

Warwick District Council
Corporate Health & Safety



Annual Report 2013-2014

Health & Safety Annual Report 2013/14

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Warwick District Council is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe place of work for all its employees, as well as taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the public and the environment (which may be affected by its work) are exposed to the lowest practicable level of risk.
- 1.2 Effective management of health and safety risks helps the Council to:
- Maximise the well-being and performance of its employees
 - Stop people getting injured, ill or killed by their work
 - Prevent reputation damage in the eyes of customers, suppliers, other stakeholders and the wider community
 - Encourage better relationships with partnerships / contractors and ensure that the activities of contractors do not pose a health and safety risk for the Council or its employees / visitors / customers
 - Minimise the likelihood of prosecution and consequent penalties
- 1.3 Best practice suggests all organisations produce and publish an Annual Health and Safety Report. As such, this report summarises Warwick District Council's health and safety performance during the year 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014. The aim to provide relevant information on what the Council is doing to protect its employees, volunteers, contractors, service users and members of the public.
- 1.4 The report provides an overview of key performance statistics, including the number of lost working and reportable accidents, along with commentary on key aspects of health and safety.
- 1.5 The format for this years report has changed slightly to accommodate a recommendation put forward by Internal Audit. The report summarises in more detail the effectiveness of the Councils Health & Safety management system during the year 2013-14 against various standards and in-house procedures and sets out a number significant objectives and targets for improvement to be met in the year 2014-15.

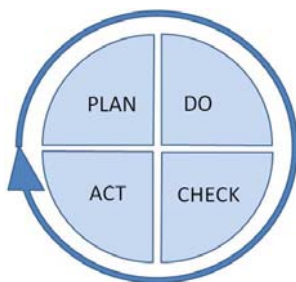
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2. WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO MANAGING HEALTH & SAFETY RISKS



- 2.1 The Council's Health & Safety management system includes the key elements of the HSE's guidance document HSG65 'Managing for Health & Safety'. The document has undergone a review and as a result a revised document was published in 2013. The HSE has moved away from using the POPMAR (Policy, Organising, Planning, Measuring Performance, Auditing and Review) model of managing health and safety to a 'Plan, Do Check, Act' approach.
- 2.2 The move towards Plan, Do, Check, Act achieves a balance between the systems and behavioral aspects of management. It also treats health and safety management as an integral part of good management generally, rather than as a stand-alone system. The table below gives a summary of the actions involved in delivering the system effectively:

Plan, Do, Check, Act	Conventional health and safety management	Process safety
Plan	Determine your policy / plan for implementation	Define and communicate acceptable performance and resources needed
Do	Profile risks/Organise for health and safety/implement your plan	Identify and assess risks/identify controls/Record and maintain process safety knowledge
		Implement and manage control measures
Check	Measure performance (Monitor before events, investigate after events)	Measure and review performance/Learn from measurements and findings of investigations
Act	Review performance/Act on lessons learned	

2.3 To manage the health and safety risks it faces and to follow the Plan, Do, Check, Act model, the Council takes the following approach:

Plan

- **Policy** - Has documented health and safety management arrangements including a Corporate Health Policy (which currently undergoing review), as well as a range of codes of practice and operational guidance.

Do

- **Monthly Departmental Meetings** – Health & Safety included as a standard agenda item for discussion at monthly meetings.
- **General Health & Safety Advice** – The Health & Safety Adviser acting through the Environmental Sustainability Manager provides day to day advice on the subject to staff of all levels of the Council. As above, also advising managerial staff via various reporting mechanisms on how to control risks identified and how to comply with legislation.
- **Health & Safety Representatives** – Volunteers have been established to act as contact points within their service areas on matters of health & safety. Regular H&S Rep meetings conducted with any resultant actions identified being taken forward by attendees to senior management where relevant. In addition, positive working relationships between management and union health and safety representatives.
- **Health & Safety Training** – The provision of internal and external Health & Safety Training. Specific health and safety training may also be arranged and undertaken by members of each service area.
- **Risk Assessment** – The provision of risk assessment system 'Assessnet'. Appropriate line managers having access to system to record risk assessments within their service areas, enabling them to keep track of actions generated and review dates that are set. The Senior Management Team has access to the system and also made aware via SMT reports as to the status of the assessments.
- **Health & Safety information** – An intranet Health & Safety page freely accessible for all levels of staff to view policies, procedures and guidance together with examples generic risk assessments. The intranet WaSP page is also used to communicate important health & safety information and updates on the subject together with upcoming training events.
- **Corporate Procedures and Codes of Practice** – form part of the overall health and safety policy, providing safe systems of work for employees to follow and to adapt them to their service areas as appropriate.

