



## Lewes District Council

### To all Members of the Employment Committee

A meeting of the **Employment Committee** will be held in the **Telscombe Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes** on **Monday, 07 December 2015** at **10:00** which you are requested to attend.

Please note the venue for this meeting which is wheelchair accessible and has an induction loop to help people who are hearing impaired.

This meeting may be filmed, recorded or broadcast by any person or organisation. Anyone wishing to film or record must notify the Chair prior to the start of the meeting. Members of the public attending the meeting are deemed to have consented to be filmed or recorded, as liability for this is not within the Council's control.

24/11/2015

Catherine Knight  
Assistant Director - Corporate Services

### Agenda

- 1 Appointment of Committee Member**  
To confirm the appointment of Councillor J Peterson to the Employment Committee. Councillor Peterson replaces Councillor Nicholson.
- 2 Election of Chair**  
To elect a Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year
- 3 Minutes**  
To confirm and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Employment Committee dated 14 September 2015 (copy previously circulated).
- 4 Apologies for Absence**
- 5 Declarations of Interest**  
Disclosure by councillors of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the councillor regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct

- 6 Urgent Items**  
Items not on the agenda which the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances as defined in Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972
- 7 Updated Code of Conduct Policy (page 4)**  
To consider the Report of the HR Manager (Report No 174/15).
- 8 Sickness Report - Report (Page 20)**  
To receive the Report of the HR Manager (Report No 175/15)
- 9 Accidents to Staff from April to October 2015 (Page 33)**  
To receive the Report of the Health and Safety Officer (Report No 176/15)
- 10 Joint Health and Safety Forum Activities from January to November 2015 (Page 42)**  
To receive the Report of the Health and Safety Officer (Report No 177/15)
- 11 Exclusion of the Public and Press**  
To consider, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), excluding the public and press from the meeting during the discussion of Items 12 and 13 on this Agenda as there are likely to be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act
- 12 Consideration of Matters Raised by the Employees' Side**  
To consider any matters raised by the Employees' Side in respect of the items on this Agenda
- 13 Consideration of Health and Safety Matters Raised by the Employees' Side**  
To consider any matters raised by the Employees' Side in respect of Health and Safety
- 14 Date of Next Meeting**  
To note that the next meeting of the Employment Committee is scheduled to be held on Monday , 7 March 2016 in the Telscombe Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes commencing at 10am

For further information about items appearing on this Agenda, please contact Ruby Brittle at Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1AB. Telephone 01273 471600

**Distribution:**

Councillors: T Nicholson, E Merry, S Gauntlett, P Franklin, A Lambert

Employees' Side: Mr M Connolly, Mrs S Harvey, Mrs L Plant and Mr G Purdye

**Agenda Item No: 7**

**Report No:  
174/15**

**Report Title: Updated Code of Conduct Policy**

**Report To: Employment Committee**      **Date: 7  
December  
2015**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Elayne Merry**

**Ward(s) Affected: All**

**Report By: Helen Knight**

**Contact Officer(s)- Helen Knight**

**Name(s): Helen Knight**  
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### **Purpose of Report:**

To update the Council's Code of Conduct for employees.

### **Officers Recommendation(s):**

- 1** To note the report and the updated Policy, and recommend to Cabinet/Full Council that it be implemented.

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 2** The Council seeks to review its existing HR policies regularly to ensure they are up to date, in line with employment law and fit for purpose. These revisions have been undertaken in consultation with the Council's Assistant Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic Services, as well as with consideration to ACAS best practice guidance and the needs of the business.

### **Information**

- 3** Some legislative changes have occurred which have been incorporated into this revised policy under the guidance of the Council's Legal Services.

The most significant revisions are around Safeguarding, Intellectual Property, Purchasing and E cigarettes which can be found in paragraphs 14, 18, 30 and 33.

Unison were approached for their comments on these revised policies on 30 September 2015 and as of the date that this report was submitted for Employment Committee (18 November 2015) none had been received.

### **Financial Appraisal**

- 4 There are no financial implications of this report.

### **Legal Implications**

- 5 Legal Services have contributed to the revision of this policy.

### **Sustainability Implications**

- 6 I have not completed the Sustainability Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report/budget monitoring report/development control report

### **Equality Screening**

- 7 This policy has been subject to an Equality Impact Initial Assessment undertaken by one of the HR Officers.

### **Background Papers**

Code of Conduct for Employees

## **Code of Conduct for Employees**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This Code is designed to ensure that the integrity of the Council and its employees is maintained and that employees have clear guidance on the conduct required of them while employed by the Council.
- 1.2 The Code describes the conduct required in a range of circumstances which you may come across as part of your duties. These are detailed below, but they are neither exhaustive nor exclusive and other circumstances will arise where you will have to consider what conduct the Council would expect. The Code provides sufficient information for all employees to be aware what is required of them.
- 1.3 In such circumstances, you should realise that the Council's (and your) principal aim is to serve the public, who expect a high standard of integrity and service from the Council. You should, therefore, avoid doing anything that could reflect adversely on the Council. If any doubt exists as to the proper course of action, seek advice from your manager or Head of Service.
- 1.4 This Code sets out the minimum standards of conduct that employees are expected to observe when carrying out their duties. You should take time to read this and make sure you understand it. If you require clarification you should speak to your manager.

### **2. Status of the Code**

- 2.1 The Code applies to all employees and casual workers of the Council. Agency workers and consultants should also ensure that they observe the principles described. Failure to adhere to the code may make an employee liable to disciplinary action and in some cases a breach of the Code could result in criminal prosecution.
- 2.2 This Code of Conduct sits aside other policies and procedures which you should read and understand including;
  - Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy
  - The Whistleblowing Policy
  - The IT Security Policies
  - The Social Media Guidelines
  - Equality Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy
- 2.3 The Code supplements any specific provisions regarding work conduct or rules in:
  - Your terms and conditions of employment.
  - Council's Constitution.

- The national conditions of service applicable to your post.

### 3. Actions Required

- 3.1 Some of the provisions in this code require employees to disclose information to the appropriate manager. Where this is required employees should inform their line manager or Head of Service and make an entry in the Disclosure Book held by the Head of Democratic Services or complete a Close Personal Relationships Declaration Form.
- 3.2 The appropriate managers for Heads of Services to disclose information to are the Directors and for the Directors the appropriate manager is the Chief Executive, for the Chief Executive it is the Leader of the Council.

### 4. Standards

- 4.1 Local government employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to councillors and fellow employees with impartiality.
- 4.2 You will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service.
- 4.3 You must report to the appropriate manager any impropriety or breach of procedure. In particular you are required to work within the framework of the National Law, the Council's Constitution and the National Conditions of Service for your particular employment group, as adopted by the Council.
- 4.4 If you do not feel able for any reason to notify your manager or an appropriate manager within the Council you must express your concerns about any breach of procedure or impropriety to any one of the designated posts or bodies listed in **Whistleblowing Policy** without fear of recrimination.
- 4.5 You must also have regard to the Council's Values and Behaviours and any Council policies which may have a bearing on how Council employees should conduct themselves, e.g. Equality Policy, Dignity at Work Policy.

### 5. Disclosure of Information

- 5.1 It is generally accepted that open government is best. The law requires that certain types of information must be available to members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public.
- 5.2 The authority itself may decide to be open about other types of information.
- 5.3 You must be aware of which information this authority is and is not open about, and act accordingly.

## **6. Confidential Information**

- 6.1 All information or knowledge obtained during the course of your employment must be treated as confidential, unless and until it is formally made public.
- 6.2 It should not be disclosed to any person except to another appropriate employee or otherwise in the course of your employment for legitimate purposes.
- 6.3 Above all, it must not be disclosed for your own advantage or that of anyone known to or connected to you.

## **7. Computers and Information**

- 7.1 The Council has established policies and procedures concerning Data Protection and IT security which you are required to follow, these policies and procedures can be found on Info link.
- 7.2 For all new employees, within the first six months of employment your manager will draw your attention to other policies and procedures which should be read in conjunction with this code as part of your induction.
- 7.3 Before any new employee, consultant, agency worker or casual worker can access any of the Council's IT systems they will have to undergo several pre - employment/work checks including HR obtaining two employment references and ensuring that there are no unexplained breaks in employment for the last 3 years.
- 7.4 You must read the LDC IT Security policies and successfully complete the IT quiz before access to the IT system is given.
- 7.5 You should not use any information obtained in the course of your employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should you pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.
- 7.6 Any particular information received from a councillor, which is personal to the councillor and does not belong to the authority should not be divulged without the prior approval of that councillor, except where such disclosure is required or sanctioned by the law.

## **8. Personal Interests**

- 8.1 Your off-duty hours are your own personal concern; however you must not put yourself in a position where your job and personal interests conflict or you could bring the Council into disrepute through your actions. This could lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

## **9. Personal Information**

- 9.1 Most employees have access to and are able to access and/or alter sensitive personal data.

- 9.2 You must not, in any circumstances, make any alteration, including insertion, deletion or amendment to any financial or non- financial record in which you have an interest, however tenuous.
- 9.3 A list of such interests, though not exhaustive, will include:
- Property, owned, leased, rented or licensed either by you or with others (including subdivided properties)
  - Neighbours, including the street in which you live, or people living near by
  - Close personal relationships as defined in policy Close Personal Relationships at Work
  - Organisations such as sports clubs and other similar bodies in which you have an ongoing interest, have membership of, or have been in any way involved with in the recent past.
- 9.4 All Members and staff involved in benefit administration and investigation must register with the Head of Democratic Services any interest that they have in property within the Lewes District Council area that they rent to tenants (even when those tenants are not claiming benefit).
- 9.5 If you work in benefit administration or investigation you will be asked to declare any such interest when you first join the Council and are required to register an interest should the position change during the course of your employment.
- 9.6 No written rules can hope to cover all possibilities or situations and you must, if any doubt exists, contact your line manager for advice on how to proceed. In his/her absence the query should be referred upwards.

## **10. Political Neutrality**

- 10.1 Employees serve the authority as a whole. It follows they must serve all councillors and not just those of the controlling group, and must ensure that the individual rights of all councillors are respected.
- 10.2 Subject to the authority's conventions, employees may also be required to advise political groups in their official capacity within the Council and they must do so in ways which do not compromise their political neutrality.
- 10.3 Employees, whether or not politically restricted, must follow the authorities' policies and procedures and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.
- 10.4 Local Authority employees holding politically restricted posts are disqualified from membership of any local authority, other than a parish or community council, from being an MP or MEP and are subject to prescribed restrictions on their political activity.
- 10.5 The Local Government Officers (Political Restriction) regulations 1990 and the Local Government (Politically Restricted Posts (No 2) Regulations 1990 covers the posts which are politically restricted.

These are:

- Specified posts, such as the Chief Executive and the Monitoring officer. Chief Officers and their deputies are restricted without exemption or appeal;
- All posts which reach or exceed the grade PO11 or above. These posts are automatically included on a list which employing authorities are under a duty to prepare unless exemption for individuals is granted.
- All posts which meet the duties - related criteria for determining a 'sensitive' post, irrespective of remuneration level unless the post holder appeals successfully against determination. These posts are defined as those which (i) give advice on a regular basis to the employing authority, to any committee or sub-committee or another joint committee on which the authority is represented (but excluding purely factual information or speak on behalf of the authority on a regular basis to journalists and broadcasters.

