

Agenda Item No: 8 **Report No:** 33/15
Report Title: Accidents to staff from April to December 2014
Report To: Employment Committee **Date:** 23 February 2015
Cabinet Member:
Ward(s) Affected: All
Report By: Jill Yeates
Contact Officer(s)- Jill Yeates
Name(s): Jill Yeates
Post Title(s): Health and Safety Officer
E-mail(s): jill.yeates@lewes.gov.uk
Tel No(s): 01273 7106276

Purpose of Report:

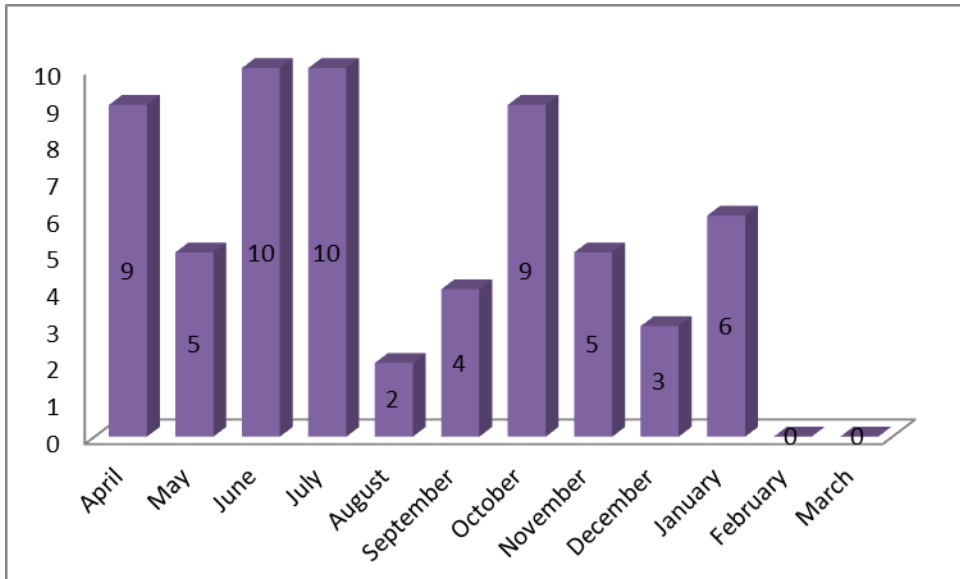
To report the statistics on accidents reported between 1 April 2014 and 31 December 2014.

Officer's Recommendation:

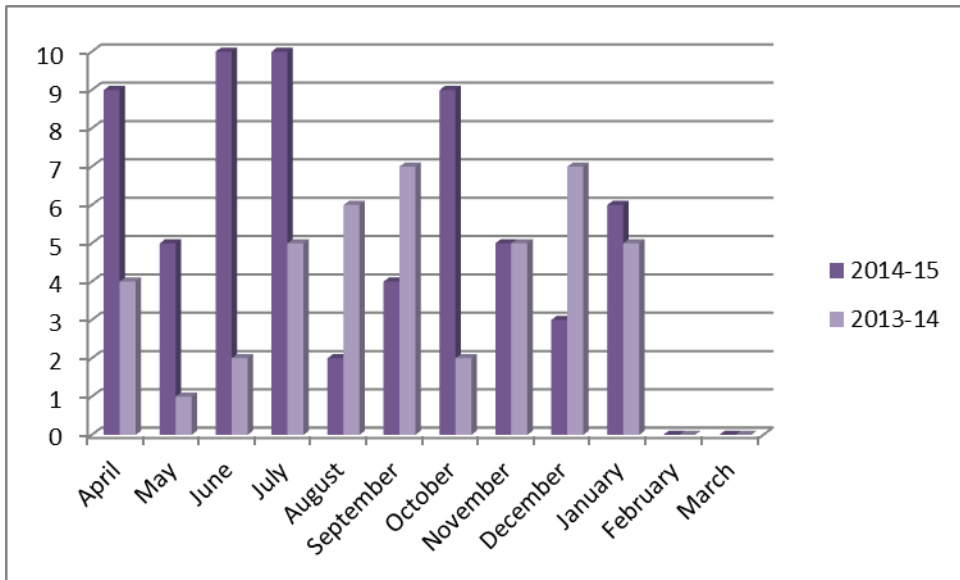
- 1 To note the report
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Reasons for Recommendations