Check

- **Reporting to Joint Communications Forum and Members / Trade Unions Joint Safety Panel** - Regular reporting by the Health & Safety Adviser to the above forums consisting of senior management staff and union representatives and councillors. Updates are given on employee lost working time accidents that have occurred in a specified period, with the opportunity also being available for those attending to discuss other health and safety issues that may be relevant.
- **SMT H&S Update Reports** - Regular reporting by the Health & Safety Adviser to the Senior Management Team, advising on the status at the time of the H&S management system and of hazards that have been identified, recommending to SMT any reasonable actions to be taken.
- **Monitoring of hazards** – As mentioned in *Planning & Implementation*, the Council utilises a system for the recording of each service areas risk assessments. The Health & Safety Adviser provides regular reports to enable Senior Management Team to monitor the status and the types of the risk assessments within their service areas and to follow up with the appropriate management response where necessary.
- **Accident Investigations** – Where appropriate, accidents are investigated with findings and recommendations communicated to responsible managers for them to take action to prevent reoccurrence. Summaries of lost working time accidents are reporting to Joint Communications Forum and Members / Trade Unions Joint Safety Panel for their consideration
- **Annual Reporting on Corporate Health & Safety** – Annual reports are now being produced to inform all staff of the work undertaken with the last 12 month period and including results of surveys used to measure health and safety performance and accident statistics.
- **Prioritised audits** – Health and Safety related audits conducted. Higher risk areas identified for examination by the H&S Adviser, reporting findings and recommendations to the relevant Service Area Manager and employees involved.

Act

- **Review of policies and procedures** – Considerable review of the Health & Safety policy, corporate procedures and codes of practice with ongoing review taking place. Review is undertaken as a result of audits and outcomes of accident investigations for example.

Health & Safety Executive

- 2.4 To the best knowledge of the Health & Safety Advisor, there were no prosecutions or enforcement notices issued by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) in respect of any health and safety failures within Warwick District Council during 2013/14.

Warwickshire Fire Service

- 2.5 To the best knowledge of the Health & Safety Advisor, there were no prosecutions or enforcement notices issued by Warwickshire Fire Service in respect of any fire management failures by Warwick District Council in 2013/14.

Internal Assurance

- 2.6 At the end of 2013, the Corporate Health & Safety function was subjected to examination by internal audit. The auditor's examination against the CIPFA model demonstrated a robust corporate framework in place for managing health and safety and the findings were seen as giving 'Substantial' overall level of assurance that the applicable risks are managed effectively.

The above conclusion took account of issues that arose. They were summarised as:

- There was question over whether enough is being done to enforce provisions of the Driving for Work protocol in relation to driver qualification, vehicle condition and insurance cover;
- Member training (including Employment Committee) was recommended;
- Consideration to be given to the format of the Health & Safety Annual Report.

2.7 Risk Assessments

- 2.8 In terms of risk assessments, the focus for 2013/14 has been on:

- Continuing to ensure that service areas assess significant health and safety risks within their areas of responsibility. The Assessnet online management system is used for this purpose.
- Appropriate line managers having access to system to record risk assessments within their service areas, enabling them to keep track of actions generated and review dates that are set. The Senior Management Team has access to the system and is also made aware via SMT reports as to the status of the assessments and are asked to follow up with the appropriate management response where necessary.
- As of the end of March 2014, around 320 completed risk assessments had been entered onto Assessnet online health and safety management system.

- To enable the Senior Management Team to monitor and manage the review of risk assessments and tasks generated, the Health & Safety Adviser continues to arrange for a list of risk assessments and their status to be sent to SMT on a quarterly basis. It is recognised however that this is an ongoing challenge and that further Senior Officer engagement and co-operation is required to ensure that the risk assessments are updated regularly and that risks within their areas of responsibility are managed effectively.

2.9 Health & Safety Policy - The current document, Health & Safety Policy issue 2 is still current and remains a live document.

2.10 Significant review of the document has been taking place during 2013-2014 and it is intended that these will be communicated to staff using the methods described in paragraph 2.18. New policies produced include Fire Risk Management and Legionella Management (referred to in section 6). A number of codes of practice including Accident Reporting, Control of Contractors have been reviewed and take into account changes in legislation and in-house processes.