- 10.6 The political restrictions are deemed to be incorporated in the contract of employment of every local authority employee who holds a politically restricted post.

Politically restricted post holders are advised of the fact on appointment.

## **11. Relationships with Councillors**

- 11.1 Employees are responsible to the authority through its senior managers. For some, their role is to give advice to councillors and senior managers and all are there to carry out the authority's work.
- 11.2 Mutual respect between employees and councillors is essential to good local government.
- 11.3 Close personal familiarity between employees and individual councillors can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and councillors and should, therefore, be avoided.

## **12. Relationships with the Local Community and Service Users**

- 12.1 Employees should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the authority.

## **13. Relationships with Contractors**

- 13.1 All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, must be made known to the appropriate manager using the Close Personal Relationships at Work Policy and disclosure form.
- 13.2 Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives in the tendering process.

- 13.3 No part of the local community should be discriminated against.
- 13.4 If you engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, you must declare that relationship to the Head of Service and take no part in the contract or in the awarding of that contract.

## **14. Safeguarding**

- 14.1 The Children's Act 2004 includes a specify duty on District Councils to have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to co-operate with other agencies to improve the well-being of children and young people, therefore all employees are expected to work to promote safeguarding within the Council and with members of the public
- 14.2 You should ensure that all policies relating to Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults as agreed by the authority are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law.
- 14.3 You have a responsibility to report any safeguarding concerns over the welfare of children, young people or vulnerable adults. This extends to the identification of signs of abuse; poor practice by staff, councillors and others acting for or on behalf of the council, and allegations brought to our attention by a member of the public in line with the Safeguarding policy.

## **15. Appointment and other Employment Matters**

- 15.1 Employees involved in appointments should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. It would be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment which was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post.
- 15.2 In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, you should not be involved in an appointment where you are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship outside work with him or her

You should also complete the form to disclose the personal relationship under the Councils Personal Relationships at Work Policy whether the relationship exists at the start or develops during the course of employment.

- 15.3 Similarly, you should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any other employee who is a relative, partner, etc. In particular;

(i) The provisions of the Scheme of Conditions of Service for NJC APT & C Staff, Section 1, Paragraph 6(a) is deemed to apply to all employees of the Council. "Every candidate for any appointment under the employing authority shall, when making an application disclose in writing to the Chief Executive of the authority

whether to his knowledge he is related to any member of the authority or to a holder of any senior office under the authority.

- 15.4 Deliberate omission to make such a disclosure will disqualify the candidate, and if the omission is discovered after appointment they shall be liable to dismissal.
- 15.5 It shall be the duty of the Chief Executive to report to the authority or appropriate committee any such disclosure made to them.
- 15.6 The Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) Regulations 2001 also prescribe the procedure to be followed in respect of the appointment of Chief Officers and their dismissal in the event of misconduct.
- 15.7 You must complete the Close Personal Relationships at work Declaration form if you have a connection in a private, social or domestic capacity with someone who also works for the Council.

## **16. Outside Commitments**

- 16.1 Staff employed by the Council have conditions of service which require them to obtain written consent to take any outside employment.
- 16.2 Staff should be clear about their individual contractual obligations and should not take outside employment which conflicts with the authority's interests.
- 16.3 Any member of staff who wishes to take up other paid employment should first get the consent of their manager, Head of Service or Directors, they in turn and the Chief Executive must get the consent of the Council.
- 16.4 In practice the Council will not normally object, provided that there is not, or will not be in the foreseeable future, any possible conflict of interest between the two appointments and that the principles set out in this Code are adhered to.

## **17. Inventions and Patents**

- 17.1 Staff must follow the authority's rules on the ownership of intellectual property (\*see 18 below) or copyright created during your employment.
- 17.2 Inventions made before 1 June 1978 are the property of the Council if made in the course of the Council's employment. However the Patents Act 1977 states that after 1 June 1978 inventions are only the property of the employer if:
  - They have been made in the course of the employee's normal duties, or
  - They have been made in the course of duties specifically assigned to the employees and where invention might be reasonably expected; or
  - It was made in the course of the employee's duties and at the time the employee had (because of the nature of his or her duties and particular responsibilities arising from them) a special obligation to further the interests of the employer.

## **18. Intellectual Property.**

- 18.1 Under the Intellectual Property Act 2014 it is now a criminal offence for the intentional copying of UK or EU registered design, this does not apply to unregistered designs although a civil case can be brought against someone believed to have deliberately copied unregistered designs. Therefore employees must ensure that they do not intentionally copy someone else's intellectual property.
- 18.2 The Council will continue to own the rights to any design(s) that employees produce as part of the employment with the Council under the terms and conditions of their employment
- 18.3 The Intellectual Property Act 2014 applies to all designs created on or after 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, unless the design was created under a contract which existed prior to this date and which also specifies who owns the design.

## **19. Personal Interests – General**

- 19.1 Employees must declare to an appropriate manager any non-financial or financial interests that you consider could bring about conflict with the authority's interests.

## **20. Personal Interests - At Work**

- 20.1 Employees must refrain from becoming involved in a Council capacity with any matter in which you have a direct or indirect interest. This rule is an absolute one in cases of direct financial interest.
- 20.2 It also applies in cases of indirect interest, for example, through membership of any organisation in negotiation with the Council, through family or friends or by any other relationship or association where an outsider might suspect that the relationship could influence your or the Council's views.
- 20.3 The important thing is that it must be crystal clear to an outsider that everything is open and above board; there must be no room for suspicion, however ill-founded that suspicion might be,
- 20.4 In any case, where you do have an interest, either direct or indirect, you must not take part in any Council capacity in connection with the matter in question without the prior knowledge and consent of your Head of Service which will only be given in suitable and probably rare circumstances;
- 20.5 Any interest must be notified to your Head of Service formally. This can take the form of a general disclosure - for example, an employee working in the Planning Service Area would inform the Head of Planning Policy generally of that interest, and the fact that planning applications would be made;
- 20.6 A record of the interest should be made in the Disclosure Book maintained by the Head of Democratic Services;

- 20.7 Staff must not attempt to seek information or in any way discuss with your colleagues the matter in question.
- 20.8 Above all, workers must deal with colleagues, Council Members, other organisations and the public in a prompt and courteous manner.

## **21. Personal Interests - Out of Work**

- 21.1 The general rule is that you're off duty hours are your personal concern and broadly speaking you are entitled to spend your free time as you wish.
- 21.2 You must never put yourself in a position where there may be, or is suspected to be, a conflict between your official position and your private interest, whether remunerated or not. It is impossible to draw up a comprehensive list, but a few examples will serve to illustrate those occasions when conflict may arise (and therefore the activity should not be embarked upon) and those where conflict is unlikely (and therefore the activity may be in order unless and until a conflict does arise, in which case it must be discontinued forthwith)
- Any employee within any Service Area is precluded from drawing plans for planning permission, building regulation consent, or any other purpose over which this Council exercises statutory control.
  - Any Solicitor is precluded from acting in any conveyancing matter where the Council is involved in the same transaction as a mortgagee, vendor or purchaser or in making a grant.
  - Any member of Estates is precluded from giving independent valuation advice in respect of properties which are the subject of acquisition, disposal or mortgage by the Council or from acting in connection with any negotiations for such purposes.
  - Any member of Finance is precluded from altering computer records relating to any financial dealings that they themselves may have with the Council, e.g. Council Tax records.
  - All employees are precluded from having any dealings with a Contractor to the Council where they or a close relative have any relationship, however remote, with that contractor.
  - All employees are precluded from accepting any gift or legacy made to them as a consequence of their job whether they know about it or not.
  - Employees should never knowingly become Power of Attorney, trustees, executors or beneficiaries of customers' wills. Employees should not be involved in witnessing wills or other legal papers or documents for customers'.
- 21.3 The following are generally permissible within the Code of Conduct (but subject of disclosure where necessary)
- Any individual employee acting for themselves or in certain circumstances for their immediate family.
  - Any employee preparing plans and drawing for approval by another Local Authority.
  - Any employee (subject to general statutory and regulatory provisions) acting for or giving independent service in connection with any matter where the

District Council is not - nor likely to be - involved in any capacity, however remote.

## **22. Equality Issues**

- 22.1 All employees are expected to work to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and good relations.
- 22.2 You should ensure that policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the authority are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law.
- 22.3 All members of the local community, customers and other employees have a right to be treated with fairness and equity.

## **23. Separation of Roles during Tendering**

- 23.1 If you are involved in the tendering process and dealing with contractors you should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles within the authority.
- 23.2 Senior employees who have both a client and contractor responsibility must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.
- 23.3 If you are in a contractor or client service area you must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers' suppliers, other contractors and subcontractors.
- 23.4 If you are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors you should not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- 23.5 If you are contemplating a management buyout you should, as soon as you have formed a definite intent, inform the appropriate manager and withdraw from the contract awarding processes.
- 23.6 You should ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

## **24. Corruption**

- 24.1 It is a serious criminal offence to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person in your official capacity.
- 24.2 If an allegation is made it is for you to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained:  
**In particular:-**

- 24.3 Under the **Bribery Act 2010**, it is an offence for employees corruptly to accept any gifts or consideration as an inducement or reward for:
- Doing, or refraining from doing, anything in their official capacity; or
  - Showing any favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity.
- 24.4 Under the **Bribery Act 2010**, any money, gift or consideration received by an employee in public service from a person or organisation holding or seeking to obtain a contract will be deemed by the courts to have been received corruptly unless the employee proves to the contrary.
- 24.5 Any gifts, hospitality or bequests received or offered, should be recorded in the Council's Hospitality Register kept by the Head of Democratic Services.
- 24.6 If there is any doubt as to whether the gift or hospitality needs to be recorded you should record it.
- 24.7 Records keeping details of any trips abroad on Council business and copies of the necessary form should be kept and are available from the Head of Democratic Services.

## **25. Use of Resources**

- 25.1 You must ensure that you use public funds entrusted to you in a responsible and lawful manner.
- 25.2 You should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge to the authority In particular:

## **26. Use of Council Facilities**

- 26.1 All Council facilities, including telephones, stationery, stamps, photocopying and printing services, depot equipment, vehicles and transport are provided for official use only they are not intended for personal use\* Please see the Contract Hire Car Policy for further details.
- 26.2 At the discretion of the Head of Service, but normally only in exceptional circumstances, you may be permitted to avail yourself of certain of the Council's services and equipment, provided that all appropriate reimbursements are made to the Council.
- 26.3 However, such reimbursement can never properly recompense the Council, because of added hidden costs, such as maintenance, loss of employee's time, etc. and the use of facilities in this way if permitted at all, will only be permitted sparingly.
- 26.4 Council facilities must not be used at any time for the employee's private gain.

## **27. Postage and Stationery Facilities**

- 27.1 You are not permitted to put private mail through the office mail system, which carries the official stamp of the Council, for either franking or use of stamps, at any time.
- 27.2 Employees are not to use for personal purposes any stationery or equipment which carries the official titles of the Council.