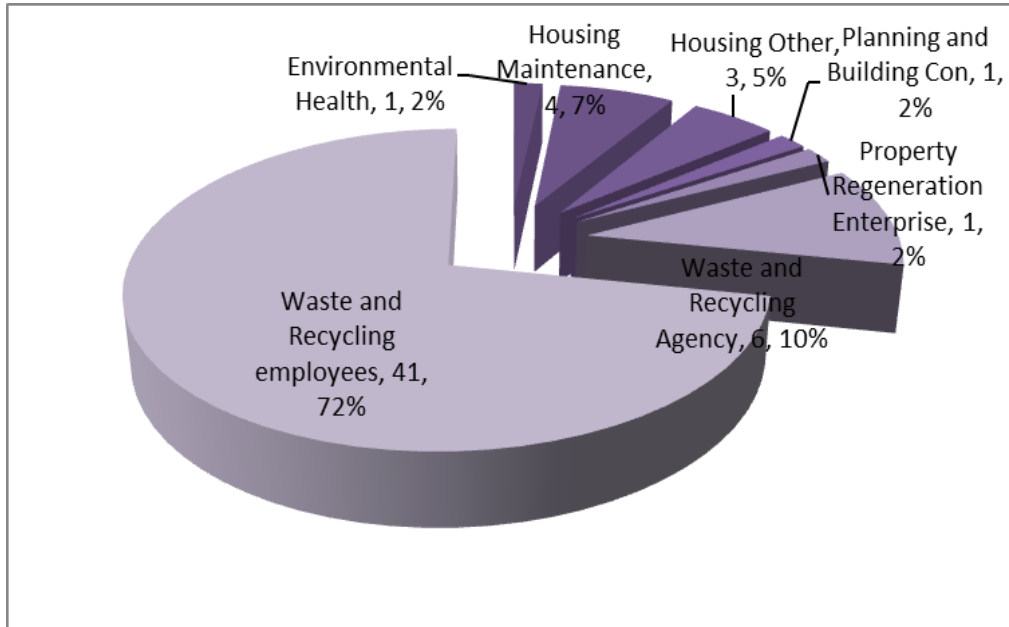
- 1 The Employment Committee has previously requested that this standing item be reinstated to the Employment Committee Agenda.
- 2 **Information**
 - 2.1 The statistics are presented as previously requested – with numbers and percentages, and comparisons with the previous year (same period). The purple pie charts are this financial year's statistics; the green ones are last year's.
 - 2.2 There were 57 accidents from April to December 2014. April, June, July and October had the highest monthly accidents.



