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ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

To: Councillor Copland, <u>Convener</u>; Councillor Al-Samarai, <u>Vice-Convener</u>; Councillor David Cameron, <u>the Lord Provost</u>; Councillor Steve Delaney, <u>the Depute Provost</u>; and Councillors Boulton, Davidson, Fairfull, Graham, Macdonald, MacGregor, Massey, McLeod and Thomson.

<u>Trade Union Advisers</u>: Ron Constable and Carole Thorpe (EIS); Kevin Masson and David Willis (GMB); Jason Currie and 1 vacancy (SSTA); Mark Musk and Alison Robertson (UNISON); Joe Craig and Mishelle Gray (UNITE); and Rob Stephen and 1 vacancy (VOICE).

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 19 June 2023

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Members of the **STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in the **Council Chamber - Town House on <u>MONDAY, 26 JUNE 2023 at 10.00am</u>. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.**

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream can be viewed on the Council's website. https://aberdeen.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

JENNI LAWSON
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER – GOVERNANCE (LEGAL)

B U S I N E S S

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1.1.   <u>There are no items at this time</u>

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2.1.   <u>There are no items of exempt business</u>

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3.1.   <u>Members are requested to declare any interests</u>

DEPUTATIONS

4.1.   None at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.1.   Minute of Previous Meeting of 13 March 2023 - for approval (Pages 5 - 8)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6.1.   Committee Business Planner (Pages 9 - 12)

NOTICES OF MOTION

7.1.   None at this time

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

8.1.   None at this time

RISK MANAGEMENT

9.1.   Cluster Risk Register and Assurance Map - CUS/23/185 (Pages 13 - 24)

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH ARRANGEMENTS

10.1.   Aberdeen Scientific Services Lab Move - RES/23/184 (Pages 25 - 32)

WORKFORCE STRATEGIES

11.1.   Developing the Young Workforce Apprenticeship / Internship Update - CUS/23/153 (Pages 33 - 40)

11.2.   Microsoft Dynamics 365- People and Change Journey - CUS/23/182 (Pages 41 - 50)

COUNCIL POLICIES AFFECTING STAFF

12.1.   Policies for People Update - CUS/23/186 (Pages 51 - 58)

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING OF STAFF

13.1.   Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update January to March 2023 - COM/23/173 (Pages 59 - 80)

13.2.   Employee Mental Health Action Plan Annual Progress Update - CUS/23/187 (Pages 81 - 108)

ESTABLISHING AND PROMOTING VALUES FOR THE ORGANISATION

14.1.   Equality and Diversity Action Plan - CUS/23/163 (Pages 109 - 120)

IIAs related to reports on this agenda can be viewed here

To access the Service Updates for this Committee please click here

Website Address: aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Stephanie Dunsmuir, email sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 13 March 2023. Minute of Meeting of the STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Copland, Convener; Councillor Al-Samarai, Vice-Convener; Councillor Steve Delaney, the Depute Provost; and Councillors Boulton, Davidson, Fairfull, Graham, Macdonald, MacGregor, Massey, McLeod, Thomson and van Sweeden (as substitute for Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost).

Trade Union Advisers:- Carole Thorpe and Ron Constable (EIS); Kevin Masson and David Willis (GMB); Mark Musk and Alison Robertson (UNISON); and Fiona Sales (UCATT).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be viewed here.

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

ANNOUNCEMENT

1.   The Convener advised that Councillor Massey was replacing the late Councillor Mackenzie on the Committee. He welcomed Councillor Massey however noted that it was unfortunate that the reason he was now attending the Committee was due to such sad circumstances.

The Convener added that he wished to note the sad passing of Mike Middleton, who had previously been one of the GMB Trade Union Advisers on the Committee, paying tribute to the service that Mike had given to the Council and to the GMB. Councillor Macdonald added that Mike had been a real gentleman, deeply rooted in his family and in his Trade Union work. Councillor Boulton further noted Mike's constant smile and that he had always dealt with people with good grace no matter the issue being discussed, and that she hoped Mike's family took consolation from how well regarded he was. Finally, Ms Robertson added her tribute to Mike on behalf of UNISON.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

2.   There were no declarations of interest nor transparency statements made.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

3.   The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 30 January 2023 for approval.

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
13 March 2023

The Committee resolved:-
to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

4.   The Committee had before it the business planner as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

At this juncture, the Convener advised that due to the relatively low volume of business on the agenda for the meeting of 15 May 2023, he proposed to cancel that meeting in terms of Standing Order 7.3, and move any reports to the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 26 June 2023.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note the reasons outlined in the planners for the delays to item 4 (Mental Health Action Plan Annual Update) and item 6 (Whistleblowing Policy);
(ii)   to agree to remove items 10 (Employee Assistance Scheme / Occupational Health / Sickness Absence Six Monthly Update) and 31 (Developing Young Workforce / Employability Update);
(iii)   to otherwise note the planner; and
(iv)   to note the cancellation of the meeting of 15 May 2023, and that all expected business would instead transfer to the meeting of 26 June 2023.

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY - OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2022 - COM/23/078

5.   The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Commissioning which presented statistical health and safety performance information for the three month reporting period October to December 2022 to provide Members with the opportunity to monitor compliance with health and safety legislation.

Members asked a number of questions in relation to the report, including the statistics around incidents of unacceptable behaviour. There was further discussion around the differing requirements by Health and Safety Executive inspectors and the request for paper records to be made available on site when electronic records were already available.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee note the report and provide comment on the health, safety policy, performance, trends, and improvements.

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
13 March 2023

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note that the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord was liaising with the Health and Safety Executive in relation to the differing expectations of inspectors in terms of paper records and electronic records;
(ii)   to note that officers would review the colour scheme used in the graphs to ensure that there was consistency between graphs relating to similar information; and
(iii)   to otherwise note the report.

EAS ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE, OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND ABSENCE ANNUAL UPDATE JANUARY 2022 - DECEMBER 2022 - CUS/23/080

6.   The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer Services which provided an update on the utilisation of the Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provided by Time for Talking and VIVUP during the last 12 month period January to December 2022; and a further update on the Occupational Health and Absence data for the period 1 January to 31 December 2022.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee consider the contents of the report.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note that officers would keep the committee apprised of progress with the absence improvement work being undertaken through the Performance Board, including any specific areas included with the action plan and the impact of any initiatives being undertaken;
(ii)   to note that officers would present a report to Committee later in the year in respect of communication and engagement with staff; and
(iii)   to otherwise note the report.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION - PROGRESS REPORT UPDATE - CUS/23/079

7.   The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Customer Services which set out the employee information which had been presented as part of the 2023 Equality Outcomes Progress Report to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee at its meeting on 8 March 2023, and provided assurance on work being undertaken to meet the Council's employer Equality Outcomes in line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note the employee information update presented as part of the 2023 Equality Outcomes Progress Report presented to Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee attached at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2; and

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE
13 March 2023

(b)   note the work undertaken to date, provided within the Progress Report at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, as part of the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan to meet our Equality Outcomes as an employer.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note that officers would provide detail of the timescales for the introduction of Diversity Packs in the report due to Committee in June 2023;
(ii)   to approve the recommendations; and
(iii)   to instruct the Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development to provide an update to Staff Governance Committee at a future meeting of the Committee on any impact the report had on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan as well as any changes, updates or new areas of focus based on the data and analysis.
-     **COUNCILLOR NEIL COPLAND, Convener**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1		**STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER** The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.							
2	**Report Title**	**Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report**	**Update**	**Report Author**	**Chief Officer**	**Directorate**	**Terms of Reference**	**Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T**	**Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred**
3		**26 June 2023**							
4	Developing the Young Workforce Apprenticeship / Internship Update	To present an update - note, this will replace the planned Developing Young Workforce Update due to Committee in November		Lesley Strachan	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.2		
5	Microsoft Dynamics 365- People and Change Journey	To present an update on the D365 project		Lindsay MacInnes	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.2		
6	Cluster Risk Register	To present the annual risk register update		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	GD 8.4		
7	Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update	For period to 31 March 2023		Colin Leaver	Governance	Commissioning	3.2		
8	Employee Mental Health Action Plan Annual Progress Update	To provide an update in relation to the employee mental health action plan		Fiona Lindsay	People & Organisational Development	Customer	3.2 iii		
9	Aberdeen Scientific Lab	To present an update		Hazel Stevenson	Operations and Protective Services	Resources	2.2		
10	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update Report	To present the updated action plan		Darren Buck	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
11	Policies for People Update (to include mediation)	Following approval and implementation of core policies in 2021/22 to report back on the progress of implementation and to include a review of the use and uptake of mediation		Kirsten Foley	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5, 2.7		
12		**4 September 2023**							
13	Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update	For period to 30 June 2023		Colin Leaver	Governance	Commissioning	3.2		
14	Equality and Diversity Policy	To report back on the revised policy		Darren Buck	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.6	D	It is proposed to report this to a meeting in the first quarter of 2024. This will allow extensive feedback to be undertaken, following initial discussions with external organisations
15	Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
16	Family Friendly Policy	To give an update on progress		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		

	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
17	Special Leave Policy	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
18	Staff Governance Committee Effectiveness Report	To present the annual effectiveness report		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	8.5	D	To be presented in November to allow all committees to have a full 12 months of data to report before these reports are presented
19				**13 November 2023**					
20	Employee Assistance Scheme/Occupational Health/Sickness Absence Six Monthly Report	To present the six monthly report for the EAS/OH & Sickness Absence figures		Kirsten Foley	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.7		
21	Leadership and Management Development Update	SGC 03/10/22 - to agree that an annual update on the refreshed approach to leadership and management development be presented to Committee		Sandie Scott	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.4		
22	Managing Substance Misuse Policy	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
23	Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update	For period to 30 September 2023		Colin Leaver	Governance	Commissioning	3.2		
24	Corporate Health & Safety Policy	To present the revised Health & Safety Policy, subject to approval being required		Colin Leaver	Governance	Commissioning	2.5		
25				**2024**					
26	EAS Annual Progress Update Occupational Health and Absence Annual Update January 2021 – December 2021	To present an annual report for the EAS/OH & Sickness Absence figures	March 2024	Kirsten Foley	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.7		
27	Employee Code of Conduct	To present an update on the Employee Code of Conduct		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
28	Managing Performance Policy and Procedure	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
29	People development policy / guidance	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
30	Family Friendly Policy	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
31	Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer	2.5		
32				**REPORTING DATE TO BE CONFIRMED / 2024**					

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
2	**Report Title**	**Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report**	**Update**	**Report Author**	**Chief Officer**	**Directorate**	**Terms of Reference**	**Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T**	**Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred**
33	Early Intervention and Prevention Training	Council Budget 01/03/23 - instruct the Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development in consultation with the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community and Empowerment and Chief Officer - Finance to develop a training programme for staff and elected members on early intervention and prevention and report on delivery progress to the Staff Governance Committee		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer			
34	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan	SGC 13/03/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development to provide an update to Staff Governance Committee at a future meeting of the Committee on any impact this report has on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan as well as any changes, updates or new areas of focus based on the data and analysis		Isla Newcombe	People & Organisational Development	Customer			

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Cluster Risk Register and Assurance Map
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/185
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald, Director - Customer
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe, Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development
REPORT AUTHOR	Isla Newcombe, Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development
TERMS OF REFERENCE	8.4

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To present the Cluster Risk Registers and Assurance Maps in accordance with Staff Governance Committee Terms of Reference to provide assurance that risks are being managed effectively within the People and Organisational Development Cluster.

2.   RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:-

2.1   Note the Cluster Risk Register and Assurance Map set out in Appendices A and B.

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

3.1   The Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for overseeing the system of risk management and for receiving assurance that the Extended Corporate Management Team (ECMT) are effectively identifying and managing risks. Reviewing the strength and effectiveness of the Council's system of risk management as a whole is a key role for the Committee.

3.2   The Risk Management Policy Framework states that all other committees should receive assurance on the risk management arrangements which fall within their terms of reference. This is provided through the risk registers for the relevant Clusters which fall within the remit for this Committee:

- People and Organisational Development

Risk Registers

3.3 The Council's Risk Registers are tools used by Functions and Clusters to capture and manage the risks which could prevent achievement of organisational outcomes and service delivery.

3.4 The Council's Corporate Risk Register (CRR) captures the risks which pose the most significant threat to the achievement of the Council's organisational outcomes and have the potential to cause failure of service delivery. The CRR is scrutinised annually by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee.

3.5 The Cluster Risk Register set out in appendix A reflects the risks which may prevent the Cluster from delivering on organisational outcomes and services, these risks may be escalated to the CRR where deemed necessary.

3.6 The risks contained within the Risk Register for the Cluster are grouped below by risk category and show the Council's corresponding risk appetite for each category as set within the Council's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) which was approved by the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee in March 2023.

The Cluster is working towards a target risk score which aligns with the risk appetite.

Risk Category	Risk Title	Target Risk Appetite	Aligned with RAS
Compliance	P&OD Service Delivery	Averse	Yes
Operational	Industrial action impacts on delivery of council services and on wider workforce capacity	Averse	No

3.7 The Cluster Risk Register provides the organisation with the detailed information and assessment for each risk identified including;

- **Current risk score** – this is the current assessment of the risk by the risk owner and reflects the progress percentage of control actions required in order to achieve the target risk score.
- **Target risk score** – this is the assessment of the risk by the risk owner after the application of the control actions. This is aligned with the risk appetite for this particular category of risk.
- **Control Actions** – these are the activities and items that will mitigate the effect of the risk event on the organisation.
- **Risk score** – each risk is assessed using a 4x6 risk matrix as detailed below.

The 4 scale represents the impact of the risk and the 6 scale represents the likelihood of the risk event.
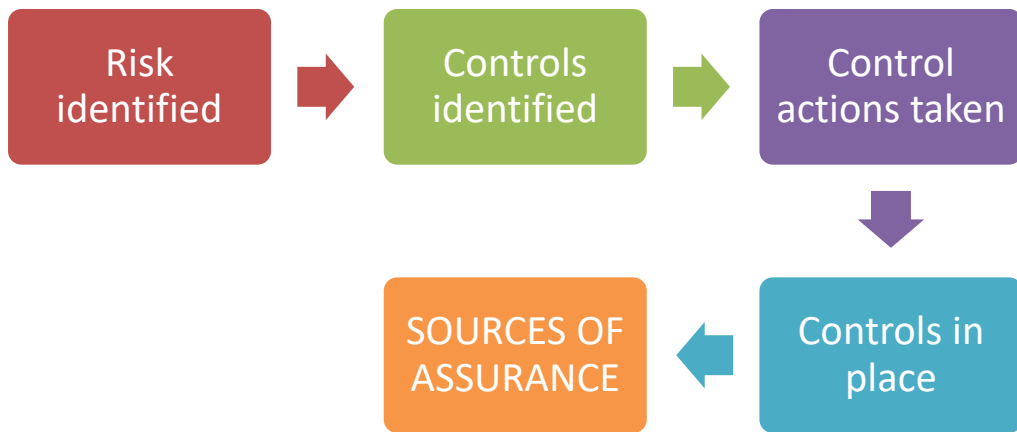
Impact	Score						
Very Serious	4	4	8	12	16	20	24
Serious	3	3	6	9	12	15	18
Material	2	2	4	6	8	10	12
Negligible	1	1	2	3	4	5	6
Score		1	2	3	4	5	6
Likelihood		Almost Impossible	Very Low	Low	Significant	High	Very High

3.8 Development and improvement of the Cluster Risk Register and associated risk management processes has continued since the Cluster Risk Register was last reported to Committee:

- The Council's Risk Appetite Statement (RAS) was reviewed and updated.
- "Managing Risk" pages were published on the Council's intranet pages which contain information and links for officers and elected members on the Council's RAS, Risk Management Policy, Guidance and Training. This supports the further embedding of our risk management culture and ensures that everyone knows the part they play in managing risks within the wider system.
- Training was provided to officers on the updated Committee report template risk sections that were reviewed and updated to reflect the RAS, ensuring that officers fully align their proposals to elected members with the Council's agreed risk appetite statement.
- Risk owners and leads continue to review and update risk registers to improve monitoring and reporting across the organisation. These are mechanisms which reflect the day-to-day business of assessing and mitigating the risks and opportunities inherent in delivering public services.

Assurance Maps

3.9 The risk registers which are reviewed by the Council's Committees detail the risks identified within each of the relevant Functions and Clusters and provide detail of the risk, the potential impact and consequence of the risk materialising and the control actions and activities required to manage and mitigate the risk. Assurance Maps provide a visual representation of the sources of assurance associated with each Cluster so that the Committee can consider where these are sufficient. Sources of assurance are controls which are fully effective, following the completion of control actions. Presentation of each Cluster's assurance map provides full sight of the defences we have in place as an organisation to manage the risks facing local government.

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┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│    Risk     │ ──▶  │  Controls   │ ──▶  │   Control   │
│  identified │      │  identified │      │actions taken│
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
                                                 │
                                                 ▼
┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│ SOURCES OF  │ ◀──  │ Controls in │
│  ASSURANCE  │      │    place    │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
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3.10   The Assurance Map provides a breakdown of the sources of assurance within "three lines of defence", the different levels at which risk is managed. Within a large and complex organisation like the Council, risk management takes place in many ways. The Assurance Map is a way of capturing the sources of assurance and categorising them, thus ensuring that any gaps in sources of assurance are identifiable and can be addressed:

First Line of Defence "Do-ers"	Second Line of Defence "Helpers"	Third Line of Defence "Checkers"
The control environment; business operations performing day to day risk management activity; owning and managing risk as part of business as usual; these are the business owners, referred to as the "do-ers" of risk management.	Oversight of risk management and ensuring compliance with standards, in our case including ARSC as well as CMT and management teams; setting the policies and procedures against which risk is managed by the do-ers, referred to as the "helpers" of risk management.	Internal and external audit, inspection and regulation, thereby offering independent assurance of the first and second lines of defence, the "do-ers" and "helpers", referred to as the "checkers" of risk management.

Risk Overview

3.11   Our workforce risk has been reviewed and updated in light of committee approval of our workforce delivery plan in service of TOM 1.2.

3.12   Our Industrial relations risk is regularly reviewed in light of the national position and is de-escalated or escalated between corporate and operational.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. This report deals with risk management at Cluster level and this

process serves to identify controls and assurances that finances are being properly managed.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report. The Council's Risk Registers serve to manage many risks with implications for the legal position and statutory responsibilities of the Council.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

7.1 There are no risks arising from the recommendations in this report. The Committee is provided with assurance that the risks presented within the Cluster Risk Register are those that may affect achievement of organisational outcomes and delivery of services for each Cluster are identified, appropriately managed and that the Council's activities are compliant with its statutory duties.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	The council is required to have a management system in place to identify and mitigate its risks.	The council's risk management system requires that risks are identified, listed and managed via Risk Registers.	L	Yes
Compliance	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Operational	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Financial	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Reputational	As above.	As above.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	As above.	As above.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

8.1 The recommendations within this report have no direct impact on the Council Delivery Plan however, the risks contained within the Council's risk registers could impact on the delivery of organisational outcomes.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not applicable

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix A– Cluster Risk Register – People and Organisational Development

11.2 Appendix B – Cluster Assurance Map – People and Organisational Development

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Isla Newcombe
Title	Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development
Email Address	inewcombe@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 053487

People & Organisational Development Risk Register

CURRENT CLUSTER RISKS	CURRENT RISK SCORE
Industrial Action – Pay Negotiations	12
P&OD Service Delivery	8

Number of Cluster Risks

2

Risk Matrix by Likelihood (6) and Impact (4)

FUNCTION	CLUSTER	RISK OWNER	RISK LEAD
Customer	People & Organisational	Isla Newcombe	Isla Newcombe

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROL ACTIONS	% COMPLETE	TARGET RISK SCORE	CURRENT RISK SCORE ▼	CURRENT LIKELIHOOD	CURRENT IMPACT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
P&OD Service Delivery	Risk to delivery of key services in the event of failures of systems, processes or capabilities	Continuous review of robust Business Continuity Plan; Cluster demand analysis and upstream early intervention measures; all members of staff reminded to take equipment home to enable working from home; Cluster development plan and cluster workforce and succession planning including talent programme enabled	70	6	8	2	4	31 March 2024

FUNCTION	CLUSTER	RISK OWNER	RISK LEAD
Customer	People & Organisational	Isla Newcombe	Isla Newcombe

RISK TITLE	RISK DESCRIPTION	CONTROL ACTIONS	% COMPLETE	TARGET RISK SCORE	CURRENT RISK SCORE ▼	CURRENT LIKELIHOOD	CURRENT IMPACT	TARGET COMPLETION DATE
Industrial Action – Pay Negotiations	Industrial action in schools impacts on delivery of SQA exam diet and on wider workforce capacity	1 Ongoing monitoring of situation via regular updates from COSLA and local union reps. 2 Once target areas are identified, regular meetings to be arranged with relevant services and P&OD to identify specific risks should action go forward 3 If strike action is confirmed, life and limb exceptions to be discussed with unions.	25	6	12	3	4	29 June 2023

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Assurance Map		
People & Organisational Development		

Corporate Risk Register Risk:

1. **Workforce Capacity and Organisational Resilience** - Risk that changes to the workforce, i.e., reduction or movement in response to external factors, significantly impact on our capacity and ability to deliver critical services and on the resilience of our workforce.
2. **Industrial Action – Pay Negotiations** - Industrial action in schools impacts on delivery of SQA exam diet and on wider workforce capacity.

