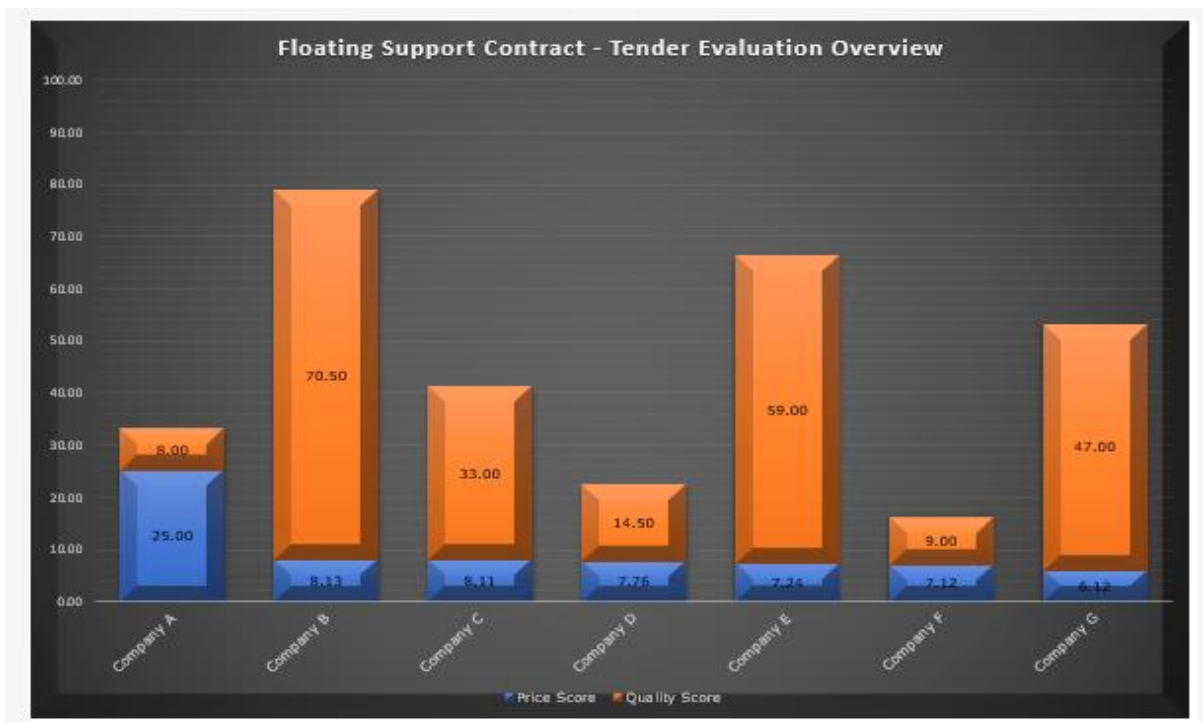
Supported Accommodation tender	Floating Support tender
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 60 units of accommodation in a mixed housing portfolio- including shared and dispersed housing. ◆ 3-month support package delivered to help people move on into their new homes ◆ Maximum stay in supported accommodation changed from 9 months to 12 months- to extend time for people to develop independent living skills. ◆ Limited tolerance to provide safe place where people are supported to achieve abstinence from drug and/or alcohol use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 600 hours will be commissioned to be provided per week to all residents, including single people, childless couples and families with dependent children. ◆ All households able to access floating support- including residents living in social housing, private rented and owner occupiers. ◆ The service will include floating support for older people in sheltered housing to help sustain their tenancies.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Accommodation meets the criteria detailed in the Checklist of accommodation standards published by Community Commissioning. 	
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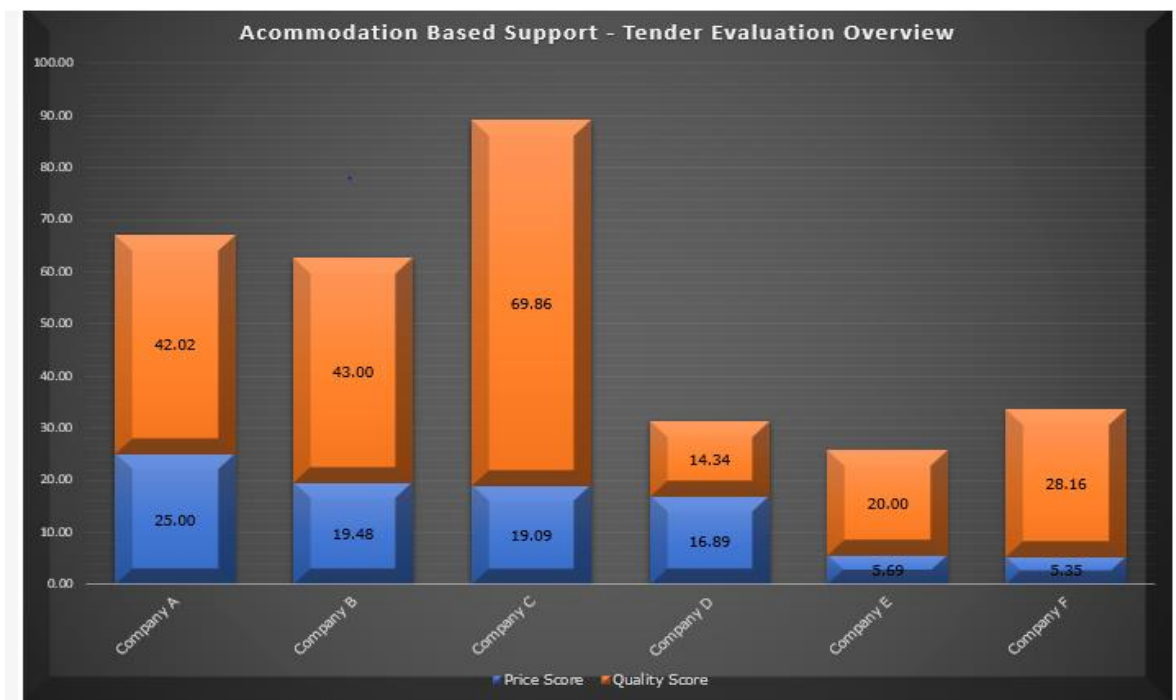
6.11 Based on the outcomes of findings and the consultation, in conjunction with the Procurement Team, a tendering exercise commenced on 3rd July 2024 advertising both floating support services and accommodation-based services, inviting potential bidders to accommodate and support people in Bury.

6.12 Panel members who evaluated bids and interviewed providers included Community Commissioning, key stakeholder representatives and a person with lived experience representing 'Project Free' a peer support service that helps men in Bury to overcome substance misuse, break cycles of behaviour, and integrate those leaving the criminal justice system back into the community.

6.13 There were seven bids evaluated for the floating support contract. The graph below shows each company's price and quality scores. The winning bidder, Calico, is identified as 'Company B'.



6.14 There were six bids evaluated for the accommodation-based support contract. The graph below shows each company's price and quality scores. The winning bidder, Adullam, is identified as 'Company C'.



7.0 Recommendations

7.1 After the tendering and commissioning exercise, it is recommended that:

- A contract is awarded to Adullam Homes for 60 units of accommodation over a 4-year period.
- A contract is awarded to Calico Homes for 600 hours per week of floating support over a 4-year period
- Enter 4-year contractual arrangements from the 1st October 2024 to the 31st September 2028, with the option to extend by 1 year based on performance and review.
- Delegate finalisation and sealing of these contracts including any clarifications to the Director of Law and Democratic Services in consultation with the Executive Director for Health and Care.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

9.0 The Housing for Adults with Additional Needs Strategy aligns to the Bury Let's Do It Strategy which provides the vision to enable people of all ages to live well within their neighbourhoods, supported by the integration of public services with our neighbourhood hubs. The procurement of Neighbourhood Housing Support Services also meets the aspirations of the Let's Strategy.

Local

- Local housing options for local people by accommodation homeless people in Bury
- Developing and regenerating the unique townships where people live

- Prevent the need for Bury residents to have to move out of the borough to have their tenancy needs met.
- Bring Bury residents back in borough if its right for them.
- Work with local developer's and providers who know the local area.

Enterprise

- Encouraging enterprise to drive inclusive economic growth through our business community.
- Enterprising innovation and creative solutions to current housing issues, including a mixed housing portfolio.
- Be bold in our housing solutions and future developments in Bury.

Together

- Working together to commission quality supported accommodation, fit for purpose homes for people with additional needs in Bury.
- Working together with service users, their carers and families to shape accommodation options and positive move on.
- Working together to ensure inclusivity throughout the housing agenda and preventing homelessness.

Strengths

- Taking a strength- based approach to recognise the assets and strengths of communities to settle people in their new homes.
- Recognising the strengths of individuals enabling their independence, choice, and control for housing.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

EA has been completed.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

An environmental impact assessment has not been undertaken for the review, as there are no implications or carbon impact of this decision.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Increase in demand of people who have housing/homelessness problems accessing the service and have complex needs (mental health, offending histories, and substance misuse problems).	The review considered the pathways which are required to ensure early identification of people/households that require housing related support. it included different ways of working to develop support packages which are

	not only tenancy related but provide interventions for other aspects of people lives to develop independence and resilience.
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Legal Implications:

The provision of tailored supported accommodation supports compliance with the statutory duties in the Care Act 2014 to support individual wellbeing which includes promoting the maintenance of personal dignity, emotional wellbeing and the suitability of living accommodation (Section 1(1) and (2) Care Act 2014).

The procurement of these services has been carried out in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Legal services should be engaged to finalise the terms and execute each contract.





Financial Implications:

The total cost of the two contracts will be funded from existing provision and consequently there is no cost impact to the Council.

In addition, the awarding of the two contracts will generate a c. £0.045m saving. The saving has been built into the Health & Adult Care (HAC) Directorate medium term financial strategy (MTFS)

As part of the monthly budget monitoring cycle, Finance and Budget holders will track the expenditure linked to the two contracts ensuring that all expenditure aligns to the funding provided. Any financial risks/pressures identified will be highlighted to the Director of Adult Social Services as part of the monthly budget monitoring conversation whereby an action plan will be deployed to mitigate any financial risks/ pressures.

Appendices:

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ITT Neighbourhood Support Housing Serv
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NHSS Consultation Event Slides- Feb-
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Neighbourhood Housing Support Serv

Background papers:

[Review of Neighbourhood Housing Support Services- Cabinet- 4th April 2024](#)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning



Classification: Open	Decision Type: Non-Key
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Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 04 September 2024
Subject:	A review of health and safety performance in 2023-24 and a proposed Health and Safety Strategy for the next 3 years.	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs and HR	

Summary

In accordance with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) best practice the Council produces an annual Health and Safety Report. This report sets out key health and safety activity over the preceding financial year alongside a summary of reported health and safety incidents and is presented to members for their comment and approval.

As part of the annual reporting process the Council's Health and Safety Policy is also reviewed (in-line with HSE Best Practice) and the Policy is also included here for approval.

Additionally, in-line with the recommendations from an external review of Health and Safety arrangements in the Council conducted in 2023, the Council has developed a new 3-year Health and Safety Strategy which proposes a set of priorities for 2024-27 and is presented for approval.

Recommendation(s)

Cabinet is asked to approve the 2023-24 Annual Health and Safety Report, revised Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety Strategy for 2024-27.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

To ensure continued compliance with health and safety legislation HSE best practice guidance and, ultimately, to support a safe working environment for staff and those who access Council services.

Alternative options considered and rejected

None.