## **28. Telephones**

- 28.1 The Council's telephone system is provided for the conduct of the Council's business and except in exceptional circumstances, personal incoming calls are to be discouraged, since they occupy switchboard lines that members of the public may wish to use.
- 28.2 When they do occur, you are asked to keep them as brief as possible.
- 28.3 If an external personal call has to be made, it should be recorded - either directly on the telephone system itself in the case of the Council's main switchboard or on a telephone record pad available from your service area, and subsequently paid for.

## **29. Claims for Expenses and Payments**

- 29.1 If you are required to complete timesheets, flexi records, overtime claims and or other similar documentation, which has been signed and thus represents a claim for payment, you should check it thoroughly for accuracy.
- 29.2 Where inaccuracies in claims are found and appear to have been purposely falsified, these may be regarded as fraud for which you are liable to instant dismissal for gross misconduct.

## **30. Purchasing**

- 30.1 If you are required to make a purchase of any kind on behalf of the Council you must not use any personal loyalty cards to gain financially from the transaction.

## **31. Sponsorship - Giving and Receiving**

- 31.1 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a local Government activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply.
- 31.2 Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential customers.
- 31.3 Where Lewes District Council wishes to sponsor an event or service neither you, nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct

way without there being full disclosure to an appropriate Head of Service of any such interest.

- 31.4 Similarly, where the authority through sponsorship grant aid, financial or other means, given support in the community, you should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

## **32. Protective Clothing and Safety Equipment**

- 32.1 The Council provides all necessary protective clothing and equipment to employees who may be exposed to a risk of injury or undertake work that requires it.
- 32.2 If you are issued with or are required to obtain or use this equipment, you must ensure that they are used at all times, both for your own protection and the protection of others who may be working in close proximity to you.

## **33. Fire Precautions**

- 33.1 You must be particularly careful in avoiding activities which may cause fire and to make sure that cigarette ends, matches and other inflammable materials are properly extinguished.
- 33.2 Smoking including the smoking of E Cigarettes is not allowed inside any of the Council buildings and should only be undertaken in designated areas outside of the building(s). This does not include outside the front area of the building(s) where the general public and service users have access.
- 33.3 The fire precautions are included in the employees' induction programme and notices are posted throughout Council buildings, giving instructions for action to be taken in the case of fire, and the authorised exits in case of emergency.
- 33.4 Fire practices are held from time to time without warning and you should follow the instructions immediately and implicitly.

## **34. Personal Possessions**

- 34.1 The Council accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to any of your personal possessions and this includes bicycles and vehicles parked in the council's office's car parks or premises.
- 34.2 You are strongly urged never to leave money or valuables in a place where they may be stolen. Personal lockers should be used where provided.
- 34.3 You should never leave personal belongings untended in areas where the general public have access even for short periods of time.
- 34.4 You are advised to be security conscious of your personal belongings at all times.

## **35. Press and Media**



- 35.1 You must not deal directly with the press or the media in relation to any of the Council's business or affairs unless you are required to do so as part of your duties or you have been expressly authorised by your Head of Service.
- 35.2 If in a personal capacity you attend and or speak at a public meeting or in a personal capacity speak to the press it must be made very clear that you are not representing, speaking or acting on behalf of the Council.

**Any breach of this code of conduct may lead to the disciplinary policy being invoked and could lead to disciplinary action being taken.**

Date of policy	August 2015
Policy drawn up by	Human Resources
Policy ratified by	CMT
Policy review date	January 2017

**Agenda Item No: 8**

**Report  
No:175/15**

**Report Title:           Sickness Report**

**Report To:               Employment Committee      Date:           7 December 2015**

**Cabinet Member:**

**Ward(s) Affected:    All**

**Report By:             Helen Knight & Becky Cooke**

**Contact Officer(s)-   Helen Knight & Becky Cooke**

**Name(s):           Helen Knight/Becky Cooke**  
**Post Title(s):       HR Manager, Shared Service/Head of Organisational  
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### **Purpose of Report:**

To update the Employment Committee regarding the Council's sickness figures.

### **Officers Recommendation(s):**

- 1     To note the report.
- 

### **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 1     The Committee have asked for a regular item to be presented regarding the absence statistics within the Council.

### **Information**

- 2     The figures for Quarter 2 of 2015/16 (1 July to 30 September 2015) are presented as background papers to this report. The average number of days' absence per employee for Q2 was 2.98. Points to note are:
  - 2.1    The data for Q2 is the last which will be presented with the 'old' service area headings. Q3 (from 1 October to 31 December 2015) will be the first available on the new structure of the HR and Payroll system and will represent the Council's current structure. It is worth being aware that it will not easily be possible to make a direct comparison to Q2 figures as some staff will have been moved from one service area to another. However as we continue to present data on an going basis from hereon in, each quarter we will have more information to reflect back on and identify trends

- 2.2 The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) undertake an annual absence management survey each year, and results from their 2015 survey show that the national average absence figure has increased slightly from their 2014 results from 6.6 days to 6.9 days per employee per year. Average absence has increased most in the public services sector to 8.8 days per employee per annum (where it is now 50% higher than in the private sector). On average manual workers have 1.5 more days' absence per year than non-manual workers. Just a quarter of organisations achieved their 2014 target to reduce employee absence.
- 2.3 Sickness absence for Q2 at LDC has increased from Q1 and has also increased from the same quarter last year. This can in part be attributed to a number of long term absence cases, particularly in the areas of Housing and Waste Services. Overall, long term sickness represented 67% of the total absence figure in Q2. In Waste Services specifically, 75% of absence in Q2 relates to long term cases, and all of which are being managed through the Sickness Procedure. By removing Waste Services absence, the overall LDC figure for Q2 reduces to 2.18 which is a figure that is more in line with neighbouring authorities who don't have an in house waste service, and also with national public sector absence rates.
- 2.4 During Q2 there were 19 separate instances of long term absence (over 3 weeks) some of which started in the previous quarter, with 13 still being off - 4 of the 19 have now left the organisation and 1 has commenced maternity leave.

9 cases (47.36%) were in Waste Services. Since these figures were produced this has reduced to 3 due to employees returning to work, leaving or retiring.

The remaining 10 were across a variety of areas.

Reasons for absence were varied:

- 4 – musculoskeletal (not back)
- 2 – cancer
- 4 – stress (3 of whom cite work related stress)
- Remaining – various.

56.02% of total days lost in Q2 to long term absence were from Waste Services.

- 2.5 During Q2 there were 90 separate instances of short term absence. 46 of these instances (51%) were in Waste Services with the rest being

spread out across the organisation. 41.89% of total days lost in Q2 to short term absence were from Waste Services.

2.6 During Q2 51.28 % of total days/overall absence for short and long term absences came from Waste Services.

2.7 There were some notable increases in particular service areas during Q2 (from Q1) and these are largely due to long term absences which have either now ended or are being managed with support from HR as follows:

Property, Regeneration & Enterprise: Long term absence of employee who has resigned since the Q2 figures were produced

Housing: A long term absence has now resulted in Ill Health Retirement for one employee, another employee is long term absent and is expected to remain so until the New Year as they are receiving treatment for Cancer.

Internal Services: A long term absence for one employee was for a pregnancy related reason and ceased when her maternity leave started

Waste and Recycling: Several of the long term absences noted during Q2 have now returned to work with just a couple of employees still absent and progressing through the stages of the Sickness procedure

Planning and Environmental Health: Had a significant reduction during Q2 as a long term absence resulted in Ill Health Retirement.

2.8 The sickness policy is currently being reviewed. Feedback has suggested it needs to have clearer guidelines around managing absence, particularly long term cases. The review will also consider bringing the trigger levels into line with other authorities. HR will liaise with Unison about these revisions, and the final draft version will be brought to Employment Committee for discussion.

2.9 Finally, CMT are working with their heads of service to ensure that the momentum of sickness absence management is not lost, particularly in Waste Services which accounts overall for over 50% of our lost days.

### **3 Financial Appraisal**

3.1 The financial implications of this report are the number of working days lost to sickness.

### **4 Legal Implications**

4.1 The Legal Services Department have not been asked for comments.

## **5 Sustainability Implications**

- 5.1 I have not completed the Sustainability Implications Questionnaire as this Report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report/budget monitoring report/development control report

## **6 Equality Screening**

- 6.1 Equality analysis is not required as this is an information only report with no key decisions attached.

## **7 Background Papers**

- 7.1 Excel spreadsheet showing the Council's sickness figures for Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September 2015)
- 7.2 Excel Spreadsheet showing reasons for absence (by service area) during Quarter 2

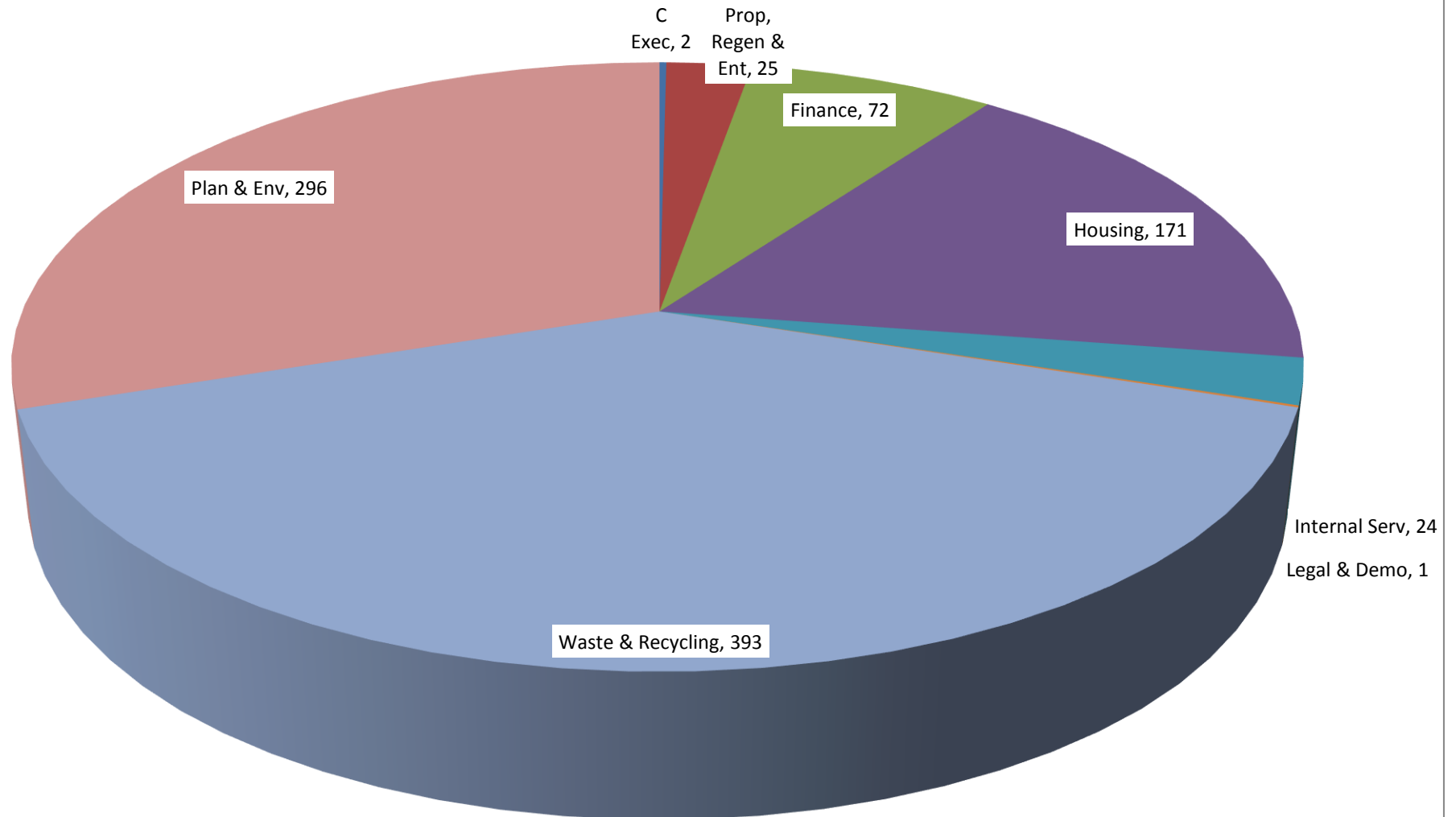
Short Term Absence Reason Q2	
Reason	Number
Animal or insect Bite	3
Asthma	1
Back or Spinal Problem	3
Chest Pains	1
Common Cold	7
Dental Problem	1
Dizziness	1
Flu	6
Headache or Migraine	5
Hospital Appointment	2
Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	16
Nose mouth or throat disorder	2
Not Specified	1
Operation & Recovery	2
Other disorder	6
Sickness	1
Stomach or bowel disorder	17
Stress	2
Throat infection or tonsilitis	1
Unspecified	4
Viral Infection	11

