



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE: 10 SEPTEMBER 2026

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING **ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide assurance to the Employment Committee that the Council is effectively managing its health, safety and wellbeing responsibilities. The report sets out progress against relevant statutory duties, key performance indicators and service priorities during 2025/26.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. The County Council is required, under the Management of the Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, to have in place an occupational health and safety management system. This system requires the Council to have a Health and Safety Strategy, and to consult and communicate with all interested parties on health and safety performance.
3. The Council's Health and Safety Strategy 2025-2030 details key performance indicators for the Council, progress for which is included in this Health, Safety and Wellbeing annual report.

Background

4. The health, safety and wellbeing of staff, service users and customers is of paramount importance to the Council. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team provides oversight, advice and assurance across the Council, monitoring performance to support compliance with statutory responsibilities, identify areas for improvement and promote consistently high standards.
5. This report provides a high-level overview of health and safety performance across the Council. More detailed departmental annual reports and service-level improvement plans support local monitoring, compliance and continuous improvement.
6. The following areas will be covered within this report:
 - Accident and Incident Data

- Health and Safety Audits
- Mandatory Health and Safety Training
- Key Performance Indicators
- Priorities and Projects
- Wellbeing Service

Accident and Incident Data

7. The Council uses the AssessNET system to report all accidents and incidents. The table below (figure 1) shows the number of accidents and incidents that have been reported across the Council, along with the percentage change over the past three years.

Incident Type	2025/2026	% Change	2024/25	% Change	2023/24
Injury	806	-12%	899	+12%	801
Near Miss	448	+45%	309	-28%	432
Property Damage	229	-9%	253	+47%	172
Violent Incident	180	-9%	197	+34%	147
Illness/Disease	22	-8%	24	140%	10
Total	1685	0%	1682	+7%	1562
RIDDOR	20	-23%	26	0%	26

Figure 1

8. Children and Family Wellbeing Centres, Leicestershire Traded Services (LTS) Catering, Recycling and Household Waste Sites, Direct Services, Highways Operations, Beaumanor Outdoor Learning and Passenger Fleet consistently report the most accidents, reflecting the nature of their services and associated risks.
9. Accident and incident data is monitored through quarterly reporting. The Council promotes a positive, 'no blame' reporting culture so that staff feel able to report accidents, incidents and near misses, regardless of severity. This supports early identification of risks and helps services take preventative action.
10. Managers are required to investigate each reported incident to identify the root cause and address any issues. Due to their seriousness, all RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reportable incidents are investigated thoroughly by a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Advisor. Following the investigation, the relevant manager is provided with an action plan setting out the steps required to reduce the risk of recurrence.

11. In 2025/26, 448 near misses were reported, compared with 309 in 2024/25, representing a 45% increase. This follows work by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team to promote the importance of reporting near misses. Higher levels of reporting are positive, as they provide more opportunities to identify risks and take action before an injury occurs.
12. Encouragingly, the increase in near miss reporting has been accompanied by a 12% reduction in reported injuries and a 23% reduction in RIDDOR reportable incidents. This suggests that the Council's focus on promoting near miss reporting is supporting earlier identification of risks and preventative action. Continued work to strengthen reporting and investigation will help build on this progress and further reduce the likelihood of injuries occurring.
13. In 2025/26, 180 violent incidents were reported, compared with 197 in 2024/25, representing a 9% decrease. This reduction is encouraging and reflects the Council's continued focus on prevention, reporting and support for employees working in higher-risk settings.
14. A range of measures are in place to help protect staff, including body worn cameras, lone working devices and targeted interventions in higher-risk service areas. The Council also continues to promote the reporting of all violent incidents, regardless of severity, so that managers and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team can identify trends, review controls and take action where further protection is required. Where incidents occur, managers are expected to review the circumstances, consider whether additional control measures are needed and take steps to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

Health and Safety Audits

15. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing team conducts annual audits across various council services and schools, with each service audited every five years. Council occupied sites also undergo health and safety inspections every three years.
16. After each audit, service managers or head teachers receive a detailed report and action plan to address any noncompliance. Each department within the Authority is updated quarterly on audit outcomes and progress. Noncompliance issues not resolved within required deadlines are reported to the Assistant Director or Director.