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1. Background

- 1.1 The Council has now established a strong governance regime around health and safety activity, which includes an annual review of the organisation's Health and Safety Policy (as per HSE guidance) and consideration of an annual outturn report. Each year these are considered jointly by Members and the Trades Unions via the Corporate Health and Safety Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) and, ultimately, subject to Cabinet approval.
- 1.2 A review of the Council's health and safety arrangements, carried out in March-June 2023 by external health and safety consultants noted the significant recent progress that had been made in terms of Health and Safety governance, Trade Union collaboration and the production of annual and quarterly reports. It also acknowledged the commitment of staff at all levels in the context of the financial pressures facing the Council. However, the review made a number of recommendations for improvement both strategically and operationally. A key recommendation was the development of a longer-term (3 year) Health and Safety Strategy and supporting set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to set out the overarching improvement journey for health and safety in the Council.

2. Reports for Consideration and Approval

- 2.1 This document introduces three reports for discussion and approval by Cabinet. To support and assure these documents the external consultant who reviewed health and safety arrangements across the Council in 2023 was asked to review these reports against the recommendations from their work as well as HSE best practice and their feedback has been incorporated. The reports have also been considered and agreed by the Council's JCC.

2.2 Health and Safety Policy

- 2.2.1 The Council's Health and Safety Policy (Appendix A) sets out how the Authority will meet its responsibilities under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other associated legislation to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all employees, and to provide such information, instruction and training as may be necessary for this purpose. In addition, it also sets out how the Council will take responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of third parties such as contractors, visitors or members of the public who may be affected by our activities.
- 2.2.2 The policy is reviewed on an annual basis as per HSE guidance. There are no major changes proposed this year. Some minor amendments have been made to strengthen and clarify language, particularly in relation to roles and responsibilities, in response to feedback.

2.3 Annual Health and Safety Report 2023-24

2.3.1 The annual report (Appendix B) provides an overview of health and safety management activity during 2023-24. It includes progress against the Council's agreed health and safety objectives and an analysis of incident statistics. In addition, it highlights the support provided throughout the year to Council services and takes account of the organisational, local and national context. It also includes a progress report against the 31 recommendations made through the external review noted above.

2.3.2 The overarching aim for 2023-24 was to embed and strengthen the core basic requirements of a robust health and safety management system. Significant progress has been made here, and some key highlights are:

- A revised health and safety policy, signed by the Chief Executive and Leader and was published
- A robust and consistent new risk assessment process has been developed and launched, with risk assessments now all stored centrally.
- A detailed health and safety training matrix has been developed for the Operations Department, and action is being taken to close any gaps.
- The School's Health and Safety Policy was updated and issued with a strengthened request for assurance information. Responses were received from all 33 schools within scope.
- The Council's occupational health service was outsourced in July 2023 and a managed health surveillance programme developed. As of 3 June 2024, 88.2% of staff requiring health surveillance have already attended or have appointments scheduled.

2.3.3 Additionally, some key statistics for 2023-24 are:

- 232 accidents/incidents/near misses/dangerous occurrences were reported
- 151 involved employees and 81 involved members of the public. – There has been a concerning increase in incidents of violence and aggression against staff and additional steps have been taken in response to this including strengthened guidance and targeted training and support
- 29 were near misses. – This is a significant rise on the previous year and a positive indication.
- 5 were RIDDOR reportable

2.4 Health and Safety Strategy for 2024-27

2.4.1 A Health and Safety Strategy for 2024-27 (Appendix C) has been developed, which clearly sets out the Council's approach to health and safety management, its priorities for the next three years and a number of KPIs to monitor performance. The Strategy's priorities include:

- Ensuring full compliance with our robust new risk assessment process
- Developing a system to centrally monitor health and safety training and working towards full compliance

- Developing a robust health and safety culture
- Integrating Housing Services into our approach to health and safety

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

Please summarise how this links to the Let's Do It Strategy.

Strong health and safety practice is key to the Council delivering the Let's Do It! Strategy by ensuring employees have the confidence and infrastructure to deliver effectively in their roles.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the outcome(s) of an initial or full EIA and make **specific reference regarding the protected characteristic of Looked After Children**. Intranet link to EIA documents is [here](#).*

An Equality Impact Assessment of the Council's Health and Safety Policy was undertaken at the time of its original approval and no negative impacts identified.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

*Please provide an explanation of the Environmental impact of this decision. Please include the impact on both **Carbon emissions** (contact climate@bury.gov.uk for advice) and **Biodiversity** (contact c.m.wilkinson@bury.gov.uk for advice)*

No negative impacts identified.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
The lack of a robust Health and Safety Policy and Strategy, which align with HSE guidance, would pose a risk to employee and public safety as well as legal challenge.	Policy and Strategy approval, communication and continuous monitoring and review
Lack of compliance with the organisation's Health and Safety Policy and Strategy	Engagement and training to be rolled out following communication of the Policy and Strategy, with requirements for compliance
Lack of clear governance and priorities for health and safety	Agreement of this report and close and continuous joint working with the Trade Unions

Legal Implications:

This report requests members to approve the Health and Safety Annual Report. It is also to update Cabinet on the Council's Health and Safety performance over the last 12 months and sets out national priorities and the priorities for the next 12 months. As an employer the Council has statutory responsibilities to carry out our undertaking (all activities) so far as is practicable in a safe and healthy working environment for our employees, contractors and partners. In addition, as an Authority we have a duty under s18 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to make adequate provision for health and safety regulations in our area.

Financial Implications:

To be completed by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

Appendices:

Please list any appended documents.

Appendix A Health and Safety Policy

Appendix B Health and Safety Annual Report 2023-24

Appendix C Health and Safety Strategy 2024-27

Background papers:

[Report to Cabinet: 12th July 2023 – Health and Safety Annual Report](#)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
JCC	Joint Consultative Committee

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Health and Safety Policy

July 2024

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1. Health and safety statement of intent

Bury Council, as a responsible employer, accepts its responsibility under the Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and all other associated legislation to provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all its employees, and to provide such information, instruction and training as may be necessary for this purpose. In addition, it also accepts responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of third parties such as contractors, visitors or members of the public who may be affected by its activities.

The Council also recognises the moral, legal and financial costs that can result from failings or poor application of occupational health and safety systems, and as far as is reasonably practicable, will:

- Identify hazards and control significant health and safety risks which arise from our work activities.
- Provide information, instruction, training and supervision to employees, volunteers, contractors and agency personnel.
- Consult with employees and others on matters that affect their health, safety and welfare.
- Provide and maintain premises that are safe.
- Provide suitable work equipment and articles (e.g. substances) that are safe in use, maintenance, handling and storage.

In doing this, we will:

- Ensure compliance with the relevant health and safety legislation as a minimum standard.
- Consider occupational health and safety whenever political, managerial and operational decisions are taken.
- Ensure that no decision is made, or operation undertaken, unless appropriate occupational health and safety standards are assessed.
- Interpret health and safety management in its widest context, including wellbeing, rehabilitation, physical and mental health.
- Make available necessary resources, including financial, to ensure appropriate health and safety standards are delivered.
- Co-operate with everyone who has a responsibility for Health & Safety in: identifying hazards in the workplace, assessing risks related to them and implementing appropriate protective measures.
- Ensure sound health and safety management practices across all areas of activity and influence, including roles and responsibilities as an employer, service provider, client organisation, commissioner, owner and controller of land and premises and partner within partnership arrangements.

The detailed arrangements for bringing the implementation of the above are set out within the remainder of this policy.

Signed _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Date _____

Lynne Ridsdale: Chief Executive

Cllr. Eamonn O'Brien: Leader of the Council

2. Responsibilities

Everyone in the Council is responsible for the health and safety of themselves and others who may be affected by their work activities. The section below sets out roles and responsibilities for all those who work for the Council in any capacity, our Partners and Elected Members.

Elected members are responsible for providing leadership on issues of health and safety and ensuring the provision of adequate resources. A member of the Cabinet will have specific responsibility for the occupational health and safety portfolio and will ensure this policy is promoted and that occupational health and safety issues are brought to the attention of Cabinet when appropriate. Elected Members are responsible for:

- Providing leadership on issues of health and safety.
- Adoption of policies, strategies and plans that are within the spirit of this policy and which allow it to be implemented in practice.
- Provision of adequate resources to enable the implementation of occupational health and safety policies, plans and strategies.
- Scrutiny of appropriate areas of health and safety management.
- Carrying out Council roles and duties in line with the standards, arrangements and guidance covered by this policy.

The Chief Executive has overall and ultimate responsibility for health and safety within the organisation. They are responsible for having systems in place that are properly resourced to manage the significant risks facing the Council. They should lead by example in visibly championing health and safety within the organisation and send out clear messages that any risks to health and safety need to be effectively managed. Furthermore, the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation and maintenance of this policy.

The Designated (Occupational Health and Safety) Director, the Director for People and Inclusion has responsibility for:

- Promotion of health and safety at a strategic level.
- Monitoring of the implementation of corporate systems and standards.
- Overseeing the delivery of health and safety responsibilities through the Bury Council Executive Team.

The Council's Executive Team have operational responsibility for applying this policy, and for health and safety compliance and performance. This includes:

- Promotion of health and safety at a strategic level.
- Monitoring of the implementation of corporate systems and standards.
- Overseeing the delivery of health and safety responsibilities within their service / department.
- Ensuring that each service completes a risk assessment needs checker annually. Ensuring risk assessments are stored centrally and reviewed at least annually.
- Ensuring health and safety incidents are appropriately reported and investigated and that any follow-up actions are implemented.

- Overseeing the provision of appropriate health and safety training to ensure compliance with all appropriate legislation and best practice.

Managers have responsibility for the health and safety of their teams and application of this policy on a day-to-day basis within their areas of responsibility. This includes:

- Managing the risk of accidents / incidents and reporting them if they do occur. Ensuring timely and accurate reporting of accidents / incidents and the delivery of follow-up investigations and actions as required. Also ensuring the timely reporting of appropriate accidents / incidents etc to the Health & Safety Executive under the provision of the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).
- Managing the risk of occupational ill health, the delivery of effective health surveillance programmes and reporting incidences of ill health if they occur.
- Ensuring that employees are made aware of and follow this Health and Safety Policy, Risk Assessments and other relevant health and safety documentation.
- Escalating awareness of risks and issues which are outside of their immediate control.
- Include relevant employees and trade unions in the creation and maintenance of health and safety management arrangements e.g. Risk Assessments.
- Managers of contracts and any other Council officers who manage the delivery of services through alternative provisions including, partners, third parties, volunteers, agencies, etc. must ensure that:
 - Health and safety risks and potential risks to the Council are considered.
 - Appropriate steps are taken to manage the risks.
 - Those responsible for service provision have appropriate health and safety management arrangements in place.

Employees, agency workers, volunteers, consultants, contractors, partners and suppliers are expected to:

- Take personal responsibility for their own health and safety and the health and safety of those affected by their acts or omissions while at work. Consider risks and highlight concerns through the line management structure and/or through the Bury Council Health and Safety Team.
- Undertake relevant health and safety training as required.
- Co-operate in adhering to the standards and expectations detailed in this policy.
- Ensure that they carry out their work, so far as is reasonably practicable, without putting themselves or others at risk.
- Ensure any tools, materials and equipment which they may use are safe and free from defects and if not report this for action through the appropriate line management structure.
- Co-operate with any health and safety investigation and assist in the delivery of any actions identified.
- Report any hazards that they become aware of, any shortfalls in health and safety management arrangements, any accidents that happen at work and any illness that they believe has been caused or made worse by work.
- Assist in the development, implementation and maintenance of health and safety management arrangements e.g. Risk Assessments.
- Participate in appropriate occupational health surveillance programmes and take any follow-up actions identified in a timely manner.

This statement applies to everyone working in and on behalf of Bury Council and at all Council sites. The principles extend to the working conditions of staff who are agile workers, including working from their home.

This policy does not apply to those working in maintained schools, which are responsible for the development and approval of their own policies. The Council have provided schools with a template Health & Safety Policy which reflects their specific responsibilities and aligns with the approach set out within this document.