Short Term Absence Reasons by Department Q2		
Department	Reason	Number
<b>Chief Executive Secreteriat</b>	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
<b>Revenues &amp; Benefits</b>	Asthma	1
	Common cold	1
	Flu	2
	Other disorder	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	2
	Viral infection	2
<b>Housing Management</b>	Common cold	1
	Headache or migraine	1
	Other disorder	2
	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
	Viral infection	1
<b>Housing Strategy &amp; Needs</b>	Stress	1
<b>Property Services</b>	Dizziness	1
	Hospital Appointment	1
	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	1
	Not specified	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
	Viral infection	1
<b>Corporate Support</b>	Animal or insect bite sting	1
	Flu	1
	Nose mouth or throat disorder	1
<b>Customer Services</b>	Common cold	1
	Headache or migraine	3
	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	1
	Operation & Recovery	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	2
<b>Information Technology</b>	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
	Viral infection	1
<b>Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	Nose mouth or throat disorder	1
	Viral infection	1
<b>Waste Services</b>	Animal or insect bite sting	2
	Back or spinal problem	2
	Chest pains	1
	Common cold	4
	Dental problem	1
	Depression	1
	Flu	3
	Headache or migraine	1
	Hospital Appointment	1
	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	12
	Operation & Recovery	1
	Other disorder	2
	Sickness	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	7
	Throat infection or tonsilitis	1
	Unspecified	4
	Viral infection	2
<b>Fleet Services</b>	Back or spinal problem	1
	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
	Viral infection	1
<b>Housing &amp; Environmental Health</b>	Stress	1
<b>Planning</b>	Hospital Appointment	1
	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
<b>Property, Regeneration Enterprise</b>	Viral infection	1
<b>Tourism &amp; Economic Development</b>	Other disorder	1

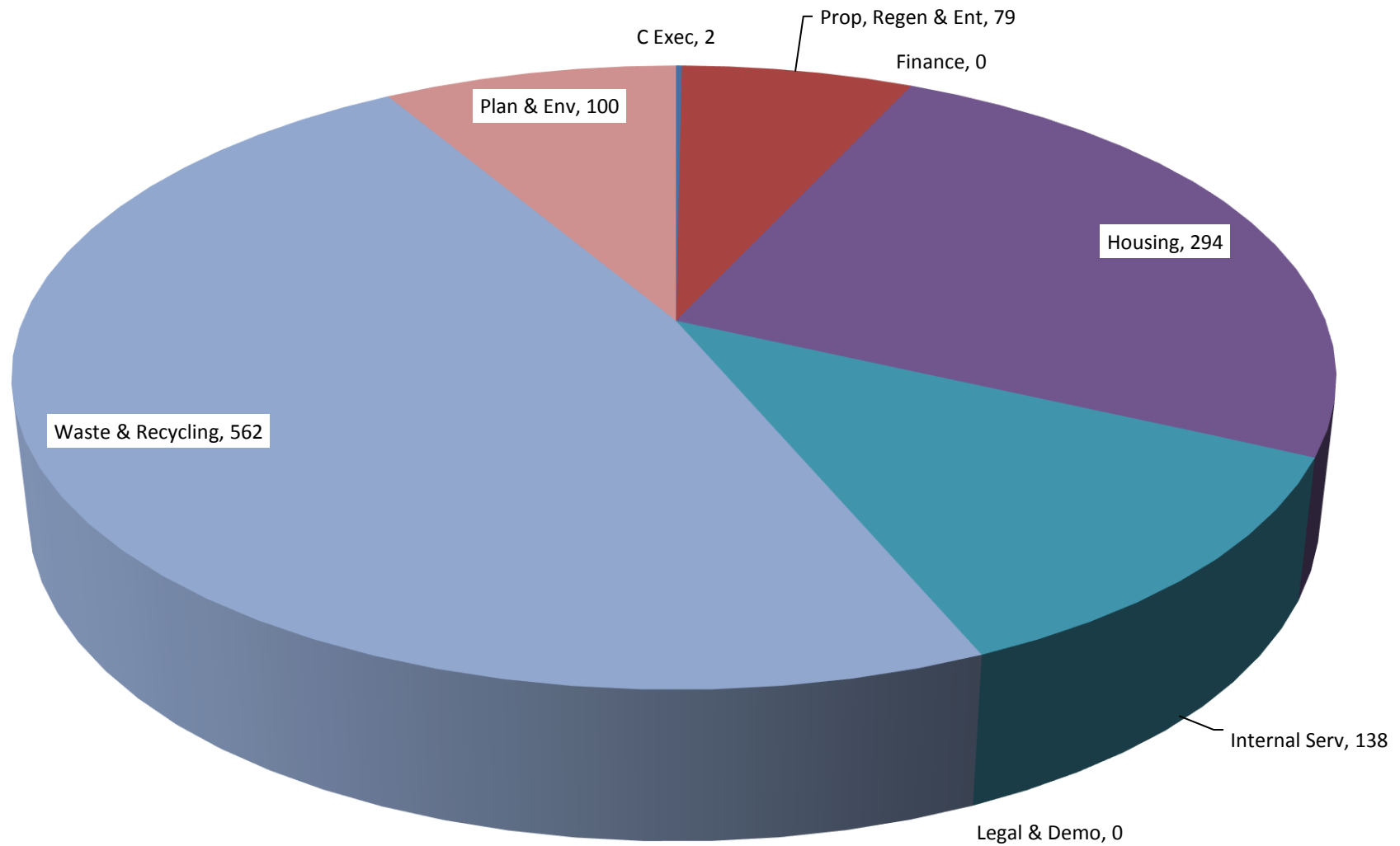
Long Term Absence Reasons	
Reason	Number
Cancer	2
Depression	1
Heart Problem	1
Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	4
Nose mouth or throat disorder	1
Operation	1
Stomach or Bowel Disorder	1
Stress	3
Unspecified	1

Long Term Absence Reasons by Department		
Department	Reason	Number
Revenues & Benefits	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
	Heart Problem	1
Housing Management	Cancer	1
Housing Strategy & Needs	Operation	1
Waste Services	Back or spinal problem	1
	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	3
	Stomach or bowel disorder	1
	Stress	3
	Unspecified	2
Housing & Environmental Health	Cancer	1
	Musculoskeletal problem (not back)	1
	Stress	1
Planning	Depression	1
	Nose mouth or throat disorder	1