Cluster Risk Register Risk:

1. **P&OD Service Delivery** - Risk to delivery of key services in the event of failures of systems, processes, or capabilities

First Line of Defence (Do-ers)	Second Line of Defence (Helpers)	Third Line of Defence (Checkers)
• Staff and managers implementing related procedures and guidance flowing from policies and ACC workforce Strategy • P&OD delivery against Workforce Strategy • Assessment of people related risks by staff and managers • People and Organisational Development (P&OD) enabling effective people management, support and development through relevant advice to managers • Managers undertaking relevant training and development • Monitoring of employee related data by P&OD and all Senior Management Teams via People Performance Dashboard	• Staff related policies • Relevant guidance for managers and staff available on People Anytime • ACC Workforce Strategy and delivery plan • Management and Leadership Training and Development Opportunities • Job Families and Capability Framework • Re.cr.uit Scheme - Internal Recruitment and Internal Movement of Staff • FAIR agreement with Trade Unions • Regular engagement with Trade Unions including Directors Union Engagement meetings • Outlined approaches to trade union and staff engagement and consultation (business case and adoption and change management approaches) • Temporary Movement of Staff Protocol	• COSLA – national negotiating body via SJC and SNCT. • Scottish Government – checking compliance with national initiatives e.g. Early Years Expansion, Pupil Equity Fund • Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) / ACAS-- professional bodies available for benchmarking / best practice advice and guidance • Society of Personnel and Development Scotland (SPDS) – professional body available for benchmarking / best practice advice and guidance and links into COSLA • Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMiE) reports – use a sampling strategy for inspections

- Skills audits and professional development plans used to build training requirements and programmes of development
- Managers engaging staff and trade unions during change in line with our people change procedures and approach
- Managers[1] completing Continuous Review and Development and 1:1s
- Leadership Forum
- Staff and managers completing mandatory training requirements
- Reporting of mandatory training completion and exception actions by managers

- E-learning system
- Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health provider to support staff eg those reporting stress
  - Mental Health Action Plan and Substance Misuse Action Plan
  - Mental Health First Aid Network
  - Your Care online wellbeing staff portal
- CMT Boards
- Council Committees
- Corporate Management Team (CMT)
- Data Protection processes and Information Governance including DPIAs
- Employment Legal Team
- Consultation and legislative tracker to horizon scan for changes in the law
- Risk Appetite Statement
- Business Continuity Sub-Group
- Employee Data Forum

  across school leadership and learning and teaching
- GTCS/SSSC- set out registration requirements for specific parts of the workforce
- Employer Accreditations including Quality of Working Lives, Investors in Young People, Disability Confident, Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, Equally Safe at Work
- Benchmarking through Local Government Benchmarking forum (LGBF) measuring indicators such as cost of HR gender profile and workforce profile across all 32 Local Authorities (Statutory Performance Indicators)
- Staffing Watch Report
- Internal Audit – Staff Resourcing – August 2022
- Internal Audit – Attendance Management – October 2022
- Internal Audit – PVG and Disclosure Checks – April 2023

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen Scientific Services Lab Move
REPORT NUMBER	RES/23/184
DIRECTOR	Steven Whyte
CHIEF OFFICER	Mark Reilly
REPORT AUTHOR	Hazel Stevenson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The report will give a high level summery of Aberdeen Scientific Services Labs' (ASSL) move to the James Hutton Institute and the benefits to staff and the service

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Committee note the progress and achievement of Aberdeen Scientific Services Labs' (ASSL) move to James Hutton Institute, the engagement with team members throughout this change and the benefits and opportunities realised for staff through this.

3. Background

3.1 Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory (ASSL) is one of only four Official Control Laboratories in Scotland (the others being Dundee, Edinburgh, and Glasgow). It provides essential statutory services to local authorities in the North of Scotland, offering a one-stop shop for chemical analysis, microbiological examination and other testing to councils, businesses, and individuals. Most testing is backed by accreditation to the ISO 17025 standard and its value enhanced by the impartial and authoritative opinion that adds unique value to the service provided.

3.2 ASSL provides analytical and scientific services to a wide range of local authority and private clients. It provides statutory functions under food and agriculture legislation. When at full complement, it is a team of 20 staff within Operations and Protective Services, consisting of 18 scientific and technical staff and 2 support staff. Among the staff are individuals who have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out the statutory functions of Public Analyst, Food Examiner and Agricultural Analyst which they do on behalf of Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and The Moray Council. The Feed (Transfer of Functions) (Miscellaneous Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 Act transferred competence for feed law functions from local authorities to Food Standards Scotland (FSS) resulting in one member of staff

being appointed as the Agricultural Analyst for FSS and one as Deputy Agricultural Analyst. Public Analyst and Agricultural Analyst appointments are also held for The City of York Council.

3.3 ASSL provides both chemical analysis and microbiological examination on a range of sample types, principally food, animal feeds, potable water, swimming pools, legionella monitoring, air monitoring and surface/ground waters and leachates from landfill site monitoring. It provides support for the Environmental Health services and plays an integral part in the process of protecting the health of the people of the Northeast of Scotland.

3.4 ASSL is an Official Feed and Food laboratory (OCL) jointly designated for Great Britain by FSS and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) under the Official Feed and Food Control Regulation (2017/625). Without this status, the laboratory would not be able to undertake any enforcement work and UKAS accreditation is a prerequisite for this.

3.5 ASSL has successfully maintained UKAS accreditation status since 1994.

3.6 The laboratories were located in part of an Edwardian school building off Dunbar Street. It had been apparent for some time that this accommodation was no longer fit for purpose, nor the alternative uses planned for the site. Officers had considered various alternatives, with co-locating with another scientific body being a preferred option. The James Hutton Institute (JHI) was the only local organisation with sufficient free space, and planning for adaptations to some of their laboratory accommodation on their Craigiebuckler site was well underway before the pandemic.

This work was put on hold due to the Covid emergency and the restrictions that were introduced. It resumed autumn 2021 with refurbishment works completed in April 2022, and a phased relocation of all laboratory staff and equipment undertaken between April and May 2022,

3.7 Funding for this relocation has been identified from within the existing Operations and Protective Services budget and the spend has been authorised under delegated powers.

3.8 Modern laboratory facilities will lead to improved service delivery as well as projecting an image appropriate to the excellent scientific services that ASSL offers. Co-location with other organisations on the site also provides a unique opportunity for ASSL to become part of a wider scientific campus, developing partnership working and creating new income generating opportunities.

4. Employee Experience

4. 1 Employee Engagement

4.1.1 As the aforementioned move to James Hutton Institute was a major relocation of the service, it was ultimately important that staff were engaged with and kept updated on the progress of the project. This was achieved via regular face to face team meetings and update briefings. Staff were engaged with on all

aspects of the relocation, including inputting to the scoping exercise for a suitable location. All comments and views were taken on board and an open and transparent line of communication between staff and managers was maintained at all times.

4.1.2   Staff were also involved in the design layout and structure of the new labs; this was highly important as the staff are the day-to-day end users and the design needed to support and enhance their working environment.

4.1.3   Before the move commenced, site visits were arranged for team members, this allowed familiarisation of the new premises and also facilitated opportunities further feedback. Some examples of the feedback received from staff following the move include '*The move to JHI has been great, the lab is clean, bright and modern. The JHI staff have been helpful and welcoming. There is potential for working on projects in partnership with JHI staff.'*

4.1.4   Full engagement throughout the process ensured that there was a high level of buy -in by staff, they also felt engaged and valued throughout the process. This led to a smooth transition from the old to new premises.

4.2   Employee and Service Benefits

4.2.1   The co-location of ASSL and James Hutton has offered benefits for both the service and staff as a whole.

4.2.2   Team members have feedback via 1 to 1s and team meetings that the new modern environment has improved morale and feelings of wellbeing. It has created the opportunity for staff to have contact with similar professionals and create a wider scientific community. The shared communal facilities, such as the canteen, also allow integration and the opportunity for social networking. Examples of this include involvement in the many seminar series run by the institute, attendance at their annual research conference, alongside social groups involving crafting and sporting interests. All existing staff have remained with the service through the move, and this has allowed all ASSL existing knowledge and expertise to be carried over.

4.2.3   Furthermore, the ability to cross-train staff is enabling succession planning and building capacity and resilience into the service. With input from staff, the redesign of posts made vacant through natural retiral has placed further emphasis on this flexibility and resilience across the service- particularly important with the specialist skills which need to exist within the lab team.

4.2.4   As the labs are purpose-built to specification, this allows for opportunities to build in resilience and futureproof the service. The James Hutton Institute already has an extensive knowledge base which can be used to look at new techniques, equipment and analysis.   This offers great professional development opportunities for staff as well as the possibility to expand business bringing in additional revenue. Future challenges and threats can now be approached with greater ease and assurance.

4.2.5 Whilst this move has amounted to a significant change for staff, through continued engagement throughout the process, it has nonetheless resulted in feedback from staff of boosted morale, a renewed pride in the workplace and a visibly dedicated, committed and enthusiastic team dynamic.

4.2.6 The above advantages that were hoped for, in scoping the project, have been realised and are already affording new, exciting landscapes to be explored and developed.

4.2.7 The relocation and associated redesign has allowed the laboratory to expand the scale of the work undertaken to include the provision of scientific analysis and Public Analyst services to The City of York and West Yorkshire, along with Public Analyst services to a number of additional local authorities within Scotland via improved links with Edinburgh Scientific Services. This service was previously provided by a private sector company based in Wales.

5.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   Following the relocation a number of additional revenue generating opportunities have been realised, all of which have been carried out collaboratively alongside the James Hutton Institute. This has resulted in an additional revenue of £20,700. The laboratory has also successfully tendered for and won a 3 year contract for the supply of water chemistry and microbiological analysis to a major oil and gas operator. This represents an extension to our existing water chemistry contract and generation of new work in relation to microbiological testing services. It is projected that these opportunities could result in a 10% increase in revenue over the coming financial year.

6.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1   There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8.   RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Remaining at the current property had	Strategic partnership formed with James Hutton Institute	L	**Yes**

	limited opportunity to for strategic partnerships with other scientific bodies which allows ASSL to change and adapt to emerging and present risks and challenges.	allowing ASSL to access their already extensive scientific knowledge base		
Compliance	The current premises was outdated and not allowing room for improvement and expansion which may have impacted on over all capability to retain the required accreditations.		M	**Yes**
Operational	The current premises was outdated and had no option for expansion or improvement meaning that there was no opportunity to change and realign with advances in the scientific landscape	Move to new modern premises has allowed for a bespoke, purpose built lab which is future proofed	L	**Yes**
Financial	The current premises were outdated and old requiring structural repairs, also lack of	Move to new modern premises has allowed for a bespoke, purpose built lab which is future proofed allowing opportunities to expand and create	M	**Yes**

	opportunity to modernise ASSL created barrier to sourcing new and/or retaining business	new business opportunities.		
Reputational	In current premises there was a risk that ASSL would become outdated and not be able to keep up with advancements in the scientific filed	Move to new modern premises has allowed for a bespoke, purpose-built lab which is future proofed	M	**Yes**
Environment / Climate	No significant risk identified			

9. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The activity outlined in this report supports the ACC Policy Statement through protection of public health, provision of advice and support to local authorities and businesses.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	ASSL supports the Prosperous Economy element of the LOIP through the provision of a locally based UKAS accredited laboratory service which can be accessed by local businesses, both new and established.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	By providing local businesses with access to an accredited laboratory, as well as sound advice, an opinion on the significance of results they are more likely to succeed and contribute to the local economy.

10.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

11.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

.   N/A

12.   APPENDICES
N/A

13.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Developing the Young Workforce Apprenticeship / Internship Update
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/153
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe
REPORT AUTHOR	Lesley Strachan / Alison Paterson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.2

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1   This report follows on from a report to Staff Governance Committee in November 2022 (CUS/22/236), which provided a detailed picture of all the work undertaken to support our commitments as an employer under the Young Persons Guarantee.

1.2   The Chief Officer – People & Organisational Development was instructed to bring regular progress reports as part of the implementation of the Workforce Delivery Plan approved at Staff Governance Committee in January 2023.

1.3   Accordingly, this report provides an update to Committee on the progress of three particular strands of activity relating to developing our young workforce. These are:
- Our Apprenticeship programme
- Internships for Care Experienced Young People
- ABZ Campus – Employability Pathway Programme

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee:-

2.1   notes progress of the continuing work to develop our young workforce, to do this in line with our LOIP commitments, and to shape our workforce for the future.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1   <u>Strategic Context</u>

3.1.1   Our Workforce Delivery Plan, relating to the workforce strategy included as part of the TOM 1.2 was approved at Staff Governance Committee in January 2023. The plan includes developing our young workforce (DYW) in order to meet our current and future organisational challenges, including our demographic

challenges.

3.1.2 Our Developing the Young Workforce approaches include involvement in employability programmes to support delivery of the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) in terms of increasing the number of young people achieving positive destinations, as well as elements of the Socio-Economic Rescue Plan by providing supported work placements, with built-in employability support to young people who are at risk of long-term unemployment. As a direct result of participating in internships, young people gain valuable work experience (in many cases resulting in continued employment with the Council), a reference, and in some cases, a qualification. Employability is a theme which runs strongly throughout the LOIP, with employment, training, and achievement of qualifications all being desired outcomes.

3.1.3 Care Experienced Young People are identified as a key group in the LOIP and are the focus of a successful Aberdeen Prospers improvement project which aimed to support 15 care experienced young people into employment through public sector funded employability programmes.

3.1.4 ABZWorks is City Growth's employability service, which works across the Council and with partner agencies to support a wide variety of people into a positive destination. Care experienced young people are a priority group for this support, and are identified as such in the Local Employability Partnership Delivery Plan.

3.2   Apprenticeship Update

3.2.1 Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) offer young people aged 16-24 an opportunity to undertake an apprenticeship which combines learning with on-the-job experience, whilst earning a salary. Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs) offer individuals of any age, the opportunity to undertake an undergraduate degree whilst retaining their existing employment.

3.2.2 We continue to develop and expand our Modern Apprenticeship and Graduate Apprenticeship offering. In the last 12 months we have introduced Modern Apprenticeships in two additional areas where we have workforce capacity issues. These are Pensions and Building Standards.

3.2.3 The Pensions team have just recruited 2 Modern Apprentices who will be undertaking the Business Administration Framework. This is the first time the team have considered Modern Apprenticeships as a resourcing solution and they are very much looking forward to bringing young people into the team to support their succession planning.

3.2.4 During 2020/2021 the Scottish Government along with Local Authority Building Standards Scotland developed a workforce strategy to address national issues in attracting, recruiting and retaining staff within Building Standards, in particular the younger demographic, to support succession planning. One key element of this has been the development of an apprenticeship route. In August 2022, a pilot of a new Modern Apprenticeship was introduced, and we participated in

this pilot recruiting a Modern Apprenticeship to our Building Standards team in September 2022 for a 2-year apprenticeship. The team is very supportive of this new Modern Apprenticeship and aims to support future cohorts.

3.2.5 In terms of Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs), we continue to offer these to our existing staff (not restricted to the age 16-24 category) as a development and succession planning offering, whereby employees have an opportunity to undertake an undergraduate degree whilst working. The cost of the degree programme is funded by Skills Development Scotland through the apprenticeship levy.

3.2.6 Since we started offering Graduate Apprenticeships in 2018, 29 employees have taken up the opportunity to undertake these apprenticeships. Of this, 3 have completed a 4-year undergraduate degree programme with a further 26 working their way through degree programmes currently. In addition, one of our Graduate Apprenticeship graduates has also gone onto to undertake a further post graduate Graduate Apprenticeship, MSc in Cyber Security and is due to graduate this year. These are in a range of subjects as follows:
 - Business Management
 - Construction and the Built Environment
 - Data Science
 - Accountancy
 - Software Development
 - Civil Engineering.

3.2.7 Our learning partner for our Graduate Apprenticeship programme is the Robert Gordon University (RGU) for all courses with the exception of Civil Engineering, which is the University of Dundee. RGU have just announced some new Graduate Apprenticeship frameworks in Surveying, which is an area in which we are finding significant challenges in recruiting staff, so we are exploring this with RGU currently, with a view to offering Traineeships.

3.3 Internships for Care Experienced Young People

3.3.1 Following the success of the Kickstart Internship Scheme, reported to Staff Governance Committee in November 2022, where the Council employed 83 young people aged 16-24 on 6-month Internships, The Talent Team within People & Organisational Development continue to work together with the Employability Team within City Growth, to create job and career opportunities for our young people, targeted at our hard to fill vacancies across the Council.

3.3.2. We have just developed paid internships for Care Experienced Young People as part of our commitment as Corporate Parents and in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan where one of our aims is to sustain positive destinations on leaving school for children in our priority localities, and another is to support care experienced young people into paid employment through public-sector funded employability programmes.

3.3.3 City Growth have secured funding for this pilot project and the Internships are fully funded at Grade G4, Living Wage. The Internships are 12 weeks in

duration, with the number of hours per week increasing incrementally throughout the period to ease the young people into work, depending on their needs.

3.3.4 The team have worked with the Youth Team in Children's Social Work to identify care experienced or looked after young people who they are supporting, who they believe would benefit from this opportunity.

3.3.5 In addition to the normal line management support, Interns will be registered on employability programmes and have a dedicated employability keyworker, and we will allocate a mentor/buddy, which will be a young employee who is either a current or recent Apprentice / Intern, where possible.

3.3.6 In accordance with our commitments to care experienced young people, they will be eligible for a guaranteed interview for any vacancies / apprenticeship opportunities within the Council at the end of their internship. We will also provide them with support in cv/application writing and interview skills to prepare them for recruitment and selection processes.

3.3.7 23 young people expressed an interest in the Internship programme and have been matched with a job area that they wish to be considered for. Supported selection processes have been developed, as many of these young people have never applied for jobs or attended interviews before. We are working together to ensure that the young people can access their interview information by email, to get to their interview location and can be accompanied by their Social Worker, if they so wish. In addition the interview format is very informal to get the most out of them. Following interview, the young people are being supported to complete the necessary preferred candidate check documentation, such as evidencing their right to work in the UK and even support setting up bank accounts.

3.3.8 Whilst selection processes are ongoing, at the time of writing this report, 13 young people have been successful in securing an internship and have either commenced work or are awaiting a start date. As their internships progress, they will have the opportunity to attend cv/application and interview skills workshops to help them secure employment at the end of their internships.

3.3.9 Any young person put forward for an internship who is not successful in immediately securing a placement, or who is not yet ready for it, will receive ongoing employability support to prepare them for a future opportunity.

3.3.10 It is our intention to hold a celebration event for the Interns on completion of their internship as we did for the Kickstart scheme.

3.4 **ABZ Campus – Employability Pathway Programme**

3.4.1 This programme will be introduced as a pilot programme in academic session 2023/24, starting in early June 2023, to a small number of pupils (approximately 15) in S4 at 3 academies within the city. It presents a new and unique opportunity to provide a vocational work experience option to students who may

otherwise have made the decision to leave school, with limited qualifications or positive destination.

3.4.2 The course provides an opportunity for young people to identify and develop the key skills required for employment, and to develop their confidence and readiness for joining the workplace, as well as gaining a recognised qualification at the end of the course.

3.4.3 Through the course, learners will undertake a range of key skills workshops to prepare them for work and to gain an insight into the different types of jobs and career pathways available at Aberdeen City Council. They will then be matched to a particular job area within the Council according to their skills and area of interest and will undertake a supported work placement.

3.4.4 Throughout the course, learners will receive support from a mentor and a keyworker who will provide them with support to get the most out of the course and throughout their work placements.

3.4.5 On completion of the programme, students will receive a completion certificate, including Scottish Qualification Authority (SQA) employability qualifications. They will also be eligible for a guaranteed interview for any ACC apprenticeship roles / entry level roles, as well as a reference from their placement Manager / Mentor and ongoing support from their Key Worker.

3.4.6 The work experience placement options identified as part of the programme are aligned to our hard to fill vacancy areas including Early Years, Adult Social Care and Roads. We will also provide a focus on occupational segregation highlighting some case study examples where this has been successful, such as male employees within Early Years as well as female employees within Operations roles.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified	None	L	Yes
Compliance	No significant risks identified	None	L	Yes
Operational	No significant risks identified	None	L	Yes
Financial	No significant risks identified	None	L	Yes
Reputational	No significant risks identified	None	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified	None	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:- Caring for Young People: • Ensure the Council follows best practice as a corporate parent to get the best outcomes for looked after young people, those in kinship care, and those with additional support needs such as autism, developmental disorders, or mental health problems. A City of Opportunity: • Promote the number of apprenticeships available through the Council;

	• Work with the city's universities, North East Scotland College, and businesses to increase educational and training options and the number of care experienced young people and young people from deprived communities going onto positive destinations, including further and higher education, vocational training, and apprenticeships. A Prosperous City: • Develop our economy in a genuine partnership with the private sector, and third sector. Valuing Our Staff • Recognise that the Council depends upon its staff to deliver the services it provides and believe the Council must properly reward, train, and support its staff; • Engage regularly with staff and trade union representatives
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of Economy stretch outcomes 1. No one will suffer due to poverty by 2026; 2. 400 unemployed Aberdeen residents into Fair Work by 2026, and 3. 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled / reskilled to enable them to move into, within, and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026. People Stretch Outcome 7: Page 22 • 95% of all our children, including those living in our priority neighbourhoods, will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. The key drivers for this outcome are: 7.1 Improving pathways to education, employment and training for all our children.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	n/a

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Staff Governance Committee Report, CUS/22/236 Developing the Young Workforce and Employability Programmes Update, November 2022 [Agenda for Staff Governance Committee on Monday, 21st November, 2022, 10.00 am](#) [ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL](#)

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Microsoft Dynamics 365- People and Change Journey
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/182
DIRECTOR	Andy Macdonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe
REPORT AUTHOR	Lindsay MacInnes and Craig Falconer
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.2

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To present to Staff Governance Committee the change journey to date for staff in introducing Dynamics 365 as our Client Relationship Management tool across Social Care. Also, to compliment and develop on the update given via the report to Education and Children's Services Committee in January of this year.

1.2.   To provide background, context, and next steps for this journey.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1   note the change journey and the adoption and change management tools and methods used within this in embedding Dynamics 365;

2.2.   note the engagement techniques, including end-user co-design, which have fed into the development of the tool and its roll-out as part of the overall approach to workforce engagement as we move through transformation and include these approaches in the implementation of the Workforce Delivery Plan;

2.3.   note the meeting of our commitments within that plan, specifically around ensuring the right skills are in place, with the right support and that Empowered people will take effective decisions to meet the needs of our customers and, with the effective use of data and digital, allow limited public resources to be targeted; and

2.4.   note that this innovative use of Dynamics 365 for Social Work has resulted in the project being a finalist at this year's Local Government Chronicle awards.
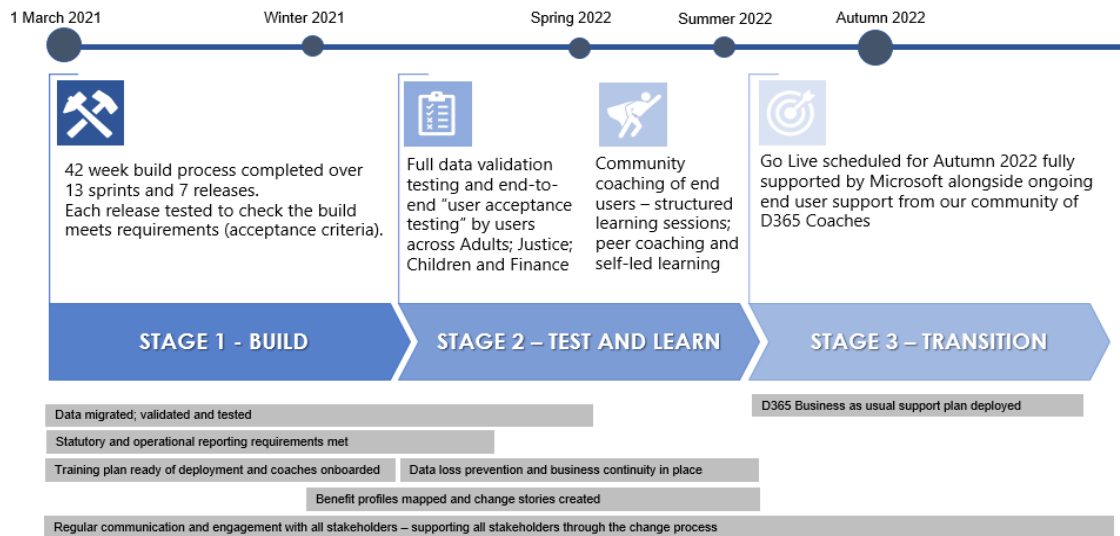
3.   CURRENT SITUATION

3.1   In September 2018, the former Strategic Commissioning Committee gave approval for the Council to work with its digital partner to develop a new system

that would better serve the needs of social work going forward. Services sought a system which would be able to contain and bring together all types of client data within a structure that would better enable cross service working, across other key systems.