The Health and Safety Team is responsible for:

- Leading on the development and monitoring of organisational standards, strategies, policies and arrangements and ensuring these continue to reflect national legislative and best practice standards as they develop.
- Carrying out independent: auditing, monitoring and investigation of organisational and departmental standards, arrangements and complex risks and accidents.
- Advising managers and employees, including the Chief Executive, to enable them to meet their health and safety responsibilities, including the provision of training and practical advice.
- Preparing quarterly reports to the Council's Executive Team and Health and Safety Joint Consultative Committees (JCCs), including an assessment of key health and safety risks and statistics on work-related and workplace incidents, health and safety training and other proactive and reactive work.

Bury Council Asset Management. The Council has established a board to oversee the management of all Council operated assets, the Council are also in the process of creating a facilities management team that will ensure that:

- Buildings are being operated in compliance with all statutory requirements, in line with the Council's policies and procedures.
- Preventative and protective measures (including maintenance activities) are understood, developed, applied, maintained and recorded. This is in order to achieve appropriate levels of control over any significant risks that are identified through the buildings risk assessment process.
- Health and safety site-specific arrangements are applied in practice and records are kept (including those in relation to fire safety and first aid management).
- All relevant building users and service providers participate in: co-operating and co-ordinating building related risk assessments, the development of preventative and protective procedures and the application of procedures, protective measures and maintenance activities.

Building responsibilities remain with individual Departments and their nominated owners. The board will, however, oversee processes and procedures and work to ensure all buildings are managed effectively.

The Council's **Occupational Health providers** are responsible for providing professionally independent advice and support to employees and managers on issues relating to the impact of work on the health of individuals and individual's health on their ability to work.

Trades Union Safety Representatives. The Council recognises the important function of Trades Unions in managing health and safety at work. The functions of a

Trades Union Safety Representative are set out fully in The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 and include:

- Investigating potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace and to examine the causes of these events.
- Investigating complaints by employees the Trades Union represents concerning their health, safety and welfare at work.
- Making representations to Bury Council as the employer on the above and on general matters relating to Health & Safety at work.
- Carrying out inspections of the workplace and work activities. (This does not negate manager's legal responsibility to perform inspections or tours to support their risk assessments or H&S planning.)
- Representing members of staff during consultations at their workplace with Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspectors.
- Receiving information from HSE Inspectors following inspections of their workplace.
- Attending meetings of the appropriate Health & Safety committees.

The Director of People and Inclusion will liaise with the Trade Union Branch Secretary to determine the appropriate discharge of the safety role and ensure any necessary paid time off from their regular job to enable them to perform their Trade Union duties, agreed in line with The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations (1977) reg 4(2)(a)(b).

3. Arrangements

Bury Council aims to meet its health and safety objectives by focusing on three key areas:

- Governance, consultation and communication.
- Robust health and safety management systems.
- Effective training and development.

An overview of these arrangements is set out below. These methods are supported by several key documents and procedures which are highlighted.

Governance, consultation and communication

Governance, consultation and communication arrangements are in place for Health and Safety at the highest level of the organisation. These include:

Governance

- The Council's Cabinet agrees a Health and Safety Strategy and receives an annual Health and Safety Report taking ultimate responsibility for agreeing priorities and assuring their delivery through the annual reporting cycle.
- A formal Corporate Health and Safety Joint Consultative Committee, which is led by Elected Members and Trade Unions meets quarterly and receives a formal report setting out key health and safety risks and details of accidents and incidents.
- The Council's Executive Team will also consider Health and Safety issues, at least quarterly, reviewing health and safety reports and taking operational decisions and actions where needed. This role is also supported by regular review of the Corporate Risk Register and direct escalation of any significant new health and safety risks or concerns by the Director of People and Inclusion.
- Departmental Management Teams will consider Health and Safety issues at least quarterly via a formal agenda item and a review of the latest health and safety report, accident, incident, and work-related ill health information and other key data pertaining to the Department.
- Departmental Joint Consultative Committees: (DJCCs), which are led by Executive Directors, will ensure that Health and Safety is a regular agenda item for discussion and engagement with Trade Union colleagues at a departmental level.

Consultation and Communication

- The Corporate and Departmental JCC process provides the formal route for consultation with the Trades Unions on all health and safety matters.
- Consultation will cover:
 - Introduction of any measure which may substantially affect health and safety at work, e.g. the introduction of new equipment or new systems of work.
 - Arrangements for getting competent people to help the organisation comply with health and safety laws (a competent person is someone who has the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to help an employer meet the requirements of health and safety law).

- The information that is given to employees on the significant risks arising from their work, measures to reduce or eliminate these risks and what employees should do if they are exposed to a significant risk.
- Planning and organisation of health and safety training.
- The health and safety implications of introducing new equipment, technology and working practices.
- Health and Safety will be a regular theme within corporate communications and local managers will be encouraged to include health and safety as a discussion point within team meetings.

Robust health and safety management systems

The following systems are available and used by managers to ensure that health and safety is managed across the Council to a consistent and satisfactory standard:

- Completion and regular review of suitable and sufficient risk assessments of: all work activity, service provisions and facilities, to identify any factors that may foreseeably present a significant risk of harm.
- Assessment of any additional support or preventative and protective measures for individuals who have a recognised vulnerability which makes them more susceptible to harm at work.
- Provision and use of preventative and protective guidance, measures, equipment, and management systems to achieve appropriate levels of control over factors identified through the risk assessment process.
- Maintenance of safe places of work, safe systems of work, safe plant, safe equipment, healthy working environments, safe means of access to and egress from all places of work and safe arrangements for use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances.
- Provision of suitable occupational health services, including health surveillance, where employees may be exposed to hazards that can harm their health.
- The reporting and recording of all accidents/incidents using the corporate e-reporting system and subsequent investigation as necessary. Arranging delivery of appropriate response actions. If, because of injury or illness, employees are incapable of making an immediate report, their manager must do so. If the injury is reportable under RIDDOR, the HSE must be informed by the appropriate manager.
- Monitoring and review of health and safety management arrangements to ensure they are effective and opportunities to improve are identified.
- Procurement arrangements that consider all relevant health and safety requirements and ensure appropriate control measures are put in place.
- Assessment, before engagement, of the competence of contractors and other service providers to carry out any work that they will do on behalf of the Council in a safe manner; monitoring their health and safety performance during the delivery of services; and taking appropriate action when health and safety performance falls below acceptable standards. (move further down the list)

Training and Development

Training is provided to ensure competence in identifying and managing risks at work as applicable to individual roles. A record will be maintained of all training to ensure competence is maintained through appropriate refresher programmes.

Advice and training on key areas of the management system is provided through the Health and Safety Team.

Managers must carry out health and safety training and development needs assessments through supervision and employee review processes. These assessments must confirm that relevant and/or required general health and safety training and development has taken place or is arranged and that any training and development that is specific to the job roles or working circumstances of individuals and teams is identified and delivered.

Several methods are used to communicate and reinforce learning in relation to health and safety:

- Local Induction
- Health and Safety Induction
- Corporate Health and safety E learning based on common Council wide risks
- Bespoke training aimed at risks relevant to service areas
- Shadowing, mentoring, supervision and instruction
- Health and Safety Tools

4. Monitoring and review

On-going monitoring of this policy will include proactive and reactive measures, incorporating spot checks, accident investigations, statistical analysis and audits of Departments. Results of monitoring activities will be reported via the governance channels described above.

Departments must monitor their own guidance documents, procedures and risk assessments to check their effectiveness.

This policy will be subject to review on at least an annual basis in the context of the annual Health and Safety report and the three-year strategy. Reviews and revisions will take place more regularly in the case of any significant changes, including where:

- Legislation has been introduced or revised.
- Guidance has been introduced or revised.
- Incident investigation suggests that a review may be required.
- Research, monitoring or audit suggests that a review may be required.
- Changes in organisational structures, arrangements, etc.

Minor amendments of a routine nature will be agreed with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Affairs following Trade Union engagement.

The Appendix, which details arrangements and guidance for the management of specific areas of risk will be updated in 'real time' as areas of guidance emerge and evolve.

Appendix 1: Specific arrangements

Arrangements and guidance for the management of specific areas of risk can be accessed through the following links. All managers and employees are expected to apply the arrangements and guidance as relevant to them and the work that they perform or manage. The arrangements and guidance are updated as national guidance and the local risk profile change, the intranet should always be accessed either directly or through these links to ensure that the most up to date information is used.

Please use the topic links below. After opening, each topic area will have more detailed guidance forms and relevant information.

- [Asbestos](#)

We have a legal duty to prevent the exposure of employees, contractors and visitors to asbestos.

- [Auditing \(health and safety\)](#)

Arrangements for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of health and safety management systems.

- [Construction \(Design and Management\) Regulations](#)

Construction work, whether a small, short duration job or a large project is regarded as potential high risk in respect of health and safety.

- [Control of Substances Hazardous to Health \(COSHH\)](#)

COSHH applies to a wide range of substances and preparations which could be used in the workplace.

- [Display Screen Equipment, workstations and lighting](#)

H&S requirements for users when working with display screen equipment (computers, laptops, eye tests, etc.) and office ergonomics.

- [Driving](#)

Driving as part of a work activity (driving in between sites, driving on behalf of the council) is no different to any other work activity.

- [Electricity](#)

Procedures of applying sound health and safety principles.

- [Electromagnetic fields](#)

Regulations requiring employers to take reasonable steps to prevent harm from exposure to magnetic fields at work.

- [Facilities Management \(FM\): Building & Premises](#)

Responsibility of sites, with constant vigilance of all site matters including welfare of staff and clients, safety, security and crime prevention.

- [Fire safety](#)

Fire safety guidance, fire risk assessments and information about evacuating a building on the activation of a fire alarm.

- [First aid](#)

Ensuring that a workplace has the necessary first aid requirements.

- [Health and safety reporting](#)

What to do about reporting accidents and near misses.

- [Inductions \(Health and Safety\)](#)

Induction checklists and questionnaire for new starters.

- [Infection control](#)

Infection control policies, procedures and guidance.

- [Inflatables](#)

Checklist and guidelines for the safe use of play inflatable devices.

- [Inspections](#)

Guidance and checklists for workshop, site, and office inspections.

- [Legionella](#)

Identify and assess sources of risk for legionella and take steps to prevent or control the risk.

- [Lifts and lifting equipment](#)

Guidance on lifting equipment and safe use.

- [Lone working](#)

Many employees will spend some, most, or all their time working alone (home visits, meetings, working in isolation, etc.).

- [Managing health, safety and welfare](#)

General health and welfare, stress management, management of work related ill health risks and ill-health at work.

- [Manual handling and lifting people](#)

Any activity that requires an individual to lift, move or support a load will be classified as a manual handling task.

- [Mobile telephones and driving](#)

Guidance on the use of mobile phones when driving.

- [Noise](#)

Guidance to help to identify whether there may be problems with noise at work

- [Office health and safety](#)

Offices are generally considered low risk environments (with the possible exception of stress related risks).

- [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\)](#)

PPE is supplied and used at work wherever there are risks to health and safety that cannot be adequately controlled in other ways.

- [Pregnancy and new mothers](#)

Guidance for pregnant women, those who have given birth within the previous six months or are breastfeeding.

- [Procurement \(Health and Safety\)](#)

Client / contract duties under health and safety law. Applies to contracted operational works, and provision of services or goods.

- [Risk assessment](#)

A risk assessment is about looking at what, in the workplace, could cause harm to people.

- [Skin](#)

Those working in health care, hairdressing / beauty industry, printing, cleaning, catering, construction, and metalworking are at greater risk

- [Slips and trips](#)

Preventing slips, trips, and falls in the workplace.