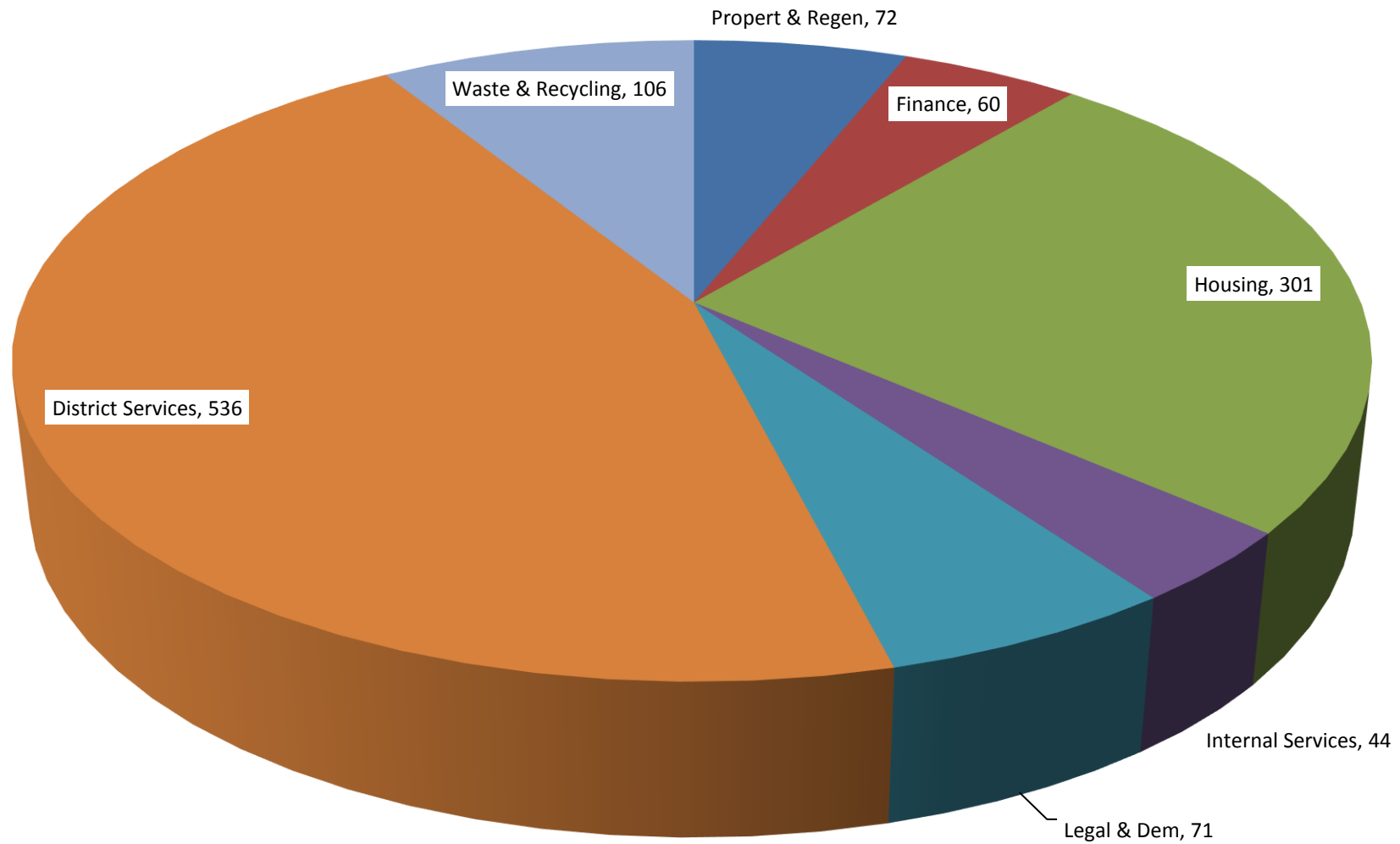
## Days Lost Q1 2015/16



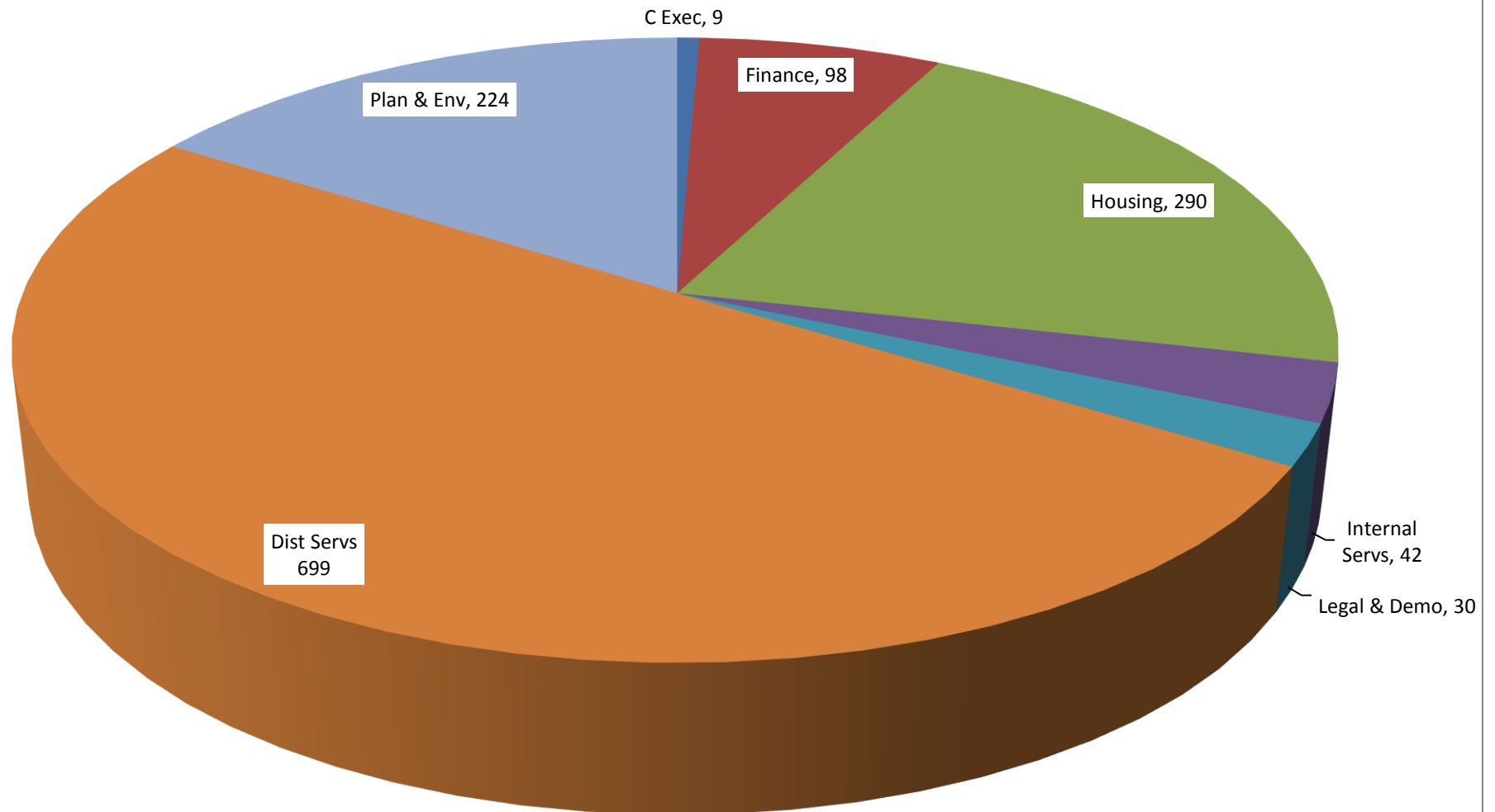
## Days Lost Q2 15/16



## Days Lost Q3 14/15



## Days Lost Q4 14/15



<b>Dept</b>	<b>FTE 31/12/13</b>	<b>FTE 31/3/14</b>	<b>FTE 30/6/14</b>	<b>FTE 30/9/14</b>	<b>FTE 31/12/14</b>	<b>FTE 31/3/15</b>	<b>Q1 FTE</b>	<b>Q2 FTE</b>	<b>Q3 FTE</b>
C Exec	7.00	7.00	10.00	13.00	13.00	11.00	7.00	7.00	13.00
Prop & Regen & Ent	25.77	25.50	26.88	25.28	20.85	23.74	19.64	17.64	20.85
Finance	56.38	55.61	53.81	51.73	52.00	46.31	52.00	54.00	52.00
Housing	80.10	77.15	71.52	72.21	69.25	52.08	76.63	72.63	69.25
Internal Serv	29.77	29.77	29.58	29.18	28.57	21.86	27.77	31.77	28.57
Legal & Demo	23.68	24.68	22.86	22.59	22.61	16.64	30.18	31.18	22.61
Waste & Recycling	111.53	111.94	102.24	112.86	112.00	114.00	111.74	113.74	112.00
Plan & Env	70.15	67.36	69.06	66.98	61.00	69.00	67.76	65.76	61.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>404.38</b>	<b>399.01</b>	<b>385.95</b>	<b>393.83</b>	<b>379.28</b>	<b>354.63</b>	<b>392.72</b>	<b>393.72</b>	<b>279.28</b>

<b>Dept</b>	<b>14/15 Q1 Absences</b>	<b>14/15 Q2 Absences</b>	<b>14/15 Q3 Absences</b>	<b>14/15 Q4 Absences</b>	<b>15/16 Q1 Absences</b>	<b>15/16 Q2 Absences</b>	<b>Q1 Days per FTE</b>	<b>Q2 Days per FTE</b>	<b>Q3 Days per FTE</b>
C Exec	26.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	2.00	0.29	0.29	0.00
Prop, Regen & Ent	27.00	11.80	71.84	9.00	25.00	79.00	1.27	4.48	3.45
Finance	128.00	88.07	60.20	98.00	72.00	0.00	1.38	0.00	1.16
Housing	191.50	289.54	300.99	290.00	171.00	293.50	2.23	4.04	4.35
Internal Serv	30.00	24.11	43.93	42.00	24.00	138.00	0.86	4.34	1.54
Legal & Demo	8.00	15.36	71.00	30.00	1.00	0.00	0.03	0.00	3.14
Waste & Recycling	371.00	296.83	536.00	699.00	393.00	562.00	3.52	4.94	4.79
Plan & Env	119.00	111.75	106.00	223.50	296.00	100.00	4.37	1.52	1.74
<b>Total</b>	<b>900.50</b>	<b>837.46</b>	<b>1189.96</b>	<b>1391.50</b>	<b>984.00</b>	<b>1174.5</b>	<b>2.51</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>4.26</b>

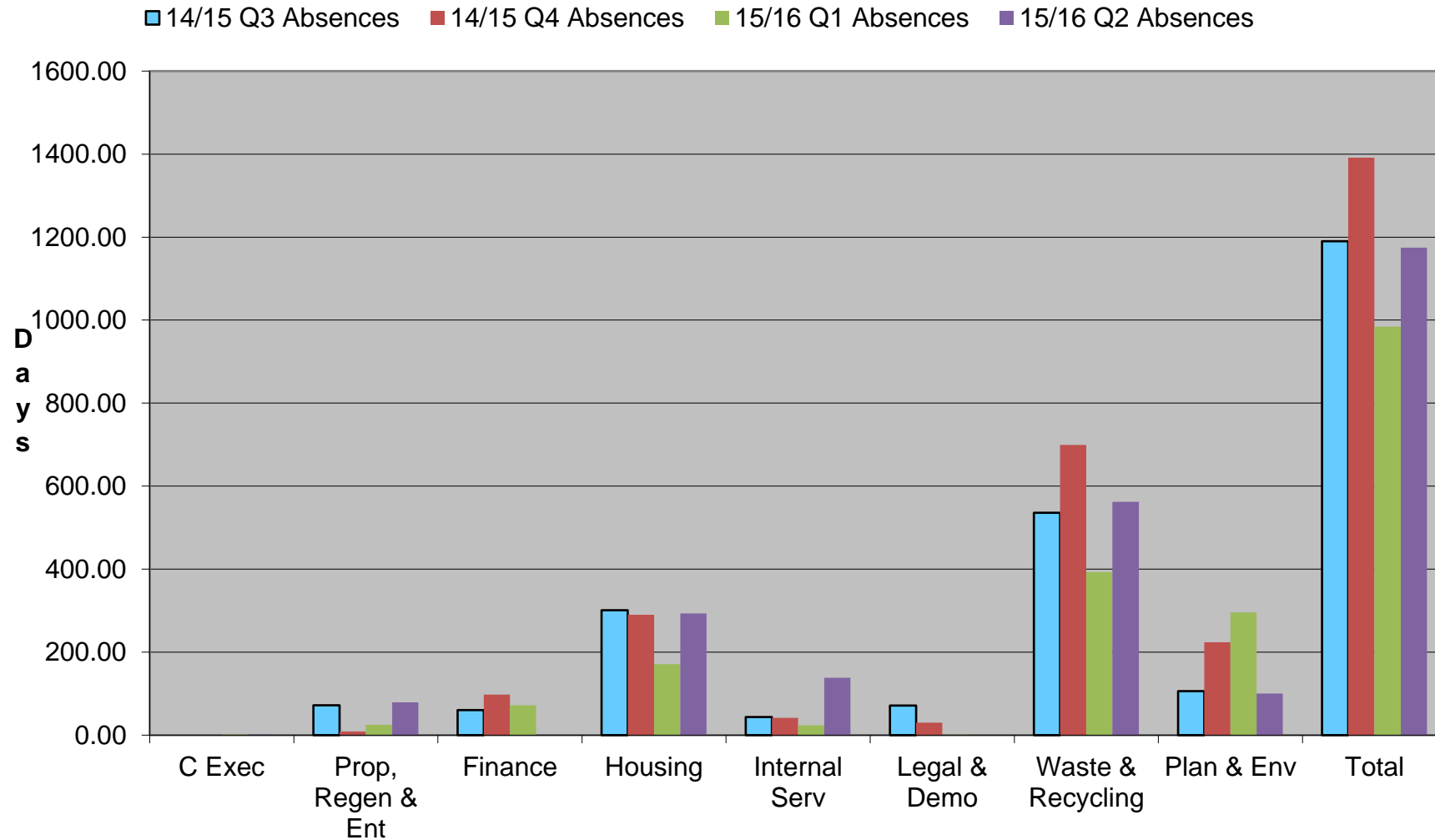
**Q4 FTE**

11.00  
23.74  
46.31  
52.08  
21.86  
16.64  
114.00  
69.00  
354.63

**Q4 Days  
per FTE**

0.00  
0.38  
2.12  
5.57  
1.92  
1.80  
6.13  
3.24  
3.92

## FTE Sickness Days Past Four Quarters



**Agenda Item No: 9**

**Report No:  
176/15**

**Report Title: Accidents to staff from April to October 2015**

**Report To: Employment Committee      Date: 7 December 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](mailto:jill.yeates@lewes.gov.uk)**  
**Tel No(s): 01273 7106276**

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**Purpose of Report:**

To report the statistics on accidents reported between 1 April 2015 and 31 October 2015.