3.2.   The replacement of the system at that time, Carefirst, presented an opportunity to further develop the Council's approach to being data led, adopting a corporate approach to customer case management. Enabling:
- a clear understanding of how current line of business customer systems are used and exploring alternative enabling technologies to drive modernisation and transformation.
- a platform for the future delivery of customer applications, including the capabilities and benefits of a unified, integrated solution and maximising investment and driving better outcomes.

3.3.   The Council's partnership with Microsoft provided the opportunity to work with stakeholders and system users to modernise and transform our social work data system using Microsoft technologies. In 2019, Microsoft were commissioned to help us implement Dynamics 365 across all social work functions. Dynamics 365 is a set of intelligent business applications used to deliver enhanced results through predictive, AI-driven insights, across services.

3.4.   Deploying Dynamics 365 to meet our requirements at ACC also gives several specific advantages. From a frontline care worker's perspective, it transforms the way that we record, access, and share information across the business and with service users. From our citizens' perspective, it will give them more involvement, more interaction and greater transparency in the service they receive. In relation to our managers, it means they can better use data to make decisions, allocate resources and deliver services to best meet the needs of the most vulnerable – moving further towards predictive rather than reactive care.

3.4.1. The system has built-in business process flows (BPFs), which help employees to navigate through our internal processes. For example, Dynamics uses mail-merge principles to pull pre-populated client data into form templates – for issuing to partners and suppliers, meaning that employees can reduce their admin time to focus on clients, and the organisation can reduce the risk of a potential data breach. Dynamics 365 is designed to work on the go, so employees can input and update the system whilst working, using their laptop, 2-in-1 device or work mobile phone. Service users can, in turn, be more involved in collaborating and participating in the writing of their records.

3.4.2. Technically the business has moved from having social work transactions and data on 9 systems to one, with all functionalities being delivered within the 365 Power Platform. This has also enabled the adoption of a common data model which facilitates a single definition across the platform for citizen, worker, case, assessment, review, chronology etc.

3.4.3. The design and implementation took place over 12 x 3-week sprint cycles, designing the internal user journeys required for delivery of a 21st century social work service.
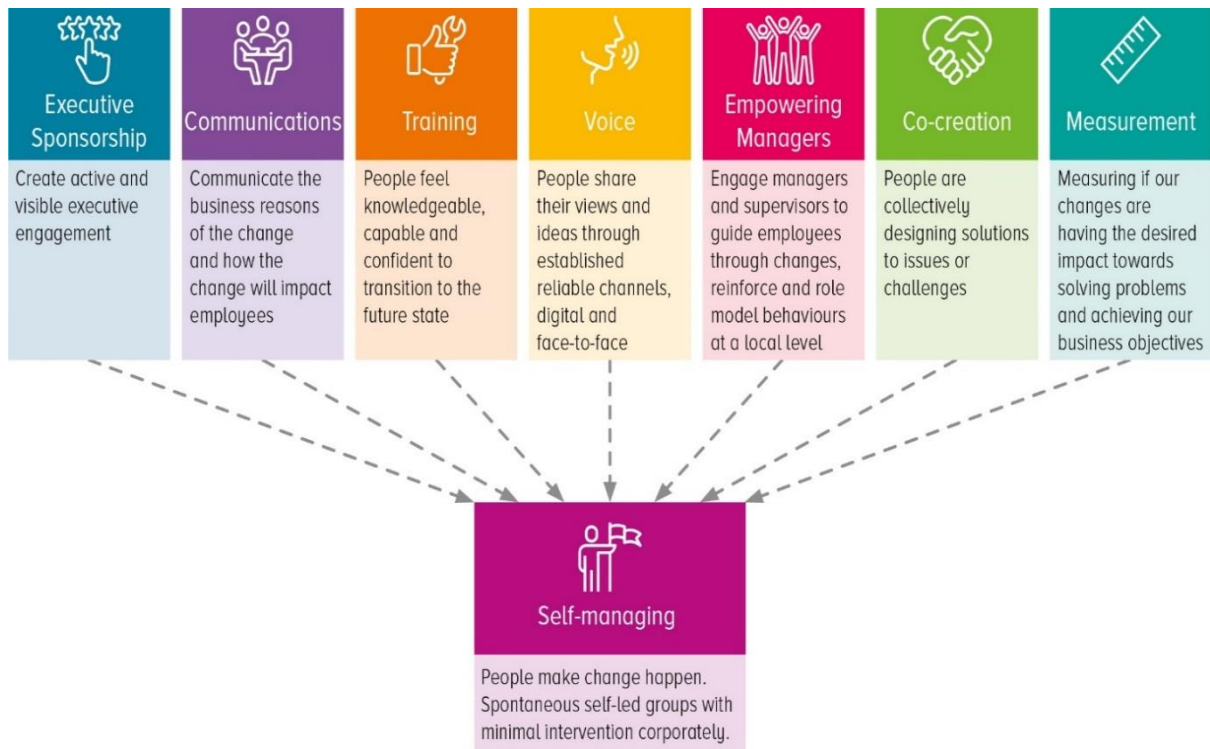
Project Timeline

| 1 March 2021 | Winter 2021 | Spring 2022 | Summer 2022 | Autumn 2022 |

42 week build process completed over 13 sprints and 7 releases.
Each release tested to check the build meets requirements (acceptance criteria).

Full data validation testing and end-to-end "user acceptance testing" by users across Adults; Justice; Children and Finance

Community coaching of end users – structured learning sessions; peer coaching and self-led learning

Go Live scheduled for Autumn 2022 fully supported by Microsoft alongside ongoing end user support from our community of D365 Coaches

STAGE 1 - BUILD | **STAGE 2 – TEST AND LEARN** | **STAGE 3 – TRANSITION**

Data migrated; validated and tested

D365 Business as usual support plan deployed

Statutory and operational reporting requirements met

Training plan ready of deployment and coaches onboarded | Data loss prevention and business continuity in place

Benefit profiles mapped and change stories created

Regular communication and engagement with all stakeholders – supporting all stakeholders through the change process

3.5. Whilst realising and capitalising on the cross-cutting functionality, first and foremost the development of Dynamics 365 was to build a data system that more effectively met the needs of social work and social workers. Consequently, the voice and needs of those who would use the Dynamics 365 system was critical to its design and build. Alongside this, colleagues within Digital & Technology cluster also developed within these new ways of working to deliver user-led, continuous improvement.

3.6. While social workers had the subject matter expertise, the development of Dynamics 365 was a true multi cluster and multi partner project. The technical skills and expertise of Microsoft and Hitachi along with the connectedness of colleagues from the Finance, Digital and Technology, Data and Insights and People and Organisational Development clusters has been critical to ensuring the successful delivery of the Dynamics 365 system. This approach has ensured that we have a sustainable model to support the workforce, including new staff, to build their skills and knowledge of Dynamics 365 in an increasingly self-serving approach.

4. WORKFORCE ENGAGEMENT AND CO-CREATION IN THE CHANGE

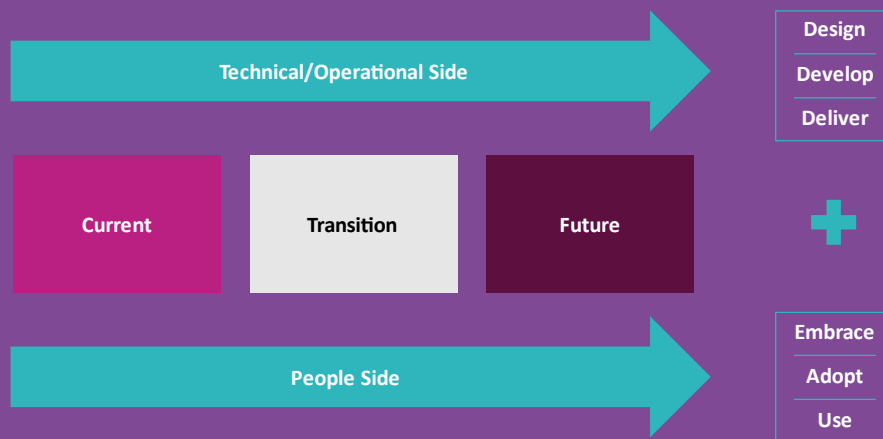4.1. **How have teams and individuals been helped to prepare for this change?**

The project team worked closely with service teams to support them through this change and applied our adoption and change management (ACM) pillars (as referenced in our Workforce Delivery Plan). This overall approach is adapted from the key learnings gained within our first engagement with Microsoft as our digital partner and has fundamentally improved the way we deliver change.

These pillars are central in targeting our support and interventions.

Executive Sponsorship	Communications	Training	Voice	Empowering Managers	Co-creation	Measurement
Create active and visible executive engagement	Communicate the business reasons of the change and how the change will impact employees	People feel knowledgeable, capable and confident to transition to the future state	People share their views and ideas through established reliable channels, digital and face-to-face	Engage managers and supervisors to guide employees through changes, reinforce and role model behaviours at a local level	People are collectively designing solutions to issues or challenges	Measuring if our changes are having the desired impact towards solving problems and achieving our business objectives

Self-managing

People make change happen. Spontaneous self-led groups with minimal intervention corporately.

4.1.1. Social work practitioners were fully involved in design and development. Three full-time "Product Owners" were within the partnerships on the project and led this work from within Social Work, in representing their own 3 respective services of Children's, Adults' and Justice services. Before the project was fully mobilised, the Social Work teams mapped out their 93 top level processes and, during the sprint elaboration, these developed into 483 user stories which allowed social workers to specify their own needs for the system. At the end of each sprint, the unit level testing was completed before 90 Dynamics coaches, who were volunteers from social work services, carried out over 400 scripted user acceptance tests as well as providing key peer support. The coaches are well placed to identify "fixes" on the system and work with the technical experts to resolve this in an approach that prioritises future developments.

ACC Change Management

Technical/Operational Side

Design
Develop
Deliver

Current | Transition | Future

Embrace
Adopt
Use

People Side

Successful change requires both the technical and people side

4.2. Executive Sponsorship

From the outset, the project has been spearheaded by the Director and the Chief Officers of Children's and Adults Social Work, Digital & Technology, Finance and Data & Insights – actively through involvement in Project Board key decision-making and visibly through leading regular manager briefings and issuing update blogs to keep teams informed and engaged.

4.3. Communication

Throughout the programme of work, users and the wider community have been kept informed through the Digital Workspace area of the Intranet. We have posted regular project updates, shared "sneak peeks" of the system and short training clips.

4.4. Training

4.4.1. At the beginning of the project, 300 learners were surveyed from the end user community. Results showed that roughly 70% of learners prefer live online training – explaining that it ensures they have dedicated time aside for their learning, which they can complete with colleagues. Learners and Subject Matter Experts from the service advised that sessions should be no longer than 3 hours in duration, for ease of scheduling and engagement. This data informed our approach in rolling out the learning.

4.4.2. The Coach Approach- In response to the survey feedback, and with the successes of our Digital Super Champs model in mind, a coach approach was adopted - onboarding 75 coaches across the 3 services: Adult Services, Children's Services and Justice Services.

4.4.3. The Coaches underwent a series of "Train the Trainer" sessions with our partner Hitachi, who were closely involved in the design and development of the system. The Coaches were also offered the opportunity to take part in a "How to deliver engaging training session" – a virtual session delivered by colleagues in People Development. Further support has continued to be offered to Coaches to develop their skills professionally though a Coaching workshop delivered via NESCol. The Coaches both provide training for their peers and are actively involved in supporting the change management effort, championing the system within their teams.

4.4.4. System training has all been delivered through either virtual or face-to-face in person training events. In line with the launch of the new system, key areas were also identified for employees across the service to develop their practice, notably in how they write and how we secure personal data. The project team worked with service teams to scope out eLearning modules to cover "Data Protection for Social Work" and "Recording Principles". These are self-paced modules that learners can fit around their day-to-day, with the latter course being integral to the work that multi-agency teams continue to do to embed these principles and ensure the presence of the client's voice in their record.

4.4.5. Training was consistently followed up with evaluation by delegates. Feedback included:
- Good list of resources for further learning and more detail.
- The importance of recording accurately, sensitively and relative information for the needs of the individuals I work with.
- In depth understanding of how information is recorded and used can affect clients.'
- Enforcing the fact that you need to record the persons voice in that, their words, and also non-verbal language.

4.5. Voice

4.5.1. Two-way communication has been prioritised from the outset - with shared and service-specific Microsoft Teams sites in place for all staff as well a dedicated Yammer community for colleagues to ask and answer questions; suggest improvements and share knowledge, as well as opportunities to do this on our Intranet's Digital Workplace pages with the wider workforce.

4.5.2. Dedicated update meetings took place with trade union colleagues on the progress and stages of the project. These received positive trade union feedback, including regarding the management of the change and the level of end-user involvement.

4.6. Empowering Managers

4.6.1. Regular Manager Briefing sessions continue to be in place to empower people managers, provide essential updates on the project and ensure 2-way communication is in place with them and their teams.

4.6.2. Managers briefings have been well-attended, and these sessions have been used to cover a wide variety of topics, to equip managers with the skills and knowledge to support their teams.

4.6.3. Examples of Topics covered:
- Project Update and Cutover Plan – regular updates on the timeline
- Go Live Checklist – Preparing for go live and their steps for day one and week one
- Managing Change, Uncertainty and Wellbeing – how to recognise any issues and support teams through
- Your Role as Managers in Change

4.7.   Co-creation

The system has been designed and delivered in partnership with those that will use it. In the early stages of the project, a series of workshops were convened to scope requirements; these were prioritised against, and released throughout, each of the builds. After each phase of the build, a playback session was run in conjunction with Microsoft, which checked through the functionality and gave our internal teams the opportunity to provide feedback and input and ensure the design was user-led.

4.8.   What have been the lessons learned?

4.8.1. With a change of this magnitude, including the user-led, continuous improvement approach to the project being new to all, it is to be expected that some aspects will require increased support and communications to further their confidence and ability. Alongside this, the project team learned the benefit of involving affected roles at the earliest possible juncture.

4.8.2. Sentiment Surveys were regularly issued and monitored–to gauge the general appetite for change as well as awareness and confidence levels. Where there have been specific issues flagged, P&OD team members have reached out to Service Managers to identify additional means by which to support specific teams.

4.8.3. As anticipated, there were some technical challenges to overcome – this resulted in changes to the overall project timeline. This change was managed with the services themselves, including timely updates re these changes and, in some cases, this allowed additional time to prepare teams for the change and an extra buffer for training.

4.8.4. Dynamics 365 went live on 17 October 2022 and, as the project team accelerated towards that date in the final preparation stages, there was a transitional move over from the design, develop and delivery phases to continue to work closely with the people in helping them to embrace the change; adopt the solution and further optimise processes, using the digital solution wherever possible.

4.8.5. Feedback during this has shown, as anticipated, that time and experience will bring increased confidence and familiarity with the system. Whilst working to

ensure the system becomes embedded, the project has recognised that Social Work colleagues are now establishing new norms and ways of working, and the D365 infrastructure allows for build and rebuild where needed, alongside this.

4.9. Post Go Live Impact and Next Steps

4.9.1. The co-creation of the tool and the agile nature of the system itself have meant a significant change for staff. With the product being now in its continuous development phase, social work practitioners are leading the prioritisation of features as product owners. As we move forward with the full delivery of the tool, we are committed to maintaining an approach to change which is inclusive, supportive, and engaging, with ownership for change sitting - wherever possible- with those whom it impacts. The management of change, communication and engagement will continue to include tracking against our 8 pillars, which ensure that this is the case. Engaging with staff to enable their transitioning in the support team model is well underway in terms of aligning to the continuing strategic direction and ensuring the specialisms are in place.   As we unlock improved reporting tools and insights from data in real time, we can continue to identify and improve service delivery using emerging trends. One example is the continued development of our recording principles, using the benefits of the system and designing the standards alongside service users.

4.9.2. As we move out of a project approach to ongoing ACM, we continue to build upon the foundations from the project to ensure the reinforcement of the change and the return on investment. This includes developing our Intranet guidance further to give colleagues quicker access to key information, maintaining work with Product Owners in confirming that the training guides capture the system advancements, and adapting our coach community to grow in line with these changes.

4.9.3. Aberdeen City Council's innovative use of Dynamics 365 for Social Work has resulted in the project being a finalist at this year's Local Government Chronicle awards. The common data model and user led design have also attracted interest from the Digital Health Institute who are keen to exploit the work done in Aberdeen to advance their development of citizen data vaults.

4.9.4. The Dynamics platform aligns with the council's objectives to rationalise and simplify its business software to reduce cost and complexity, as well as creating space for innovation; work is already underway through the Transformation Programme in expanding its use and maximising the benefits of a joined-up platform.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications to this report in terms of the change management approaches utilised, the project has been delivered within allocated resources.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 None.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The project includes elements of addressing awareness and behaviour change which will have environmental impacts and sustainability and therefore are an enabler to the Council's approach to achieving net zero.

8. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk		This approach mitigates against the risk of the non delivery of the council's objectives	N/A	N/A
Compliance		As above	L	Yes
Operational		As above	L	Yes
Financial	A lack of adoption of the tool will result in the Council not reaping the return on the investment	This approach mitigates against the risk of the non delivery of the council's objectives	N/A	N/A
Reputational		As above	L	Yes
Environment / Climate		As above	N/A	N/A

9. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	Adoption of the tool and the resulting improved, joined up data/records on our customers, support the intention to enable positive futures for our city's young people. All other aims are supported by developing our workforce holistically.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	

Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	By meeting the health and emotional wellbeing needs of our care experienced children and young people they will have the same levels of attainment in education and positive destinations as their peers by 2026 By enabling Social Workers to have more time with clients, more joined up records in insights and less of an admin burden- the Dynamics 365 implementation will feed directly into the attainment of this outcome.
Regional and City Strategies	Ensures we have the capability internally to deliver on these regional and city strategies

10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required – following stage 1
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Write Right About Me: Aberdeen's multi-agency records improvement work | Aberdeen City Council
Link to Education & Children Services Committee Report: Implementation of DYNAMICS 365/Replacement of CareFirst

12. APPENDICES

None.

13. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Policies for People Update
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/186
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe
REPORT AUTHOR	Kirsten Foley
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.5; 2.7

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To provide an update on the application to date of the revised Managing Discipline, Managing Grievances and Dignity and Respect at Work policies.

2.   RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

2.1   Notes the data provided regarding the usage and application of the policies;

2.2   Instructs the Chief Officer People and Organisational Development to undertake a deep dive of the data to identify areas, managers and employees who would benefit from additional support and early intervention to prevent escalation of issues;

2.3   Instructs the Chief Officer People and Organisational Development to take action to reduce the length of time currently being taken at each stage of the policies as set out in paragraph 3.16 below; and

2.4   Instructs the Chief Officer, People and Organisational Development to report disciplinary, grievance and dignity and respect at work data to the Staff Governance Committee on an annual basis.

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

Background

3.1   The revised Managing Discipline Policy was approved by Committee on 7 June 2021 (Public Pack)Agenda Document for Staff Governance Committee, 07/06/2021 14:00 (aberdeencity.gov.uk)

3.2   The revised Managing Grievances Policy and the Dignity and Respect at Work Policy were approved by committee on 28 September 2021 (Public Pack)Agenda Document for Staff Governance Committee, 28/09/2021 14:00 (aberdeencity.gov.uk)

3.3 It was agreed that the implementation date for all three policies would be 1 February 2022 to allow training in the new policies to be delivered to managers and communications to be shared with staff regarding the new policies.
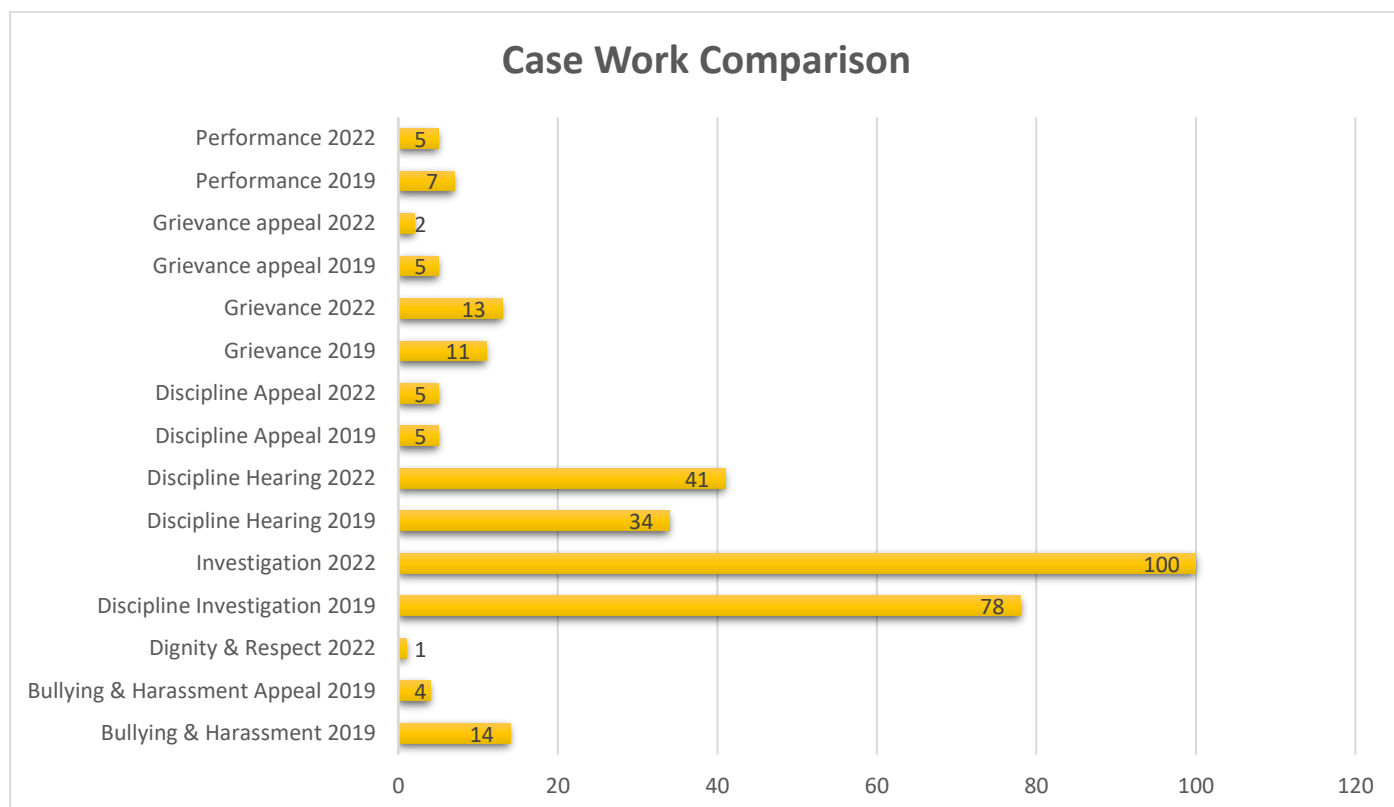
3.4 The key aims of the revised policies were to

1 Increase the use of informal methods of resolution and seek to deal with issues at the lowest level to avoid unnecessary escalation to the hearing stage of policies and
2 To introduce a single investigation process which applies to all 3 policies

Data

3.5 For the purposes of comparison, the data for 2019 has been used. The reason for this is that during the pandemic lock down periods in 2020 and 2021 restrictions meant that employee relations processes were handled differently. As a result of these changes, the 2019 data will provide the best comparison to the 2022 data.