- [Training \(Health and safety\)](#)

The Council is committed to providing relevant, appropriate and adequate health and safety training to all staff.

- [Vibration - Whole body vibration and Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome \(HAVS\)](#)

Whole body vibration and hand arm vibration is a widespread hazard for employees in many industries and occupations.

- [Volunteers](#)

In general, the same health and safety standards apply to voluntary workers as they would to employees exposed to the same risks.

- [Safe working in the sun](#)

Information about the risks of too much sunlight, what the harmful effects are and how to protect yourself.

- [Vulnerable persons](#)

There is a requirement for a risk assessment to be carried out when vulnerable persons are employed or carry out work experience.

- [Work equipment and safe working](#)

Items as diverse as office photocopiers, forklift trucks and woodworking machines are all classed as work equipment.

- [Work-Related Violence & Aggression](#)

This covers considerations and management arrangements for threats, acts of violence and stalking of employees by members of the public and service users. The guidance is currently under review, but it should continue to be used in the meantime.

- [Working at height](#)

Work at height applies where there is a risk of falling which is likely to cause personal injury.

Annual Health and Safety Report

2023 - 2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This annual report provides an overview of health and safety management activity during 2023-24. It includes progress against the Council's agreed health and safety objectives and an analysis of incident statistics. In addition, it highlights the support provided throughout the year by the Health and Safety Team (HST) to Council services and takes account of the organisational, local and national context.
- 1.2 Following a number of significant incidents in the previous reporting year an external review of health and safety management arrangements across the Council was carried out between March and June 2023, with a particular focus on the Operations Department as the location of both the incidents of concern and the highest areas of risk in the Authority. An action plan in response to this review has been developed and updates provided to the Corporate Health and Safety Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) on progress with this work.
- 1.3 In addition to the above, the Council's health and safety priorities this year have continued to focus on embedding and strengthening the core basic requirements of a robust health and safety management system. Key to achieving this has been close collaborative working with employees, managers and the Trades Unions.
- 1.4 In February of this year responsibility for the management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock transferred back under the direct control of the local authority. As part of this, the Council has re-gained direct responsibility for the key safety elements of this function. With reference to this report, this includes the occupational health and safety responsibilities for those staff transferring into Council employment.
- 1.5 The Council's health and safety priorities for 2024-25 are set out in the Council's Health and Safety Strategy for 2024–27, which should be read in conjunction with this report.

2. External review findings and progress against recommendations

- 2.1 Following three significant health and safety incidents in late 2022 / early 2023 the Council commissioned an external review of arrangements across the organisation and with a specific focus on the Operations Department. – The review commenced in March 2023 and concluded in June. It noted the significant recent progress that has been made in terms of Health and Safety governance, Trade Union collaboration and the production of annual and quarterly reports. It also acknowledged the commitment of staff at all levels in the context of the financial pressures facing the Council.

2.2 To build on this work and further strengthen arrangements, a total of 31 recommendations were made and Appendix 4 provides a full update on progress with these recommendations. Strategically, three key areas for action were highlighted through the review:

- To develop a new multi-year Health & Safety Strategy: A Health and Safety Strategy for 2024-27 has been developed, which clearly sets out the Council's approach to health and safety management, its priorities for the next three years and a number of KPIs to monitor performance.
- To strengthen the risk assessment process: The Council's risk assessment process has been reviewed and new guidance, a revised risk assessment needs checker (which summarises the risk profile of services) and risk assessment template have been developed and launched. A central storage location has been developed in Teams for all services to use to ensure full corporate visibility of risk assessments and enable strengthened quality assurance. - Risk Assessment Needs Checkers have been uploaded for all 88 service areas and the HST are working in partnership with services to upload individual risk assessments. When last audited (17 May 2024) a total of 776 individual risks had been identified as needing to be risk assessed, and risk assessments have been uploaded for 415 of these. Completion of this work will be a KPI within the Health and Safety Strategy and a rolling quality assurance process will begin in Q2 of 2024-25.
- To strengthen assurance of training compliance: The HST has worked closely with colleagues in the Operations Department to compile a comprehensive position statement, by employee, on all required health and safety training to strengthen corporate assurance and oversight. The HR Team are now working to upload this information into iTrent to allow effective recording and reporting, and OD colleagues are supporting Operations managers to develop a training plan, procure training providers and arrange delivery to ensure a clear cycle of delivery in line with safety requirements. Once this is in place for the Operations Department, this work will be rolled out across the Council, beginning with Housing Services.

3. Progress against 2023-24 objectives

3.1 The 2022-23 Annual Health and Safety Report set out a number of priorities for action in 2023-24, with the aim of embedding and strengthening the core basic requirements of a robust health and safety management system.

Progress against these objectives is set out below:

	2023-24 Objective	Progress
1	<p>Risk Based Audits and Investigations.</p> <p>Based on the contents of the Annual Risk Assessment Needs Checker exercise, the HST will conduct a further 4 in-depth Health and Safety Audits this year. The team will also continue to promote the importance of accurate health and safety reporting and respond to incidents of concern as and when required.</p>	<p>The HST completed 2 of the 4 health and safety audits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quarter 1 – Architectural Services (asbestos management) ▪ Quarter 2 – Building Control <p>An update on actions arising from these audits is provided as Appendix 3.</p> <p>The delivery of the third and fourth audits planned for the year (Highways and School Crossing Patrol) was delayed given the need to focus resources on both response work following the external review of health and safety arrangements noted above, and urgent work which arose in year related to both assuring Fire Risk Assessment compliance in Council buildings and response to the identification of RACC in the Bury Market Hall.</p> <p>These audits will now take place in 2024-25.</p> <p>Two schools, Derby High and Chesham Primary, were also audited in 2023-24.</p> <p>In addition to this formal audit activity, regular inspections have been carried out as part of the HST’s day to day activities. This year inspections have taken place at: Bradley Fold depot, New Kershaw Centre, the Pupil Referral Unit, areas of the Town Hall and Fernhill Travellers’ Site.</p>

		<p>During the period October to December 2023 the HST made inspection visits to 14 Bury Council establishments as part of a fire safety compliance exercise. The team also visited units within the Millgate Shopping Centre on 3 occasions and produced 5 FRAs for trading units there.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Training We will continue to deliver a comprehensive programme of training through a variety of methods to improve both the generic and specialist training available to Council staff. For the 2023-24 year this work will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A specific session for Senior Managers on health and safety responsibilities ▪ Continued roll-out of mandatory training for all managers on health and safety ▪ Continued delivery of specialist health and safety training in high-risk services ▪ The introduction of mandatory health and safety e-learning for all staff ▪ The commissioning of a bespoke package of targeted training for staff most at risk of violence and aggression at work. ▪ A full review of the Council's approach to monitoring, tracking and the quality assurance of 	<p>Michael Hayton (KC) delivered a master class on health and safety responsibilities to the Senior Management Forum on 24 April 2023. This was followed up with a reflections session held on 23 June 2023.</p> <p>Health and Safety is included as a key component of the Council's Management Development Programme (MDP). As of 28 March 2024, 30.8% of managers had completed this training.</p> <p>Progress to deliver a comprehensive programme of generic and specialist training to Bury Council staff is ongoing. Training needs continue to be identified from: the Risk Assessment Needs Checker exercise, Training Needs Analysis exercises from within Service Areas, new or updated legislation and/or changes to HSE Guidance, through JCC and Health & Safety meetings and through suggestions from the HST and Heads of Service.</p> <p>We continue to promote relevant modules from the 'Me Learning' suite of e-learning training. The Fire Safety and First Aid awareness e-learning modules remain mandatory for all employees that use council buildings. During the year, the e-learning module "Health and Safety in the Workplace" provided as part of the Me-Learning contract was added, along with a supplementary Bury Council specific module was added to the Council's list of mandatory training for all staff and as of 28 March 2024 has been completed by 54.6% of colleagues.</p> <p>Specialist training delivered by the HST during 2023-24 has included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accredited IOSH Managing Safely training – 60 managers completed the full 3-day course with 7 completing the 1 day refresher

	<p>essential role-based health and safety training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Client duties under CDM 2015 training was developed and delivered to the Market's management team ▪ Fire Marshal responsibilities training for those attending Council meetings was developed by the HST and delivered by the Facilities Management Team <p>The delivery of "Toolbox Talks" by managers within the relevant Service Areas continues to be encouraged.</p> <p>A bespoke package of targeted training for staff most at risk of violence and aggression at work has been commissioned and delivery is underway.</p> <p>Training will continue to be a significant area of focus in 2024-25. This will particularly focus on monitoring, tracking and quality assuring essential role-based health and safety training, which has already begun in the Operations Department.</p>
3	<p>Information, Procedures & Guidance We will continue to review and update health and safety Policies, Procedures and Guidance information. The intention for the forthcoming year is to again review 15% of all health and safety information available to staff on the Bury Council intranet.</p>	<p>Work continued to review and update health and safety policies, procedures and guidance information. Information was reviewed in the following areas: Stress, Fire Safety, Asbestos, Construction Design & Management Regulations requirements, COSHH, the Health & Safety Tool (for agile working), Health & Safety Induction, Risk Assessment and Health & Safety Policies. The target for the 2023-24 year was to review 15% of all health and safety information available to staff on the Bury Council intranet. This was surpassed, as 23.7% of documents were reviewed and updated.</p> <p>Work to review and update further health & safety policies, procedures, guidance documentation and communications will be ongoing throughout the 2024-25 reporting year.</p>
4	<p>Health and Safety within the Operations Department</p>	<p>The outcomes of an external review of Health and Safety arrangements within the Council, with an emphasis on those arrangements within the Operations Department, were reported to Council management during the 2023-24 year.</p>

	<p>The Council will respond to the external review of Health and Safety within the Department, which should be finalised within the first quarter of 2023/24.</p>	<p>Work to address areas for improvement highlighted in the review is ongoing, as set out in Part 2 of this report.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Schools</p> <p>Work to embed the arrangements for Schools' health and safety management will continue. Support and guidance will be provided to schools where appropriate. Providing support through attendance at Schools' Health and Safety Committee and Schools Assurance Board meetings will continue. A reviewed and updated Schools Health & Safety Policy Template will be issued, and a new Schools Health & Safety Assurance Checker exercise will begin at the start of the 2023-24 academic year</p>	<p><u>Schools' Health & Safety Committee</u></p> <p>Schools' Health & Safety Committee meetings continue to be attended by a member of the HST, the Director of People & Inclusion, the Strategic Lead for Schools and representatives from relevant Trades Unions. The Committee met regularly during the 2023-24. Issues relevant to the health, safety and wellbeing of schools' staff were discussed and actions to resolve these issues were sought.</p> <p><u>School's Health & Safety Policy</u></p> <p>In 2023-24 a review of the Schools' Health and Safety Policy template was undertaken. This was issued to schools at the start of the 2023-24 academic year.</p> <p>As part of this a strengthened request for assurance information regarding health and safety management arrangements within all Bury maintained schools exercise was included. This request asked for copies of 4 important Health & Safety management documents from all maintained schools (Health & Safety Policy, Fire Risk Assessment, Asbestos Management Plan and Legionella Risk Assessment). All 33 schools approached provided a reply. A sample of 48% of the returns was evaluated and a report on the findings from this monitoring exercise were reported to the Schools H&S Committee.</p> <p><u>HST Support to Bury Schools</u></p> <p>Support is provided through HST inspection/audit visits to schools where specific significant areas of concern have been raised. This included audits of one Bury maintained High School and one Primary School during the year.</p> <p>Guidance and support to schools arising from Children's Services management contact, through issues raised via the Schools Assurance Board and Schools</p>