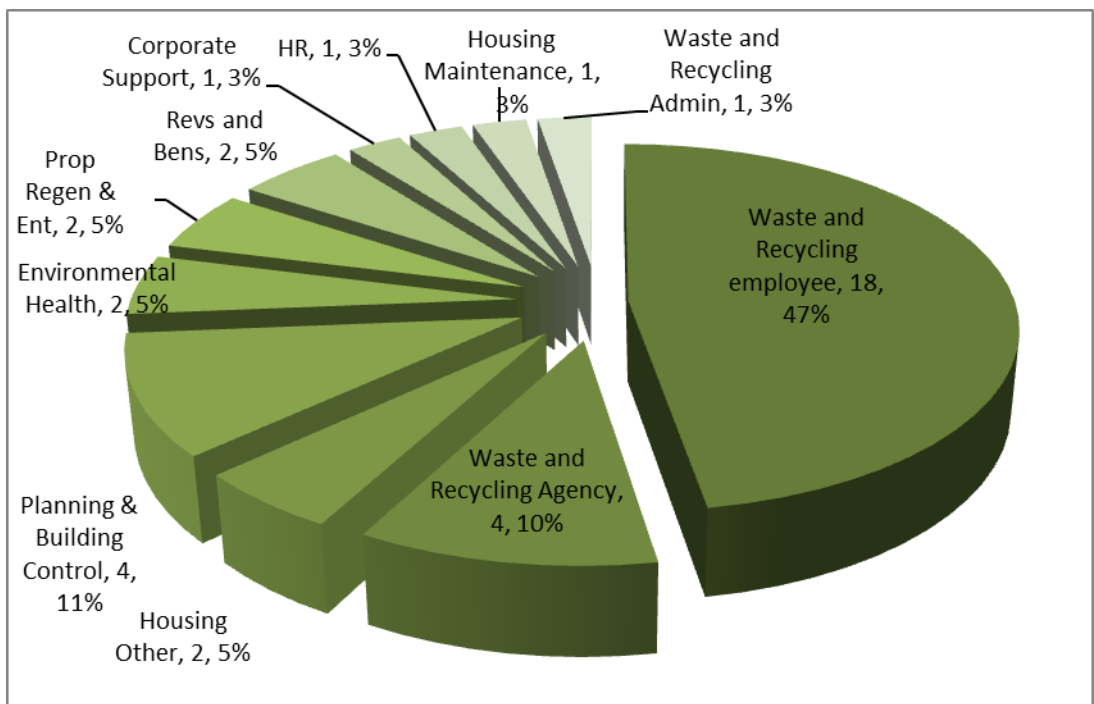
Compared to last year (2013) when August, September and December were the highest months for accidents, there still seems to be no clear pattern.



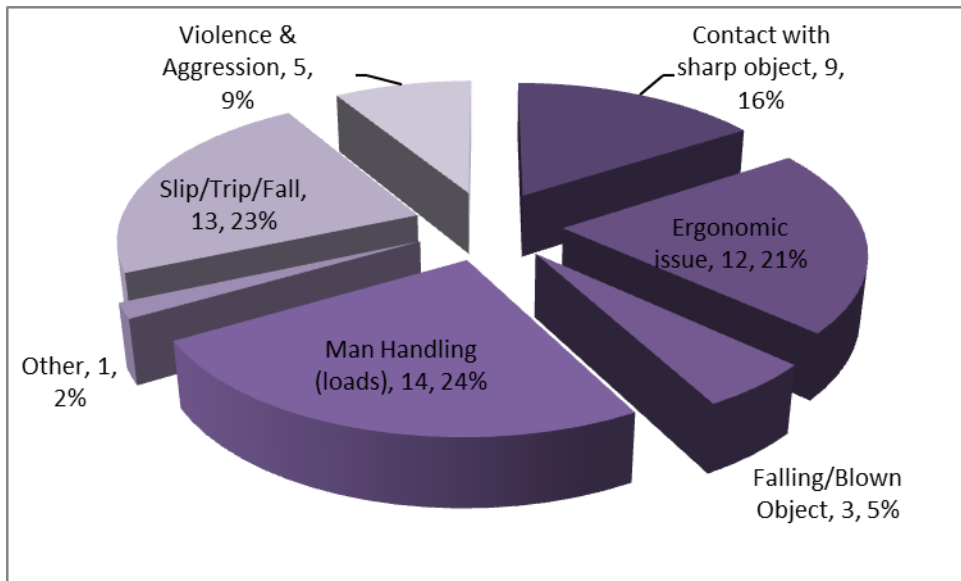
2.3 47 of the accidents were in Waste and Recycling (6 Agency staff), 4 in Housing Maintenance, 3 in Housing Other, 1 in Environmental Health, 1 in Planning and Building Control and 1 in Property, Regeneration and Enterprise.