2.11 The Control of Contractors code of practice was reviewed and was subjected to considerable amendment. The amended document refers to in detail the requirements of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM 2007) and includes clear flowchart procedures to show Council officers how to initiate the CDM requirements to help ensure that construction activities are carried out as safely possible.

2.12 Automated External Defibrillator (AED)

2.13 In the summer of 2013 an AED unit was installed and wall-mounted in the main reception area of Riverside House. A defibrillator is a machine that delivers an electric current to a person's heart in an attempt to restore it to a normal rhythm during cardiac arrest.

2.14 At the end of July 2013, eleven WDC staff members received training in how to use the machine with a councillor also being in attendance. The training session was free as part of the purchase of the unit and feedback from the delegates and the councillor was very positive with many of them hoping that more people within the building would be trained in the use of the AED machine, as they felt the more people trained the better.

2.15 At the time of producing this report, refresher training was in the process of being planned for July 2014 for the above AED operators. Additional volunteers were also being sought to extend the number of trained AED operators.

2.16 Communication

2.17 The intranets homepage still provides a useful tool to display important health & safety information to a wide audience throughout the Council. The types of information displayed in the year 2013-2014 included health & safety alerts, fire safety messages, requests for additional first aiders and advertisements for future training sessions.

- 2.18 *Policies & Procedures* - During the first quarter of 2013, work began involving a group of key individuals to investigate the possibility of using Moodle, the Councils E-Learning Portal or alternatives to more effectively communicate new and reviewed health & safety policies and procedures to Council employees. It is intended that employees will confirm electronically that they have read and understood important documents such as emergency evacuation procedures and building security thus ensuring compliance with statutory duties and creating an accurate audit trail.
- 2.19 Throughout the year 2013-14, the working group responsible for considering the above initiatives continued to meet to discuss various options. It has since been learnt that a software called Meta-Compliance had been purchased and was due to be installed at the end of June 2014.

3. HEALTH & SAFETY ADVICE

The Health & Safety Advisor remains the Councils source for competent health and safety for staff of all levels. The types of activities undertaken by him in the 2013-14 included:

- Giving Risk Assessment advice / assistance
- Production of H&S Update reports to SMT
- Attendance at SMT meetings to advise the group accordingly
- Attendance at Risk Management Group meetings
- Advice on / assistance with Safe Systems of Work
- Completion of Workstation Assessments
- Liaising with contractors and managers on related issues
- Evaluation of Pre-Qualification Questionnaires submitted by potential contract service providers
- Work with Procurement in the redesign of contractor evaluation documents
- Receiving and processing Staff Alert List referrals and amendments
- H&S Inspections and assistance
- Conducting H&S Audits
- Involvement with fire safety issues including drills and evacuations
- Facilitating and taking part in working groups to help improve H&S systems
- Reviewing and production of H&S Policy and procedures
- First Aid enquiries
- Attending members / trade union panel meetings to discuss H&S Matters
- Accident investigation
- Implementation of personal safety systems including panic alarms and lone worker systems
- Training of employees and tenants of Riverside House
- Liaising with external enforcing authorities
- Advice on H&S Legislation
- Enquiries on general working environment

4 HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING



4.1 Individual Service Areas are responsible for specialised safety training and will hold further records of training that they have arranged. Figures below show the number of employees that have received in-house H&S training from April 2013 through to April 2014.

4.2 It should be noted that H&S Induction training also incorporates some of the subjects listed below and that the other subjects listed are training sessions provided in addition to induction.

• Health & Safety Induction	45
• H&S for Supervisors	8
• General H&S Awareness	31
• Fire Awareness / Warden	31
• Tunstall Lone Worker	13
• Assessnet – Risk Assessment	10
• Online DSE Assessment / Training	126
• Manual Handling, slips & trips	17
• Managing Teams through Change	6
• Effective Time Management	11

4.3 Other H&S related training that was completed by external consultants in 2013-2014:

• IOSH Managing Safely	19
• NEBOSH Construction Certificate	1
• Event Safety	3
• Control of Contractors	31
• Stress Management for Managers	11
• Employees Stress Awareness	12
• First Aid	3
• AED (Automated External Defibrillator)	11
• Miscellaneous Safety Institute and professional training	12