		<p>Health & Safety Committee meetings has also taken place throughout 2023-24. This will continue throughout the 2024-25 reporting year.</p> <p><u>Consortium of Local Educational Authorities for the Provision of Science Services (CLEAPSS)</u></p> <p>CLEAPSS was selected to provide Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA) services to Bury Council schools for the 2023-24 year. It was agreed that a Health & Safety Advisor would act as the Bury Council Radiation Protection Officer (RPO) to support this arrangement.</p> <p>The Health & Safety Advisor attended and successfully completed RPO training in the 2023-24 year. Both Bury Schools have been contacted to arrange an inventory and advisory visit.</p> <p>CLEAPSS membership for relevant Bury schools for 2024-25 has been renewed.</p>
6	<p>Health and Safety Communications & Awareness</p> <p>We will continue to develop a programme of communication, engagement and awareness raising activities to strengthen understanding, awareness and confidence around health and safety.</p>	<p>The Health & Safety Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) continued to meet throughout the 2023-24 reporting year. Improvements to health and safety governance through the JCC have been made; it is now well established and receives quarterly reports on health and safety performance. There is a direct line of communication to the Bury Council Executive Team from the JCC.</p> <p>The Trades Unions are working closely with the Bury Council HST. This has primarily been through a series of joint inspections of Council buildings. The inspections include direct contact with Bury Council employees, during which the opportunity to discuss areas of concern is given.</p> <p>The HST issue updates on health and safety legislation and guidance to all employees via global emails that are sent out through the Bury Council Communications Team, usually as part of “Wellbeing Wednesdays” emails. Examples are: work related violence and aggression (WRV&A), managing stress,</p>

		asbestos, fire safety and health and safety in the workplace e-learning, staying safe at home and heat stress hot weather working.
7	<p>First Aid</p> <p>We will complete a review of First Aid provision within Bury Council within the 2023-24 reporting year.</p>	<p>An initial review of First Aid provision within Bury Council was undertaken and detail regarding roles and responsibilities is to be developed and rolled out in 2024-25.</p> <p>E-learning training in First Aid Awareness remains a mandatory requirement for all employees working in Council buildings. As of 28 March 2024, 58.2% of Bury Council employees who are required to undertake this training had undertaken it.</p>
8	<p>Fire Safety</p> <p>Following the lifting of COVID Secure Working Arrangements, the introduction of a robust system of Fire Marshal arrangements within Bury Council occupied buildings has been identified as a priority work area for 2023-24. This recognises that occupancy levels of buildings have increased significantly after 'Lock Down' and the occupancy level of key buildings (e.g. the Town Hall) will increase further as a result of the Bury Council buildings stock rationalisation exercise. The HST will be working closely with the Bury Council FM service to achieve this.</p>	<p>A system of Fire Marshal arrangements was introduced following a number of fire safety initiatives. These included: overseeing and reporting on the effectiveness of 3 Fire Drills, taking part in discussions regarding the best way to provide coverage with Fire Marshals during periods of lower building occupancy and agile working, providing professional opinion and advice relating to the relocation of Service Areas into the New Kershaw Centre and Elizabethan Suite sites, producing and delivering guidance on Fire Marshal responsibilities for those attending Council meetings.</p> <p>During the period October to December 2023 the HST supported Facilities Management colleagues in a large Health & Safety Compliance Assurance Exercise.</p>

4. Additional in-year activities

4.1 COVID

By the end of 2022-23 all restrictions had been lifted and a small number of remaining COVID secure working arrangements, e.g. in relation to hand sanitation and ventilation, were downgraded from mandatory requirements to advisory recommendations. Therefore, the HST kept a watching brief on any COVID related guidance which may have been issued throughout the 2023-24 year. The generic Covid-19 Risk Assessment for the Council remains in place and will be reviewed in the light of any new information and guidance issued. HST monitoring of COVID secure working arrangements and restrictions continued throughout the year.

4.2 Health and Safety compliance assurance exercise

The HST provided a significant amount of support to the Facilities Management Team regarding a health and safety compliance exercise for all key Council buildings. Subsequent to this, time was spent ensuring fire safety compliance.

4.3 Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

RAAC was identified in the roof structure of Bury Market main hall which resulted in the Market being temporarily closed. Several stallholders were relocated to vacant units of the Millgate Shopping Centre and adjoining areas. Advice was provided in respect of the Market Hall, and the HST undertook a number of FRAs to ensure fire safety compliance for all the offered trading locations.

4.4 Health Surveillance

The Council's Occupational Health provision was outsourced in July 2023 and Optima Health have commenced delivery of a managed health surveillance programme. As of 3 June 2024 88.2%, of staff requiring health surveillance have already attended or have appointments scheduled.

4.5 Integration of Housing Services

Six Town Housing was integrated back into the Council in February 2024. A base line assessment of health and safety performance is due to be carried out during the early part of 2024/25.

5. Investigations, incidents, absence and claims

5.1 Investigations

No major health and safety investigations took place during the 2023-24 reporting year.

5.2 Incidents

During the 2023-24 reporting year there were 232 accidents/incidents/near misses/dangerous occurrences reported.

There were:

- 81 reports involving members of the public.
- 151 reports involving employees.

Of these there were:

- 29 near misses
- 4 dangerous occurrences
- 5 RIDDOR reportable incidents

The total number of reports in 2023-24 represent an increase on the previous year, from 202 to 232. This should be set in the context of a significant increase (from 7 to 29) in the number of near misses reported and an increase of 13 (from 26 to 39) in the number of work-related violence and aggression (WRV&A) incidents reported. - The WRV&A guidance information was re-issued towards the end of the 2023-24 reporting year and training courses started for services identified as at a higher risk, informed by incident reports. The HST have also supported a review of risk assessment arrangements in relevant services.

The number of RIDDOR reportable incidents reduced from 6 in 2022-23 to 5 in 2023-24.

More detailed analysis of the 2023-24 reports statistics is provided in Appendix 1.

There were no HSE interventions (although a HSE investigations in relation to an incident from 2022-23 remained ongoing).

5.3 Sickness absence

The Council lost an average of 13.71 days per full-time equivalent employee due to sickness in 2023-24. This is a decrease on 14.5 days during the previous year.

The main causes of long-term absence as at the 31 March 24 were stress, depression, mental health and fatigue at 39.16% and musculoskeletal injuries at 16.31%.

The largest cause of short-term absence was stress, depression, mental health and fatigue at 14.51%.

Addressing sickness absence is a significant area of focus for the HR Team, with regular reporting, data analysis and working together with Service Managers to drive down sickness absence. This has been supported by the transition to a new Occupational Health provider in 2023-24. The HR Team will continue to work closely with the HST in this area.

5.4 Employers liability claims

There were 7 Employers Liability claims received/reported during the year, with a total reserve of £339,487.

When comparing claims information for the previous year (9 employers liability claims with a total reserve of £181,169k) there has been a significant rise in the total reserve despite a small reduction in the number of claims received. The majority of claims are from manual workers across a range of service areas.

6. National priorities and changes

6.1 The HST have kept abreast of the national landscape and priorities of key regulatory and sector bodies and have taken action and/or communicated information to employees/Council services as appropriate.

6.2 Details of HSE national campaigns, e-bulletins, webinars and updates to guidance and health & safety legislation which are of particular relevance to the work of Bury Council received during the 2023-24 year are numerous and are therefore contained in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1: Incident statistics

During the 2023-24 period there were 232 reported accidents/incidents/near misses and dangerous occurrences. This is an increase from 202 in the previous year.

Reported Accidents/Incidents	2022-23	2023-24
Members of the public	85	87
Employees (including Agency Workers and Contractors)	117	145
TOTAL	202	232

5 of these incidents (down from 6 in 2022-23) were reported to the HSE under the requirements of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) as detailed below:

Breakdown of RIDDOR reported incidents	2022-23	2023-24
Over 7-day absence	3	3
Fractures to bones	1	2
Occupational Disease (HAVS)	1	0
Dangerous Occurrence	1	0
TOTAL	6	5

The breakdown of incidents involving employees reported by Department shows significant increases for Children and Young People and the Corporate Core: Corporate Core was due to an increase in reporting of WRV&A incidents relating to the Town Hall reception. The rise in Children's was once again WRV&A reports.

Breakdown of incidents involving staff by Department	2022-23	2023-24
Operations	90	90
Children & Young People	9	17
Health & Adult Care, (formerly OCO)	7	5
Corporate Core	10	32
Business Growth & Infrastructure	1	1
TOTAL	117	145

The breakdown of incidents involving members of the public and clients highlights an increase over the past year for Health and Adult Care and Children and Young People, but a decrease for Operations. The majority of Health and Adult Care incidents are centred around the two sheltered housing schemes (Griffin & Falcon house). The Children and Young People ones are from day centres and causes are quite varied (allergic reactions, contact with electricity etc). All incidents have been reviewed by the HST and the view is that there is no underlying issue behind this rise:

Breakdown of incidents involving members of the public by Department

	2022-23	2023-24
Operations (Leisure)	57	38
Operations (Markets)	13	9
Operations (Libraries)	8	6
Operations (Transport)	0	3
Children & Young People	2	11
Corporate Core	4	4
Health & Adult Care (formerly OCO)	1	16
TOTAL	85	87

A breakdown of incidents involving employees by cause (as determined by the manager) shows a rise of 34, influenced by 22 more near miss reports and 13 more reports of WRV&A:

Breakdown of incidents by cause		
	2022-23	2023-24
Work related violence	26	39
Road traffic collision	5	5
Fire	0	1
Theft of property	0	6
Slip, trip or fall	14	24
Exposure to hazardous chemicals/substances	4	1
Manual handling	21	13
Stung/bite by insect	0	1
Exposure to biological agent	0	1
Trapping/crushing Incident	1	1
Medical condition	1	1
Animal related attack	4	1
Fall from height	2	1
Hazardous situations	3	0
Struck against object	15	0
Near miss	7	29
Dangerous occurrences	1	4
Burns/scalds	2	5
Repetitive movement	2	1
Struck by vehicle	2	0
Sport related	0	1
Contact with moving machinery	3	2
Cuts	0	3
Contact with sharp objects	3	0
Contact with electricity	1	1
Struck by moving/falling object	0	4
TOTAL	117	145

Appendix 2: HSE national updates

HSE waste and recycling ebulletin (18 May 2023)

This waste and recycling bulletin included details on a series of accidents from the start of the year and how to prevent similar accidents by following health and safety guidance. In addition, there was new guidance from the Waste Industry Safety and Health (WISH) and details on a recent enforcement prosecution.

Action: Shared with Waste Management

HSE update on Asbestos (reissued)

The HSE issued a reminder about the risks posed by asbestos in their [Asbestos & You](#) campaign.

Action: Shared by the Communications Team and issued to all staff

HSE update on free training on stress risk assessment.

The law requires all employers to prevent work related stress and to support good mental health in the workplace. It is also good for business, as failing to manage stress at work can cost employers in reduced productivity, increased sickness absence, or even losing a valued member of the team. And it is the right thing to do! The HSE's Working Minds campaign brought together a range of tools and support to help businesses and workers understand the best ways to prevent work related stress and encourage good mental health.

Action: The Council developed and launched a new stress risk assessment process, including a conversation template. The Working Minds resources are promoted alongside this on the intranet.

HSE update on working in hot temperature.

The HSE issued a reminder that there is no maximum working temperature written in health and safety legislation, or when it's too hot to work, because every workplace is different. No meaningful upper limit can be imposed because in many indoor workplaces high temperatures are not seasonal but created by work activity, for example in bakeries or foundries.

Action: Shared globally, and specifically with the managers of Waste Management and Street Scene.

Building Safety

In October 2023 the main parts of the Building Safety Act 2022 came into force. These changes mainly relate to the development and management of multi residential buildings that are over 18 metres tall.

