

# Health & Safety Annual Report 2020-21



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# Executive Summary

Welcome to the Council's annual Health and Safety report for 2020/21.

Covering the first twelve months of the Covid-19 pandemic, like many of our other current annual reports, 2020/21 has been a year like no other.

Regular readers of this annual report will know that we recognise that good health and safety management supports the delivery of our services to the people of Lincolnshire. The benefits of maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all our employees, service users, visitors and contractors is an essential element in the delivery of an effective and efficient council.

This approach has been no more evident as we have risen to the various challenges that the pandemic has presented us, whether that has been ensuring safe and effective workplaces to continue vital frontline service delivery or ensuring the sound transition from office to home based working.

This has been emphasised by a continued strong relationship and feedback from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), in particular with our response to providing COVID safe workplaces, but also continuing our record of no enforcement or intervention actions from them.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, developments in our general approach to managing Health and Safety have continued apace with full rollout of the EVOSAFE system, improvements in fire training take up and strengthened working across the council's working groups being just a few highlights from the year.



**Andrew Crookham**  
Executive Director – Resources



**Cllr Mark Whittington**

# Key Results

This corporate update report provides a summary of the Health and Safety activities for 2020-21 and gives assurance on how well the Council manages it's Health and Safety risks.



We are pleased to report there were **no occasions** where the HSE took enforcement action. Including all COVID related spot checks on “COVID safe” working environments, including several schools.



Despite the impact of COVID and the restriction on classroom/ face to face training, LCC continued to recognised the importance of health and safety training; with **over 5,000 individual Health & Safety courses completed** via our e-learning system.



The development of a manager COVID toolkit, allowed all relevant and ever changing government guidance into one single location, this was updated weekly making it easier for managers to stay compliant and ensure COVID safe working environments



The introduction of mystery shoppers and digital audits to monitor the effectiveness of our COVID safe control measures within our open LCC buildings confirmed the effectiveness of our controls and where required identified areas for improvement.



Establishment and continued development of the Health & Safety Committee. With more Trade Union representatives attending the meetings, this has helped to improve engagement with all involved on health and safety matters.



Despite COVID and the closure of schools for the third year running we achieved a **100%** return rate on the annual schools Health & Safety self assessment. Focusing on COVID, **100%** of schools confirmed an awareness of LCC and Government guidance, actions had been taken to reviewing risk assessment and COVID controls are directly monitored by Heads.

# Key Results

## “Home sweet home”

The lockdown in March 2020 resulted in the majority of staff working from home. To assist staff with creating a safe working environment at home, guidance documents were produced along with a new on-line home working assessment toolkit.

## “Digital first”

With lockdown preventing physical audits taking place, alternative methods of delivering our service were developed. An on-line audit of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) supply and availability was undertaken along with on-line audits of COVID compliance in schools and key worker buildings.

## “Evolution of Safety”

At the end of 2020 we introduced the new EVOSAFE on-line incident reporting system. This improved system now allows employees to record “near misses” and “dangerous occurrences”. Helping us to identify potential trends or patterns and take action to reduce the risk of future injury or loss.

## “One stop professionals”

The creation of the new LCC website allowed specific pages to be aimed at professionals. These pages incorporated our health and safety manual along with dedicated pages for COVID guidance, including the COVID toolkit and risk assessments to aid managers with compliance with government guidance.