3.6 The graph below shows a break down of the type of cases progressed in 2019 and 2022.

Case Work Comparison

Category	Value
Performance 2022	5
Performance 2019	7
Grievance appeal 2022	2
Grievance appeal 2019	5
Grievance 2022	13
Grievance 2019	11
Discipline Appeal 2022	5
Discipline Appeal 2019	5
Discipline Hearing 2022	41
Discipline Hearing 2019	34
Investigation 2022	100
Discipline Investigation 2019	78
Dignity & Respect 2022	1
Bullying & Harassment Appeal 2019	4
Bullying & Harassment 2019	14

3.7 The most notable change in the data between 2019 and 2022 is in relation to Bullying and Harassment cases (now handled under the Dignity & Respect at Work Policy). In 2019, 14 cases progressed to the formal stage of the Bullying

and Harassment Policy; in 2022 only 1 case progressed to the formal stage of Dignity and Respect at Work.

3.8   In the period March 2022 – present (i.e. the period during which the new policies have been in place), a total of 9 mediations between employees or employee and manager have been undertaken at the informal stage of either Dignity and Respect at Work or Grievance. As the mediation service has been relaunched, we do not have comparator figures from 2019, however this will give us a baseline figure for future comparison when reviewing the data.

3.9   The data shows that in 2022, 100 investigations took place, resulting in 55 hearings under one of the 3 policies; 45% of investigations determined, therefore, that no formal action was required. This is illustrated in the chart below:

Outcome of Investigations

Category	Value
No Further Action	45
Proceed to Hearing	55

(Horizontal bar chart, x-axis from 0 to 60)
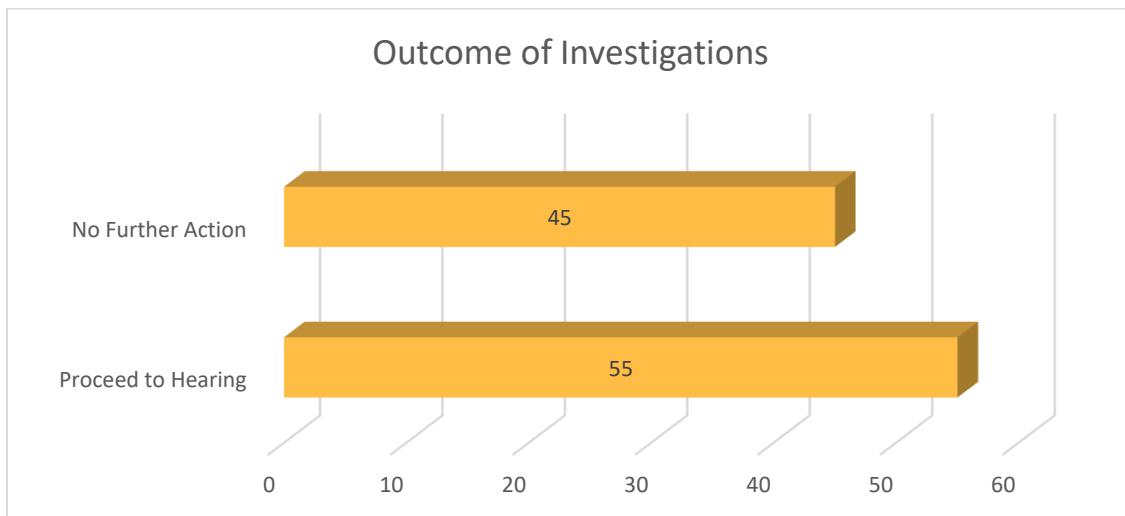
3.10   The chart below shows the average duration of the stages of the different policies.

Average Stage Timescales 2022

(Doughnut chart with values)
- Investigation: 59
- Discipline Hearing: 40
- Discipline Appeal: 65
- Grievance Hearing: 41
- Grievance Appeal: 60
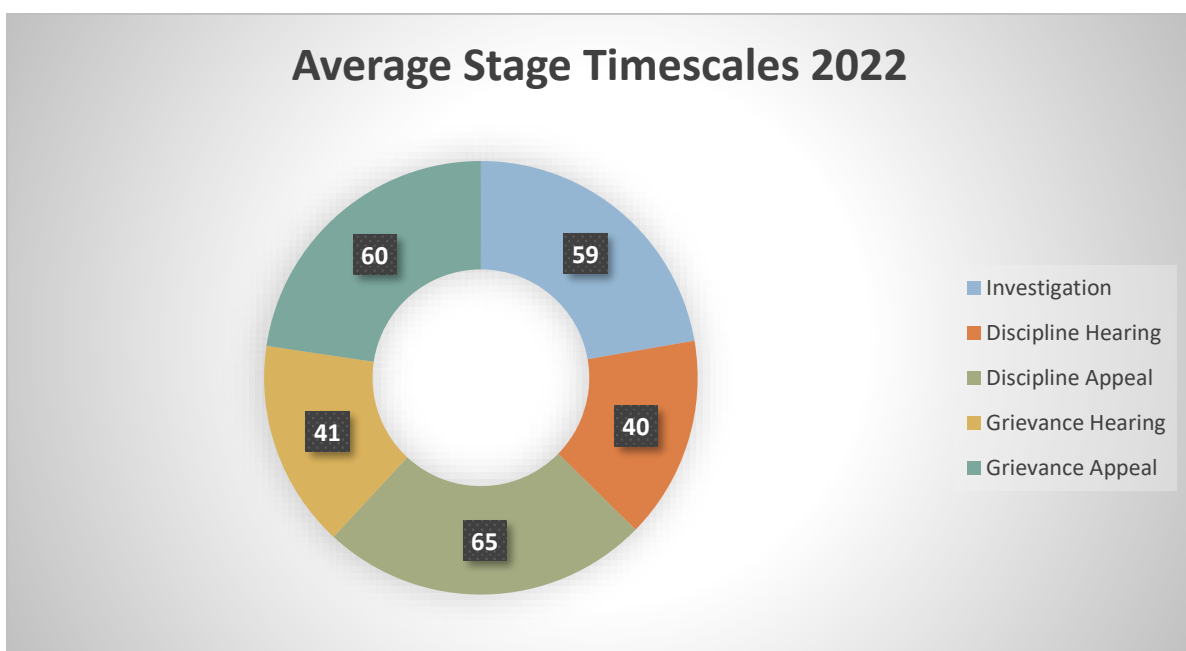
3.11 The data shows that, whilst timescales for the stages of the procedures are a matter of guidance rather than policy, in 2022 the organisation was failing to meet the preferred timescales, as detailed in the table below:

Policy Stage	Days in Guidance	Average Days 2022	Average Days Jan – Apr 2023
Investigation	20	59	34
Disciplinary Hearing	10	40	29
Disciplinary Appeal	10	65	52
Grievance Hearing	10	41	50
Grievance Appeal	10	60	25

3.12 A further detailed review of the data will be undertaken to fully understand the reasons for the delays in each individual case, however an initial review identifies that the main reasons for delays were as follows:
- Employee off sick during investigation
- School holiday periods during investigations for school based employees
- Annual leave of one of the parties to the process (employee, union rep, P&OD rep, Investigating Officer or Hearing Chair)
- Sick leave of Investigating Officer or P&OD rep
- Two investigations required to be put on hold until Police Scotland had concluded their own investigations.
- Appeals to Committee of necessity have a longer lead in time than officer appeals.

3.13 The table below shows a further breakdown of the timescales for the investigation and disciplinary hearings in 2022 by number of days taken to complete:

Disciplinary Hearing Timescales

Timescale	Value
10-20 days	~19
21-30 days	~4
31-40 days	~4
41-50 days	~3
51-60 days	~0
61-70 days	~0
71-80 days	~0
81-90 days	~1
91-100 days	~1
over 100 days	~9
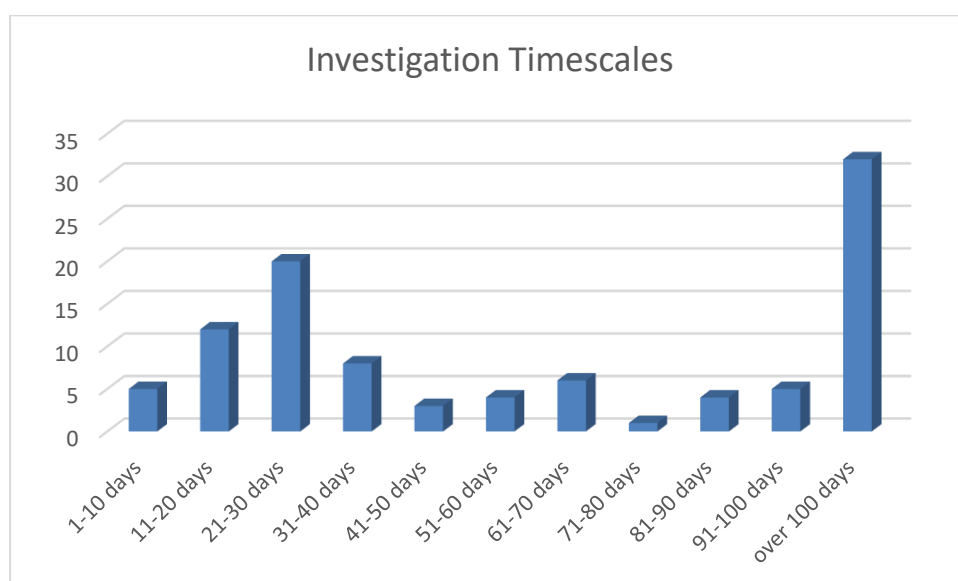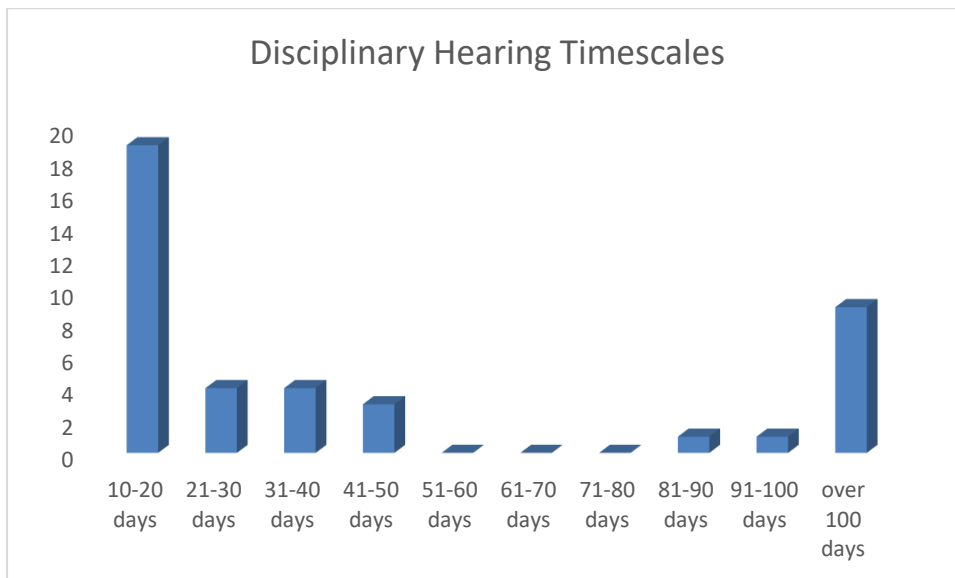
3.14   These preferred timescales were outlined from February 2022 and a period of adjustment and improvement is expected. The timescales for cases opened in the first four months of 2023 shows improvement in the average timescales in almost all areas, the exception being the time taken to progress to Grievance Hearing. The data for Jan – Apr 2023 remains outwith the preferred timescales contained in the guidance.

It may also be the case that these timescales are unrealistic and need further review, including exploring whether the timescales should be put on hold during periods of unavoidable delay, such as those set out above.

There will always be some cases which will exceed the days contained within the guidance for a number of reasons, as set out above, however the data shows that this is an area of significant concern and there is need for improvement.

Planned Actions for Improvement

3.15   A number of actions are proposed in order to progress cases more timeously, and these are set out below:

Proposed Action	Timescale	Perceived Improvement
Increased visibility of case work data for Service Managers	Some data now available via Employee Relations team in P&OD Data reporting being scoped as part of Dynamic 365 project.	Greater visibility of data allows for early intervention where issues are identified.
P&OD Advisors allocated to Service	Underway	Greater visibility of data and identification of any

Management Teams to attend SMT meetings quarterly to undertake deep dive of data		issues at early stage to allow intervention as appropriate from SMT or P&OD
Appointment of Employee Relations Case Work Lead	Appointment has been made and preferred candidate takes up post on 3/7/23	Additional resource within P&OD to support Advisors and managers with case work through a coaching approach; data deep dives with both P&OD advisors and SMTs; improved data reporting; allocation of Investigating Officer and Hearing Chairs
Continued roll out of Investigating Officer training *	Ongoing sessions arranged	Increase the pool of trained IOs to allow cases to be allocated more quickly
Refresh training for Hearing Chairs	Training need being scoped	Reduce delays in arranging hearings through increasing confidence in Charis that they fully understand the process
Review preferred timescales	By Dec 2023	Further analysis of reasons behind the actual time being taken will allow realistic timescales to be set which allow for a thorough process to be followed whilst progressing matters timeously.

* Currently there are 117 trained Investigating Officers in the pool. Since May 2022 a total of 122 individuals have completed the online training course, and 33 have completed the training workshop. Ultimately, the aim is for all managers to attend the training for Investigating Officers as part of their recommended training. Currently around 17% of employees at management level have completed the training.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			**Yes**
Compliance	No significant risks identified			**Yes**
Operational	No significant risks identified			**Yes**
Financial	No significant risks identified			**Yes**
Reputational	No significant risks identified'			**Yes**
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			**Yes**

8. OUTCOMES

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The Prosperous Economy theme in the LOIP makes mention of the importance of retaining talent and expertise in City organisations. This would include the Council. Ensuring that people policies are in place and applied appropriately and consistently should assist with employee relations in the organisation and with the retention of trained and valued employees. This would mean that they can continue in post and contribute to delivering

	effective services to citizens and businesses, indirectly contributing to the City's economy.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Prosperous People theme in the LOIP indicates that all people in the City are entitled to feel safe, protected from harm and supported where necessary, which would include employees of the Council. Ensuring that people policies are in place and applied appropriately and consistently should assist with employee relations in the organisation, ensuring that conduct issues are efficiently addressed and that employees are supported when undergoing the procedure. This should indirectly assist with employee mental health and wellbeing allowing them to function both in employment and at home.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   N/A

11.   APPENDICES

11.1   N/A

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Corporate Health and Safety –January – March 2023
REPORT NUMBER	COM/23/173
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	Vikki Cuthbert (acting)
REPORT AUTHOR	Colin Leaver
TERMS OF REFERENCE	3.3

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 The appendix to this report summarises statistical health and safety performance information for the 3-month reporting period January to March 2023 to provide the Committee with the opportunity to monitor compliance with health and safety legislation.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

   That the Committee:

2.1 Note the report and provide comment on the health, safety policy, performance, trends, and improvements.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 The appendix to the report contains a dashboard of the statistical information in relation to health and safety activities for the three-month reporting period January – March 2023. The statistical information also contains an analysis of the key figures in each of the incident and near miss sections.

   The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences 2013 (RIDDOR) places duties on employers, the self-employed and people in control of work premises (the Responsible Person) to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This reporting duty includes incidents which result in an employee being absent from work for 7 days or longer, which have historically been the main reason for Aberdeen City Council's reports to HSE.

   This report addresses the following matters:

   • All incidents involving employees and members of the public (serious and minor)
   • HSE Reportable Incidents

- Reportable Diseases
- Near Miss Information
- Enforcement Interventions
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Audits
- Compliance Monitoring
- Health and Safety Policies, Procedures and Guidance

3.2 Incidents (Jan-Mar 2023)

All incident and near miss information in the appendix to this report has been provided to Cluster level in the appendix. However, within the Operations Function these have been reported to Service area level.

Incident information

3.3 The figures are reported to Cluster level for both employee and third-party incidents. Causation figures are also included within the appendix. There is also now a comparison for each of the three years prior to this reporting period so the Committee has sight of the last reporting year prior to the pandemic. The comparative figures for this year are in a separate chart due to the change of system.

3.4 When an incident is reported, the manager is required to complete an investigation report, and this should be shared with the employee and signed off by both. This investigation report highlights categories of criteria which require to be considered including root cause, actions identified and completion dates.

3.5 Page five of the appendix details the breakdown of incidents within the Operations function which shows that the largest number of incidents within Operations occur within the Education Service.

These incidents continue to often involve children/young people where a social, emotional, mental health need (SEMHN) has been identified.

Figures show that children in Aberdeen City are doing better than the national mean across mental health measures. However, it is seen that there can be no complacency, and that changes are being seen in the needs of children and young people.

The lack of socialisation and lack of structure from school during the periods of lockdown appears to have impacted some children more than others and vulnerability has undoubtedly increased. This is often heavily impacted by parental mental health. We also know that vulnerability is often directly linked to levels of child poverty, and the current cost of living crisis will be a significant factor too. In many cases, dysregulation is a sign that children do not feel safe and secure.

We are seeing a changing picture in attitudes, behaviours and engagement from some children and young people both in their social and school lives and this is mirrored nationally. Some children and young people are reaching increasing levels of dysregulation and struggle to maintain positive relationships or make positive choices which can impact on others.

Schools continue to follow the staged intervention procedure, whereby support is accessed using school-based, community, and city-wide supports.

The Health and Safety Sub-Group, which was formed, with a membership of Education staff, Trade Unions and Corporate health and safety, to undertake analysis of health and safety data generated by schools, informs the direction of the overall workstream. This also ensures that appropriate support is made available to schools if required.

HSE Reportable incidents (Jan – Mar 2023)

3.6   The table in the Appendix also shows the number of RIDDOR reportable incidents. During the reporting period between January and March 2023 8 incidents involving an employee required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive. The vast majority of these continue to be for over 7-day absences.

3.7   All RIDDOR incidents reported to HSE by the corporate health and safety team and are also followed up with the relevant manager to get assurance that the correct causation and remedial actions have been identified and that any identified remedial actions have been implemented.

Incident (reportable employee) frequency rates

Period – Quarterly	Reportable Incidence rate	Reporting period
Jan-Mar 2023	0.98	2022/23

3.8   The above figures are calculated using the formula:

$$\text{Incidence rate} = \frac{\text{RIDDOR injuries per period} \times 1000}{\text{Number of employees}}$$

3.9   The figure for the corresponding period last year (January to March 2022) was 6 RIDDOR reportable incidents and a reportable incident rate of 0.75.

Reportable Diseases

3.10   There were no reportable diseases reported under RIDDOR; which was also the case in the corresponding reporting period last year.

Near Miss Information

3.11 Many safety activities are reactive, that is, they occur after an injury incident. By reporting near-miss incidents this promotes proactive safety, thereby raising awareness of potential hazards and mitigation strategies before an injury occurs. Recognising and reporting near-miss incidents can significantly improve employee safety and enhance the safety culture by allowing processes and systems to be altered before an incident occurs.

3.12 Reporting managers are required to investigate the near miss to identify the root cause and implement any new identified controls, where possible, to reduce the likelihood of any reoccurrence.

3.13 The appendix shows information on the number of near miss figures for this reporting period and again a comparison with the three previous reporting years.

3.14 Page eight of the appendix gives a breakdown of near misses within the Operations function. As with incidents, the majority are within the Education services. Like incident figures, these are mainly because of distressed behaviours evident in some children with additional support needs. Risk assessments are reviewed after every near miss to consider any actions which can be taken to prevent or reduce the risk of reoccurrence.

Four-year comparison

3.15 The annual comparative figures are displayed to show a comparison across the period which also included those years through the Covid pandemic. The figures are increased as the figures are representative of a return to full face to face interactions with service users post pandemic; but could also be as a result of work done by senior managers and Trade Unions to encourage staff to report all issues. Work continues to be undertaken in consultation with Clusters to reduce these incidents where trends are identified.

Regulator interventions (HSE / SFRS)

3.16 There are occasions where HSE and Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) contact Aberdeen City Council to request further information or ask for action to be taken regarding the way Aberdeen City Council undertake their legal duties.

3.17 There were no HSE visits during this reporting period.

3.18 SFRS carried out 3 site visits as part of their annual audit of ACC (Aberdeen City Council) care properties, homelessness accommodation and educational establishments and provided letters of their recommendations.

3.19 The identified actions from these audit visits have been added to the fire risk actions database and allocated to the responsible manager. These will be followed through the fire action dashboard to close out. Any actions which pass their compliance date are raised with the relevant Chief Officer and reported to the Risk Board.

Fire risk assessments

3.20 Fire risk assessments are completed on a rolling 5-year programme. A total of 33 fire risk assessments, including 1 Bon Accord Care managed site, were completed during this reporting period. The overall average compliance score was 82%. The issues identified are across the range of topics considered in the assessment process. These issues are given a priority level dependant on the resultant risk which requires an action by a specified date. No building is left at risk during this process.

3.21 Any identified actions are included into the fire risk actions database and monitored to a close. This database is available to all Chief Officers on the managers' portal, which shows live data on open, closed, and non-complied with actions. Should an action pass the compliance date these are escalated in writing to the Chief Officer.

Health and Safety Audits

3.22 Compliance visits have been undertaken on several topics / premises within the ACC estate. Topics included Management of LOLER (Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations) 84% and Manual Handling 100% with an overall compliance respectively, Lone Working with an overall compliance of 83% and, Line Manager Responsibilities 94%. Management of Asbestos 100%. Again, all action points raised are included in an action log, which is reviewed weekly and reported to the relevant Chief Officer. Managers who have had actions allocated to them are given access to the action log to record the action taken to remove the risk and to record the date completed. Follow up visits are also carried out to ensure actions have been completed and that controls continue to be suitable and sufficient and are being followed. Again, the actions are given a compliance date based on the level of risk which ensures that the risk is removed before it places anyone in greater danger.

3.23 Line Manager responsibility is one strand of the review of the health and safety policy. Compliance monitoring continues to be undertaken to understand the level of line managers' understanding of the health and safety responsibilities placed on them by the Council. The overall score on average is 96% across this quarter. The results of these compliance visits identify areas where managers may require additional support, explanation, or training to close that knowledge gap. Several areas have been identified as requiring action including risk assessment training, completion of a first aid needs assessment and understanding and complying with the workplace inspection procedure. Having identified the areas requiring further improvement and those managers who require that additional support the Corporate Health and Safety Team (CHST) are currently providing training to all management levels, and where required specific 1-2-1 training on manager responsibilities, risk assessment and reporting/investigating incidents.