Action: Bury Council would not traditionally have any residential buildings that fall into this category but with the return of Housing Services, Peachment Place and Red Bank, may be over 18 metres tall. Details have therefore been shared with Housing Services.

Fire Safety (England) Regulations

The requirements of the Fire Safety (England) Regulations may have some implications for Housing Services. However, any new requirements for the recording of findings from Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs) produced by Bury Council and those

commissioned by external consultants are already met and have been met for some considerable time.

Action: Shared with Housing Services.

HSE Construction Site inspections

From September 2023 HSE inspectors were undertaking inspections of construction sites, focussing on the health risks of moving and handling of materials on site.

Action: The Head of Street Scene was informed about the HSE campaign.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)

Department for Education guidance for responsible bodies in education settings with confirmed RAAC in their buildings was issued.

Action: This was emailed to Children's Services management, for issuing to all Bury Schools, on 25 October 2023. A Bury Council all staff communication re RAAC in Bury Council buildings was sent out to all Bury Council staff on 15 September 2023. Content from the latest HSE and Gov.UK web pages was shared with Building Control and Architectural Services on 27 October 2023.

HSE Mental Health & Stress focus

The HSE put the reduction of work-related ill health, with a specific focus on mental health and stress, at the centre of its 2022-32 strategy and says that it intends to “deliver interventions that make a real difference”.

Action: Mental health forms a key part of the Council wellbeing approach. A communication was sent out to the whole council regarding stress management risk assessments.

Appendix 3: Update on outstanding corrective actions arising from audits and investigations 2022-2024.

In 2022/23 and 2023/24 six audits were undertaken with the number of recommended and outstanding actions shown below:

YEAR	SERVICE AREA	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS STILL OUTSTANDING
2022-23	Waste Management	6	2
	Vehicle Workshop	9	1
	Bury Market	8	0
	Architectural Services (CDM 2015)	3	0
2023-24	Building Control	6	0
	Architectural Services (Asbestos Management)	10	0

In 2022/23 three investigations were undertaken and the number of recommended and outstanding actions is shown below. There were no major investigations in 2023-24.

SERVICE AREA	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS	NUMBER OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS STILL OUTSTANDING
Waste Management (RCV Incident)	7	2
Bury Market (Christmas Tree)	5	0
Highways (Bradley Fold)	8	3

Detail on the outstanding actions from the 2022-24 audits and investigations is set out on the following pages. All actions are shown as Amber which reflects that work is ongoing, with some delays. However, this is not seen as presenting a fundamental risk in terms of the health and safety of staff and Council compliance.


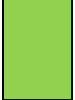
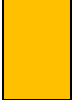

Council Audits

Service area	Action required	Progress	RAG
Vehicle Workshop	Risk assessments for all areas of the service with significant risk need to be completed and a "Risk Assessment Needs Checker" has recently been completed to aid this programme. This is an ongoing process and some excellent progress has already been made.	A new risk assessment on the repair of Electric vehicles has been completed and all staff are currently undertaking the IMI online course for electric vehicles. The remainder of the risk assessments have been written by members of the Vehicle Workshop Team and are currently being finalised.	
Waste Management	Risk assessments for all areas of the service with significant risk need to be completed. Ensure employees are involved in the writing of risk assessments. Communicate risk assessments to all relevant employees including information regarding the control measures put in place. Train staff in the risk assessment process.	Risk assessments have been written by members of the Waste Management Team and their UNISON representative and are currently being finalised.	
Waste Management	Write a training plan and implement. Keep a central record of training.	Initial training needs analysis has been completed. Data is due to be uploaded to iTrent and training arranged. An assessment of any gaps has been undertaken to assure the ability to continue to deliver safely whilst outstanding training is delivered. Attempts to appoint a temporary H&S Advisor for Operations have not so far been successful which is a barrier to progress. However, an approach has now been agreed to deliver remaining training requirements.	

Council Investigations

Service area	Action required	Progress	RAG
Highways	a. Spoil unloading area improvements - improvements to ground surface, lighting and vehicle management arrangements. b. Introduction of a segregated spoil storage arrangement.	Budget is in place, the full scheme/plans are developed, and the Service is now working to engage a contractor.	
Highways	New spoil area operating instructions	Once new area created, safe use of newly created spoil unloading area instructions to be issued to all appropriate Depot users.	
Highways	Revised and updated Depot site rules to be communicated to all Depot users.	Once new area created, revised and updated Depot site rules to be communicated to all Depot users. Can't be done until new area exists	
Waste Management	Establish clear responsibilities of supervisors.	Working with HR and OD to clarify duties and develop a workshop	
Waste Management	Task & Finish system - This will be reviewed as part of the new end-to-end MIS systems and will be discussed with our cabinet member.	Data gathering in relation to operational activity began in May to inform a full review.	

Appendix 4: Progress against recommendations made in the 2023 external review

Key:  Completed  On track and no concerns  Broadly on track but risk to be noted until full delivery  Significant risk to be highlighted. Work progressing with delivery plan identified.

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
Corporate H&S						
Plan						
1	Restructure the health and safety policy statement such that there is a short statement of intent, which is backed up by the organisation and arrangements for bring the policy into being. The policy should be signed off by the Chief Executive and Council Leader and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains fit for purpose.	High	SM, PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised H&S Policy in place Signed by Chief Exec and Leader Shared with staff via global communication 		Completed
2	Embed the leadership principles contained within HSE's INDG 417 Leading Health and Safety at Work, much of this has already been achieved. Train the Council's senior management team in their strategic health and safety responsibilities. The suggested course would be the IOSH Accredited Safety for Executives and Directors. Senior managers should be encouraged to be seen out and about within their Directorates and discuss matters relating to work and more widely with their staff.	High	SM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMF session on Health and Safety delivered in April 23 Presentation suitable as an alternative to the IOSH accredited course has been drafted by PF. Senior managers encouraged to be more visible by visiting employees in their normal work environments e.g. on site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SMF Health and Safety Masterclass based on HSE IND417 scheduled to be delivered internally on 11/07/24 	July 24

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
3	Develop in conjunction with Trade Union representatives, senior managers, HST and elected members a health safety improvement plan. Such a plan would state the clear objectives, including priorities for action, KPIs and milestones to measure performance. Performance measures should include a basket of reactive and proactive measure which will assist the council to monitor and report on health and safety performance. The objectives should be SMART, and the priorities for action should be realistic and achievable and focus on those issues which give rise to the greatest risk to the council. In conjunction with the improvement plan develop a robust reporting process against the target identified which allows for quarterly and annual reports to SLT and JCC. It is suggested that the duration of the improvement plan should be three years. The plan should identify a number of key priorities for each year and associated actions to enable progress in delivering on the priorities can be assessed.	High	CK & HST, TUs, Senior Mgt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A 3-year strategy has been drafted, including clear objectives, priorities for action and KPIs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategy to go through approvals processes in Q2 2024-25 	July 24
4	Develop a competent strategic lead to oversee the implementation of the improvement strategy across the council. They should have an overview of the effectiveness of the system in managing occupational health and safety risks as low as reasonably practicable, including the risk assessment process and	High	SM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HR Business Manager role created and appointed to, to provide more strategic oversight of Health and Safety activity Completed IOSH Managing Safely course 		Completed

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
	establishment and maintenance of a competent workforce.			and fully supported by Director of People and Inclusion plus Health and Safety team members		
Do						
5	Review the RA policy and procedure guidance, ensuring a consistent approach across the council, which enables to council to demonstrate that all significant hazards have been identified and suitable and sufficient RAs have been undertaken, risk control measures implemented and recorded.	High	CK, PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New risk assessment needs checker template, risk assessment template and guidance developed ▪ Central risk assessment storage location developed in Teams for all services to use ▪ Risk Assessment Needs Checkers have been uploaded for 88/88 services and risk assessments are being uploaded. When last audited (17 May 2024) a total of 776 individual risks had been identified as needing to be risk assessed, and risk assessments had been uploaded for 415 of these. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk assessments covering the remainder if the risks identified to be uploaded to the central storage location. ▪ Quality assurance of risk assessments to commence 	<p>June 24</p> <p>Mar 25</p>
6	Develop through a robust Training Needs Analysis process a training matrix for health and safety competencies required throughout the council.	High	Ops HoS, IL, MJ,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mandatory (all staff) health and safety e-learning has been launched as planned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The HR Team are now working to upload this information into 	Sept 24

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
7	<p>Develop a plan which will enable to the delivery of the training program to ensure competence at all levels.</p> <p>Ensure that there is a consistent approach to Health and Safety training across the Council. Establish a formal policy on Training Needs Analysis (with Matrix) so that general and specific health and safety training can be monitored in all services.</p>		PF, DB & CK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of health and safety training for all managers now embedded in the corporate management development programme The Operations Department have compiled a comprehensive position statement, by employee, on all health and safety training. 	<p>iTrent to allow effective recording and reporting, and OD colleagues are supporting Operations managers to develop a training plan, procure training providers and arrange delivery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once this is in place for the Operations Department, it will be rolled out across the Council, beginning with Housing Services. 	Mar 25
8	<p>Explore available IT systems which will enable an overview of Departmental RAs, training needs and health surveillance. The system would ideally provide real-time information regarding these key elements of the SMS, to ensure continued workforce competence and compliant RA process.</p>	Medium	CK & PF / HR / IT / Service Heads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Surveillance now being monitored through new Occupational Health contract (Optima) Teams based solution for Risk Assessment in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce iTrent functionality for recording and monitoring essential training requirements Work with ICT to develop an improved risk assessment recording and reporting system as a long-term option 	<p>Jun 24</p> <p>Dec 25</p>

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
9	Review the format and content of online policy and procedure guidance to managers, ensure a consistent format and an appropriate level of detail based upon risk. Address the deficiencies in the hazards for which advice is given. A programme is already in place, but this may need to be accelerated.	Medium	CK, PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing 15% of intranet pages and content annually, as set out in the Annual Report Ensuring a standard format in plain English which is easy to follow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% reviewed already this year, include stress, asbestos, CDM, H&S inductions, agile working 	On track Ongoing over 3 years
10	To ensure that the Council procures equipment and services which meet the council's health and safety expectations, a system should be developed to ensure health and safety is a consideration for selection. Further, HST should provide advice on higher risk activities.	Medium	PF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S Team provides input to procurement requirements for equipment and some contracts. Agreed way of working with 'Architects' function established in relation to CDM compliance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss Procurement Team opportunities to strengthen health and safety information in the Council's procurement guidance 	Sept 24
11	Provide HST staff with training on incident investigation techniques.	Medium	PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-learning course identified, but a more substantial course to be investigated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One member of Corporate H&S Team to attend each year (DB 23/24; PF 24/25); DB completed course in Dec 23. 	Mar 25
12	To enable the best use of internal HST resources in improving the council's performance consideration should be given to outsource the delivery of the 3-day Managing safely course.	Low	PF & CK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Safely courses already booked up to and including April 24. Pass and satisfaction rates are very high. Cost analysis found that more cost effective if PF continues to deliver. Also a more tailored 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently recruiting to additional H&S roles to ensure capacity to deliver the 3-year H&S Strategy 	Completed