Total number of people trained: 401

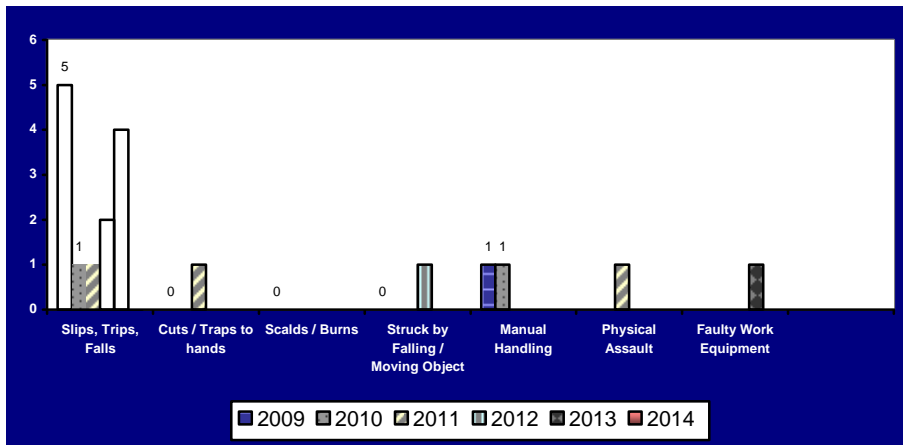
4.4 Assessnet DSE (Display Screen Equipment) Module - At the time of producing this report, there were 234 individual workstation assessments entered into the Assessnet system with approximately 126 employees completing online assessment and training in the 12 month period.

5. ACCIDENT REPORTING AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Lost Working Time Accidents



5.2 The graphs below summarise the number of employee lost working time accidents that have occurred between April 2013 and April 2014. This format will hopefully be useful to all and will allow comparative data to be tracked annually:

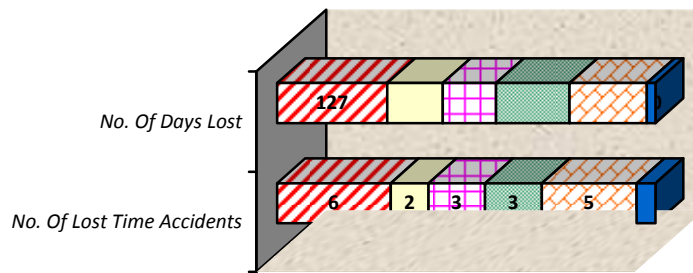


5.3 Total number of lost working time accidents for 2013-2014 was just 1. This was reportable to the HSE as required by the RIDDOR Regulations (Reporting of Incidents, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995).

5.4 The accident above resulted in a total of 10 lost working days. Consisting of:

- 10 days lost as a result of an employee falling from an office chair,

5.5 As shown in the diagram below, the 2012-2013 period showed that there had been 5 lost working time accidents resulting in 89 lost working days. The number of lost time accidents for 2013-2014 dropped to 1 and the number of lost working days decreased dramatically to 10 (see graph below) –



	No. Of Lost Time Accidents	No. Of Days Lost
2014	1	10
2013	5	89
2012	3	85
2011	3	61.5
2010	2	64
2009	6	127

5.6 Monitoring of hazards – The provision of the risk assessment system ‘Assessnet’ continues to be used for this purpose. Appropriate line managers having access to system to record risk assessments within their service areas, enabling them to keep track of actions generated and review dates that are set. The Senior Management Team has access to the system and is also made aware via SMT reports as to the status of the assessments and are asked to follow up with the appropriate management response where necessary.

5.7 Audit & Review



5.8 Audits - Audits and inspections are an important part of an effective health & safety management system to see if systems that are in place are working properly and to identify areas for improvement.

5.9 In an effort to continually improve the Councils H&S management systems and provide an effective corporate H&S Audit system a Risk Based Health & Safety audit and ‘subject specific’ audit approach is being used on an annual basis to sample up to 10 service areas / premises per year. During 2013/14, the Health & Safety Advisor:

- Continued with a risk based audit program, focusing on significant specific risks within service areas and individual locations
- A number of ‘subject specific’ audits were also conducted
- Areas for improvement were identified and action plans produced and followed up in attempts to ensure issues were closed out

The following audits that were completed were:

- August 2013, Contractor Supervision – *Housing & Property Services*
- October 2013, Management of Legionella – *Housing & Property Services*
- December 2013, Fire Risk Assessment – *WDC*
- March 2014, Risk Based Audit – *Document Management Centre*
- November 2013, Risk Based Audit – *Royal Pump Rooms*
- January 2014, Risk Based Audit – *Tannery Court VSH*
- March 2014, Inspection of Communal Areas – *Riverside House*