Mandatory Health and Safety Training

17. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team and the Learning and Development Service have set mandatory health and safety courses for all employees or managers to meet the Council's legal training requirements.
18. These mandatory courses are as follows:

- Health and Safety Essentials – mandatory for all staff;
 - Management of Health and Safety - mandatory for all managers;
 - Display Screen Equipment (DSE) – mandatory for all computer users;
 - DSE assessment – not training, however mandatory upon completion of the DSE training.
19. Additional health and safety, and job-specific training is available through Learning and Development. Managers are responsible for identifying the training requirement for each job role.
 20. The Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Team closely monitor the Council's adherence to mandatory training requirements, with compliance updates provided to each department's management team as part of the quarterly reporting process.
 21. Figure 2 below displays the compliance data, accurate from end of March 2026. It is important to note that in April 2026, the Chief Executives and Public Health departments were merged to form a new department: Public Health, Communities, Law and Governance. Consequently, the training data from Thrive reflects this newly established department.

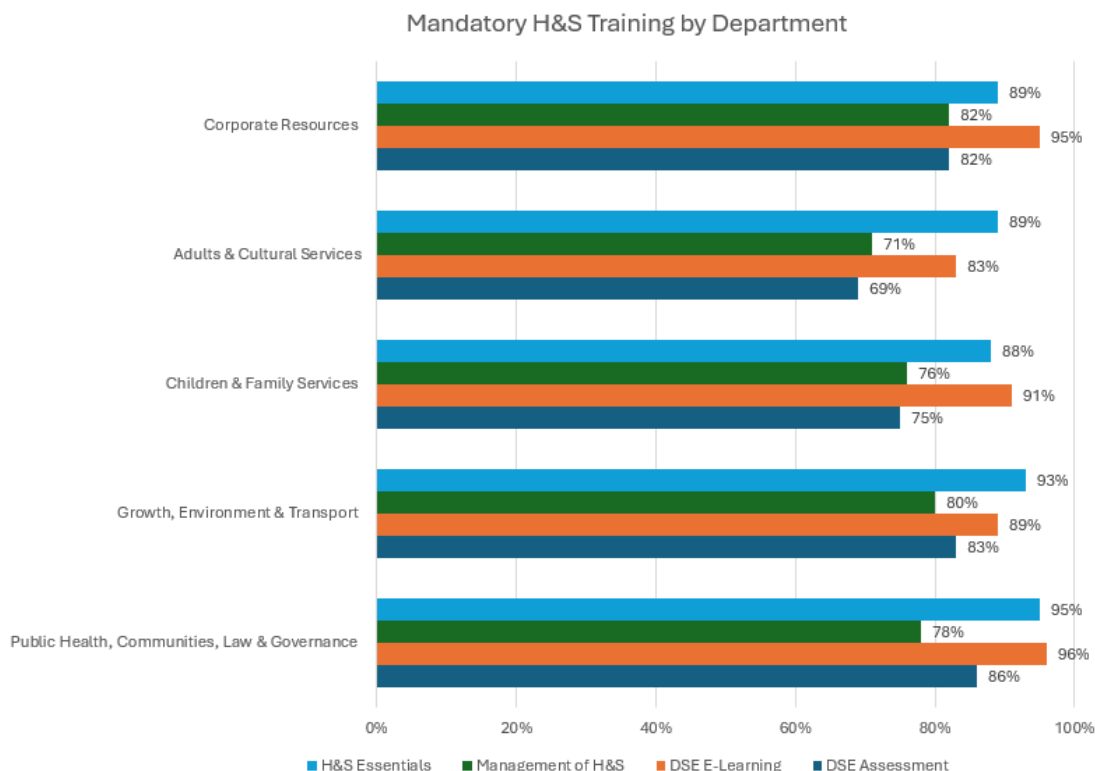


Figure 2

22. Overall compliance for each a course is shown in Figure 3 below, accurate from end of March 2026.

Course	Compliance
Management of Health and Safety	77%
Health and Safety Essentials	91%
DSE Training	91%
DSE Assessment	79%