3.24 The actions identified as requiring action are recorded in the compliance action log sheets and each is given a compliance date. Where actions in any audit or compliance process are not closed out on time these are initially raised with the

relevant Chief Officer and reported through the relevant Risk and Performance Boards.

Health and safety policies, procedures, and guidance

3.25 There are no health and safety procedures requiring approval during this reporting period. Health and safety procedures are scheduled for review across the year. Corporate procedures are reviewed by the CHST whilst local procedures, specific to a service, are reviewed by the service with advice and input from the CHST.

3.26 When procedures are completed, they require to be approved by the relevant Chief Officer. Where the procedure is corporate these are communicated with the relevant services and step by step guidance is developed and made available to inform managers of what is required to be compliant.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires that an organisation has a suitably robust safety management system to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees. Where any incident is of sufficient seriousness there is a requirement to report these under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 which provides a potential for the Enforcing Authorities to become involved and carry out their own investigation into the circumstances of the incident. Any investigation could result in prosecution of the organisation and in some cases prosecution of managers and/or employee.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications because of this report.

7. RISK

Risk Appetite

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement

Management Of Risk

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	N/A	N/A		
Compliance	There is the risk that any injury or serious health and safety incident could result in focus from the Health and Safety Executive which could result in enforcement action in the form of notices or prosecution.	Corporate Procedures require all tasks to be risk assessed and the controls implemented and supervised by line managers. All employees are trained to a level where they are competent to carry out the work. Analysis of the causes of the incidents, near misses and work-related absences and resultant improvements to prevent, where possible, reoccurrences, can reduce the financial exposure to the Council. This effective health and safety management system in which risks are identified and either eliminated or reduced will result in a reduction of costs to the organisation.	L	**Yes**
Operational	The risk is that any health and safety incident can lead to an injury to an	The task has been risk assessed; employees are trained, competent and supervised then there should be less likelihood of incidents.	L	**Yes**

	employee which could have the potential to temporarily or permanently affect either or both their employment and/or their life. The risk to our citizens is that we are unable to provide the same level of service delivery due to staff absences from illness and injury sustained during their work. Also, there is the possibility of a reduced budget due to the associated financial costs.			
Financial	The risk is that any incident has the potential to bring a reduction in the overall budget in place to provide service delivery.	As per compliance above	L	**Yes**
Reputational	Local and National	Each Function should have a robust safety	L	**Yes**

	press coverage of any incident can present reputational damage to the organisation.	management system in place. There are many facets to this which are important starting from ensuring employees are trained and competent, every hazard is risk assessed and employees are up to carrying out investigation of near misses to ensure controls are reviewed to consider whether remedial actions are required.		
Environment / Climate	N/A	N/A	N/A	

8. OUTCOMES

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	A healthy and safe workplace assists the overarching principles of the stretch outcomes within the LOIP (Local Outcome Improvement Plan) by ensuring that resource is directed at the services required by the city. Removing the level of lost resource to the financial penalties incurred through the Civil and Criminal Courts and from the Regulators will allow the available resource to be best used to ensure funding of the growth sectors of the local economy.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The areas reported on within this report allow Clusters a further opportunity to recognise areas which when acted upon can assist with engagement of staff and service users to support the meaningful educational progress of children and young people.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	**Outcome**
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full Impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 N/A

11.   APPENDICES

11.1 Quarterly staff governance Health and safety dashboard January to March 2023

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

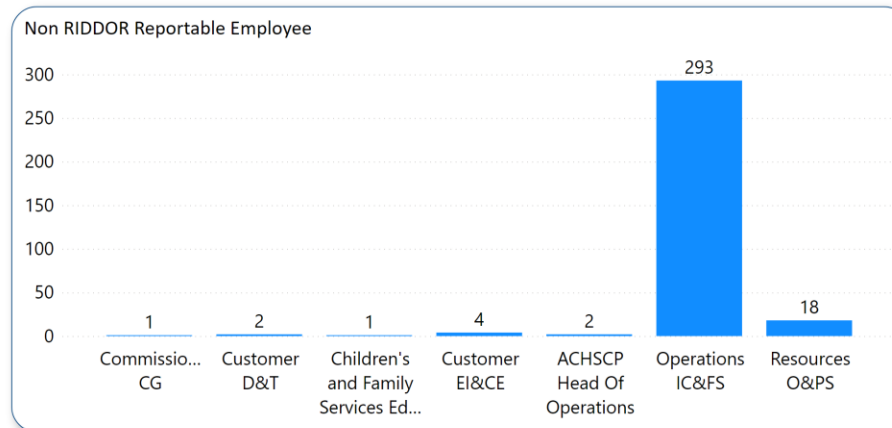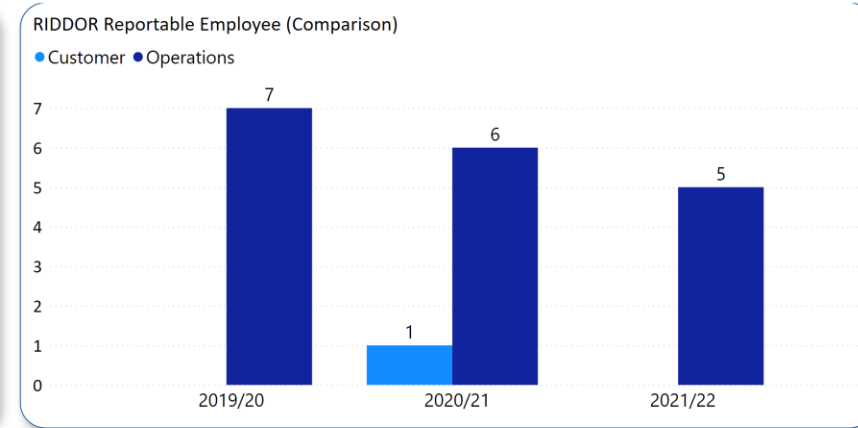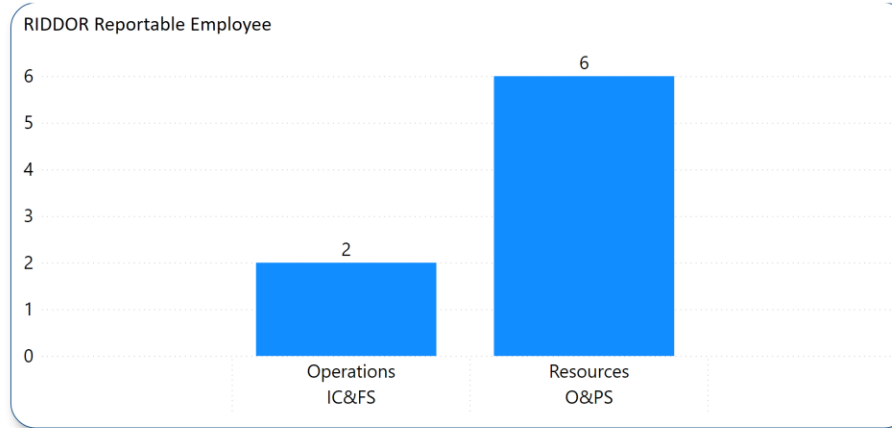| Name	Colin Leaver
Title	Corporate Health and Safety Lead
Email Address	cleaver@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 523092

SG_H&S_Report_Visuals_V4

[View in Power BI](↗) ↗

Last data refresh:
12/06/2023 13:07:29 UTC

Downloaded at:
12/06/2023 13:43:55 UTC

Date Last Refreshed:

25 May 2023

Staff Governance Health & Safety Report Quarter 4 2022/2023 (Jan 23 to Mar 23)

The following tables give breakdown of all employee incidents across all Functions and Clusters in Aberdeen City Council. The tables on the left initially show the number of incidents for each Cluster this reporting period with those on the right giving a quarter 4 comparison for each Function from 2019/20 to 2021/22.

RIDDOR Reportable Employee

RIDDOR Reportable Employee (Comparison)

Non RIDDOR Reportable Employee

Non RIDDOR Reportable Employee (Comparison)
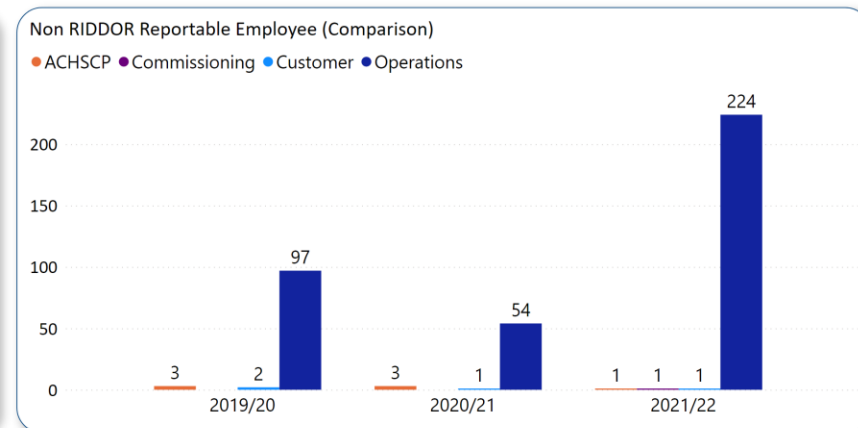
Employee Incident Information

RIDDOR reportable incidents are 8 for this quarter, a reduction from 11 last quarter but an increase from 6 for corresponding quarter last year. Incident reports show an increase from 2021/22 with the largest number still within Education. The increase could be attributable to a drive by Education and Trade Unions for all incidents to be reported but also could be representative of national increases across Scotland post-pandemic

The tables below give information on those non-employee incidents which happened across all Functions and Clusters. Again the tables on the left show the current period for each Cluster, with those on the right giving a quarter 4 comparison for each function from 2019/20 to 2021/22.
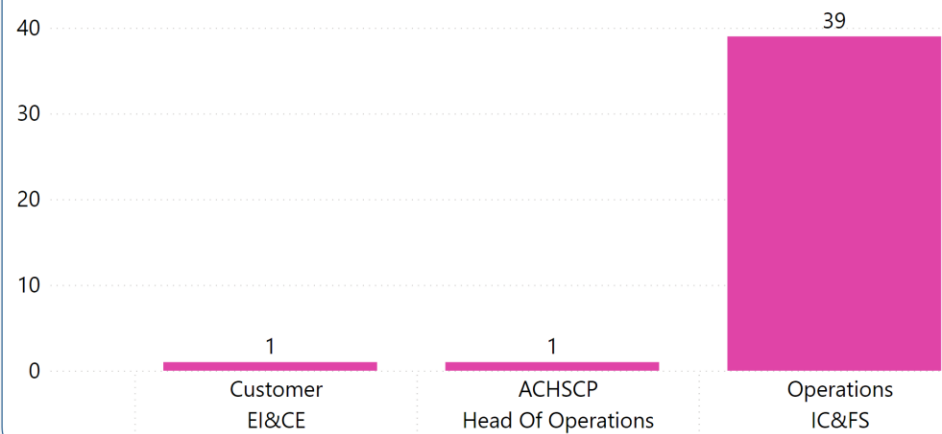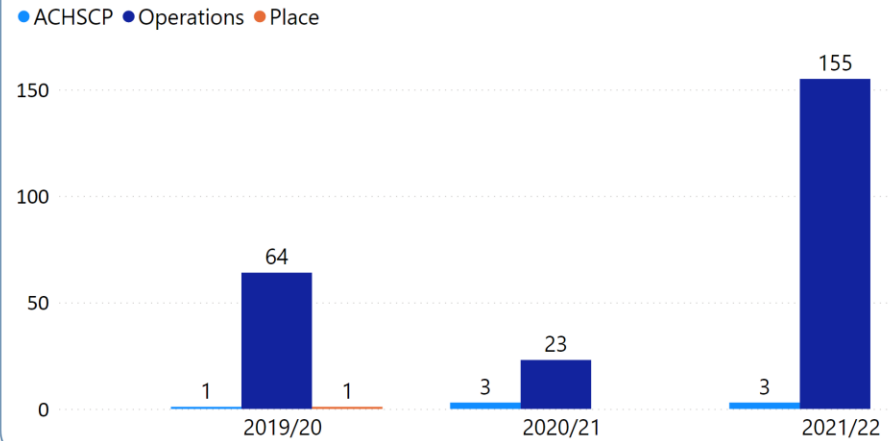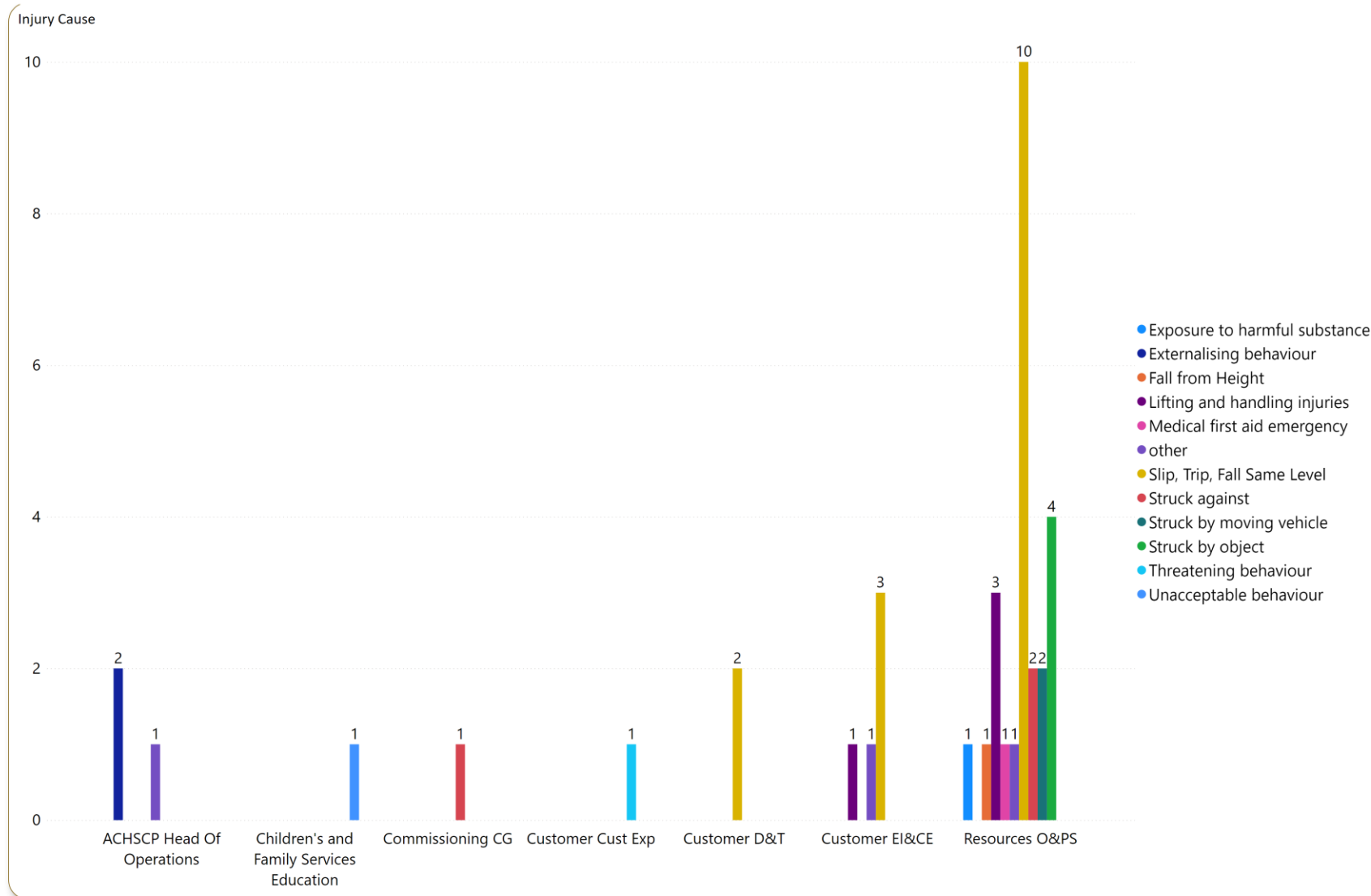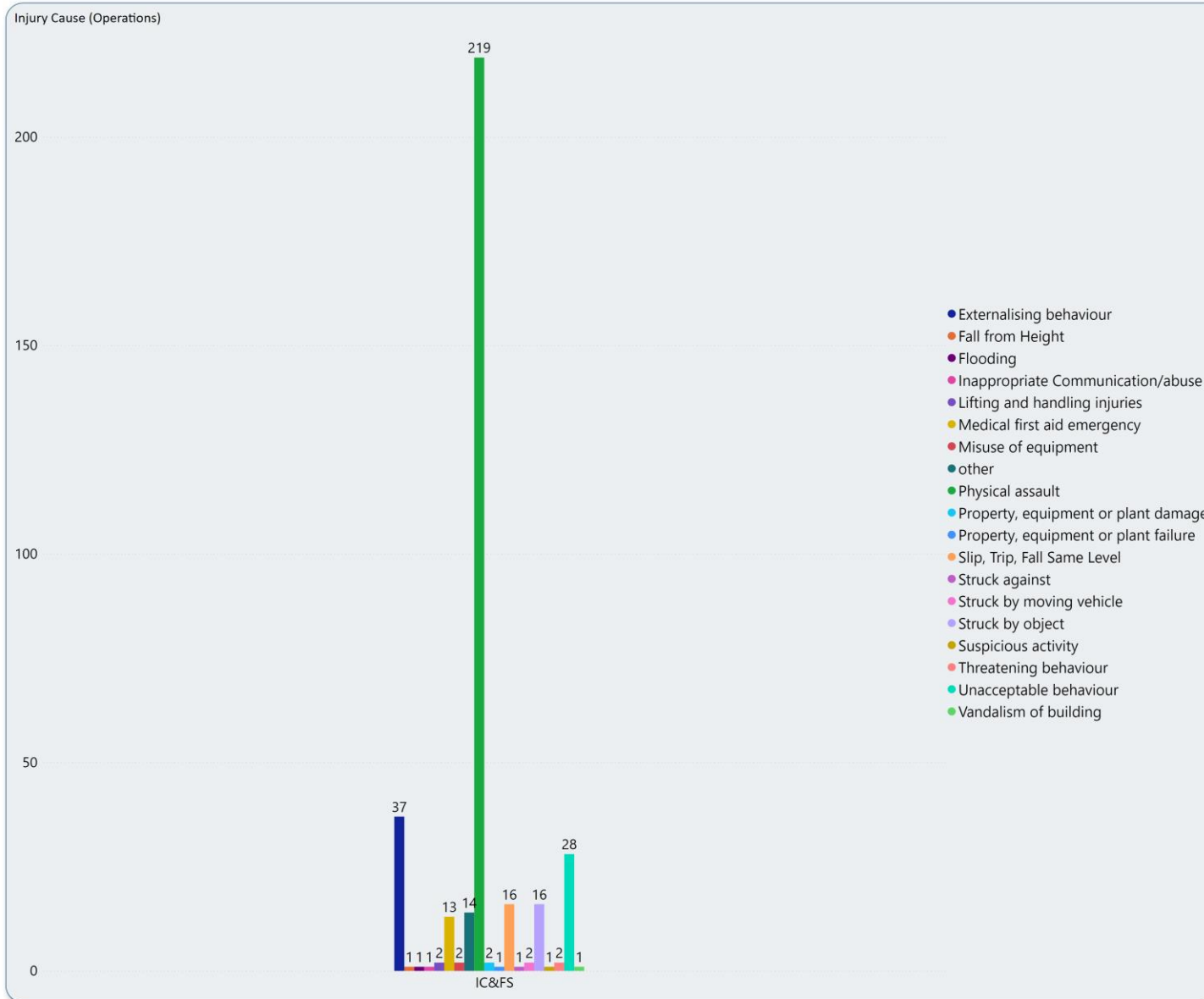
RIDDOR Reportable Non Employee

Resources
O&PS

RIDDOR Reportable Non Employee (Comparison)

● Operations

Non RIDDOR Reportable Non Employee

| Customer | ACHSCP | Operations |
| EI&CE | Head Of Operations | IC&FS |

Non RIDDOR Reportable Non Employee (Comparison)

● ACHSCP ● Operations ● Place

H&S Incident Causation
Reported between Jan to Mar 2023

The table shows incident causation for each Cluster colour-coded against the key for this reporting period apart from Operations, which is covered in the next page.

Injury Cause

Legend:
- Exposure to harmful substance
- Externalising behaviour
- Fall from Height
- Lifting and handling injuries
- Medical first aid emergency
- other
- Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level
- Struck against
- Struck by moving vehicle
- Struck by object
- Threatening behaviour
- Unacceptable behaviour

The following table gives a breakdown of **Operations** Incidents down to cluster level.