## Accident & Incidents Reported by Directorate Area

%\* and ratio per 1000 employees\*\*

**0.75% /4:1000**

**Resources**



**5%/17:1000**

**Place**



**0.25%/5:1000**

**Commercial & Corp Services**



**2% /12:1000**

**Adults & Wellbeing**



**77% /46:1000**  
**Children Services**  
**(Inc. schools)**



**15% /67:1000\*\*\***

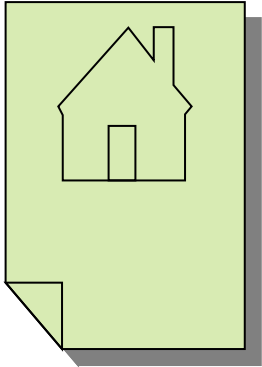
**Fire & Rescue**

\* Percentage split of total reported accident/incidents

\*\*1:1000 accident ratio rate = the number of accident per 1000 employees

\*\*\*Public Protection Team move from LFR to Resources in 2020-21

# COVID Response



## Home Working

At the end of March 2020 the Government announced that everyone had to remain at home to help in the fight against the spread of COVID. This resulted in thousands of our staff having to work from home and a requirement for us to ensure this can be done safely. To support this, a significant amount of information, guidance and communication was developed to assist staff with the initial set-up of an emergency workstations at home and then the longer term home working solution that was safe and compliant. The Council also introduced a £100 grant per employee to purchase essential equipment.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Early in the pandemic an audit had identified issues around the response to PPE and the root causes of non-compliant purchasing. To resolve these issues and ensure the supply of suitable and sufficient PPE to our front line key workers, a centralised approved suppliers list was established. The purchasing of PPE is now managed by the Commercial Team. Public Health are responsible for quality and Business Support oversee the distribution to employees. To evaluate the implementation of this process a management survey was undertaken confirming its successful implementation.

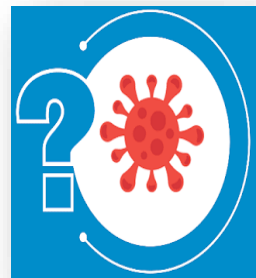


## Building Safety

To ensure the safety of those key workers who continued to work from our buildings throughout the pandemic individual risk assessments were undertaken on each building. These highlighted the various control measures being implemented and uploaded onto SharePoint for all employees to access. To monitor the implementation “mystery shoppers” and on-line audits were introduced, which gave assurance the control measures were being followed and “COVID safe” working environment had been achieved.

## Vulnerable Employees

Certain groups in society faced an increased risk from COVID and additional guidance and controls were introduced to protect these individuals. In the initial stages employees who fell within any of these groups were instructed to remain isolated and work from home. As lockdown was eased specific guidance was developed outlining the controls measures for employees and the requirements placed on management to undertake an individual risk assessment for any employee within these groups who needed to return to the office – outlining the specific controls to reduce the risks faced by these individuals.



## Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

During the pandemic the Government tasked the HSE to undertake both physical spot inspections of workplaces and phone interviews to confirm employers were abiding by the COVID safe workplace guidance. The HSE have undertaken several inspections at open LCC buildings and schools, all receiving positive feedback.

# Health, Safety & Wellbeing

## Dedicated Health & Wellbeing Information

Initially health and wellbeing information was set up on the Council's COVID pages on the intranet. This has now been moved to the new HR Hub, signposting to national online resources such as MIND, Rethink and Every Mind Matters. A number of **Workforce Matters Bulletins** were also developed and communicated covering topics such as *Coping with Change*, *Financial Issues*, *Relationship issues*, *working from Home*, *Remote Working*, *Leadership and Wellbeing during winter*.



## Mental Health Support

- Circus Of Life ran Resilience Workshops, with employees receiving 4x half day sessions and managers 2x half days.
- Mindfulness Workshops – Motivational Mondays and Wind Down Fridays
- Lincs2LEarn Resilience and Stress Awareness Courses
- Agreement to introduce Mental Health First Aiders within LCC – 98x applications were received for 45x places, with training commencing in 2021.

## Physical Health

Promotion of One You Lincolnshire(OYL) – providing health and lifestyle support and advice on topics such as diet, fitness, smoking cessation and alcohol reduction.



**Workout Wednesday lunchtime sessions** – desk based exercises provided by OYL.



## Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Service

Work on the upgrade of the County Emergency Centre was finally completed. There was some delay due to availability of IT equipment, due to increased demand but during the whole 3 year project the Emergency Planning & Business Continuity Team were able to operate out of the building. A new reception has also been created that has enabled a controlled environment to be created for those entering the building.