Figure 3

23. Compliance with mandatory health and safety training has improved over the past 12 months:
- **Management of Health and Safety** compliance has increased by 8% (71% compliance in 2024/2025 compared to 77% compliance in 2025/2026);
 - **Health and Safety Essentials** compliance has increased by 16% (75% compliance in 2024/2025 compared to 91% compliance in 2025/2026);
 - **DSE E-learning** compliance has remained constant at 91% compliance;
 - **DSE Assessment** compliance has increased by 2% (77% compliance in 2024/2025 compared to 79% compliance in 2025/2026).
24. In 2025/2026 the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team arranged five additional Management of Health and Safety training sessions for Children and Family Services to help boost compliance. In the last 12 months, Children and Family Services have increased their Management of Health and Safety training compliance by 27%, and although this is positive, the department's compliance is currently at 76% and therefore further improvement is required.
25. To further support compliance, both face-to-face and online training options are available, for several of the health and safety courses, to accommodate various learning preferences. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team continue to contact all new managers via email to invite them to participate in the 'Management of Health and Safety' course as a prompt, to help improve compliance. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team now also email all managers who are due to complete the Management of Health and Safety training and yet to book onto a course on a quarterly basis.

Health and Safety - Key Performance Indicators

26. The following summary outlines the performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out in the 2025–2030 Health and Safety Strategy, focusing on compliance, accident reduction, and manager training.
27. The KPI to ensure all services receive an occupational health and safety audit within a five-year period has been achieved in 2025/2026, with a

total of 37 audits conducted including five audits of Oakfield Secondary sites before transferring into the County Council. Currently there are a total 175 teams/services and County Council maintained schools.

28. The KPI to ensure all buildings occupied by County Council staff receive a three yearly health and safety inspection has been achieved in 2025/2026 as 89 buildings were inspected, out of a total of 192 buildings.
29. The following four KPI's have also been set:
 - To increase reporting of near misses compared to injuries over the five-year strategy period.
 - Achieve a 10% decrease in injuries caused by Slip, Trips and Falls over the five-year strategy period.
 - Achieve a 10% reduction in RIDDOR reportable incidents over the five-year strategy period.
 - Increase percentage of managers that have undertaken management of health and safety training, achieving 95% compliance by the end of the five-year strategy period
30. As it is the first year of the strategy, it is difficult to comment on the progress however compared to 2024/2025, positive progress has been achieved.

Health and Safety - Priorities and Projects

31. Over the past 12 months, the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team has undertaken a substantial amount of proactive work to continuously improve the service offering to the council, including:
 - Launching a new Health and Safety Strategy for 2025–2030 and delivering campaigns to meet the new KPIs outlined in the strategy, including:
 - Launching a campaign to improve near miss reporting.
 - Launching a campaign on slips, trips and falls focussing on reducing the occurrence of slip, trip and fall injuries.
 - Launching a new Child Seat e-learning course.
 - Procuring a new supplier for the provision of ergonomic equipment.
 - Establishing a revised process for triaging DSE assessments to ensure employees are advised correctly on workstation adjustments.
 - Arranging a Men's Mental Health Awareness Week which included men's talking groups and an external speaker from Andy Man's Club to deliver a talk on Mental Health that was facilitated both in person and online.
 - Launching revised eLearning modules for manual handling, working at height, asbestos management, legionella and COSHH, following the transition to Thrive.

