

Electoral wards affected:

All wards, as the Corporate Safety Team provides corporate-wide health and safety support, assurance and monitoring activities across the Council.

Ward councillors consulted:

The Corporate Safety Team's work is primarily focused on providing assurance that the Council has appropriate health and safety governance arrangements, management systems, competent personnel, effective communication processes and suitable documentation in place to manage health and safety risks. Whilst there has been no formal consultation with Ward Councillors in relation to this report, health and safety performance and related matters are routinely reported through established corporate governance arrangements, including the Corporate Joint Consultative Group, where the relevant portfolio holder receives updates.

Public or private:

Public

Has GDPR been considered?

Consideration has been given to data protection requirements, and no personal data is presented within this report.

1. Executive Summary

This report provides the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee with an overview of the health and safety governance, assurance, monitoring and performance activities undertaken by the Corporate Safety Team during 2025/26.

The Corporate Safety Team provides professional advice, guidance and support to Directorates to assist them in discharging both their own and the Council's responsibilities for ensuring the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, service users, contractors and members of the public who may be affected by Council activities.

The report outlines the review and assurance work undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of the Council's health and safety management arrangements, including governance frameworks, policies, risk management processes, compliance monitoring and performance reporting. Collectively, these activities provide assurance that robust arrangements remain in place to support the effective management of health and safety risks across the organisation.

2. Information required to take a decision

The Committee is asked to consider the information contained within the Annual Health and Safety Report 2025/26, note the assurance provided regarding the effectiveness of the Council's health and safety management arrangements and discuss any areas requiring further clarification or exploration.

3. Implications for the Council**3.1 Council Plan**

The work undertaken by the Corporate Safety Team directly supports the Council Plan and contributes to the delivery of key cross-council priorities by helping to ensure that services are delivered safely, effectively and in compliance with statutory requirements.

Address our financial position in a fair and balanced way

- The Corporate Safety Team provides practical, proportionate and cost-effective advice to managers and operational teams, enabling Directorates to manage risks effectively whilst making best use of available resources.
- The continued delivery of health and safety training through e-learning platforms provides an efficient and accessible approach to workforce development whilst reducing training costs.

Strive to transform council services to become more efficient, effective and modern

- The Corporate Safety Team supports evidence-based decision-making using health and safety performance data, benchmarking and assurance activity, enabling continuous improvement in health and safety management arrangements.
- The use of digital systems and reporting tools supports more efficient monitoring, communication and governance processes.

Continue to deliver a greener, healthier Kirklees and address the challenges of climate change

- The Corporate Safety Team promotes the health, safety and wellbeing of employees, service users and visitors through the provision of guidance, advice and assurance activities.
- The use of technology, including virtual meetings and online training, helps to reduce unnecessary travel and supports the Council's environmental objectives.

Continue to invest and regenerate our towns and villages to support our diverse places and communities to flourish

- The Corporate Safety Team provides specialist advice and support to project and construction management teams to ensure that health and safety considerations are embedded throughout the planning, design, procurement and delivery stages of projects.

3.2 Financial Implications

The Corporate Safety Team supports the Council in meeting its statutory health and safety obligations through the provision of professional advice, guidance, monitoring and assurance activities. Effective management of health and safety risks helps to reduce the likelihood of enforcement action, regulatory fines, civil claims, uninsured losses and associated reputational damage.

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

3.3 Legal Implications

The Council has statutory duties under health and safety legislation to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees and others affected by its activities.

The professional competence of the Corporate Safety Team, together with the monitoring, audit and assurance activities undertaken throughout the year, supports the Council in maintaining compliance with relevant legislation, identifying areas for improvement and reducing the risk of enforcement action by regulatory bodies.

There are no additional legal implications arising directly from this report.

3.4 **Climate Change and Air Quality**

The recommendations contained within this report are for information and assurance purposes only and therefore have no direct impact on climate change or air quality.

However, the Corporate Safety Team continues to support the Council's environmental objectives through the use of digital technologies, remote engagement methods and online learning platforms, helping to minimise unnecessary travel and associated carbon emissions where appropriate.

3.5 **Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)**

- **Risk**

The Council maintains a Corporate Health and Safety Risk Register, which is reviewed and updated on a six-monthly basis. Relevant strategic risks are escalated and reflected, where appropriate, within the Corporate Risk Register.

The monitoring, assurance and advisory activities undertaken by the Corporate Safety Team contribute to the identification, assessment and management of health and safety risks across the organisation, supporting the Council's overall risk management framework.

- **Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA)**

Integrated Impact Assessments have been completed for the Corporate Health and Safety Policy and associated guidance documents. These assessments have been approved and published in accordance with the Council's Integrated Impact Assessment process.

The report itself is retrospective in nature and is presented for information and assurance purposes; therefore, no additional Integrated Impact Assessment is required.

4. **Consultation**

N/A

This report provides an annual summary of health and safety performance, assurance and monitoring activities undertaken during 2025/26. No specific consultation has been required in the preparation of this report.

5. **Engagement**

N/A

The report is presented to provide assurance on health and safety governance and performance and does not propose any changes to policy, service delivery or operational arrangements that would require stakeholder engagement.

6. **Options**

6.1 **Options considered**

The Corporate Governance and Audit Committee may:

Receive and note the contents of the Annual Health and Safety Report 2025/26; and

Identify any areas where further information, assurance or future reporting may be beneficial.

6.2 Reasons for recommended option

The report is presented to provide assurance regarding the effectiveness of the Council's health and safety governance and management arrangements during 2025/26.

As this is an annual information and assurance report, no decision is required other than for the Committee to receive, note and consider the information presented.

7. Next steps and timelines

The Corporate Safety Team will continue to monitor health and safety performance, governance arrangements and compliance activities throughout 2026/27. Findings from assurance, monitoring and review activities will be reported through established governance arrangements as appropriate.

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Previous Annual Health and Safety Reports presented to the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee have been received, reviewed and noted, providing Members with an opportunity to consider health and safety performance, governance arrangements and areas of assurance across the Council.

10. Appendices

Annual Corporate Health and Safety Report.

11. Service Director responsible

Rachel Spencer-Henshall
Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director for Public Health and Corporate Resources.