5.10 **Risk Based Audits** - Common issues raised across a number of sites during these audits included:

- Review of risk assessments required and amendment to include additional hazards and controls.
- The need for service areas to include Health & Safety as standing agenda items during team and departmental meetings.
- The need to review emergency evacuation procedures and ensure fire wardens are named for certain areas.
- Many service areas have access to Tunstall Lone Worker and many are using it in accordance with Council policy, however it is perhaps not used for all required lone working visits.
- Portable Appliance Testing (P.A.T.) of office electrical equipment, particularly items such as desk fans in some cases are due for retesting.
- Employee Display Screen Assessments required in certain areas and or assessments need to be reviewed.
- Employees Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to be checked to ensure it is in good condition and that this is recorded on a maintenance register

5.11 **Management of Legionella Audit** - Areas for improvement identified during this audit included:

- Close monitoring of Legionella control measures required at an individual site to minimise the risk of Legionella growth building water system
- Confirmation required to show that water tank cleaning is completed
- 6 Monthly Water Test records to be held by each actively managed building
- Shower cleaning and descaling regimes to be completed within the required timescales and recorded
- Annual cleaning and disinfection regimes to be brought up to date and records held for each site
- Annual Water Tank Inspection regimes to be brought up to date and records held for each site.

- Annual flushing of hot water tanks to be completed and certification held for each site.
- 5.12 **Fire Risk Management Audit** – Areas for improvement identified during this audit included:
- Fire Risk Assessments to be reviewed at least annually as stipulated by the risk assessment document
 - Fire Risk Assessment actions to be allocated to specific officers
 - Management process to be introduced to ensure the prompt resolution of actions recommended by Fire Risk Assessments. This includes recording the assessments using the Assessnet system, so that actions and review dates can be tracked more effectively
 - Fire safety training records to be held at each site as well as centrally at Riverside House.
 - Fire Risk Management policy to be reviewed to take more into account management arrangements and Fire Risk Assessment processes.
- 5.13 It was recognised that significant improvements are required in the way the council manages its Fire Risk Assessment process. As mentioned in the internal audit conducted by the Health & Safety Advisor, although there is a programme in place for the production of Fire Risk Assessments in WDC Corporate buildings, it was of concern that there is clearly a management failing in the ability to confirm that the FRA recommendations have been implemented.
- 5.14 As a result, the Level of Assurance given in the audit was 'limited'. The system of control was weak and there was evidence of non-compliance with some of the controls.
- 5.15 **Contractor Supervision** (Housing Repairs) – Areas of improvement identified during this audit included:
- Training records of contractor to be sampled to satisfy competency requirements
 - Review contractor supervision arrangements to ensure WDC and contactors are aware of each other responsibilities.
 - Implement a procedure to deal with and resolve defects, non-compliances and incidents.
 - Post work inspection records to be easily accessible
 - Introduce a spot check inspection process whilst IW work is taking place to ensure safety controls are implemented
 - That all information relevant to the contract, including original contract specifications and supporting H&S information are easily accessible

- Risk Assessments to be made easily accessible for each housing repair job

5.16 **Riverside House Communal Areas Inspection** – The main areas of improvement identified during this audit included:

- PAT Testing required of electrical appliances in shared kitchens and other shared areas
- Updating of supplies required for the First Aid room
- Carpets, carpet tiles and other minor floor surface faults in a small number of areas to be repaired / replaced to remove trip hazard faults
- Health & Safety Law posters and notices displaying names of first aiders to be updated in a number of areas
- Small number of items obstructing walkways in basement corridor

6. **HEALTH & WELLBEING**

6.1 A Health and Wellbeing Strategy has been put in place and is to be taken forward by the new Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee. It has three 'pillars' –

- health promotion amongst Council workforce
- health promotion in the community, and
- Health scrutiny with respect to consultation and issues affecting the delivery of local health services

Council Workforce

- The Public Health England Workplace Wellbeing Charter is being sought and benchmarking against standards is taking place
- A network of Health Champions has been established and it is hoped that eventually there will be full coverage by these volunteers in all work areas
- A positive response has been made to Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports for the Council to engage in the Workplace Challenge initiative
- Staff have been trained in 'Making Every Contact Count' (MECC) and this initiative, to capture opportunities for one to one health promotion, is being pursued