Injury Cause (Operations)

Legend:
- Externalising behaviour
- Fall from Height
- Flooding
- Inappropriate Communication/abuse
- Lifting and handling injuries
- Medical first aid emergency
- Misuse of equipment
- other
- Physical assault
- Property, equipment or plant damage
- Property, equipment or plant failure
- Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level
- Struck against
- Struck by moving vehicle
- Struck by object
- Suspicious activity
- Threatening behaviour
- Unacceptable behaviour
- Vandalism of building

Cause	No. of Incidents
Physical assault	219
Externalising behaviour	37
Unacceptable behaviour	28
Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level	16
Struck by object	16
other	14
Medical first aid emergency	13
Lifting and handling injuries	2
Misuse of equipment	2
Property, equipment or plant damage	2
Struck by moving vehicle	2
Threatening behaviour	2
Fall from Height	1
Flooding	1
Inappropriate Communication/abuse	1
Property, equipment or plant failure	1
Struck against	1
Suspicious activity	1
Vandalism of building	1

The tables below show information in relation to employee and non-employee Near Misses.
Top table: Total Near Misses for this reporting period for each Cluster. Bottom table: quarter 4 comparison of Near Misses for each Function from 2019/20 to 2021/22.
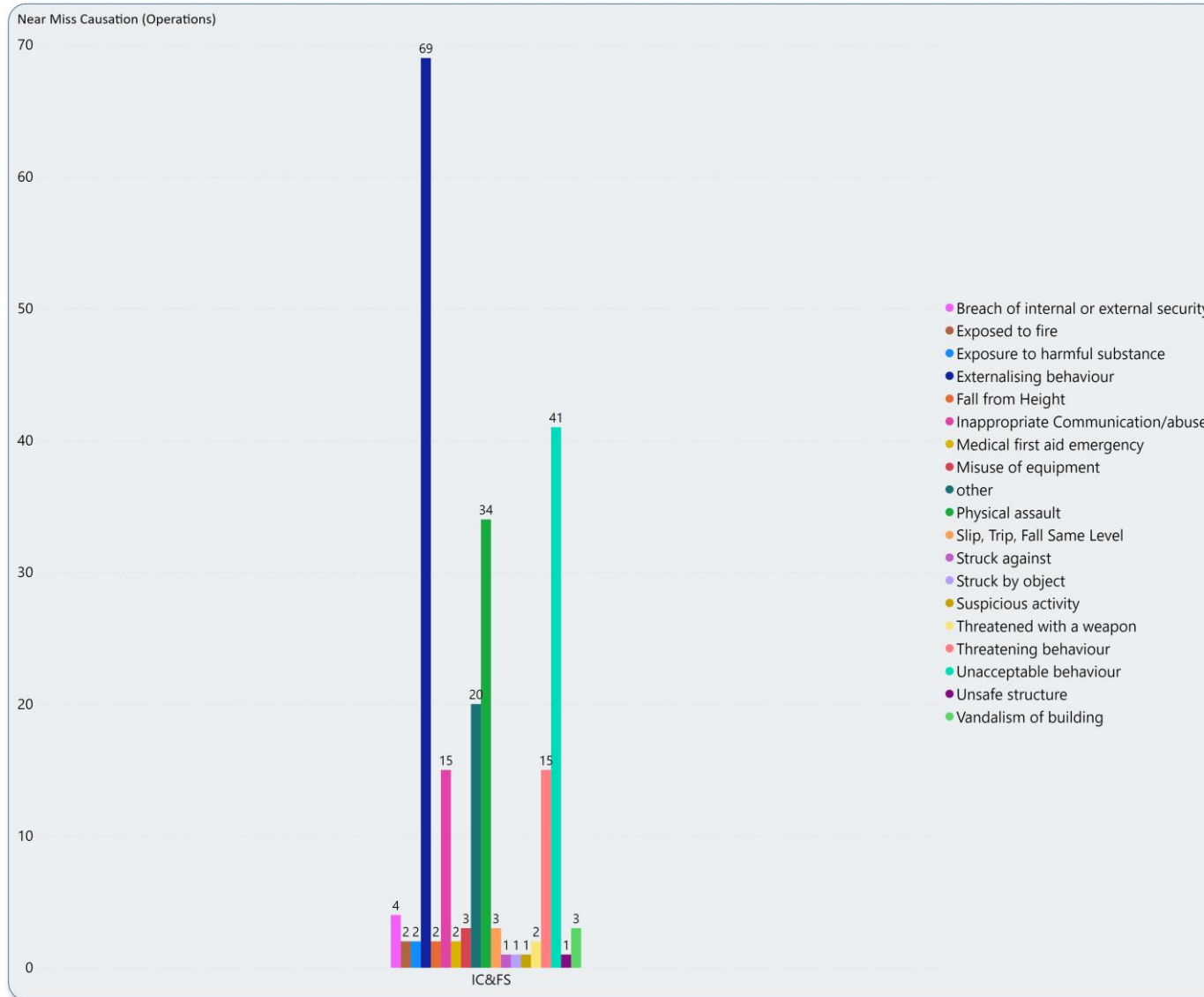
No. of Near Miss

Cluster	No. of Near Miss
ACHSCP Head Of Operations	6
Commissioning CG	1
Customer Cust Exp	5
Customer EI&CE	19
Operations IC&FS	221
Resources O&PS	18

No. of Near Miss (Comparison)

● ACHSCP ● Commissioning ● Customer ● Operations ● Place ● Resources

Year	ACHSCP	Commissioning	Customer	Operations	Place	Resources
2019/20	20		15	121	2	2
2020/21	7		10	51		1
2021/22	14	2	20	235		1
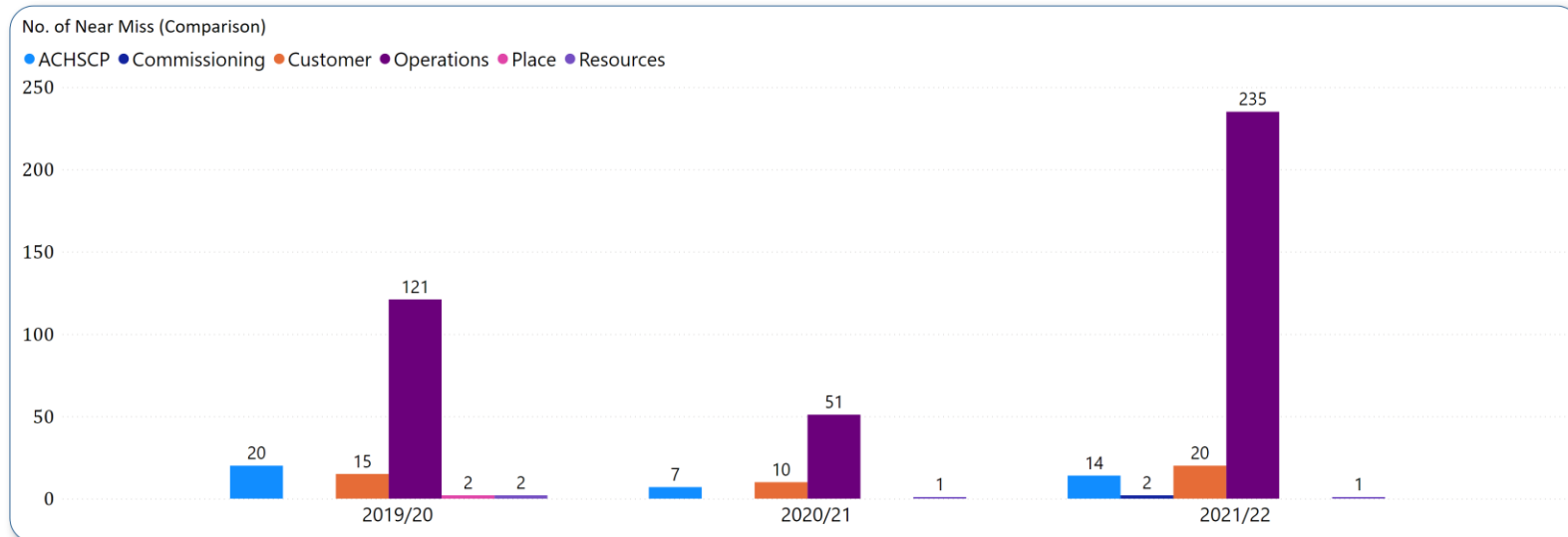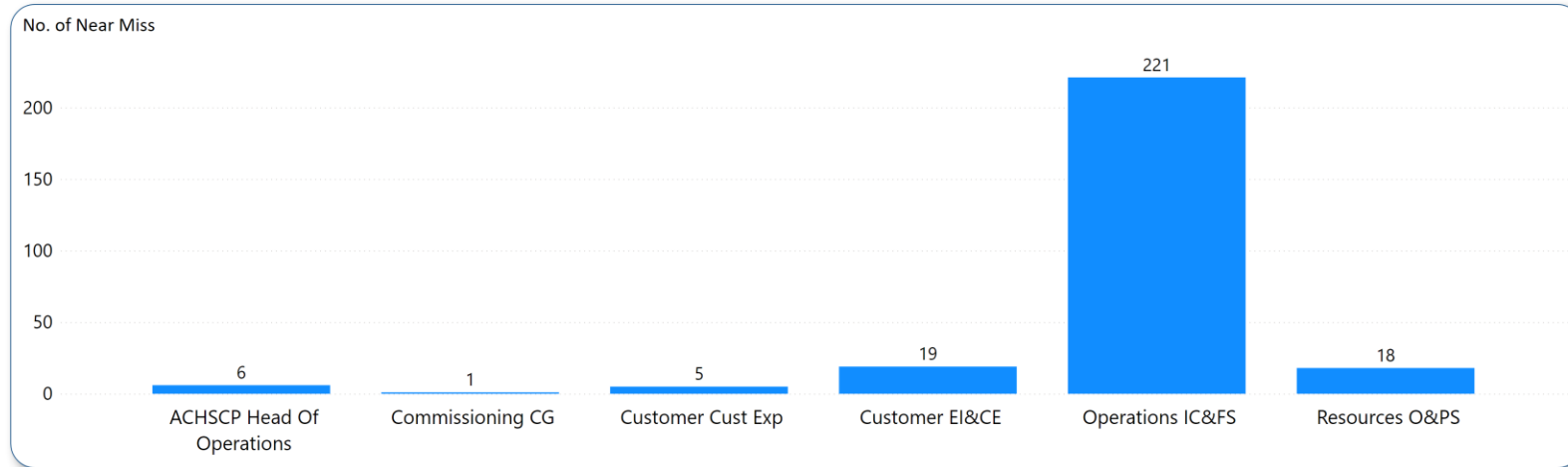
The table below shows information to a Function and Cluster level for employee and non-employee Near Misses apart from Operations, which is covered in the next page.

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Near Miss Causation

Legend:
- Contact with electricity
- Exposed to fire
- Externalising behaviour
- Inappropriate Communication/abuse
- other
- Physical assault
- Property, equipment or plant damage
- Property, equipment or plant failure
- Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level
- Struck by object
- Suspicious activity
- Threatening behaviour
- Unacceptable behaviour
- Vehicle incident

Categories: ACHSCP Head Of Operations, Commissioning CG, Customer Cust Exp, Customer EI&CE, Resources O&PS

Near Miss
The number of near misses are similar to those reported last year and as with incidents the largest number sit within Education for pupil behavioural issues. The numbers are increased form the two previous years comparisons as they represent a full return to schools.

The following table gives a breakdown of **Operations** Near Miss down to cluster level.

Near Miss Causation (Operations)

Legend:
- Breach of internal or external security
- Exposed to fire
- Exposure to harmful substance
- Externalising behaviour
- Fall from Height
- Inappropriate Communication/abuse
- Medical first aid emergency
- Misuse of equipment
- other
- Physical assault
- Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level
- Struck against
- Struck by object
- Suspicious activity
- Threatened with a weapon
- Threatening behaviour
- Unacceptable behaviour
- Unsafe structure
- Vandalism of building

Cause	No. of Incidents
Externalising behaviour	69
Unacceptable behaviour	41
Physical assault	34
other	20
Inappropriate Communication/abuse	15
Threatening behaviour	15
Breach of internal or external security	4
Misuse of equipment	3
Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level	3
Vandalism of building	3
Exposed to fire	2
Exposure to harmful substance	2
Fall from Height	2
Medical first aid emergency	2
Threatened with a weapon	2
Struck against	1
Struck by object	1
Suspicious activity	1
Unsafe structure	1

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Reported Incidents
From 2019/20 to 2022/23

The table provides information on the **total number** of incidents for the last four reporting years (including current year to date) to Function level.

No. of Reported Incidents

● ACHSCP ● Commissioning ● Customer ● Operations ● Resources

Year	ACHSCP	Commissioning	Customer	Operations	Resources
2019/20	27	8	12	692	
2020/21	30	0	5	307	
2021/22	35	4	11	837	
2022/23	22	10	20	1257	47
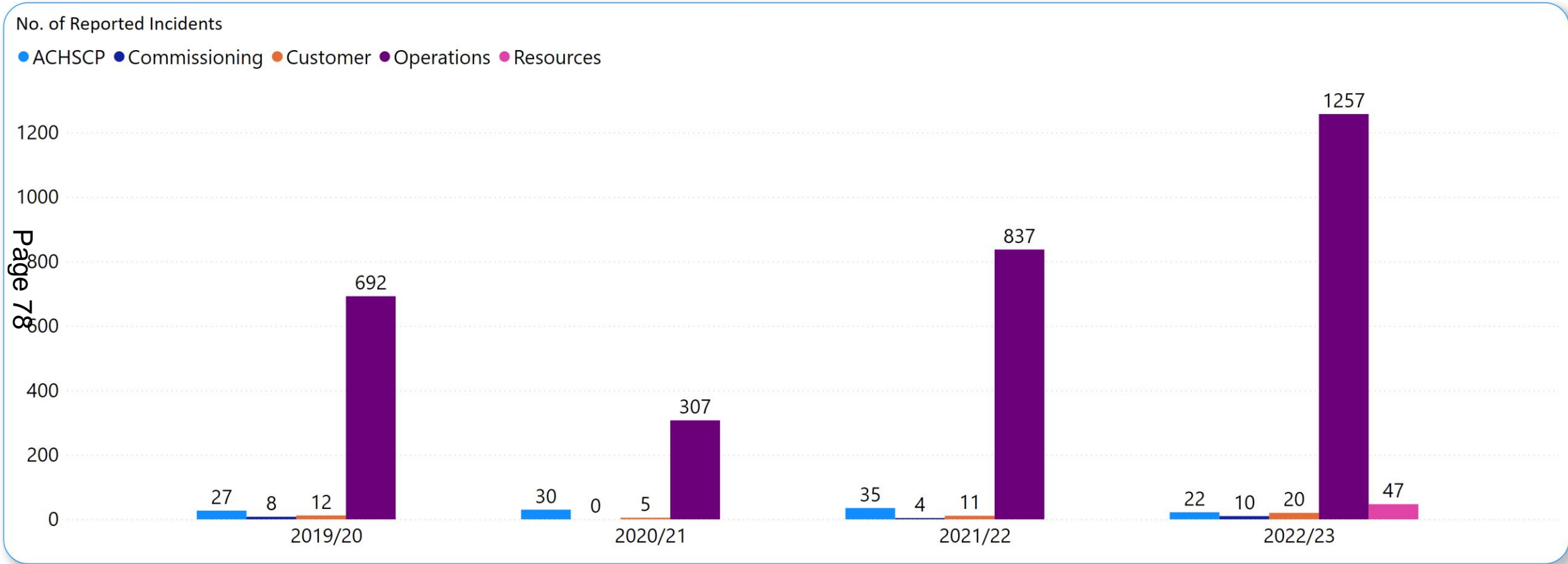
Reported Near Miss
From 2019/20 to 2022/23

The table provides information on the **total number** of near miss for the last four reporting years (including current year to date) to Function level.
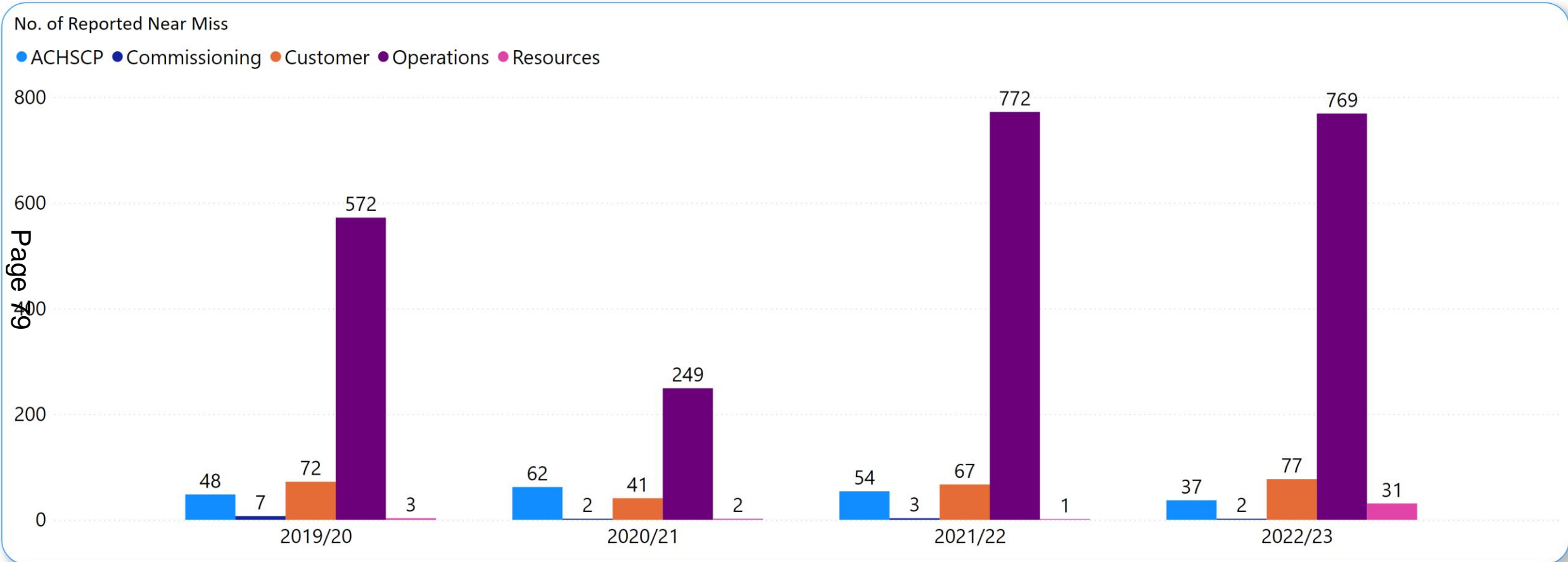
No. of Reported Near Miss

● ACHSCP ● Commissioning ● Customer ● Operations ● Resources

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
ACHSCP	48	62	54	37
Commissioning	7	2	3	2
Customer	72	41	67	77
Operations	572	249	772	769
Resources	3	2	1	31

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Employee Mental Health Action Plan Annual Progress Update
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/187
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe
REPORT AUTHOR	Kirsten Foley
TERMS OF REFERENCE	3.2 iii

1.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1   The purpose of this report is to review the impact of the Employee Mental Health Action Plan and propose further amendments based on this review.   The original plan was developed and approved by Staff Governance Committee on 3 February 2020. Following a review of the actions on the original plan, an analysis of the psychological absence data and feedback from the mental health action plan focus groups, a revised plan was developed and was approved by Committee on 21 February 2022.

1.2   The report also contains an update on the action taken to support employee mental health over the past 12 months.

2.   **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee: -

2.1   approves the Mental Health Action Plan and supports the work outlined to address and improve employee mental health and wellbeing; and

2.2   notes the proactive actions carried out so far to address and support positive employee mental health; and reflects on the variety of initiatives, activities, training and support made available to employees during the last 12 months.

3.   **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1   The Mental Health Action plan was approved by Staff Governance Committee in January 2019.

3.2   Reports to the Staff Governance Committee in February 2020, June 2021 and February 2022 gave updates on the progress against the plan.

3.3   In February 2022, the Committee reviewed and approved a revised Employee Mental Health Action Plan. Accordingly, work was undertaken, as detailed in

the paragraphs below, to revise the Mental Health Action plan. SGC Report Feb 2022

3.4   The review of the mental health action plan was undertaken to assess the impact of the support already provided and identify, based on data and feedback, the most appropriate areas of focus for the year ahead.

3.5   Throughout 2021 and 2022 feedback was gathered from Focus Groups which were set up and which included employees from a range of frontline services (Education, Trades, Environmental, Waste and Community Empowerment) and including our Trade Union Representatives to ensure we had a broad understanding of the organisation's needs and wants.

Feedback gathered identified a need for additional support in the following areas:

Issues Requiring Additional Support	How we're addressing these
Work-Related Stress	QWL Stress Risk Assessments Mental Health First Aider Network Wellness Action Plans Reasonable Adjustment Passports Self Help Employee Assistance Service Able Futures
Training	Mental Health Awareness for Managers - ** Mandatory Training Mental Health Awareness Tools for Managers and Supervisors Mental Health First Aid QWL Stress Risk Assessment Menopause Awareness Sleep Awareness Alcohol and Drugs Awareness
Frontline Communications	Increased clear communications including: Posters Leaflets Yammer Teams Intranet Presence at service specific events Roadshows Employee Induction

3.6 As part of the previous review of the plan, a range of data, research and strategic drivers were reviewed and analysed to identify the most appropriate areas of focus and to target support where it is most needed and will be most effective. This review and analysis has been embedded into the improvement cycle as the various elements of the plan are targeted across the workforce.

Current Strategic Context

3.6.1 The Scottish Government Programme for Government continues to identify the need to improve national wellbeing by further increasing investment in mental health support and tackling and improving support for drug addiction and preventing drug deaths as key drivers for 2022/23. In addition, the Programme for Government includes the Creating Hope Together suicide prevention strategy, a national review of the Eating Disorder Services Implementation Group and the Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity Bill.

3.6.2 A new poll in November 2022 by Mental Health Foundation shows that:

- more than one-third (34%) of UK adults are feeling anxious,
- almost three in ten (29%) are feeling stressed and
- one in ten (10%) are feeling hopeless about their financial circumstances in the past month

Our new research reveals anxiety is gripping the UK as many people suffer in silence and struggle to cope

ACC Context.

3.6.3 The ACC absence data for the period Jan 2022 to Dec 2022 identifies the following trends.

3.6.4 The top 3 absences show ACC Staff Absences by category with Psychological consistently remaining at the top of the top reason for the last 3 years.

1. Psychological
2. Musculoskeletal
3. Respiratory

% of Total Absence attributable to Psychological Absence by month
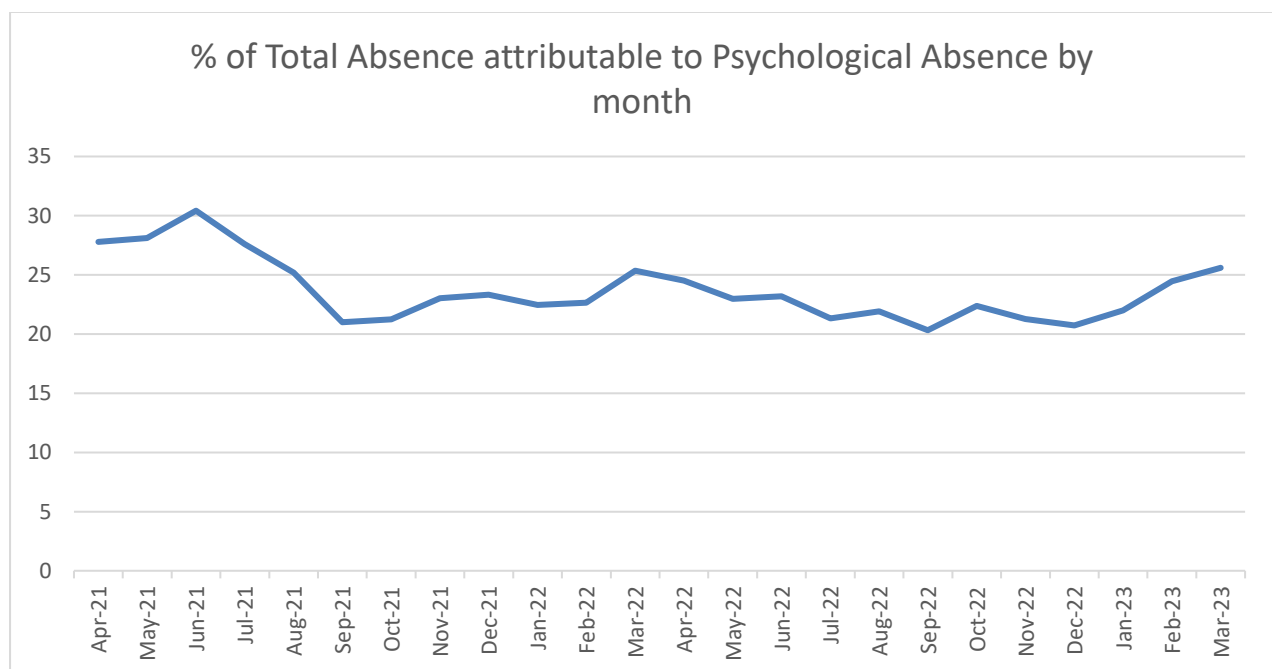
3.6.5 Overall, Psychological absence rates, which includes work and non-work related stress, anxiety, depression and mental health, remain steadily at the top of the overall absence figures at an average of 22.4% of total absences in 2022 which is a slight decrease on figures of 24.89% in 2021.