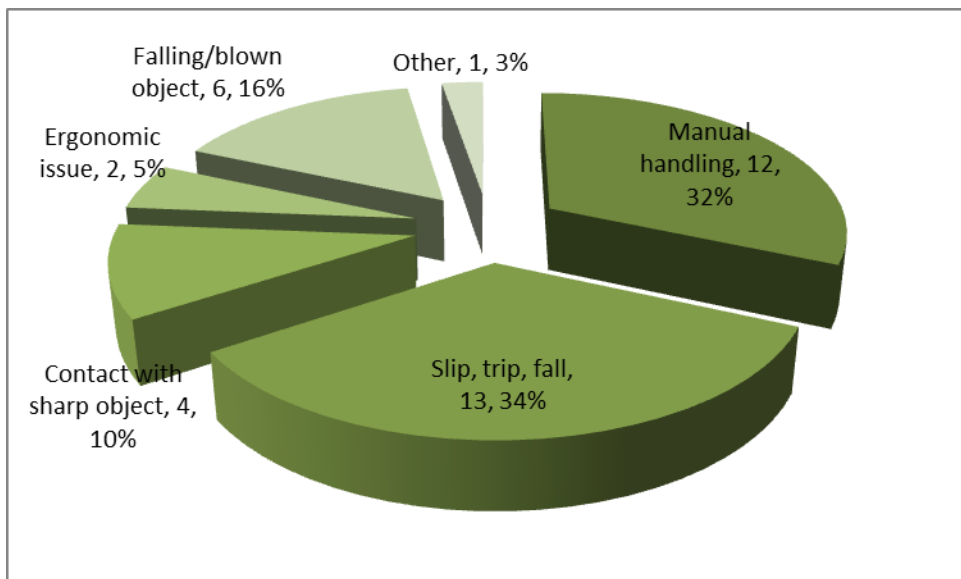
Last year over the same period the accidents were spread over more teams, with Waste and Recycling having 60% of the accidents instead of 82%, and Planning and Building Control having a significantly higher percentage of the accidents (4 out of 38 instead of 1 out of 57).



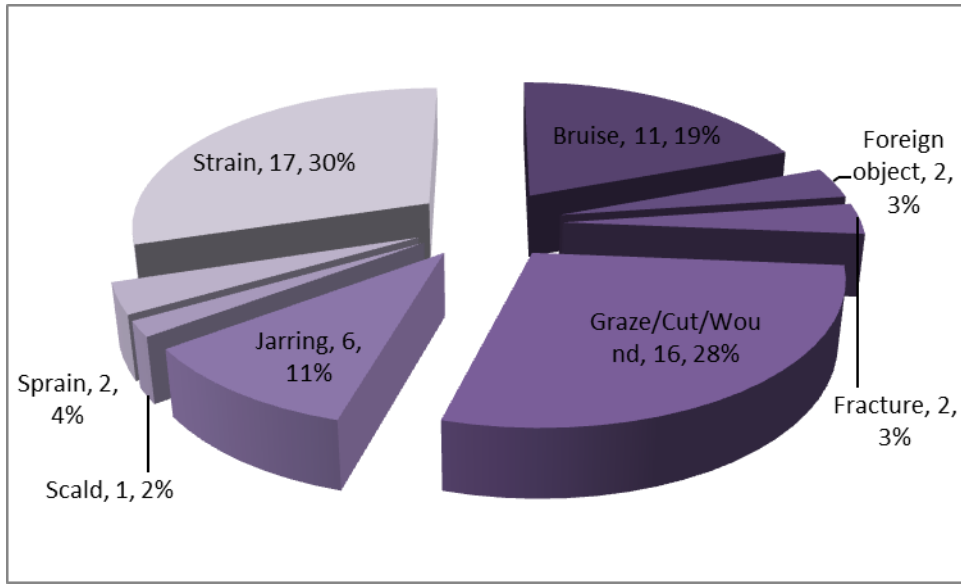
2.4 13 (23%) of the accidents involved slips, trips and falls, 14 (24%) were manual handling problems, 12 (21%) were ergonomic issues, 9 (16%) were contact with a sharp object, 5 were violence and aggression (3 dog bites, 2 personal attacks), 3 were falling objects and 1 was dust flying up and getting into the handler's eyes.