The Community

- A cohort of local businesses has been awarded, or are working towards the Workplace Wellbeing Charter

Health Scrutiny

- The Sub-Committee has started its work and a response to consultation on Dental Health Services has been returned
- A work programme is being agreed

7. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS FOR IMPROVEMENT



7.1 Fire Safety and Asset Management

- 7.2 As shown from the section above detailing results of health and safety audits carried out in the last period, a significant number of required improvements have been driven by these audit findings. In particular higher risk areas such as Fire Safety, Control of Contractors and Management of Legionella.
- 7.3 Subsequently, to help steer many of these improvements, a Corporate Asset Compliance Group comprising of key individuals within the organisation has been set up. The main role of the group being to monitor compliance requirements across the Council's assets and to seek continual improvement. It is also intended that the group will also provide an opportunity for sharing information across service areas with regards to compliance issues.
- 7.4 As highlighted in the Fire Risk Assessment audit, one of the main objectives for the coming year is to ensure that the Council has robust systems in place to ensure that remedial actions identified through assessments and surveys for instance are dealt with in a timely manner and that works are assigned to specific officers. Remedial actions will then be prioritised on a risk basis and works 'programmed in' accordingly.
- 7.5 To help achieve the above, it was agreed at December 2013 SMT meeting that trials of Assessnet's online health & safety management system 'Fire Risk Assessment' module should be conducted with input from members of Building Control and Property Services. These trials are due to take place in July 2014.
- 7.6 It has been recognised that the subject of corporate asset management as a whole is a key priority area for improvement in the coming months to ensure that the Council operates its business undertakings in a way that minimises risk to anyone who may be affected by them. As an organisation, the Council also has a responsibility to demonstrate compliance with various pieces of Health & Safety legislation. It is for this purpose that the use of Assessnet on a wider scale is to be investigated, so that statutory certification can be monitored and controlled more effectively. Solutions are currently being explored and will continue to be throughout the coming year.

7.7 Health & Safety Policy review

7.8 As shown earlier in this report, areas requiring improvement have been identified using a number management tools, particularly audit.

7.9 The need for an updated Fire Risk Management policy has been identified and a draft document has since been produced by the Health & Safety Advisor. This document has been discussed among the Corporate Asset Compliance Group and where appropriate, their feedback forming part of the policy content. Once the content is agreed, this document will be communicated to staff using the Meta Compliance system.

7.10 As considerable work has been undertaken to improve the management of Legionella in Council buildings water systems, this has also triggered the need to review existing policy. The Council has employed a new contractor to help fulfil its statutory obligations in ensuring they manage the risk of Legionella growth in building water systems. Future meetings are planned between the Contractor, Health & Safety Advisor and the Energy Manager to confirm the extent of contractor activities and to ensure these correspond with Council Policy. Once this is completed, the Management of Legionella code of practice will be amended and form part of the Corporate Health & Safety Policy by the end of 2014.

7.11 Communication

7.12 As in paragraphs 2.18 and 2.19, a new Meta Compliance and e-learning software are to be installed by ICT in June 2014. It is intended that the software will where appropriate ensure that important policies, procedures and guidance are communicated to Council employees demonstrating compliance more effectively with statutory requirements.

8.0 SUMMARY

- 8.1 On the whole, it has been a successful year for Health and Safety at Warwick District Council.
- 8.2 As mentioned in the report, only one workplace accident resulting in lost working time occurred with no health and safety related enforcement actions being taken against the Council.
- 8.3 The Internal Audit result showed that a robust framework is in place for the management of Health and Safety. However as shown, audits conducted by the Health & Safety Advisor identified deficiencies within a number other processes designed to minimise the risk of harm to Council staff and others.
- 8.4 The majority of audits did show that the Council does have processes in place to identify a wide range of health and safety risks and to comply with statutory requirements, including Fire Risk Assessments. However, mechanisms for ensuring that identified deficiencies are addressed within the appropriate timescales set must be improved to minimise risks and to ensure compliance.
- 8.5 The urgent need for the above improvements has been acknowledged by the Senior Management Team and there have been concerted efforts by key personnel in attempts to see these through to completion. For the purposes of this summary, fire risk has been used as an example where significant improvements are required to ensure closure of generated actions. However, the same principle applies to many asset based monitoring systems that require follow up work, for example Legionella, Asbestos and statutory examinations of elevators and stair lifts.