3.6.6 The Workplace Health Report identifies stress as being the most prevalent reason for absence from work, (Stress Statistics UK | 2023 Data | Champion Health) with 76% of employees identifying moderate-high or high levels of stress, and 33% identifying that stress impacts their productivity at work.

3.6.7 The graph below shows the breakdown of the psychological absences recorded during 2022 by the absence reasons subcategories. This shows the highest level of psychological absences are attributable to stress, with the lowest level being related to depression.

% of total sickness absence 2022 by psychological sub category
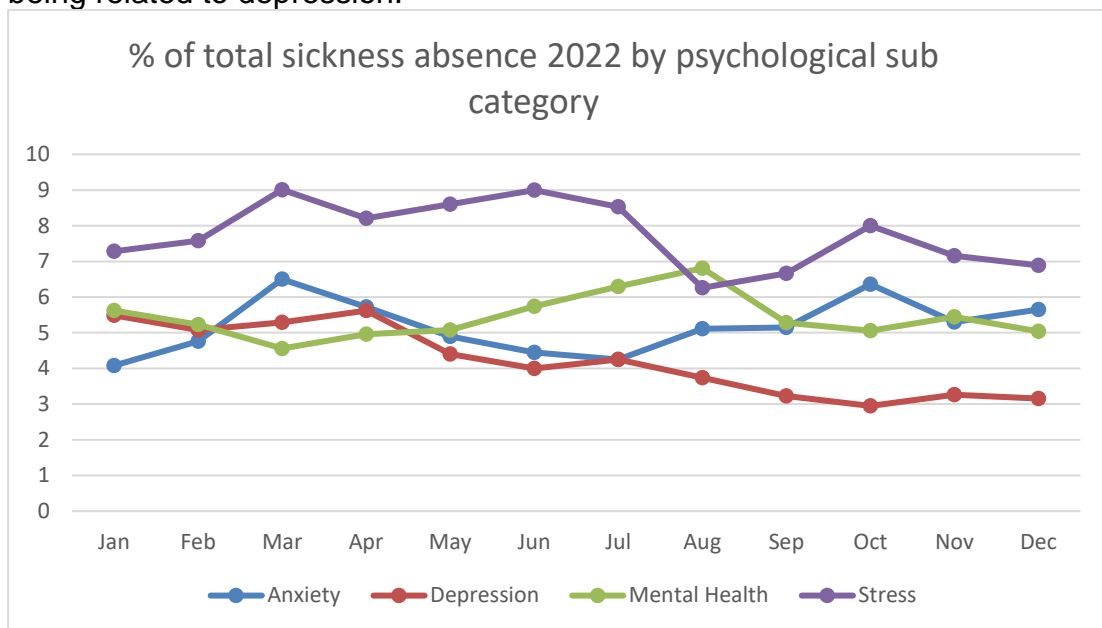
3.6.8 The Office of National Statistics reported that nationally the level of sickness absence increased in 2022 to 2.6%, which is 0.7% higher than the pre pandemic level and is the highest recorded since 2004. Sickness absence in the UK labour market - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

3.6.9 What ACC have done in 2022 under the 5 key outcomes of the plan:

3.6.10 Outcome 1. A targeted programme of support and tools which is easily accessible by all staff

3.6.11 Webpages comprising a range of support and tools available to all staff to access when they need it. Several projects have been undertaken to target specific groups of staff who have been identified through data analysis as requiring additional information and support on various wellbeing interactions including our Substance Misuse project and the Mental Health First Aid Network. These range from an increased amount of information on the support services available with a targeted communications plan to raise awareness not only digitally but by means of leaflet and poster campaigns. A full list of these can be seen in Appendix 2.

3.6.12 To ensure our communications reach the whole workforce, additional methods are also now being used and information is shared on specific channels known to be used and which already reach our frontline employees.

3.6.13 Outcome 2. A culture within which mental health and substance misuse issues are proactively supported and destigmatised

3.6.14 A working group was formed to review the policy and support available for staff on Substance Misuse. Updates on this working group are currently being reported back to the risk board on a quarterly basis, with the intention of a report being brought to Staff Governance Committee in November 2023

3.6.15 A significant amount of work has been undertaken to ensure managers are aware of the support available as well as increased communications to ensure staff and managers know where to turn to get additional support should they need it.

3.6.16 Communications about the policy and how to implement it including how to use 'With Cause Testing' were communicated out to ensure all our managers are empowered and confident to apply and that staff are aware of these proactive controls in place to ensure we support staff at the earliest stages.

3.6.17 Campaigns around Go Sober for October and Dry January are communicated to raise awareness and destigmatise the topic and encouragement to seek support and reduce intake is supported using these campaigns.

3.6.18 Information is provided about the in-house services available such as the Employees Assistance Programme from Vivup and Able Futures mental health support service as well as information on external professional services such as Alcohol and Drugs Action Aberdeen https://www.alcoholanddrugsaction.org.uk/ where employees can seek additional support for substance misuse.

3.6.19 Mental Health campaigns on a variety of topics are spread widely throughout the organisation by regularly blogging but also communicated by messaging individuals through Team. Staff are encouraged to participate in our Mental Health and Wellbeing Yammer channel with regular updates on a wide range of hot topics shared across the organisation. New channels reaching frontline teams have also been included to help us reach staff in all services.

3.6.20 Whilst there is on going analysis of absence data, this does not provide any data on the effectiveness and impact of the interventions on those employees who are in work. It is, therefore, intended that a Mental Health Wellness Pulse Check is carried out after the summer holiday period in 2023. The outcomes of this check will be used to inform further developments within the Mental Health Action Plan and will be reported to Committee in due course.

3.6.21 Outcome 3. Management training, support and development which empowers managers to support their teams confidently and appropriately

3.6.22 A suite of training available across the organisation ensures employees are empowered to maintain positive wellbeing and have access to tips and tools to build resilience.

3.6.23 In addition to this we continue to offer Mental Health First Aider training which is a vital frontline contact for employees experiencing emotional distress. This proactive approach for staff support works to prevent anyone suffering in

silence with mental health problems. Mental Health Tools for Managers increase our network of support across the organisation and empower managers to support their teams.

3.6.24 A graph with numbers of completion can be seen below:

Mental Health and Wellbeing Training
Jan 2022 - March 2023
** Mandatory Training for Managers

	Face to Face (Nescol) "Looking after others"		Online (ACC Learn) "Looking after ourselves and others"					
	Scottish Mental Health First Aid	Mental Health Tools for Managers	Mental Health Anti-Stigma and Discrimination (SeeMe)	Ask, Tell - Save A Life: Every Life Matters (NHS Education for Scotland)	Menopause Awareness	Domestic Abuse	Mentally Health Workplaces **	Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace
Value	38	67	21	57	68	161	166	269

3.6.25 Outcome 4. Data reporting which allows the organisation to access and interrogate the data in order to target interventions proactively

3.6.26 Work continues on analysing the absence data which is reported in the Absence Report to Staff Governance committee to ensure we provide targeted interventions to areas of the organisation. Most recently the work on the substance misuse project throughout the Operations Function initially which is being rolled out across the organisation to increase awareness and ensure managers and employees are aware of where to get additional support on issues arising.

3.6.27 Analysing the data has led to specifically targeting various groups depending on the actual trend identified. For example, access to physical exercise opportunities for those working in sedentary positions and targeting those within certain age brackets. e.g. over 50's to encourage proactive measures are taken prior to issues arising e.g. Menopause awareness sessions.

3.6.28 With the data showing a significantly higher ratio of staff absences in the Operations service, further analysis will be done to identify particular areas where interventions and initiatives can be targeted and Roads has been identified as one of the pilot areas for the Absence Improvement Project.

3.6.29 One such initiative is the Physical Wellbeing initiative in collaboration with Sport Aberdeen. We aim to go out to the depots to talk to staff directly about physical wellbeing opportunities with an offer of a health check to help staff realise potential problems and try proactive measures to counteract these.

Percentage of Staff Absent by Month, August 2019 onwards
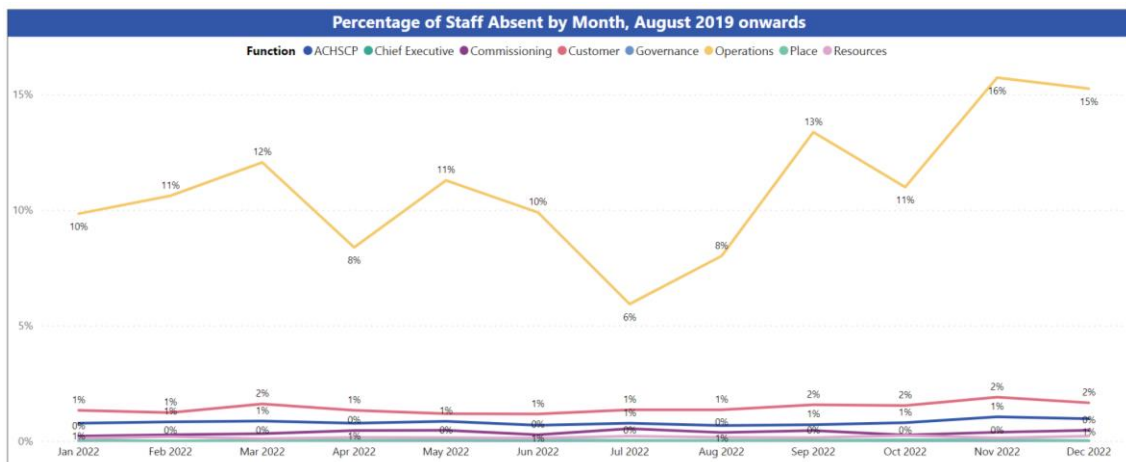
3.6.30 **Outcome 5. Reduce the total overall absences that are due to psychological reasons.**

3.6.31 Analysing the data, the overall absence rates for employees off due to psychological reasons has been steadily decreasing from 26.24% in 2020 to 24.89% in 2021 and to 22.4% in 2022). This is showing a steady trend of descent. The data will continue to be analysed and initiatives targeted at areas in most need.

3.6.32 During 2022 the Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser joined the Disability & Inclusion and Age working groups under the **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion project** to ensure that our campaigns, training and activities were accessible to all. This has helped the mental health and wellbeing calendar to build significantly and has increased the number of communications going out across the organisation ensuring a more inclusive holistic wellbeing approach. We have also increased the number of channels we send out to and communicate with, giving us an extended reach to engage with frontline staff.

3.6.32 Albeit the need is to reduce the total of overall absences, feedback from users of the MH First Aid service suggests that the Mental Health First Aid network proactively supports staff to be able to remain at work whilst being supported and to not become an absence statistic. Interactions with the service are from offices and depots right across the organisation. This reassures us that this service does have a vital reach across the frontline and outlying venues to make sure all staff know where to turn for support if they need it. An example of some of the venues using the service are listed below.

3.6.33 The majority of staff engaging with the service have been looking for support with Anxiety, which is in line with the research from Mental Health Foundation has shown- Mental Health Foundation. The second top reason for staff interacting with the Mental Health First Aid Network is for Workplace Stress which again is reflected in the data discovered from our Employee Assistance provider and again shows the vital need for this service to provide immediate support to anyone struggling.
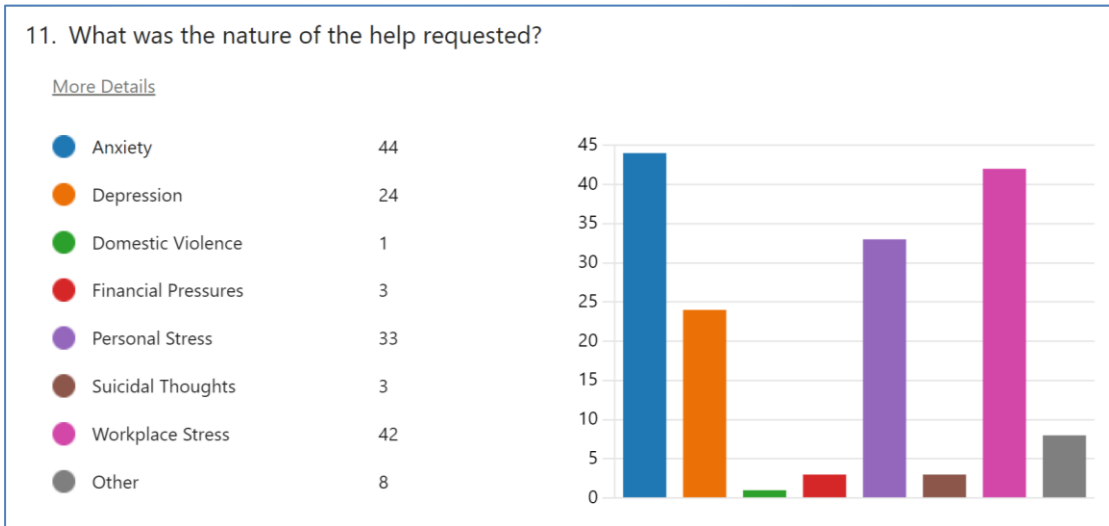
3.6.34 The majority of Mental Health First Aid referrals have been to our Employee Assistance provider with other external services also being referred to.

MHFA Referral to Services

The chart "MHFA Referral to Services" shows the following values:

- Employee Assistance Service: 37
- SAMH: 9
- Breathing Space: 7
- Mental Health Aberdeen MHA: 6
- Line Manager: 6
- Able Futures: 5
- People Anytime Mental Health...: 4
- Just listened: 4
- GP: 3
- Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB): 2
- Chaplaincy Service: 2
- Wellness Action Plan: 2
- Trade Unions: 1
- Remploy: 1
- Headspace: 1
- Wellbeing Training: 1
- National Domestic Violence...: 1
- Information from the Domestic...: 1
- Samaritans: 1
- Alternative Team Leader: 1
- Alcohol Aberdeen: 1
- Adult Social Work Team: 1
- Police Scotland: 1

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Mental health and wellbeing is increasingly becoming a core component of service delivery, linked to both staff retention and customer satisfaction. There is the potential to reduce direct and indirect costs in relation to sickness absence, low morale/engagement and increased turnover by supporting and promoting positive mental health. This can have a significant impact on Function / Cluster budgets.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Failure to comply with legislation in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace has the potential to result in enforcement action by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Such intervention can result in potential prosecution (criminal) and employees (civil claims) are more likely to succeed following a successful HSE prosecution. Changes in the Sentencing and Fines Guidance for health and safety non-compliances are resulting in increased financial penalties. Fine starting points are based on an organisation's turnover. As Local Authorities do not have turnover; their Annual Revenue Budget is deemed to be the equivalent. This amount is then altered depending on the culpability of the organisation and harm factors to employees and members of the public.

5.2 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, there is a legal requirement to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of our employees. This includes minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Compliance	Compliance with legal requirements ensures the health and safety of employees	Actions outlined in the appendix provide additional support for employees.	M	**Yes**
Financial	If no action is taken to support individuals and address trends, then the organisation will incur both direct and indirect costs.	Implementation of the Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy and supporting Stress Procedure. Effective management and maintenance of a mentally healthy workplace and provision of appropriate support.	M	**Yes**
Reputational	Without ensuring suitable employee support there is a risk of the organisation not becoming an employer of choice and having recruitment and retention issues.	Implementation of the Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy and supporting Stress Procedure. Effective management and maintenance of a mentally healthy workplace and provision of appropriate support	L	**Yes**

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Prosperous People theme in the LOIP indicates that all people in the City are entitled to feel safe, protected from harm and supported where necessary, which would include employees of the Council. Adopting the approach outlined int the report will support the workforce.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Full impact assessment not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	not required
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   Stress Statistics UK | 2023 Data | Champion Health
10.2   Mental Health Foundation Survey and Research
10.3   EAS Annual Progress Update, Occupational Health and Absence Annual Update January 2022 - December 2022 - CUS/23/080

11. APPENDICES

11.1   Appendix 1 – Mental Health Action Plan
11.2   Appendix 2 – Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities Update

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix 1

2022 Mental Health Action Plan

Focus Areas

1. A targeted programme of support and tools which is easily accessible by all staff
2. A culture within which mental health and substance misuse issues are proactively supported and destigmatised
3. Management training, support and development which empowers managers to support their teams confidently and appropriately
4. Data reporting which allows the organisation to access and interrogate the data in order to target interventions proactively
5. Reduce the total overall absences that are due to psychological reasons

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
A targeted programme of support and tools which is easily accessible by all staff	Managers are informed and open to conversations with staff	Deliver new QWL Risk Assessment training to managers	In collaboration with the Health and Safety Team Employee Relations and Wellbeing offer individual managers and teams support to complete QWL Risk Assessment
	Deliver Domestic Violence training	New Domestic Violence training available for staff to undertake through our online pages	Domestic Violence training has been extensively communicated across the organisation with MHFA attending virtual training

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
			sessions Online training is also available on this subject.
	Mental Health Awareness training delivered 'virtually' by SamH. Creating a pool of Mental Health Champions across the organisation	Continue delivering Health and Wellbeing sessions to Pupil Support Assistants in Education cluster Continue to deliver on current training programme including increasing the number of trained MHFA across the organisation to provide frontline support to employees	Training opportunities regularly communicated to network on hot topics and other relevant updates
	Employee Assistance Service (Vivup)	Continue to communicate access to service and focus on getting out to Frontline Deliver webinar type sessions and record particularly for frontline employees	Large communication plan to share information widely across the whole organisation
	Able Futures	Continue to communicate new partnership with Able Futures across the organisation to encourage uptake with tailored advertising materials created for frontline employees	A great build on to the employee assistance service and good feedback received
	Additional needs interpreter, information in easy read, languages, signing, braille etc	Information about how to upload documents from SharePoint in to google documents to help employees translate information although include messaging to be careful with personal sensitive information Should someone require additional support it can be sought from Intertrans who are also available to translate documents at a cost InterTrans is a service that provides confidential translation, interpreting and communication support services to users and providers of Aberdeen City Council's services. The service aims to	Captions have been switched on in Teams and additional support for highlighting signing on Teams also available

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
		offer improved access to users of council services whose first language is not English and / or have other communication needs. Where possible caption readers on animations and also use PDF rather than screenshots to ensure staff using screen readers can see these. Encourage use of caption reader on Teams meetings for those harder of hearing. Use Plain English in campaigns to make it easy to follow	
	Additional support signposting to external professional organisations providing support - Breathing Space - Samaritans - SamH - Ready Scotland - Parent Club	Continue to communicate support services by creating one place to find them all and link to this in regular communications. Increase information about new Able Futures partnership – Mental Health Support through "Access to Work (DWP)" with particular emphasis on Frontline employees	Regular communication campaigns around professional services available for support
	Employees are self-aware and ask for help when needed	Continue to deliver personal development courses through SAMH with additional new content from Thrive (online learning materials). Short, sharp messaging to support supervisors and front-line team leaders to deliver short sessions to workforce. Look to deliver face to face session for frontline employees who are not confident in the use of technology. Create short, recorded sessions that team leaders and supervisors can deliver directly to their teams during toolbox talks to ensure frontline staff have the same knowledge on the support available to them.	Continuing to look at Thrive for new materials to support learning
	Employees can identify personal stress triggers	Stress Risk Assessments – communicate and raise the awareness of the importance of these.	Increased referral to Wellness Action Plans

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
		Encourage the use of Wellness Action Plans for employees to share with managers before there's a crisis	have been met positively and are well used
	Deliver proactive and early interventions sessions to help build resilience and prevent overload	Variety of self improvement training Include online resources for managers to share with staff	
	Financial Wellbeing	Launch Salary Finance support on VIVUP Employee Benefits site Promote internal and external sources of budgeting and financial wellbeing information via a range of media to ensure easy accessibility for all staff	Increased communications around the cost of living crisis and details of where to find support
A culture within which mental health and substance misuse issues are proactively supported and destigmatised	Mental Health First Aider support available for all employees, including managers	The list of MHFA - Update list and consider how categories i.e. Education staff don't necessary recognise Operations as their Function Training to be available to both primary and secondary schools Physical poster campaigns to raise the profile of the MHFA in outlying workplaces and details on how to contact these	Increased reach of Mental Health First Aiders with many now trained throughout school settings
	Blog posts/newsletters	Continue to write regular blogs on hot topics and raise awareness, piggybacking on national wellbeing campaigns	Increased number of messages have gone out this year using other platforms including social media for maximum reach
	Visible commitment to positive mental heath	Continue communication of initiatives in line with national programmes and deliver training and information campaigns as appropriate	Mental Health and Welleing Adviser present at various

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
		Continue to deliver Mental Health Awareness events to encourage open conversations and make talking about mental health the norm.	public events. Year of Disabled Worker, Childrens Services Development Day to increase awareness of support and initiatives available to staff
	Employees take notice and support colleagues	Continue increasing the number of MHFA across organisation to champion mental health and make finding support accessible to all	Additional Mental Health First Aid sessions booked
	Raise the profile of mental health issues and wellbeing in the workplace.	Continue to promote wellbeing initiatives with the use of the new "Mental Health and Wellbeing" Yammer channel in particular to reach frontline employees through the new F1 licenses.	Communications significantly increased this year using a variety of methods including poster and leaflet and social media campaigns to spread the word
	Substance Misuse Action Plan	Through the Substance Misuse Action Plan Working Group, roll out the actions identified within the plan Continue to support the roll out of the Naloxone project across identified areas of the city	Work commenced to cascade awareness throughout the rest of organisation.
Management training, support and development which empowers managers to support their teams confidently and appropriately	Managers can handle difficult conversations effectively	Alternative line managers who can take on the responsibility of these conversations where there's a breakdown or element of strain. Building positive relationships with managers and staff Access to team building and additional training to support strengthening teams	A variety of training and information available to support managers to have sensitive conversations positively.