**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**

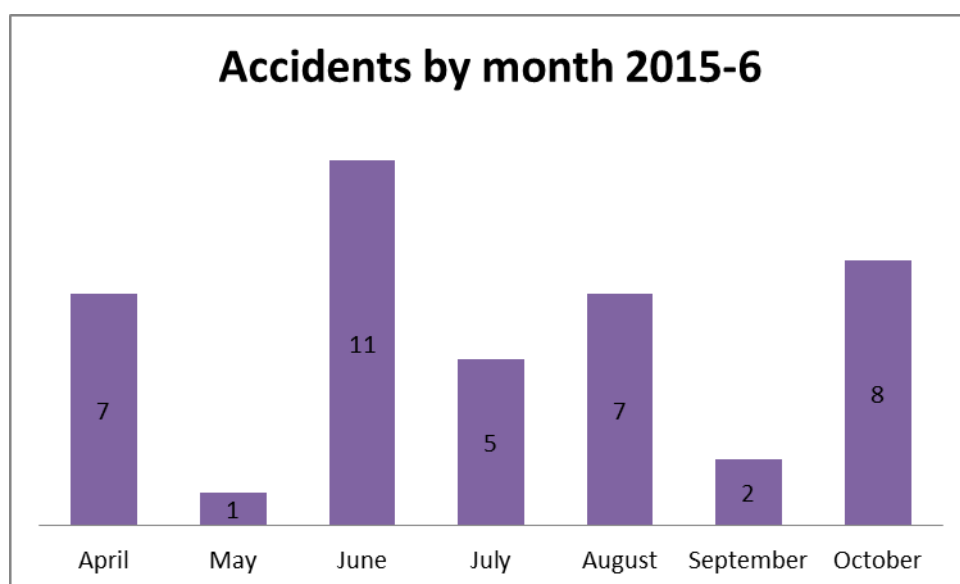
- 2.1 The statistics are presented as previously requested – with numbers and percentages, comparisons with the previous year (same period).
- 2.2 Whenever an accident or incident is reported, the individual will have reported it to a supervisor or manager, who will then need to discuss the accident or incident with them and complete the second side of the form which looks at what has been done. This then comes to the Health and Safety Officer who will follow up any action and ask for updated documents where relevant. For example, the employee who fractured his wrist when falling was litter-picking on a wet grass bank. The updated risk assessment now includes wet grass banks as areas where litter should not be removed until it is dry. The scalds from the water

heater in Southover House resulted in the company being called to clear any accumulated limescale, and bigger notices being put up. We also await the company providing small 'shelves' to put cups on so that people don't have to hold them near the boiling water. The cut caused by the individual putting his hand in his work bag has been sorted by new bags being bought for these staff with separate covered compartments for sharp objects. The person standing on his box when it broke has been provided with a proper platform (and is trained to use it). However, where staff try to carry, move or sweep up too much, there isn't much we can do except to keep reminding them to make careful judgements, going through safe systems of work and risk assessments with them and ensuring that they have regular manual handling refresher training.

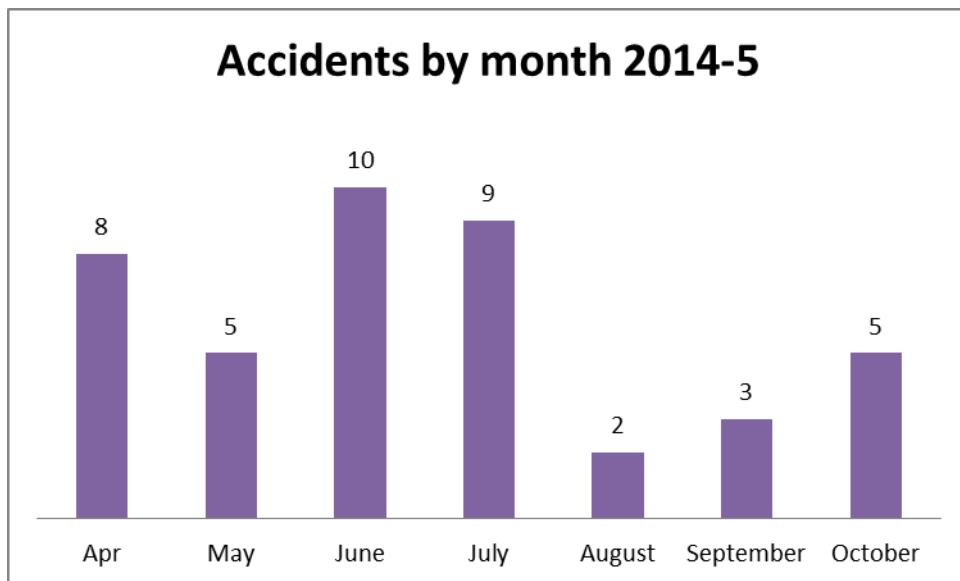
## Accident Statistics

### Accidents by month April to October 2015

There were 41 accidents from April to October 2015. April, June and October had the highest accidents for a month.

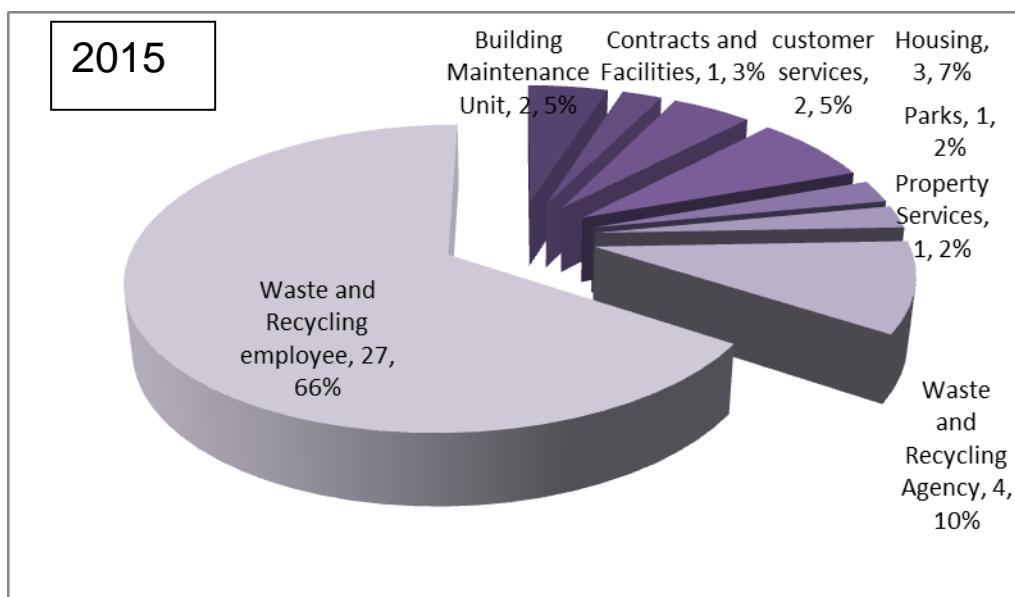


Last year there were 42 accidents during the same period. The only patterns are that April and June were higher months in both years, and that the number of accidents is remarkably similar in each year.

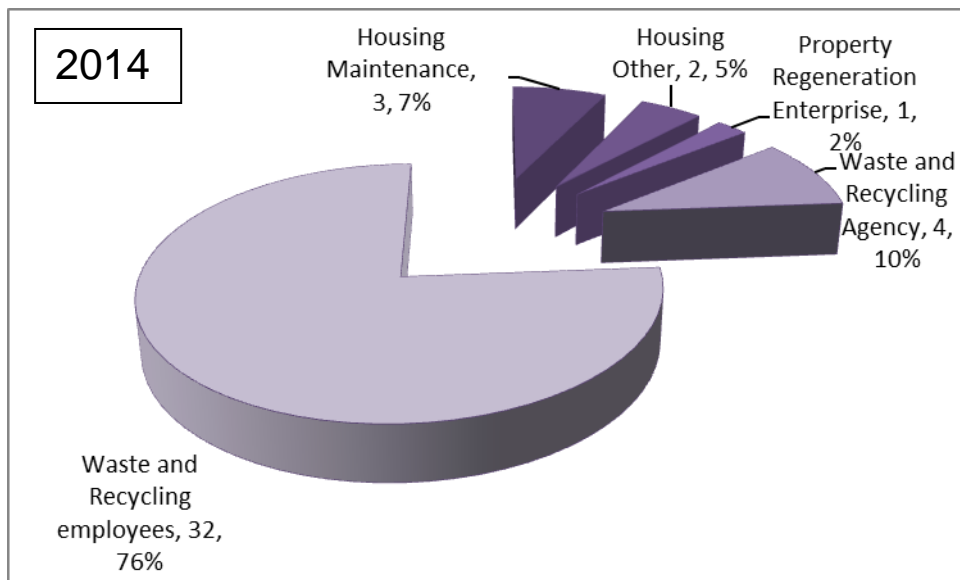


### Accidents by team April to October

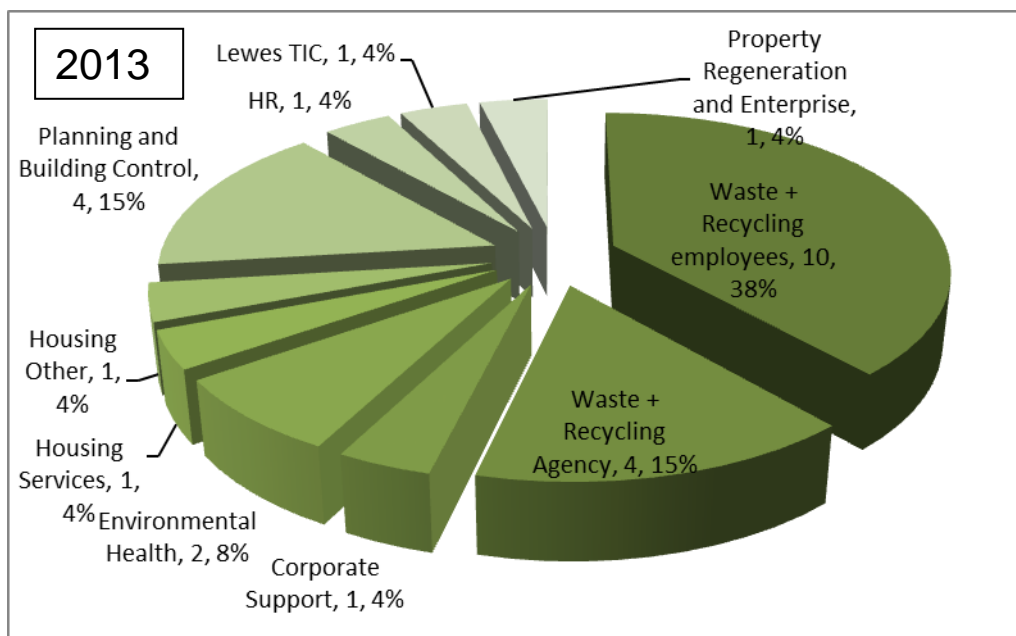
31 of the accidents were in Waste and Recycling (4 agency staff) compared with 36 last year, 3 in Housing (2 last year), 2 in Building Maintenance (3 last year), 2 in Customer Services (none last year), and 3 in other sections (1 last year).