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
				course to Bury Council and current feedback of delivery is highly positive.		
13	Review the communication mechanisms and ensure that health and safety issues are given prominence with the regular communication which go to staff and ensure that all messages reach the relevant people in a timely manner.	Low	CK & PF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Health, & Wellbeing emails issued to all staff 4-weekly on Wednesdays re-branded as Health, Safety & Wellbeing with enhanced health and safety content Six toolbox talk contents written and shared with HoS for Waste Management for delivery to Operational staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure H&S communications reach frontline staff. H&S Team to write content of further Toolbox Talks for managers to deliver 	Ongoing
14	Review the Lone working procedures within the Council to ensure that they are effective for all peripatetic staff.	Low	PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lone Working Guidance was considered as part of a new major guidance package on work-related violence and aggression, where arrangements were created and communicated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further reviews of Lone Working guidance will feature as part of the 15% rolling programme of intranet reviews. 	Completed
Check/ Act						
15	Develop a robust schedule of audit, sampling, inspections, and safety tours to enable managers to be reassured that the health and safety management system and its component parts are in place and functioning effectively.	High	PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust system of undertaking 4 audits per year (plus audits for schools) is already in place informed by the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits of Highways and SCP delayed in 23-24 due to staff absence, however SCP due for completion in Q1 of 	Ongoing

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
				<p>annual risk assessment needs checker.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional site and building safety visits are also scheduled 	<p>24-25. Housing and Highways also due to be audited in 24-25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity to carry out more audits to be reviewed annually 	
16	Review the policy, procedures, reporting and investigating systems for accidents, incidents and near misses across the Council and encourage the further reporting of near misses at all levels.	High	PF & DB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System in place for reporting accidents, incidents and near misses. Significant increase in near miss reporting from 7 in 22-23 to 29 in 23-24. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review system and identify improvements Develop communications for the whole workforce re using the system – and especially about near misses 	Sept 24
17	There should be greater political oversight of the performance of the health and safety management system, and the portfolio holder for health and safety should take an active role in challenging other portfolio holders around the health and safety performance of their departments.	Med	SM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Safety is now a standing item on the relevant Portfolio agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update to Cabinet Members on their responsibilities and opportunities for involvement to be scheduled Mandatory health and safety training for all Members scheduled for September 24 	Sept 24
18	Review the policy and systems in relation to Contractor Management to ensure a consistent approach is achieved across the Council.	Med		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction, Design & Management training has been developed and delivered to staff in markets and architects and shared with all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training content on Duty Holder responsibilities under CDM 2015 has been developed and will be converted to e- 	Sept 24

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
				relevant senior managers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> learning, so completions can be monitored Identify who needs training in which services H&S content within procurement guidance and requirements to be reviewed. 	
19	Ensure that the continual improvement strategy is reviewed in the light of performance data as set out in the KPIs identified within the strategy and required changes to policy are made.	Low	SM & CK		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review 3-year strategy and KPIs after 12 months 	Mar 25
Operations						
1	Give consideration to the re-establishment of a H&S role within the Department of Operations, as an interim, to provide additional support to the high risk services and consider additional H&S training (such as the NEBOSH National General Certificate) for Operational Managers.	High	DD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post approved and advertised several times. Failed to appoint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requesting EOIs from internal teams for a 3-month secondment, with the option to extend. Closing date for EOI's 5th July 	August 24
2	Ensure that manager and supervisors have the competency and resources to be able to carry out their responsibilities in relation to risk assessments. Reconsider the use of the 'risk assessment tracker' until assurance is obtained on the suitability and sufficiency of general risk assessments within the department.	High	Corp H&S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See Corporate H&S Action 5 above IOSH Managing Safely training programme in place which includes focus on risk assessments – most managers and supervisors have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight will continue through new corporate risk assessment process (see above) 	Completed

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
				received training, and further courses already booked into October 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Management Workshop held in Waste Management June 24 		
3	Consideration should be given to further investigation within waste and transport to determine vehicles being fit for purpose including manual handling issues and issues with handbrakes in RCV's	High	DD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor incident reports through Ops H&S committee. Manual handling training already ongoing in waste. 15 handbrakes checked on 27 November – and the remaining 6 on 4 December 23. No issues identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An anti-roll away system was fitted to the trade vehicle in January as a trial. Review of the pilot by Mid July. If successful – fit to all RCV's by April 25 	April 25
4	Review the Corporate Landlord function and ensure that all building H&S compliance issues are achieved across all Council buildings.	High	JK/BT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach now agreed Facilities Management Board established Statutory compliance is being managed on a virtual basis by the FM team across all buildings Under our Future Asset Plan we have taken action to reduce our liability associated with the business estate by allocating £500K additional funding to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formally establish revised FM team structure - posts still out to recruitment 	Mar 25

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
				support business critical building work		
5	Re-establish the H&S meetings at middle management and supervisor level within sections of the Department.	High	NSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Already have Bradley Fold H&S meeting – and Departmental H&S JCC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Service have now established middle management meeting to discuss H&S. This is through dedicated H&S meetings or included as an agenda item on service team meetings. Checked with HOS 26 June that all is in place. There is also a Bradley Fold group which picks up H&S of the depot including site inspections with the H&S advisor and the Trade Union rep. 	Completed
6	Reconsider the use of the H&S Audit questionnaire sent to managers and establish a program of Audits to be conducted more frequently by the HST team.	Medium	NSL/P F/SD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S audit questionnaire recently completed Audit questionnaire reviewed and simplified March 24 H&S audit for Operations refreshed for 24/25 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to increase the number of H&S audits in 25/26 	Completed
7	Consider the resourcing and workloads within all services, so that managers and	Medium	NSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Process for spot checks in place, records are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> H&S is now embedded into team 	Completed

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
	supervisors have more time to be able to carry out more 'spot checks' and monitoring of the teams in observing their health and safety performance at the site level.			kept, and it is on H&S committee agendas.	meetings, 1:1 meetings and job descriptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The new IT system which has been installed for waste management includes H&S checks and reminders ▪ Spot checks is already a standing item on the Ops H&S group meeting ▪ Corporate reminders are also sent out regarding risk registers and risk assessments. 	
8	Establish and deliver some Leadership and H&S Behavioural courses for the middle managers and supervisors to try and progress the move towards a more positive health and safety culture.	Medium	PF & LJ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ H&S module on the mandatory Management Development Programme ▪ Managing Safely IOSH course delivered to managers across the Department, including all Waste managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and deliver cultural/ behavioural training to first line supervisors. ▪ Develop bespoke leadership training for RCV drivers in consultation with DD ▪ Look at development programme for behaviours in waste 	Completed
9	Develop Health and Safety procedures/ Safe Systems of work for high-risk	Medium	NSL/ HoS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is the responsibility of Service Heads to ensure that SSoW are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify high risk activities then develop more robust 	Sept 24

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
	activities and communicate these to the staff			created for their work areas.	procedures/ safe systems of working – NSL to raise at Departmental Group	
10	Further establish the FM role within Bradley Fold Depot and consider the investment of resources into the site to ensure remedial works are undertaken on some of the issues.	Medium	PS/DD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LS identified a budget to support facilities improvement at Bradley Fold Action plan already developed CCTV system now installed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver facilities improvement work Depot meetings held every 2 months with walk abouts with H&S advisor and TU. Additional programme of works in place for 24/25 FM and Depot projects are the joint responsibility of DD and PS and is working well 	Completed
11	Review the SLA with schools and ensure that the caretaking staff are not going 'above and beyond' in assisting schools (and potentially putting themselves at risk) when contractors should be obtained.	Medium	DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SLAs have been updated and communicated to all School Head Teachers and Business Managers to include the risk manager's responsibilities towards the Cleaning and Caretaking teams operating in their building. Each building serviced by the Cleaning and Caretaking team have 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigating using construction management app which is used by Bury Housing Service – would allow dynamic risk assessments – Ongoing but delayed due to capacity in BHS - Awaiting outcome of service review Area Coordinators are reviewing 	<p>Nov 23</p> <p>Jan 24</p>

No.	Recommendation	Priority	Who	Progress to Date	Future Actions	Timescale
				<p>received a new H&S folder with all risk assessments reviewed and updated to cover general maintenance jobs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All COSHH data is updated and included in the folder Schools have been advised that 'any tools provided by the school will need to be maintained and risk assessed by the school' 	<p>similar Risk Assessments from BHS to ensure consistency of RAs with support from PF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area coordinators are including RA discussion in one to ones with caretakers which is ongoing. 	June 24
12	Consider more tailored and bespoke Policy statements for each Head of Service to try and achieve more 'buy-in' from the staff within these services.	Low	NSL & Ops Mgrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council H&S Policy in place Draft prepared for waste management but needs simplifying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the statement for Waste Management has been finalised, the approach will be rolled out across other Operations Department services 	Sept 24

Health and Safety Strategy

2024 - 2027

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Bury Council is the local authority for the Metropolitan Borough of Bury in Greater Manchester, providing or commissioning the full range of local government services to Bury's nearly two hundred thousand residents. Bury consists of six towns: Bury, Prestwich, Radcliffe, Ramsbottom, Tottington and Whitefield and the shared vision of the borough for 2030 is set out in the [LET'S Do It! Strategy](#).
- 1.2 There are established moral, legal compliance and financial reasons for adopting high standards of health and safety and it is important to recognise that there are benefits to the Council in adopting a pro-active, good practice approach to management of this key area.
- 1.3 The Council, as an employer and service provider, has a range of statutory responsibilities for health and safety as set out in health and safety legislation, including the [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act \(1974\)](#) and the [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations \(1999\)](#).
- 1.4 In addition, effective health and safety management is essential in order to:
 - Reduce risk
 - Reduce accidents and incidents
 - Increase productivity, because employees are healthier, happier and better motivated (think this should be further up the list)
 - Reduce employee absence and turnover rates
 - Lower the threat of legal action
 - Improve our reputation
 - Reduce costs
- 1.5 This document sets out the overarching strategy for health and safety at Bury Council for the three-year period to March 2027. It aims to be forward-looking and build on the improvements in health and safety management systems already achieved by the Council over recent years.
- 1.6 The health and safety management systems within the Council are well established. Ongoing reviews and improvements are essential to meet new and emerging challenges, including changing approaches to work through the adoption of agile working. Opportunities for increasing productivity through supporting improvement to work related health and wellbeing, and ensuring the procurement of contracted services take health and safety into account are also important considerations.
- 1.7 This strategy will also support, where possible, the national strategies developed by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE).
- 1.8 This strategy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Health and Safety Policy and Annual Reports.

2 Aims and Objectives

2.1 This strategy aims to protect our greatest assets – our people. It sets out how we will achieve this over the next 3 years, by concentrating our work on the areas of greatest health and safety challenge and where we can make the biggest difference to benefit the Council and the borough of Bury. Designed to challenge, it will ensure we improve standards and will inform our activity and approach to the delivery of our work. It is developed in line with Bury's Let's Do It strategy and has at its core the message 'Let's Do It safely!'

2.2 Our key objectives over the next 3 years are:

1. Review the Council's risk assessment processes and ensure full compliance

In year one, our priority is to review the risk assessment process and ensure it is fit for purpose. This involves reviewing the risk assessment needs checker template and ensuring all services complete this to ascertain and prioritise risks. Also, launching a new risk assessment template and guidance that is fit for purpose and suitable for all to use to gain a uniform approach. Services will be required to upload all risk assessment documentation to a central Teams folder. This will be monitored corporately, and services will continue to be able to access their master risk assessments from this folder.

A percentage of the risk assessments will be quality assured to ensure suitability and sufficiency. Challenge will be given to services that are weaker, and support provided wherever necessary.

Over the 3 years we aim to have full compliance with the risk assessment process, with documentation completed to a high standard.

2. Develop a system to centrally monitor compliance with health and safety training and work towards full compliance

Our aim is to equip the workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge to carry out their tasks in a safe and healthy way. This will include:

- Ensuring all employees complete the Health & Safety in the Workplace e-learning training so that they have an increased awareness of risks and controls to carry out their duties without harm to themselves or others.
- Ensuring all line managers attend in-person health and safety training as part of the Council's core Management Development Programme
- Offering managers and supervisors with responsibility for assessing risks accredited IOSH Managing Safely training
- Involving employees in the reviewing of risk assessments and safe working procedures.