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
	Organisation tackles the causes of workplace stress	Continue work towards improving data recording reasons for absences and reporting on this Trigger of Absence management letters to be communicated as more of a support than a punitive exercise Staff off on long term sick leave – managers to communicate more regularly with employees and agree how this will be done at early stage	Work continuing to analyse the data and target initiatives according to where the data leads
	The organisation provides support and trains managers to identify, understand and address mental health factors in the workplace.	Deliver Mental Health Awareness for Managers and Supervisors through NESCol so managers can have the full knowledge to support staff without the ongoing commitment of becoming MHFA	Additional dates secured for the forthcoming period for managers to attend
	Managers communicated with and supported regularly	Continue to offer direct support to managers and employees from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser	Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser in regular contact with managers across the organisation to provide 1-2-1 support where needed
	Build managers confidence and skills in providing support to team members who may be suffering from Domestic Violence	Continue regular communications on topics to help build confidence and knowledge	Additional virtual training offered to groups to enhance the online training available and to allow more in depth conversations on the subject

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
	MHWB Representative at Function Health and Safety Committee Groups and Senior Management Team Meetings	Attend Health and Safety Committee Groups and SMTs to discuss data and identify potential supports to be implements in targeted areas.	Regular updates send to H&S groups. Current report will be distributed to groups.
	Tablet devices being rolled out across operations services to allow staff access to teams	Improve the messaging to frontline staff to encourage them to come forwards and get help before problems become bigger. More proactive campaigning around frontline services to make talking the norm.	Significantly increased communication to frontline employees using their own channels initiated
	Managers have mental health rapport with employees	Build in an Employee Wellbeing section on templates for 1-2-1's and Continuous Review & Development	Ongoing
Data reporting which allows the organisation to access and interrogate the data in order to target interventions proactively	Analyse the absence data to identify trends and hot spots across the organisation	MHFA Recording Tool – encourage recording of interactions to show the demand on the network and help build data trends on where staff are contacting from

Refresh and resend the staff wellbeing survey/introduce pulse checks Look at tailoring surveys to gather information on mental wellbeing in the same way as the body mapping Musculoskeletal ones.   https://www.hse.gov.uk/msd/pdfs/body-mapping-questionnaire.pdf
Also, more focus on the Musculoskeletal health after two years of working from home | Discussions around potential Pulse Check underway. |
| | Emerging Trends | Analyse and interrogate the new Power BI Absence data and use this information to target areas with various initiatives depending on what the data reveals | Continuing analysis of the data to identify trends in the organisation |
| | The organisation understands the impact personal issues can have on mental wellbeing | Analyse absence data available and target initiatives and interventions where appropriate across the organisation. | Continue to target areas where the data takes us |

Initiative	Organisation Needs	Delivery	Update 2022
		Continue to communicate support services for not only use with work issues but available for employees and household members to be able to access to help improve mental wellbeing Increase access to financial wellbeing information and where to get support on issues relating to this	
Reduce the total overall absences that are due to psychological reasons	Training on Wellness Action Plans	Continue to train new MHFA to add to the network to increase coverage across the organisation to 2.5% Continue running peer group training sessions to upskill and develop current knowledge of MHFA and provide a supportive place to come for debriefing and sharing best practice. Introduce a more formal method of supervision by way of 1-2-1 meetings with MHFA's across the organisation when required Provide training to MHFA on completing Wellness Action plans to be able to support colleagues with completing	New course dates advertised

Appendix 2

Mental Health and Wellbeing Activities Update – 2022

CONNECT | TAKE NOTICE | BE ACTIVE | GIVE | KEEP LEARNING

Contents

Communications

There continues to be a significant increase in communications, e.g. intranet blogs, yammer, teams and social media posts, that have been being shared across the organisation about the various initiatives and support services that are available to employees during this time. The frontline employees now have access to more communications due to the rollout of the F1 license and evidence can be seen of them interacting on various yammer posts. In addition to this, we have been given access to the frontline services Teams channels so we can post initiative directly to them ensuring better communication.

We have been delivering awareness raising sessions using the NHS Ask, Tell, Save a Life Mental Health Animation during Employee Inductions and on other presentations and have been emphasising the our Employee Assistance Service, Vivup, is not only there to help you with work issues, but is there for any employee to use to support them no matter what the issue is whether it be something at home or at work.

Substance Misuse

Substance Misuse Awareness Campaign
A working group was established with members of staff across the organisation to improve knowledge of our Managing Substance Misuse Policy and have been working to increase awareness of the support available to employees by means of a physical poster, leaflet campaign and intranet/Teams/Yammer posts.

Support

Vivup **-** Our employee assistance service, Vivup offers a free, confidential, 24-hour counselling service 365 days a year.
Mental Health First Aid Network **–** our training programme will continue to grow the number of Mental Health First Aiders available across the organisation
Able Futures – our new partnership with DWP Able Futures organisation to provide additional Mental Health support to our workforce
Drugs and Alcohol Awareness **–** campaign to ensure employees know what support is available to them and where to find the policies relating to this
Bereavement Support – pages to signpost employees to various bereavement support services
People Anytime Mental Health and Wellbeing Pages - Our People Anytime pages continue to migrate across from the old WordPress site to our new space on SharePoint. Anything new is being added directly to SharePoint

Training

Scottish Mental Health First Aid Training Course
We continue to train staff to become Mental Health First Aiders for the organisation with a further 32 employees trained in the period 2022/23. Further courses are planned for the forthcoming year and the feedback suggests this is a vital frontline service used by many staff.

Mental Health Tools for Managers/Supervisor
This 3½ hour course shares good practice in identifying common mental health problems and making adjustments and is designed for anyone who is responsible for staff and is not wishing to become qualified as a Mental Health First Aider

Mental Health Anti-Stigma and Discrimination
Our E-Learning gives you all you need to know to start taking action to tackle stigma in work.

Ask, Tell, Save a Life
Mental health and suicide prevention learning resources. NHS Health Scotland and NHS Education for Scotland (NES) were jointly commissioned to develop these as part of the Scottish Government's 'Suicide Prevention Action Plan'.

Menopause Awareness
The course is aimed at line managers, team leaders, supervisors, HR personnel and all other employees to find out how they can support women at work who go through this phase in their lives, and to women employees themselves, to make them aware of the fact that they can seek support if required.

Domestic Abuse Training (DAART)
An awareness-raising resource which serves as an introduction to domestic abuse and coercive control. The tool provides an overview of the main considerations when responding to domestic abuse.

Mentally Health Workplaces (Mandatory Managers Training)
This training is for anyone who wants to learn more about mental health in the workplace. Everyone has a role to play in creating a mentally healthy workplace and it can have benefits for you and your colleagues.

Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace
A training programme for managers and staff on awareness and the impact of alcohol and drugs in the workplace.

Physical Wellbeing Partnerships – Sport Aberdeen and Aberdeen Sports Village
Sport Aberdeen - A free 12 wellbeing programme offered to all employees across the organisation has had 26 successful applicants apply. The programme is designed to work closely with participants to engage with them and change their behaviour towards physical activity and to encourage them to make lifestyle changes that will last. The sessions will be supported by a personal coach and have been targeted to over 50's and frontline sedentary staff although not exclusively.

In addition, the usual 25% discount on membership fees was also on offer.

Sport Aberdeen

Free Sport Aberdeen Wellbeing Package

Aberdeen City Council are working with Sport Aberdeen to help staff #getactive and feel good in 2023.

Aberdeen City Council has teamed up with Sport Aberdeen to offer 30 colleagues the opportunity to access a free Wellbeing Package which includes:
- Lifestyle evaluation and goal setting
- Gym induction
- 2 free activities (fitness class, gym session or swim)
- Lifestyle review

Aberdeen Sport Village – Free lifestyle passes were made available for Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Staff employees to to obtain with access to a full range of facilities over two separate weeks to ensure maximum accessibility for all staff.

In addition, the usual 25% discount on membership fees was also on offer.

Aberdeen Sports Village

Work it out with ASV
ASV Corporate Week | 27 March - 2 April

FREE Access during Corporate Week – 27th of March – 2nd of April

Sign up for a free lifestyle pass and try out various activities at Aberdeen Sport Village during corporate week.

Awareness Raising Campaigns

A series of campaigns in collaboration with Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working groups have seen an increase in communications across the organisation. The collaboration ensure our focus is broadened with more inclusivity with minority groups.

Alcohol Awareness Campaign – Sobering Thought and Alcohol Tips and support

Baby Loss Awareness – campaign to ensure that employees know what support is available to them

Blue Monday Campaign – 3rd Monday in January - saddest day of the year

Cancer Awareness and Support

Deaf Awareness and BSL for Beginners

Deaf Awareness Week Intranet awareness post and Yammer channel created to encourage peer support among colleagues and share of best practices

Dementia Awareness

Employee Assistance Programme – awareness campaign and comms plan

Eye Health – awareness raising campaign about eye health checks and financial support available

Fibromyalgia Week Awareness Campaign

Financial Wellbeing / Employee Benefits and Cost of Living Support

Flu Vaccination Awareness

Health and Wellbeing Sessions

Menopause Matters - CE Blog

Menopause Support and Awareness

Mental Health Awareness Week – Campaign and Events

Mind to Mind – Dealing with Anxiety Information Campaign

Mindfulness Meditation

Multiple Scleorisis Week

Naloxone – Save a Life – Aberdeen City Council's commitment to training up employees in front facing services

Naloxone Distribution Campaign

No Smoking Day Awareness Campaign – Access and Signposting to support

Parkinson's Awareness Week

Physical Activities Awareness and Opportunities

      Preventing Suicide

Scottish Learning Disability Week

Stress Awareness Month – Risk Assessments, policies, materials, support

Suicide Prevention – training opportunities to build confidence to have conversations around suicide

Suicide Prevention Campaigns, support and advice

      Suicide Prevention Training

Time to Talk Day – Awareness Campaign and signposting to local support

Tinnitus and Hearing Loss Awareness – creation of new Yammer Peer Support Group

World Health Day Campaign

World Mental Health Day Awareness

World Sleep Day – access to online training and support

Young Minds Matter Campaign – Support and Information for Young Colleagues

Random Acts of Kindness Campaign
Holiday Stress Busting Tips
Walking Football – access to walking football sessions

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	26 June 2023
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update Report
REPORT NUMBER	CUS/23/163
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald, Director - Customer
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe, Chief Officer – People & OD and Customer Experience
REPORT AUTHOR	Darren Buck
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.5

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To provide Committee with an update on our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan following the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Progress Report Update of 13 March 2023.

1.2 To provide assurance that work is progressing to meet our Equality Outcomes and is continuously adapted and improved.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

2.1 Notes the progress made as part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan;

2.2 Approves the approach to further reviewing the data from the aforementioned Progress Report and placing a focus of equality, diversity and inclusion work on the areas outlined in section 4.3.3 of this report;

2.3 Instructs the Chief Officer – People and Organisational Development to report to Staff Governance Committee on progress to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan on an annual basis which will either be as part of Mainstreaming or Progress Report updates or as an independent report in years where there is not a Mainstreaming or Progress Report;

2.4 Instructs the Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development to report to Staff Governance Committee in advance of the next Mainstreaming Report being presented to Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee in March 2025 (dates to be confirmed) with an update on proposed staffing-related content and Outcomes. This will include the annual update on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan; and

2.5 Instructs the Chief Officer – People and Organisation Development to report to Staff Governance Committee on any future changes of approach towards the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan or any additional equality, diversity and inclusion initiatives and actions that require elected member approval.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

3.1 Equality Outcomes

3.1.1 The Council has two Equality Outcomes as an employer in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010). The latest outcomes were approved at the former Operational Delivery Committee in March 2021 and are for the period 2021-2025.

3.1.2 These outcomes are:

- Improve the diversity of our workforce and address any areas of underrepresentation, ensuring that there are equal opportunities for all protected groups (with consideration for both internal employees and external applicants), with a particular and prioritised focus on Age, Disability, Race and Sex.

- Ensure that all of our employees who have protected characteristics feel fully valued, safe and included at work, with a particular and prioritised focus on Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Race, Sex and Sexual orientation.

3.2 Development and Design of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan

3.2.1 To support the delivery of our employer equality outcomes, an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan was developed and approved at Staff Governance Committee in April 2021. This Action Plan was co-created following engagement with our workforce, Equality Ambassadors Network and partner organisations. This Action Plan also supports the organisation's various accreditations and pledges such as Investors in Young People, Disability Confident and Equally Safe at Work.

3.2.2 While proposing some suggested actions, the Action Plan sought to establish employee working groups for the purposes of ongoing listening and development. This was to ensure any actions taken forward were meaningful and co-created by our diverse employees.

3.2.3 In 2021, we established five working groups, in addition to maintaining our existing Equality Ambassadors Network: Age Working Group Disability Working Group LGBT+ Working Group Race Working Group (known as 'RED' – Race Equality and Diversity) and Working Group for Sex as a Protected Characteristic

3.2.4 Each of these working groups are made up of employees who either have a protected characteristic, are an ally or are interested in Equality, Diversity and

Inclusion. Membership of these groups is flexible, with employees giving their time as and when they are able.

3.2.5 Each group is facilitated by at least one People and Organisational Development Advisor who all form part of an oversight working group which ensures that all of the work is coordinated, joined up and takes into consideration intersectionality.

3.2.6 In line with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan report, People and Organisational Development, along with the staff working groups, are following the Plan, Do, Study, Act (PDSA) cycle ensuring that active and ongoing listening takes place and that the impact on actions is considered.

3.3   New Pledges and Accreditations

3.3.1 Since the previous Staff Governance Report in April 2021, the Council has agreed to sign up to two pledges, both approved at Staff Governance Committee in November 2022:

- Pregnancy Loss Pledge
- Menopause Workplace Pledge

3.3.2 These pledges provide further focus and frameworks for the Council's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion work. Further information about these pledges was presented to Staff Governance Committee in the papers hyperlinked in 3.3.1.

3.4   New Capability Framework and Development Framework

3.4.1 The Council's new Capability and Development Framework was approved at Staff Governance Committee in January 2023.

3.4.2 The new Capability Framework introduced the Core Capability Theme of 'Care' which places stronger emphasis on visibility of equality, diversity and inclusion and respecting others in the workplace.

3.4.3 Indicators for each of the Core Capability Themes are currently being finalised in line with the Council's Job Family approach. Indicators relating to equality, diversity and inclusion will be in place for each Job Family.

3.4.4 In addition, a Development Framework sits under each Job Family and will relate directly to the Capability Framework. This will include Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training that is meaningful and relevant for each Job Family.

4   Actions 2021-2023

4.1   Actions Included in Previous Report

4.1.1 Work that the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion working groups have completed to date was included in Appendix 1 of the latest Staff Governance Report found here.

4.2   Actions Completed Since Latest Report

4.2.1 Since the last Staff Governance Report on 13 March 2023, there have been further actions undertaken:

- A Disabled Worker Event was held at the Beach Ballroom for managers and employers in the city in recognition of Year of the Disabled Worker 2022 (event was postponed and rescheduled to March 2023 due to adverse weather)
- Various staff Intranet posts for awareness-raising purposes have been issued on topics such as Neurodiversity Celebration Week, World Cancer Day, Time to Talk Day, Down Syndrome Awareness, Multiple Sclerosis, Deaf Awareness, Spinal Cord Injuries, Mental Health Awareness Week and Transgender Day of Visibility.
- A partnership working group created between Aberdeen City Council, NHS Grampian and Police Scotland to join up and collaborate on equality, diversity and inclusion work with regular meetings and a Microsoft Teams site.
- Further improvements to the Council's Recruitment & Selection Training have been made to update the race and religion sections of the training.
- An internal campaign for International Women's Day was launched which highlighted events taking place in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and utilised newly created e-learning and infographics. The campaign included an intranet post with interviews with women across Aberdeen City Council.
- Participated as an organisation in Grampian Pride 2023.

4.3   Current Data Position

4.3.1 The data presented to Staff Governance Committee in March as part of the progress report update included all of our statutory employee diversity data. This data highlighted a few areas that require further attention as part of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

4.3.2 These areas were:

- *Disability* - While we have increased the number of disabled people employed by the Council since 2020, the proportion of the workforce declaring themselves to have a disability has decreased very minimally. The number of those who choose not to disclose their disability has also increased minimally. The proportion of leavers who are disabled has, however, decreased since 2021 from 4.71% to 3.70%.

  At the same time, we have seen a very slight decrease since 2020 of job applications for Education roles from those who have a disability, as well as a very slight increase in those not disclosing anything related to disability at application stage. This is therefore worth exploring further.

- *Race* - Since 2020, we have seen a very slight increase in number of employees from the minority ethnic groups (excluding white minorities) from 2.57% of the workforce to 3.34% of the workforce. Headcount across these different groups has also increased, showing an upwards trend. The successful

recruitment of people from these groups is, according to the previous progress report, sitting at 9.53% of all recruits which supports the upward trend. To further support this, we have seen an increase in applications from people from these groups with candidates from these groups making up 19.9% of applicants in 2022. Data from 2021 shows that this was previously 13.94%. However, it is also worth noting that the proportion of leavers who are people from these groups has fluctuated over several years as seen below:

Year	% Leavers from minority ethnic groups (excluding white minorities)
2017	2.18%
2018	2.89%
2019	2.11%
2020	1.68%
2021	3.07%
2022	3.64%

Whilst the 2022 figure is reflective of the workforce profile, this may be worth exploring further to ensure that we are retaining ethnically diverse employees at the same time as recruiting them.

4.3.3 To summarise the above, a priority and focus of equality, diversity and inclusion work therefore needs to be:

- An exploration into why we are seeing a reduction in the number of staff disclosing disabilities and how we might encourage more employees to self-disclose this (and otherwise complete their diversity information);
- An exploration into why we are seeing a reduced number of applications from disabled candidates within Education and if there are any further actions and improvements to demonstrate that the Cluster is a disability-friendly, equal and inclusive employer; and
- An exploration into the fluctuation in the % of leavers of which are employees from minority ethnic groups, with further exploration into all the different ethnicity groups and their data trends, and if there are any explanations for this that require action and improvement.

4.3.4 Since the previous report was presented to Staff Governance Committee in March, the staff working groups have been made aware of the data above and are exploring these areas further with People and Organisational Development and identifying actions which can be co-created and taken forward over the next two years.

4.4 Data Changes and Improvements

4.4.1 In line with the Scottish Government Guidance on collecting, analysing and publishing diversity data, we have made changes to our HR & Payroll system, CoreHR, which aligns with this guidance.

4.4.2 These changes also bring CoreHR more closely in line with changes to diversity data collection on TalentLink, the external system used by the Council for recruitment and selection management.

4.4.3 To allow for these changes, previous diversity data has been archived and new questions and options made available to all employees.

4.4.4 A communications and engagement campaign has been launched to encourage employees to complete their diversity data on CoreHR.

4.4.5 Having these changes will ensure that the Council is collecting and analysing data in a best-practice way and also ensures that all of our data collection is consistent across our employment systems.

4.4.6 Having these changes will also align the Council with Scottish census data due to be published. This will make analysing and comparing data sets easier and more effective and accurate.

4.5 Additional Survey

4.5.1 In line with the staff communications and engagement around updating diversity data, we have added a staff survey to gather further thoughts from employees on work undertaken to date and where further improvements can be made.

4.5.2 This survey will allow us to measure the qualitative impact of equality, diversity and inclusion activity and how employees are feeling about where we are on our journey.

4.6 Actions in Progress

4.6.1 There are a number of actions currently in progress that will support with meeting our equality outcomes:

Action in Progress	Summary	Current Timescale
Accelerator Programme	A leadership and management development programme for under-represented groups at leadership and management level in the organisation.	Engagement with staff working groups completed. Survey for staff working groups and Equality Ambassadors Network completed and returned. Content available and adjustments being identified. Aiming for initial cohort launch in Summer 2023.
Diversity Pack for Recruitment	A booklet to be attached to recruitment adverts and available on our external website for candidates to get information about	Draft completed. Draft sent to staff working groups and Equality Ambassadors Network and feedback received.

	equality, diversity and inclusion at the Council as well as more information about positive action.	Draft sent to Design & Graphics teams for creation. Aiming for inclusion in adverts from Summer 2023 onwards.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Update	An update to refresh of our existing Diversity and Equality Policy.	Due at Staff Governance Committee in early 2024.
Family Friendly Policies Review	A review of family friendly policies such as maternity, paternity, adoption and IVF to ensure that they are inclusive in language and provision. Also to be reviewed in line with the Working in Partnership Policy Statement.	Working group established. Scope of policy review identified. Benchmarking and initial review underway. Update due to Staff Governance Committee 4 September 2023 and full policies due in Summer 2024.
Review and Refresh of the Council's Multi-Faith Room	There is a multi-faith room in the Town House. An options appraisal is required to determine future use of this room.	RED are currently discussing this with Facilities colleagues.

4.7   Next Steps

4.7.1   The Council's Mainstreaming Report is due to Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee in March 2025 (2025 meeting dates to be confirmed). This will include refreshed Equality Outcomes. The Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development will return to Staff Governance Committee prior to this date to provide information and to seek approval on proposed staffing-related content and Outcomes.

4.7.2   The update to Staff Governance Committee referred to at 4.7.1 shall include an update on progress related to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

4.7.3   Any changes to approach or any additional initiatives and actions that require elected member approval will be brought to Staff Governance Committee accordingly.

4.7.4   An annual update to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will be provided to Staff Governance Committee either as part of Mainstreaming or Progress Report updates or as an individual update report in years where there is not a Mainstreaming or Progress Report. This next update will be due in March 2024 (2024 meeting dates to be confirmed).

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Ongoing work on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan will ensure the Council maintains compliance with its duties under the Equality Act (2010).

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

8. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Inability to deliver on LOIP, TOM 1.2 or Workforce Strategy given importance of equality, diversity and inclusion to these.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan - Actions undertaken, including awareness raising, reviews of policies, procedures and guidance, as well as a review of training and development.	L	Yes
Compliance	Requirement to meet the General Duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty and produce statutory reports. Ensuring that Aberdeen City Council complies with the Equality Act (2010) and does not discriminate.	The update provides assurances of meeting our public sector duties. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan - Actions undertaken, including awareness raising, reviews of policies, procedures and guidance, as well as a review of training and development.	L	Yes
Operational	No significant risks identified			

Financial	No significant risks identified			
Reputational	Risks of treating staff unfairly or discriminating and not providing an inclusive environment could impact on Council reputation and employer brand.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan - Actions undertaken, including awareness raising, reviews of policies, procedures and guidance, as well as a review of training and development.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			

9.   OUTCOMES

COUNTER DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	By working towards equality, diversity and inclusion as an employer, we are working towards diversifying our workforce which in turn, supports the delivery of services for our diverse communities. Equality, diversity and inclusion is an important part of the Council's workforce delivery plan which aims to meet the Council's Target Operating Model 1.2 and ultimately its strategic goals. Specifically, within the policy statement, this report impacts positively on: • Support the implementation of Developing the Young Workforce, seek to gain the highest level of investors in young people accreditation and ensure there is a focus on supporting pupils excel in STEM subjects. In addition, with the Working in Partnership for Aberdeen Statement, this report supports with: • Promote the number of apprenticeships on offer through the council • Work to ensure that every school community provides a safe and respectful environment for young people and staff • Recognise that the Council depends upon its staff to deliver the services it provides and believe the Council must properly reward, train and support its staff • Double paternity leave for Aberdeen City Council staff and encourage other employers in the city to do likewise.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	

Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	This report supports: • 400 unemployed Aberdeen City residents supported into Fair Work by 2026 • 500 Aberdeen City residents upskilled/ reskilled to enable them to move into, within and between economic opportunities as they arise by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	This report supports: • As corporate parents we will ensure 95% of care experienced children and young people will have the same levels of attainment in education, health and emotional wellbeing, and positive destinations as their peers by 2026. • 95% of children living in our priority neighbourhoods will sustain a positive destination upon leaving school by 2026. • Child friendly city where all decisions which impact on children and young people are informed by them by 2026.

10. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required for this report as Integrated Impact Assessment completed for the Mainstreaming Report previously.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, Staff Governance Committee, 12 April 2021, RES/21/077

11.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Progress Report Update, Staff Governance Committee, 13 March 2023, CUS/23/079

11.3 Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report, Operational Delivery Committee, 11 March 2021, CUS/21/051

11.4 Pregnancy Loss Support, Staff Governance Committee, 21 November 2022, CUS/22/264

11.5 Menopause Awareness and Support, Staff Governance Committee, 21 November 2022, CUS/22/263

11.6 Job Families and Capability Framework, Staff Governance Committee, 20 January 2023, CUS/23/036

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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