## Waddington Fire & Rescue Training Centre

An all new health and safety management system has been developed. The new system was designed and developed to work on a digital platform creating a one stop shop for safety management at the training centre. This will improve the accessibility of important information along with ensuring that guidance is consistent, maintained, relevant and always up to date.



## Contamination of Fire & Rescue PPE

Work continues to implement additional controls to reduce cross contamination of PPE within fire stations following a recent Fire Brigades Union study. Improved “dirty” PPE storage at 38 stations located away from crew muster points and clean cab policy have been introduced, where “dirty” kit is stored in sealed bags before entering appliance.

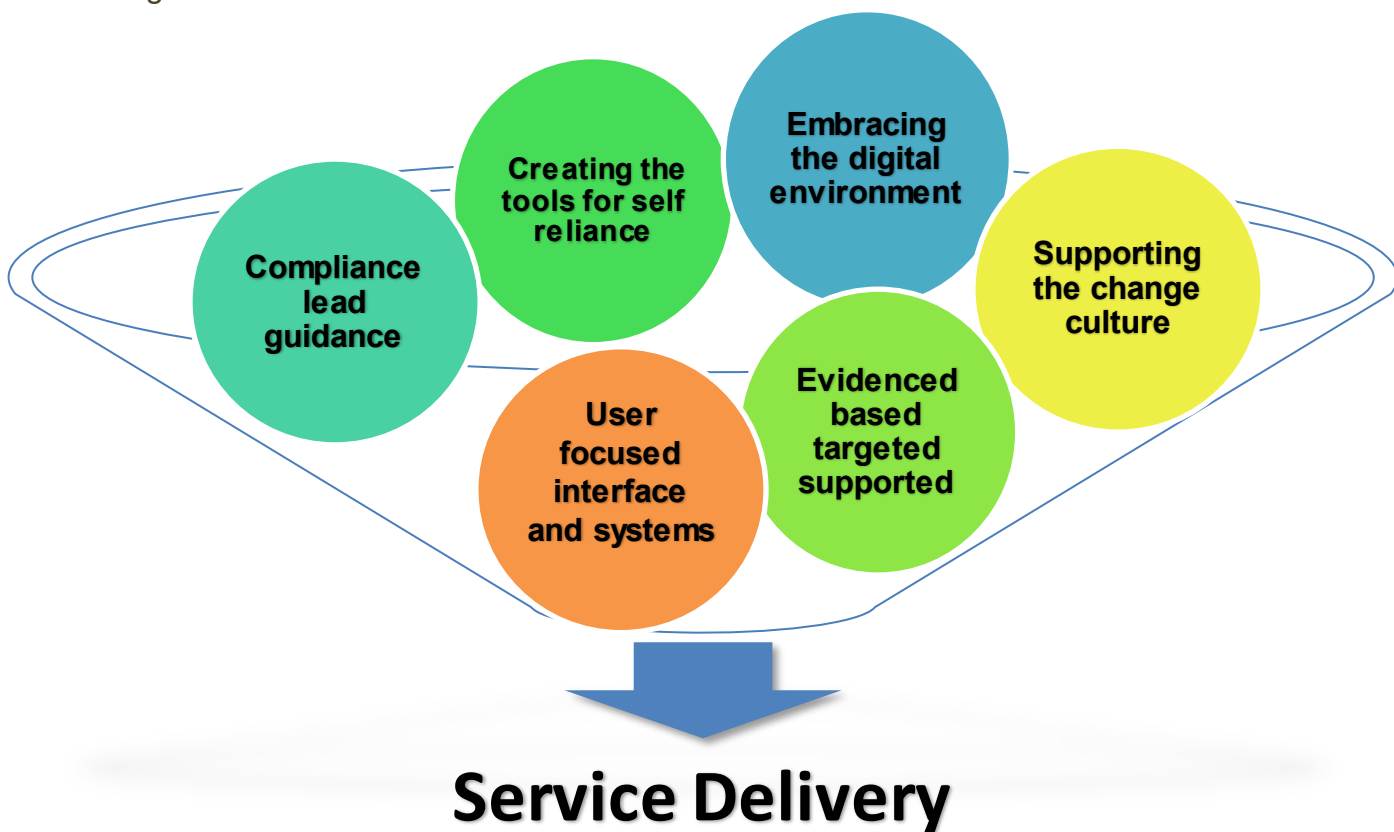


# What is the new normal?

The effects of COVID, the national restrictions and the ever changing government guidance has impacted on the working environment and the way in which our employees work more than any other factor in a generation and a number of these changes are here to stay. To enable us to meet these changes to the working environment, the culture and the way we work but to also remain compliant, the methods used to provide health and safety support services must be able to quickly and effectively change to keep pace while still remaining effective and relevant.

To ensure we are prepared and ready for the new challenges ahead, we have been reviewing our current methods of service delivery, reviewing their effectiveness to enable us to identify a strategy for the future of health and safety service delivery in a Smarter Working environment.

**The strategy for future health & safety service delivery includes:**



## Aligning to the corporate plan

The development of a more remote delivery strategy has been designed to support the key aims of the corporate plan. This strategy helps to improve the flexibility of service delivery but also agile enough to meet any changes in the future along with a heavy focus on changing the culture to one that's more person centric with self responsibility, ownership and accountability playing a leading role. This will be supported with forward thinking guidance and tools that allows people to achieve a strong and positive health and safety culture which is the foundation to creating a working environment where employees want to work, feel valued and be safe.





# Key Actions



The Council has appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure good Health & Safety management is maintained. We are satisfied that these work well, however; there is always room for continuous improvement.