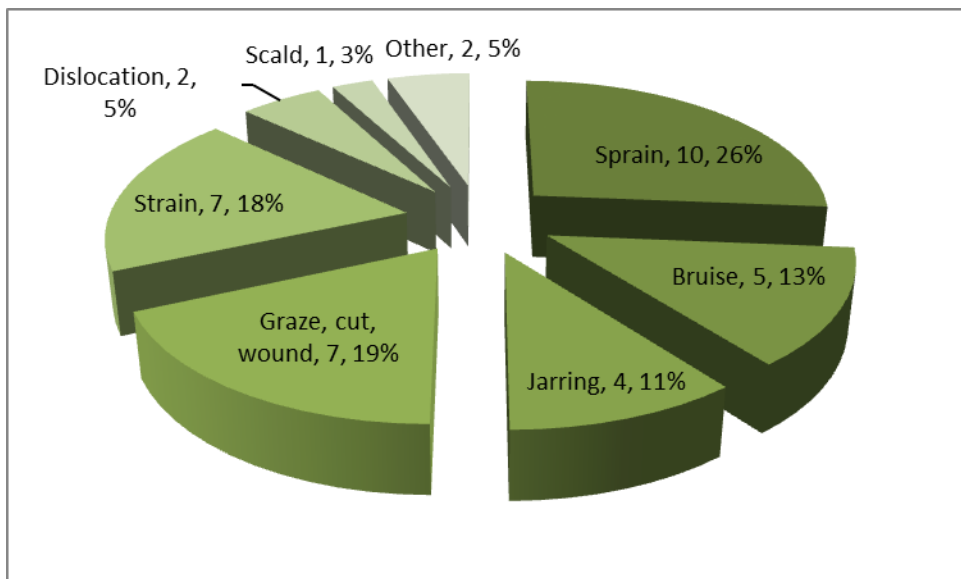
Last year over the same period a greater percentage (34%) were slips, trips and falls, and a greater percentage (32%) were manual handling problems. Ergonomic issues were much less (5%) and contact with sharp objects was less (10%). There had been no violence and aggression, but far more falling/blown object causes (there was a lot of wind in autumn 2013 which caused problems for those working out in it).



2.5 Bruising, strains and wounds still make up the vast majority of the injuries sustained, with a roughly equal amount between strains and wounds, and less bruising. The jarring injuries come next. One fracture was reported to the Health and Safety Executive (the other was an Agency staff and not our role to report it under RIDDOR).



Last year over the same period, sprains were much higher at 26% instead of 4%. Apart from that, this year it was a similar picture except that strains were a higher percentage (30% instead of last year's 18%), as were bruises (19% instead of 13%). Jarring was the same percentage.