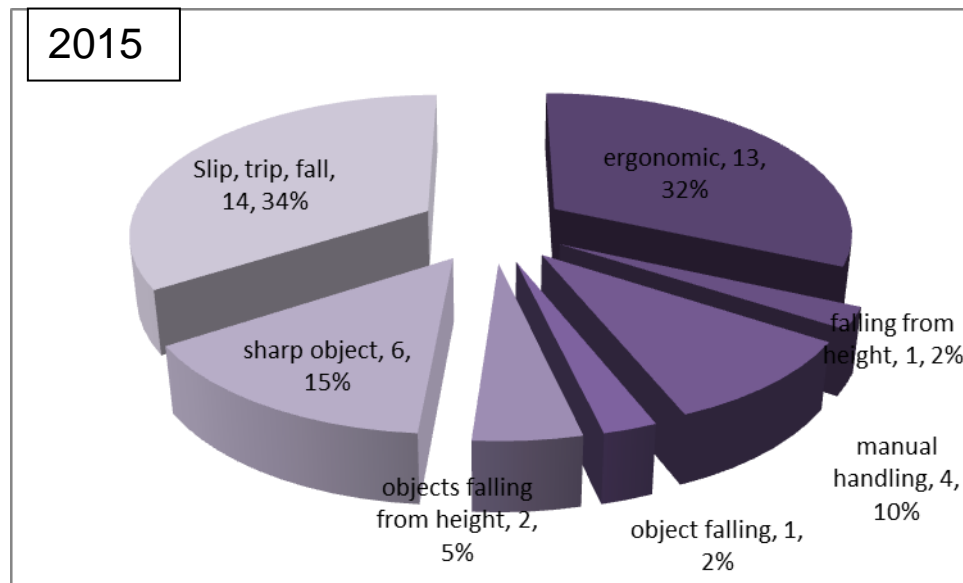
Compared with last year, the proportion of accidents in Waste and Recycling has dropped from 76% to 66% and those accidents have been shared amongst other departments to a greater extent.



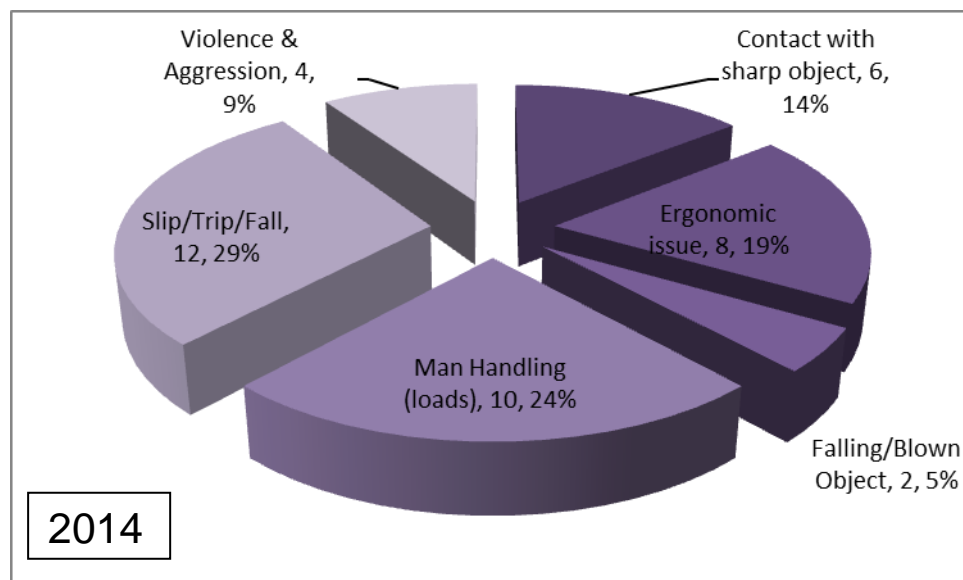
Comparing this difference to the year before over the same period to look at longer term trends, the accidents were spread over even more teams, with Waste and Recycling having 53% of the accidents.



## Accidents by cause April to October

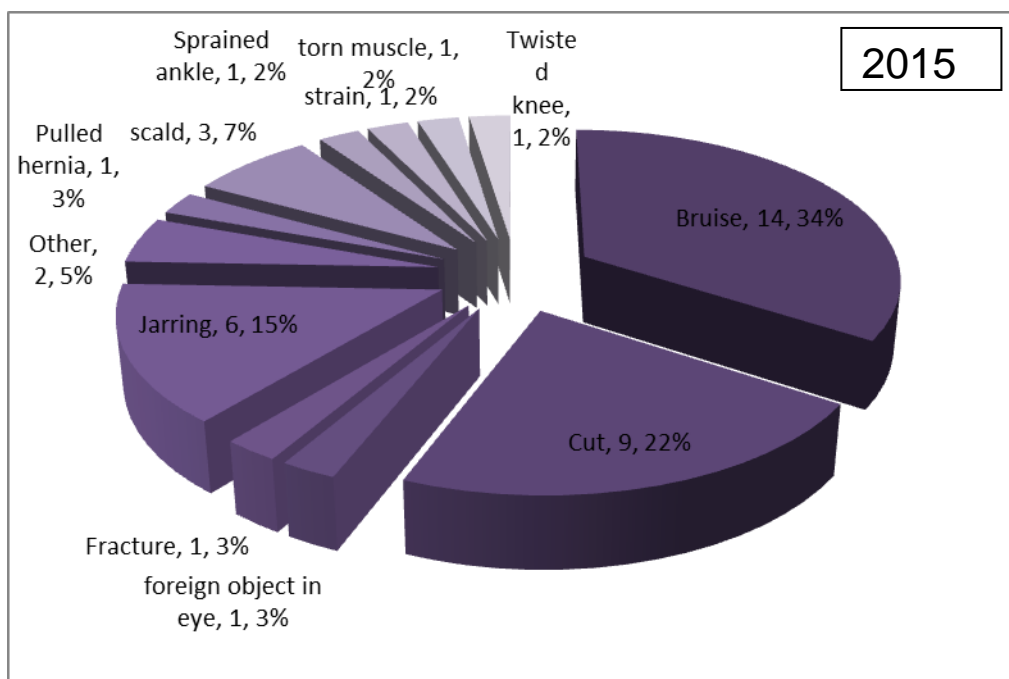


14 (34%) of the accidents involved slips, trips and falls (12 (29%) last year), 4 (10%) were manual handling problems (10 (24%) last year), 13 (32%) were ergonomic issues (8 (19%) last year), 6 were contact with a sharp object (6 last year), 3 were falling objects (2 last year) and 1 was falling from height (last year there were 3 dog bites and 1 personal attack, but no-one falling from height).



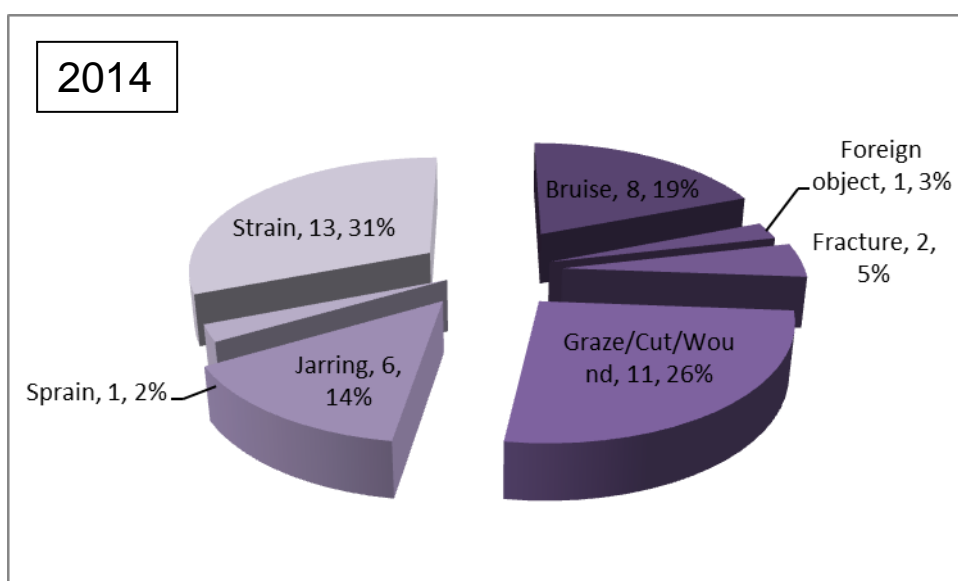
Although manual handling appears to have dropped and ergonomic to have risen, this may be that manual handling training has worked and we now need to concentrate on 'ergonomic' training, or it may be classification – if someone pulls a bin out of a store and it jams on the door, is this a manual handling or an ergonomic cause? Looking at the two together, this year 42% were manual handling and ergonomic, last year this was 43%. [Page 37 of 46](#)

## Accidents by injury April to October



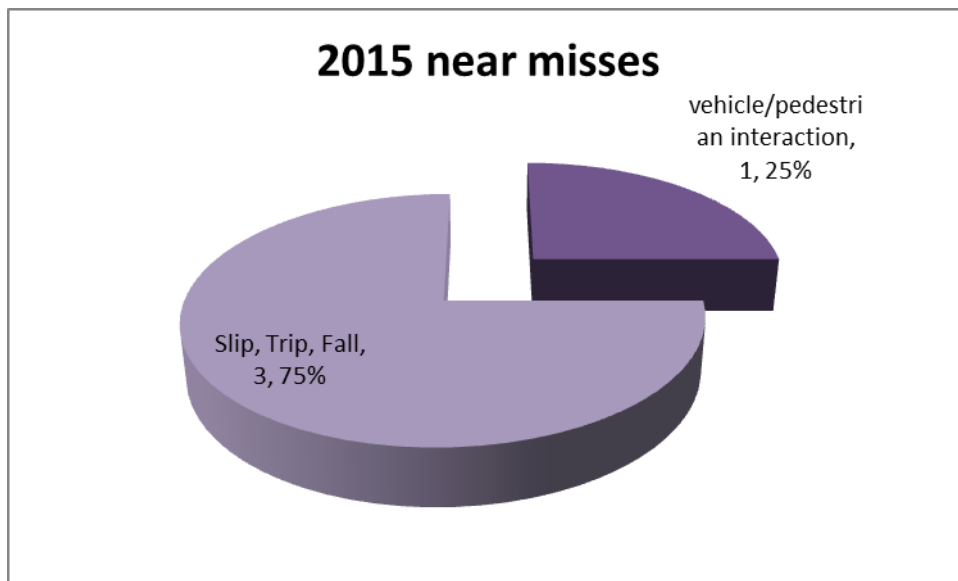
This year, bruises were the most common injury (14, 34%), followed by cuts (9, 22%) and then jarring (6, 15%). This is a slightly different weighting from last year, but with the same sorts of injuries: cuts are down and bruises are up.