Our focus over the past several years included the following areas:

## What we have done

Actions Identified/Undertaken	Progress
<p><b>Digital Incident reporting system</b> Development and roll-out of a new EVOSAFE on-line incident reporting system to improve information gathering, corporate oversight and evaluation.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<p><b>Digital Health and Safety Auditing</b> Although we had already identified the need and benefits of developing a digital process, COVID accelerated the need for a digital approach. We've introduced an on-line PPE and COVID compliance audit process and continue to work with MS teams to develop wide-ranging digital audits.</p>	<p><b>On-going</b></p>
<p><b>Compliance Officer Roles</b> To provide support to managers, give advice and have corporate oversight on building related compliance requirements, Property Services successfully appointed a Compliance Officer and Facilities Management Officer.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<p><b>Health and Safety Staff Survey</b> As part of the introduction of corporate health and safety KPI's, Children's Services developed an on-line staff survey to gather relevant information on the implementation of the 21-22 KPI's and their performance. This survey is now being used as a foundation for a corporate wide staff survey on KPI performance.</p>	<p><b>On-going</b></p>
<p><b>Introduction of a new "Home Worker" DSE assessment*</b> Due to the government lockdown and employees having to work from home we needed to develop and introduce a new DSE workplace assessment. Using our new SHINE on-line assessment system, we developed a series of key questions designed to evaluate the home working environment and also areas where improvements are required. Since its introduction in September 2020 over 2000 individual assessments have been completed and 12,000+ actions taken to reduce risks and improve home workstations for our employees.</p>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>

\* The Display Screen Equipment (DSE) regulations require employer to undertake a workstation assessment when they are working from either a new work station or there been significant changes

# Future Priorities



The Council has appropriate systems and processes in place to ensure good Health & Safety management is maintained. We are satisfied that these generally work well,

however there is always room for improvement. Our focus for 2021/22 includes the following areas:

Key Activity	Lead Officer/Team	Time Scales
The development of introduction of a all new digital Health & Safety Hub. A single point of access for all managers and employees to access information, guidance and tools.	The Corporate Health and Safety Team	From June 2021 to March 2022
Using MS teams to develop a digital health and safety audit process.	The Corporate Health and Safety Team	May 2021
Developing and Implementing a new “smarter working” workplace DSE assessment to ensure the smarter working project is compliant with the requirement of the DSE regulations.	The Smarter Working Group and The Corporate Health and Safety Team	From July 2021
Review of the current G6 – Consulting with Employees on Health & Safety that ensure compliance with the 1977 regulations - but doesn't create additional red tape.	Corporate Health and Safety Team & Unions Representatives & Management	From April 2021
Transforming the current Managing Safely in Lincolnshire course into a blended learning experience, using digital tools, interactive system and face to face training.	Corporate Health and Safety Team	Aug 2021

# Appendix I

## Our Objectives

The Council recognises that good health and safety management supports the delivery of our services to the people of Lincolnshire.

We are committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe working environment for all our employees – ensuring that their work does not adversely affect the health and safety of others, such as service users, visitors and contractors.

To achieve this, we have the following key objectives:

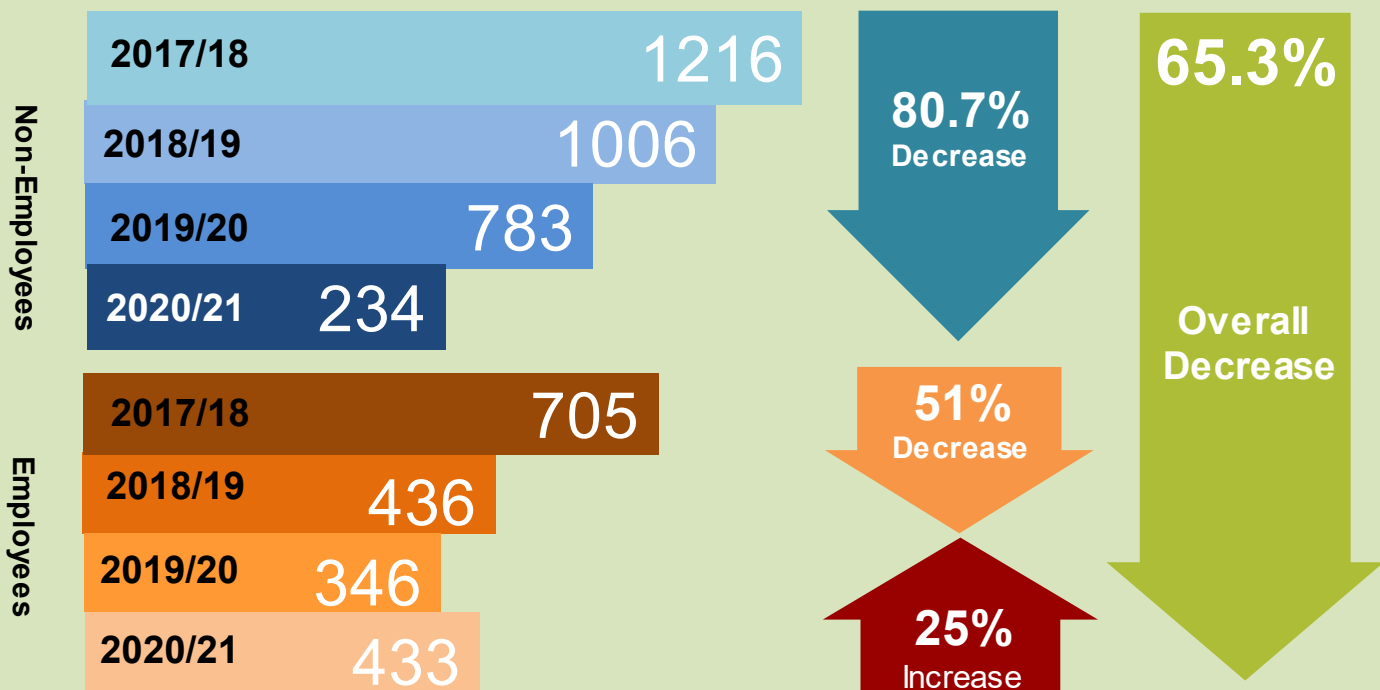
- to comply with the requirements of relevant legislation;
- to identify hazards (the potential for harm), assess risks (the likelihood of that harm being realised) and manage those risks;
- to ensure that all employees (and others as appropriate) are adequately informed of the identified risks and, where appropriate, receive instruction, training and supervision;
- to consult with employees' representatives on health and safety matters;
- to provide and maintain safe and healthy premises and work environment;
- to ensure that employees are competent to do their tasks, by providing training where necessary;
- to ensure that contractors are competent to manage the health and safety aspects of their work;
- to maintain appropriate health and safety management systems and arrangements and;
- to monitor and review the effectiveness of the safety management systems and arrangements and, where appropriate, implement improvements.