Furthermore, we will carry out a training needs analysis for all services to determine where we are now and what training needs to be put in place. The training will be prioritised according to risk. A system will be

developed to record training records centrally on iTrent, which will allow continual monitoring and reporting. This process has already begun, starting with the higher risk services in the Council which are in the Operations Department.

3. Develop a robust health and safety culture

Over the lifespan of this strategy, we will ensure that the Council develops a positive, proactive approach to health and safety, where everyone understands their responsibilities and takes action to protect their own safety and that of others.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring proactive and visible leadership of health and safety by Leaders and Members and a consistent 'health and safety first' stance.
- Involving employees in taking decisions about health and safety and ensuring they can influence it through their own actions. Employees are often the best people to understand the risks in their workplace.
- Continuing to work closely with the trade unions.
- Producing regular communications for the workforce to raise awareness and encourage engagement in relevant health and safety matters.

A positive and robust health and safety culture will support everyone to work together to identify joint solutions to problems and manage risks sensibly, which ultimately will reduce accidents and ill health plus the associated costs to the Council. It will also show that the Council prioritises the safety and wellbeing of its employees, making them feel valued, involved and empowered.

4. Integrating Housing Service's into our approach to health and safety

In the first year, it is essential that a baseline audit is carried out within Housing Services so that the Council can fully understand the current position in terms of health and safety performance. From there, an action plan will be developed and steps taken to make improvements and integrate approaches.

5. Take action to minimise work related violence and aggression

The Council has seen an increase in incidences of workplace violence and aggression over recent years. This is a common theme across the public sector. However, as an employer, the Authority must ensure that it is taking all appropriate steps to protect the workforce. Improvements here will be supported via strengthened risk assessments, specialist training a clear zero tolerance culture and communications and identifying implementing best practice from elsewhere.

6. Take action to help reduce work related ill health, with a specific focus on mental health and stress

Incidences of work-related ill health are increasing across Great Britain, and the most reported causes are stress, depression, or anxiety. This is

reflected in the Council's sickness absence figures, where 39.16% of all long-term absences and 14.51% of all short-term absences in 2023-24 were related to mental wellbeing. In both cases, they were the top reason for absence.

The Council has recently produced a new stress risk assessment guide for managers and associated stress risk assessment templates. This latest guidance has been communicated to all staff along with guidance and information from outside bodies such as the HSE, but further communications will be issued to maintain awareness.

Further planned interventions include:

- The HR Team will work proactively to manage sickness absence, including making use of the EAP and Optima occupational health service. Also making available to all employees the Counselling and Family Centre where appropriate.
- Continue to raise awareness of support options through global communications.
- Supporting managers to proactively carry out individual stress risk assessments, wherever needed.
- A review of the Council's sickness absence policy
- Targeted responses to areas of specific concern as identified through absence data and the staff Pulse Survey.

7. Occupational health

The Council moved to a new, external occupational health provider in July 2023 and the aim over the next 3 years is to fully embed this new approach and ensure a high performing, high quality service.

The provider will also deliver a managed health surveillance programme, which is essential to identify ill health caused by work and to ensure employees in safety critical roles are fit to work. The Council will ensure all employees in scope are up to date with the relevant checks and develop an effective and smooth-running process.

8. Property

Work to deliver building condition surveys of all Council owned properties is underway as part of the Future Asset Programme (FAP). This is a large task that will need to be tackled in sections, beginning with the key properties used by employees to deliver Council services. It will allow a strategic approach to be progressed around the size and shape of the Council's future estate, informed in the first instance by health and safety assurance and the current state and sustainability of buildings. It is essential that the Council ensures buildings comply with all legal requirements including electrical safety, legionella, gas safety, fire safety and asbestos management. Work to assure compliance corporately has begun and is being led by the Facilities Management Team.

3 Strategy Context

3.1 The Council has based its health and safety management structures and arrangements on the guidance set out in the Health and Safety Executive's documents:

- Managing for Health and Safety (HSG 65)
- Leading health and safety at work (INDG417), issued jointly by the Institute of Directors and the Health and Safety Executive.
- Protecting people and places (HSE Strategy 2022-32)

4 Strategy Action Plan

4.1 Key Actions

The Strategy Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 sets out the key actions that will be undertaken as part of this strategy.

4.2 Performance Management and Monitoring

The Council will maintain a range of performance indicators (see Appendix 2) to enable:

- Development and maintenance of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, Strategy, Guidance and action plans.
- Monitoring of compliance with the Health and Safety Policy, Strategy and guidance.
- Monitoring that staff have received the appropriate Health and Safety training.
- Implementing initiatives and corrective action for areas of concern.

Delivery and amendment to the Strategy Action Plan will be monitored by the Director of People and Inclusion and formally reported to the Health and Safety JCC.

An annual corporate health and safety performance report will be formally presented to the Health and Safety JCC and Cabinet at the end of each financial year.

4.3 Roles and Responsibilities

The Chief Executive has the overall accountability for ensuring that Bury Council operates in a safe and healthy manner, however responsibility for coordinating its delivery lies with the Director of People and Inclusion and the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

Ultimately though, all employees have a responsibility for health and safety, and they are accountable for co-operating with the Council in meeting its obligations and taking all reasonable steps to protect people and resources.

4.4 Funding

Delivery of this strategy will be met using existing resources within the Health and Safety service and, where appropriate, elsewhere within the Council.

Where recommendations are made to services, any improvements must be sourced from the specific service budgets.

Appendix 1: Strategy Action Plan

Ongoing actions	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2024-25				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update the health and safety guidance on the intranet (15% per year) ▪ Monitor incidents and make recommendations to counteract any identified trends or concerns. ▪ Monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from health and safety audits and inspections. ▪ Conduct an effective health surveillance programme ▪ Produce regular health and safety communications for the workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3-year health and safety improvement strategy developed ▪ Full council-wide risk assessment needs analysis complete ▪ All health surveillance up to date and a rolling programme started ▪ Training needs analysis undertaken and mandatory health and safety training plan in place for the Operations Department ▪ Audit School Crossing Patrol service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First quarterly report 24/25 published ▪ Launch 3 year strategy – global communications ▪ Require all non-personal risk assessments to be stored centrally for sample checking and QA ▪ Ensure health and safety is effectively included in the procurement process ▪ Recruit H&S Advisor (Housing) ▪ Start audit of Repairs and Refurbishments (Housing Services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second quarterly report 24/25 published ▪ Schools' model health and safety and annual compliance exercise ▪ Review of first aid provision within the Council ▪ Review of incident reporting process ▪ Complete audit of Repairs and Refurbishments (Housing Services) and produce an action plan ▪ Managed health surveillance programme up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Third quarterly report 24/25 published ▪ Review of mental wellbeing within the Council ▪ Audit Highways service ▪ Training needs analysis undertaken and mandatory health and safety training plan in place for Housing Services ▪ Training session at Senior Managers Forum on how to complete a risk assessment, with supporting information they can cascade. ▪ All high risk staff to have received work-related violence and aggression (WRV&A) training
2025-26				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update the health and safety guidance on the intranet (15% per year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual report for 24-25 published ▪ Progress against 3 year strategy to be shared with the workforce with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First quarterly report 25/26 published ▪ Training needs analysis undertaken and mandatory health and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second quarterly report 25/26 published ▪ Senior leaders to audit health and safety within their service areas (HST 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Third quarterly report 25/26 published ▪ Training needs analysis undertaken and mandatory health and

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audit Council services (4 per year), developing action plans to address areas of concern. ▪ Monitor incidents and make recommendations to counteract any identified trends or concerns. ▪ Monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from health and safety audits and inspections. ▪ Conduct an effective health surveillance programme ▪ Produce regular health and safety communications for the workforce 	<p>health and safety campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Senior leaders to require managers to involve staff and trade unions in all health and safety matters affecting them, including the review of risk assessments ▪ Quality check building condition survey 	<p>safety training plan in place across Health and Adult Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality check that all risk assessments are in the correct format then return and assist with corrective actions 	<p>will provide a checklist) and include staff and unions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Repairs and Refurbishments (Housing Services) to have completed all actions from the audit action plan 	<p>safety training plan in place for all Council services</p>
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2026-27

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and update the health and safety guidance on the intranet (15% per year) ▪ Audit Council services (4 per year), developing action plans to address areas of concern. ▪ Monitor incidents and make recommendations to counteract any 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual report for 25-26 published ▪ Review progress against this Strategy and take remedial action where needed over the year and respond to lessons learnt ▪ Progress against 3 year strategy to be shared with the workforce with 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First quarterly report 26/27 published ▪ 100% of non-personal risk assessments in a consistent format stored centrally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Second quarterly report 26/27 published ▪ Review and consult to inform the next 3 year strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Third quarterly report 26/27 published ▪ All health and safety training up to date and regular monitoring process in place
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<p>identified trends or concerns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Monitor the implementation of recommendations arising from health and safety audits and inspections.▪ Conduct an effective health surveillance programme▪ Produce regular health and safety communications for the workforce	<p>health and safety campaign</p>			
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Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPI	Further information	Target	Baseline at 31/12/23	Outcome at 31/3/24
Compliance and risk assessment				
% return of risk assessment needs checkers from all Council services annually	RANC's last completed in Spring 2023	100%	Spring 23 = 100%	2 July 24 = 97.7% (86/88 services)
% of services who have up to date risk assessments in place and uploaded to the corporate storage portal for all the risks identified in their risk assessment needs checker	Corporate storage portal only made available from 2024	100%	N/A	2 July 24 = 21.6% (19/88 services)
% response to schools' health and safety assurance check	Issued to 33 maintained schools on 19 September 2023	100%		7 Mar 24 = 100% return (33 schools)
Training				
% compliance with mandatory health and safety e-learning	First issued to staff November 2023 % of Organisational Compliance for all contracted internal staff and agency staff	100%	7 Dec 23 = 33.3%	3 June 24 = 58.6%
% compliance with mandatory fire safety e-learning	% of Organisational Compliance for all contracted internal staff and agency staff	100%	7 Dec 23 = 64.6%	3 June 24 = 61.2%
% compliance with mandatory first aid awareness e-learning	% of Organisational Compliance for all contracted internal staff and agency staff	100%	7 Dec 23 = 53.4%	3 June 24 = 69.2%
% of employees who are up to date with mandatory work-related health and safety training	Monitoring process currently being developed for the Operations Department. This will then be rolled out across the Council. Monitoring to be in place by end of Sept 25.	100%	N/A	N/A
% of managers to have completed the Management Development Programme, including the health and safety module	Management development programme launched in January 2023	100% by March 2027	N/A	4 July 2024 = 45.7%

KPI	Further information	Target	Baseline at 31/12/23	Outcome at 31/3/24
Sickness absence				
Average days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee		9.85	2022-2023 = 14.5	2023-2024 = 13.71
Occupational health and health surveillance				
Occupational Health appointments within 10 days of the referral		95%	N/A	2023-24 = 99.56%
Completion of health surveillance requirements for existing Council employees	Optima led health surveillance programme began 12 February 2024	100%		As at 24 April 24, 89.1% (295/331) have attended appointments.
Organisational culture				
% positive response to 'I have confidence in my employer's arrangements to protect my health and safety at work'	To be included in the October 24 pulse survey	95%	N/A	N/A
Incidents				
Number of accidents reported each year		Lower is better	2022-23 = 195	2023-24 = 203
Number of near misses reported each year		Higher is better	2022-23 = 7	2023-24 = 29
Number of RIDDOR reportable incidents each year		Lower is better	2022-23 = 6	2023-24 = 5
Guidance				
% of intranet guidance reviewed annually		15%	Over 15%	23.7% reviewed including stress, asbestos, fire safety, COSHH, health and safety tool, induction, risk assessments.