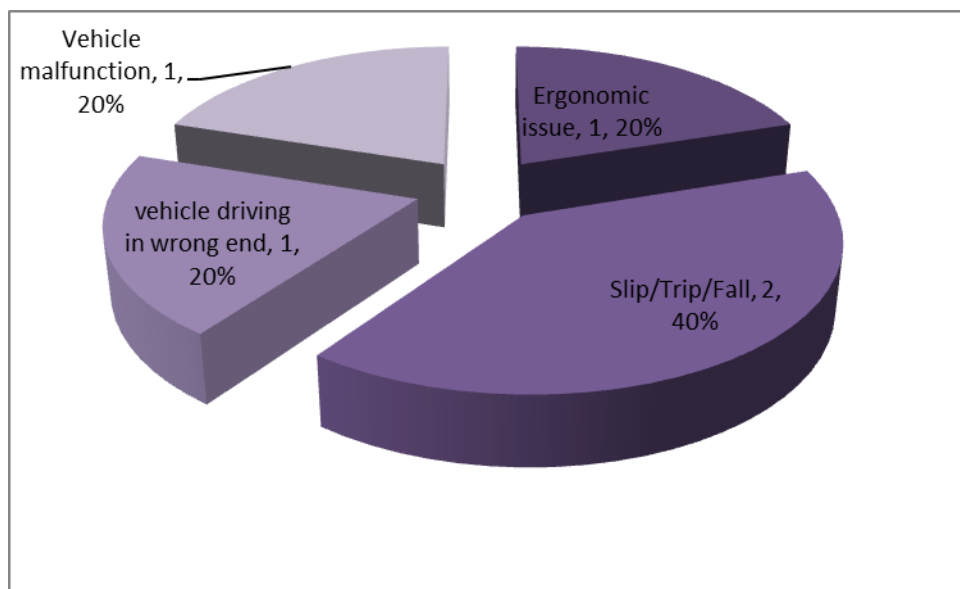


2.6 Near Misses

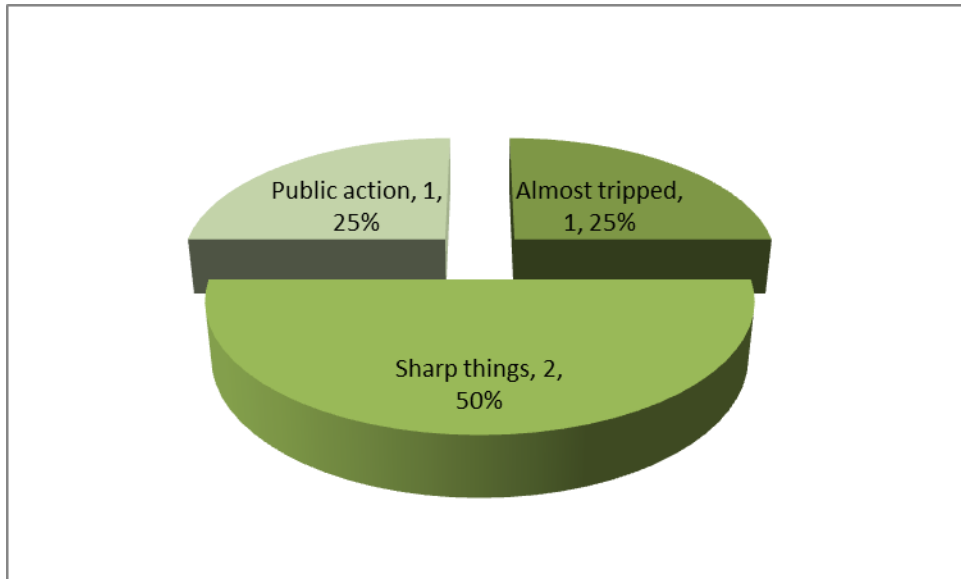
There were five near misses April to December (none reported from October to December). Two were risks of harm from slips, trips and falls, one was risk of harm from an ergonomic issue, one from a vehicle malfunction and one from an external driver ignoring our one way signs.

Four were in Waste and Recycling – three staff and one agency person; one was in Facilities reporting a vehicle travelling the wrong way through the rear thoroughfare of Southover House.

We need to encourage the reporting of more near misses and identified hazards.



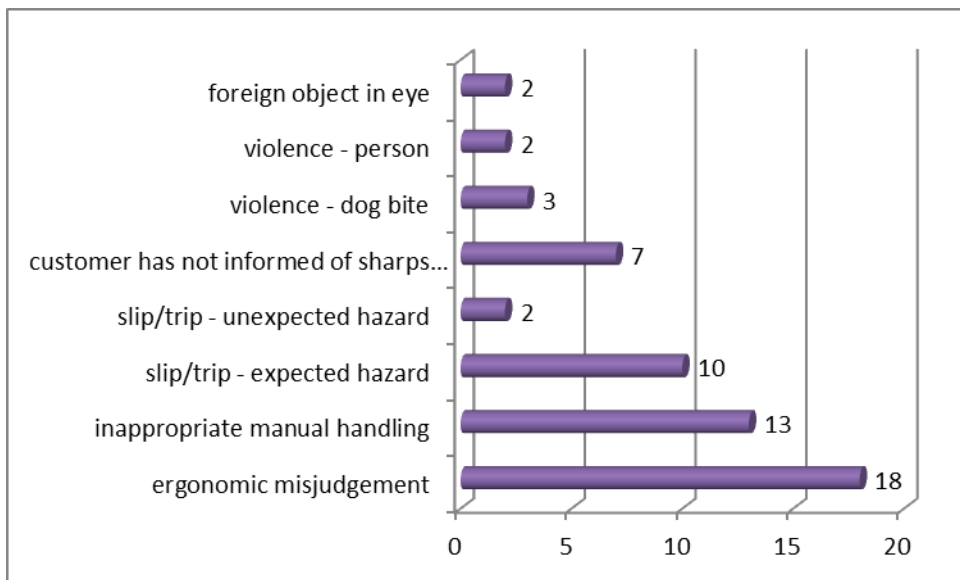
Last year over the same period, there were four near misses (again none reported from October to December): two in Waste and Recycling: one where a member of the public stepped into the road in front of one of our vehicles and one where sharps were not in a sealed sharps container; one in Housing, Fort Road office where a heel caught on a carpet rod, and one in Corporate Support when something sharp was protruding under a table which was being moved.