Last year, bruising, jarring, strains and cuts made up the vast majority of the injuries sustained at a roughly equal amount each; 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).



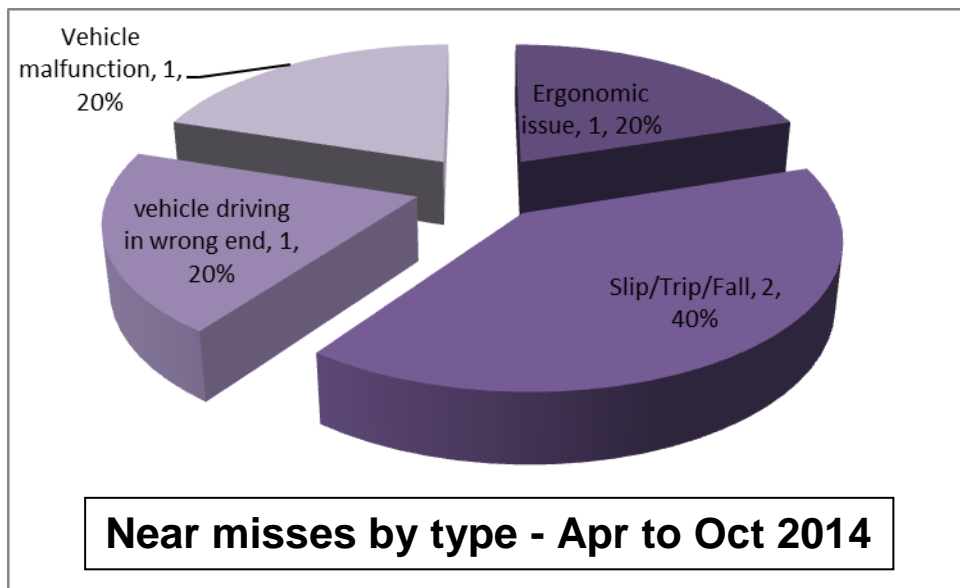
## Near Misses

Four near misses have been reported. One was a vehicle which came round a bend too fast and had to swerve to avoid a refuse collector with bins coming out of a house (Waste and Recycling); one was a mobile team worker standing on a box which broke (appropriate portable platforms have now been provided), two were in Southover House with someone nearly tripping over a box they had left on the ground and were working with, and the other nearly tripped over the 'wet floor' warning sign when going into the WC (these are now left outside the WCs and kitchens so that they are not an unseen trip hazard).



Last year, there were five near misses between April and October. 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.



### 3 Financial Appraisal

At least 75 (46 this time last year) employee working days have been lost, all but 1 of them in Waste and Recycling (10+ accidents) which means that a around 47 (46 last year) days' Agency staff would have to be paid for as a result of the accidents (although 2 of them were Agency staff, off for 2 days each).

28 of these days were on one accident where a member of Housing staff was litter-picking and slipped and fractured his wrist. 12 days were lost when a member of Waste and Recycling slipped on an Electric Vehicle and badly bruised his ribs, 11 when another slipped off a kerb and hit a wheelie bin and bruised his chest, and 9 when a recycler bent down (using the correct stance) to pick up a box and felt his leg muscle tear. 32 accidents resulted in no time off work, with 3 still to be clarified.

Specified accidents have to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations), and these include fractures and time off work over 7 days, so all the above have been reported.

### 4 Legal Implications

The Legal Services Department does not need to comment specifically on the accident statistics as it is a progress report.

### 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.

**Agenda Item No:**  
**10**

**Report**  
**No:177/15**

**Report Title:**           **Joint Health and Safety Forum activities from January to November 2015**

**Report To:**           **Employment Committee**       **Date:**           **7 December 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](mailto:jill.yeates@lewes.gov.uk)**  
**Tel No(s):**   **01273 7106276**

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**Purpose of Report:**

To report the main activities of the Joint Health and Safety Forum from January 2015 to November 2015.

**Officer's Recommendation:**

- 1    To consider the issues reported.

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**Reasons for Recommendations**

- 1    The Employment Committee Meetings will consider health and safety issues as specified in Section 5 Remit of the Employment Committee Part 2.4 c and Part 2.5 a and g to m of the Lewes District Council Constitution.

- 2    **Information**

The Joint Health and Safety Forum meets monthly to discuss health and safety matters within the council. It is chaired by the Director of Service Delivery, and administered by the Health and Safety Officer. Those attending the meetings are Heads of Service and other managers with higher profile health and safety responsibilities, and Unison representatives. The Terms of Reference, agendas and minutes are on InfoLink: <http://intranet/staff/14420.asp>

Specific health and safety matters are taken first to the manager(s) concerned, and then discussed in the Forum where relevant across different sections within

the council. Over the past eleven months, the following issues have been acted upon.

- 2.1** All employers with 5 or more employees must have a written Health and Safety Policy with the contents specified by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This must be reviewed annually (and where there is a specific reason to review it). Lewes District Council (LDC) had a completely new policy in 2013/4, and this was reviewed and amended in 2015, agreed by the Forum, and signed on 28 July by the Chief Executive. It is on InfoLink: <http://intranet/staff/1120.asp> The new document contains the same statement of our Policy, but has made the wording more succinct under the same headings of Commitment, Awareness, Competence, Compliance and Delivering our Policy. The 'Arrangements' (ie who does what) have also been updated in line with LDC structure changes.
- 2.2** The Forum introduced an Audit process a year ago, which has been refined with experience. Having prioritised the services and LDC areas of work into high, medium and low risk, a programme was drawn up over the year and the final audit (of Internal Audit!) has just been completed. The Forum agreed a generic list of questions, and the Health and Safety Officer makes appointments to see the managers concerned and go through the form with them, seeking evidence and identifying 'green' areas where the section is compliant (either legally, or with LDC Policy), 'amber areas' where work is being done to achieve compliance, and 'red' areas where the necessary work hasn't yet been done. The manager is then asked for a programme to show when the amber and red items will be completed, and asked to come to the Forum three or six months later to report on what they have achieved, and any areas needing further work. This has proved successful in engaging managers in complying with legal and Policy requirements. The audits are on InfoLink: <http://intranet/staff/14883.asp>
- 2.3** The accident and near miss reports are considered at every meeting, although where there are only one or two reports, this is done verbally rather than in graphic form. The Forum examines any trends and their causes. (An update is also reported to every Employment Committee Meeting.)
- 2.4** Risk Assessments (RA), Safe Systems of Work (SSOW) and COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Assessments have been a focus this year in order to ensure that they are all up to date and have been discussed with the staff to whom they are relevant. These should be discussed with new staff or agency workers, when they are updated or revised due to changes, or regularly as revision to ensure that workers are aware of the safety issues and procedures they need to follow. The Audit process is helping to ensure that team meetings are covering these vital processes, and the Forum is active in keeping these systems in high profile. This is an ongoing process.
- 2.5** The Health and Safety Change Management Plan 2013-4 was completed by the end of March, and a new Management Plan was

agreed by the Forum. This covers projects such as updating LDC's Lone Working Policy and Procedures together with Customers of Concern Policy and Procedures, and Asbestos Policy and Procedures. The procedures for all these have proved to be complicated and time-consuming projects, but should be completed by the end of the year. Other current projects are Driving Policy and Procedures for those with Lease cars or using their own cars on LDC business, reviewing the Fire Policy and Procedures, looking at Emergency Policies other than Fire (ie Bomb and White Powder Incidents), ensuring that the council is compliant with working at height regulations, and updating accident investigation procedures.

- 2.6** Unison representatives raised several concerns with LDC's approach to asbestos across the Council; as a result of this a working party was set up to deal with aspects such as our register and management plans, staff training and asbestos inspections. The working party reported back to each Forum meeting and the objectives have now been achieved.
- 2.7** The situation at Fort Road has also been monitored by the Forum because of the vulnerabilities of the few staff who still work there. All have been trained in basic first aid, and there is always a manager or team leader there so that the reception staff are not left alone in the building. The move to Saxon House will need a new review.
- 2.8** The Forum asked for a safe system of work for the use of fire extinguishers in LDC vehicles to be produced. This has been done, but we are seeking East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service comments to ensure that it is effective and up to date.
- 2.9** PAT testing across the council has been done and monitored by the Forum this summer.
- 2.10** A regular topic for the Forum is staff training. This has included:
- asbestos awareness training for any staff members who may need to be able to identify asbestos as part of their work;
  - basic first aid training for those working in small groups or out and about;
  - working at height training where necessary;
  - those who need to go on scaffolding as part of their jobs have had scaffolding inspection training;
  - manual handling training for office and other staff who may need to move items occasionally (those in waste and recycling have tailored manual handling training before they start work);
  - fire evacuation warden instruction – fire extinguisher training is being arranged;

- Health and Safety at LDC for new staff and as a refresher for staff, and also a similar course for managers.
- All post room and reception staff have had training from the counter-terrorism unit on how to recognise suspicious packages and letters, and what to do about this.
- HR have also run various resilience, self-defence, dealing with aggression on the 'phone, 'work smarter not longer' and other wellbeing courses to equip staff with the skills to protect themselves.

- 2.11** The Forum has also kept track of the purchase and placing of defibrillators at Southover House (outside for use of both staff and the public), and at Fort Road Offices (inside for use of staff, and visitors), and Robinson Road (also inside for use of staff and visitors). SECamb will be arranging instruction for first aiders in how to use these, although they are designed to be very simple to use.
- 2.12** In line with the last Internal Audit report, the Forum has agreed that items on Health and Safety issues should go into every LDC News and Corporate Briefing, and often recommends particular issues which should feature such as items on training, wellbeing, first aid, new or revised policies and procedures. Toolbox talks for team meetings are also discussed and recommended.
- 2.13** After last year's success with LDC entering two teams into the Global Corporate Challenge (a fitness and wellbeing initiative), the Forum was keen that we enter teams again this year. Four teams entered this year, and all did very well in improving their own levels of fitness and activity; this was also regularly featured in LDC News. It helps to raise awareness for all staff of the importance of physical activity to good health and wellbeing.
- 2.14** The Roles and Rights of Unison Health and Safety Representatives were reviewed, clarified and agreed, and put on InfoLink:  
<http://intranet/staff/1120.asp>
- 2.15** Finally, the Forum keeps updated with legal changes and health and safety developments which may affect the Council. These have included transitional arrangements for the new CDM Regulations; the European Court of Justice decision that obesity can now be classified as a disability if it affects an individual's 'full and effective participation'; a new Approved Code of Practice (ACOP) from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) for the use of woodworking machinery; amendments to the REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of CHemicals) legislation refer to safety data sheets which will affect any COSHH assessments we do, but it is up to the producers – not the users – to amend the safety data sheets. Many self-employed people no longer need to comply with Health and Safety law as long as what they do doesn't affect anyone else. However, LDC will still require that they do so, in compliance with our Health and Safety Policy.

### **3 Financial Appraisal**

There are no direct financial implications of this report.

### **4 Legal Implications**

The Legal Services Department does not need to comment specifically on the Forum's actions.

### **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. A couple of links to InfoLink have been provided.

### **9 Appendices**

There are no appendices.