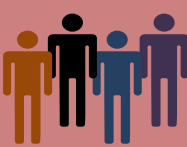


# Appendix 2

## Accidents & Incidents

### Accidents / incidents reported



 11% increase within Children's residential home incidents during lockdown

Related to low level contact from services users i.e. unintended arm movement resulted in no/minor injury.

Services closing as a result of COVID lockdowns results in incidents rates falling i.e. schools closures

72% reduction in non-employee incidents within Children's



31% increase in "minor" LFR incidents reported

63% increase in Slip, Trip, Falls, but 70% of all minor incident required "no medical treatment"

The closure of Day Centres in the initial COVID lockdown resulted in significant reduction on employee incident reports

73% reduced in employee incident reports in Adult & Community Wellbeing



# Appendix 3 - Our Risks

## Health and Safety Risks

The table below highlights some of the biggest health and safety risks the Council faces:

Risk	Mitigating Actions	Inherent Risk Rating	Level of Assurance
Failure to notify the HSE of RIDDOR-reportable incidents / injuries within the regulated timescales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy and guidance to be reviewed.</li> <li>New IT system to be installed with automated messages.</li> <li>New process to be incorporated within Managers Health &amp; Safety training</li> </ul>	Amber	Substantial
Inadequate Health & Safety knowledge/ understanding within middle and senior management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised Managing Safety in LCC course</li> <li>E-learning Managing Safety course</li> <li>Implementing KPI target on manager training</li> </ul>	Amber	Limited
Maintenance of effective governance arrangements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Corporate Steering Group</li> <li>Directorate Groups</li> <li>Revised TOR for Health &amp; Safety Gov' structure</li> </ul>	Green/ Amber	Substantial
Enforcement action from the Health & Safety Executive against LCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviewing policies/procedures</li> <li>Introduction of corporate training programme</li> <li>Provision of competent support/advice services</li> <li>RAG rated Directorate work plans</li> </ul>	Amber/ Red	Substantial
Enforcement action from the Health & Safety Executive against LCC's partners/contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contractor Health &amp; Safety evaluation</li> <li>Joint Partnership meetings</li> <li>Inspection &amp; overview programmes</li> <li>Contractor handbook</li> </ul>	Amber	Substantial

### Key

The Impact	Inherent Risk Rating	Assurance Rating
Enforcement Action / Prosecution Financial Costs – fines, claims Representational costs – bad press Harm to employees Harm to services users Impact on service delivery	<b>High</b> - very large fines, criminal prosecution, death or life changing injury, prohibition of services.	<b>Low</b> – minimal level of confidence over the design and operation of controls, performance or management of risk.
	<b>Medium</b> - significant fine, breaches of legislation, serious injury or harm improvement notices for service.	<b>Limited</b> - medium level of confidence over the design and operation of controls, performance or management of risk.
	<b>Low</b> - monitor and be aware, activity to mitigate the risk within existing service delivery plans / management arrangements.	<b>Substantial</b> - high level of confidence over the design and operation of controls, performance or management of risk.