2.7 Repeat Accidents and near misses

The Health and Safety Officer advised that she would include additional information in future, reporting on repeat accidents and near misses to help the Committee better understand the follow-up actions taken by the Council after accidents had occurred.

The bar chart below shows a general categorisation of accident types so far in 2014-15 for staff (total all 57).



The most accidents are those where people accidentally misjudge situations such as two people carrying a bulky 'fridge, but one is much stronger than the other; or people lifting things and misjudging the effect that will have on other things which are dislodged and therefore fall on them, or thinking that there is more room to carry something through a door/corridor/restricted space than there is and banging part of their body on the way. The follow-up from these accidents is to discuss them with the individual (and in team

meetings) so that people will become more aware and avoid such situations in the future.

The second most accidents are where manual handling is misjudged in some way – either by trying to pick up objects which are too heavy (wet cardboard is common and the bags for cardboard have been halved in size to try and avoid this), or acting in ways that seem easier even though training has said ‘Don’t’ such as twisting to move heavy things. Manual handling refresher training is carried out regularly with staff, and specifically if they have been involved in two or more accidents.

A lot of slips and trips happen where it should be expected such as uneven surfaces even where people know the road, or on wet grass, or when carrying objects on and off kerbs, or stepping in and out of vehicles. Again, this can only be discussed with the individual on reporting the action and any actions to avoid similar accidents in future discussed.

Customers putting sharps (usually broken glass) in waste or recycling without wrapping it or letting people know seems to be hazardous at the moment – cuts even happen through gloves. It may be that these are being reported more, rather than happening more often. Discussions are taking place to develop methods to educate our customers.

Dog bites have happened more this year than previously and we are running a ‘dog-bite avoidance seminar’ for staff in the near future.

2.8 Litigation matters

At the last meeting, the Committee discussed litigation matters, for example where legal action had been pursued as a result of an accident occurring in the workplace. The Health and Safety Officer responded that in the event of this happening, she worked closely with the Council’s Insurance Officer, and she would consider including a summary of litigation matters in future reports when it was appropriate to do so.

In fact, there is only one current staff accident claim – for an arm/shoulder injury resulting from a manual handling accident in 2011; we don’t know when this will be resolved.

3 Financial Appraisal

From the 57 accidents, 55 employee working days have been lost, all of them in Waste and Recycling (12 accidents) which means that 55 days’ Agency staff would have to be paid for as a result of the accidents. [28 of these days were on two accidents, one (15 days) from damaging a replacement hip after slipping on uneven road, and one (13 days) from an ankle fracture after slipping off a kerb (without carrying anything). 43 accidents resulted in no time off work, and 2 are unknown because they were agency staff.]

4 Legal Implications

The Legal Services Department does not need to comment specifically on the accident statistics.

5 Sustainability Implications

I have not completed the Sustainability Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report.

6 Risk Management Implications

I have not completed the Risk Management Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report.

7 Equality Screening

I have not completed the Equality Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report.

8 Background Papers

There are no background papers.

9 Appendices

There are no appendices.