- Collaborating with the Communications Team to share health and safety updates and information through corporate communication channels.
 - Maintaining and reviewing the suite of health and safety guidance available on the intranet.
 - Continuing business-as-usual activities such as audits, inspections, and investigations.
 - Maintaining ISO 45001 certification.
32. Priorities for 2026/2027 include:
- Continuing business-as-usual activities, including auditing, inspecting, supporting and advising managers, and investigating RIDDOR reportable incidents.
 - Continuing to share health and safety updates and information through corporate communication channels.
 - Maintaining and reviewing the suite of health and safety guidance available on the intranet.
 - Maintaining ISO 45001 certification.
 - Managing the re-procurement of a lone working management solution.
 - Working with the Business Intelligence team to create an accident and incident dashboard on Tableau to improve the analysis of accident and incident data at team and service level
 - Launching a campaign to increase compliance with the manual handling regulations
 - Increasing the number of incident investigations undertaken by managers to assist with reducing the number of injuries and RIDDOR reportable incidents.
 - Launching a campaign to improve compliance with Regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations in relation to suitable and sufficient risk assessment

Wellbeing Service

33. The Leicestershire County Council Wellbeing Service continues to play a pivotal role in supporting the emotional and mental health of employees. Staffed by five qualified counsellors, the Service offers tailored support through in-person, online, and telephone counselling, ensuring accessibility across hybrid working arrangements.

Wellbeing - Key Performance Indicators

34. Over the past five years, referrals into the Wellbeing Service have risen from 213 to 380. This reflects sustained demand for employee wellbeing support and the important role the Service plays in helping staff access support at an early stage.
35. In 2025–2026 alone, 308 individual employees accessed support, with the Children and Families Service and Adults and Cultural Services

departments accounting for the highest referral volumes. The Service delivered 2808 sessions this year, including counselling, advice, and single-session support such as 'Pause to Talk', menopause clinics, and same-day advice. 'Pause to Talk' is an alternative to traditional counselling which offers staff an opportunity to talk to a counsellor during a 'one off', thirty-minute session. This scheme helps to reduce the waiting list for traditional counselling and supports staff that need short term support.

36. Work-related stress (WRS) remains the most prevalent issue, reported by 28% of clients, followed by anxiety (14%), personal relationships (11%), bereavement (10%), and personal stress (9%).
37. Despite this, 84% of employees that accessed support were attending work, 15% were either absent from work due to sickness; suspended or undergoing a therapeutic return to work. Of those off sick, work-related stress or anxiety was cited as a presenting issue in 82% of cases. Additionally, 71% of staff that completed a confidential survey following counselling stated that the counselling sessions helped them to stay in work and avoid taking sick leave.
38. In order to help tackle work related stress, the Wellbeing Service have developed a new course titled 'Managing Stress at Work for Managers' which was piloted in June. This course aims to train managers in their legal responsibilities to manage stress in the workplace, whilst also exploring essential tools to prevent and tackle sources of stress. The course will demonstrate techniques from the Health and Safety Executive, to manage stress within a team and with individual employees. There will be an emphasis on 'soft skills', as well as teaching managers how to deal with their own experiences of stress.

Wellbeing - Priorities and Projects

39. Further service developments and initiatives launched or in progress include:
 - **Fibromyalgia** – following a survey to understand the needs of employees with Central Sensitivity Disorders, 101 responses highlighted the need for increased awareness and flexible support for Central Sensitivity Disorders. In response to the survey, the Wellbeing Service has developed some resources to support employees with Central Sensitivity Disorders and to raise awareness and confidence for line managers to support their staff:
 - Fibromyalgia and Other Central Sensitivity Syndromes Awareness E-Learning.
 - Webpage – Support with central sensitivity syndromes.
 - Reasonable adjustments to support with Fibromyalgia at work.
 - Fibromyalgia Recovery Guidance.

- **Trainee Therapist Placements** – a handbook has been developed to support trainee counsellors joining the service as part of a temporary placement.
 - **Reaching out** - the Wellbeing Service has been reaching out to employees in different ways including a presence at zero discrimination day and the New Starters Network event. The team offered events during Men's Mental Health week and provided tailored training and support to the Mental Health Assertive In reach team.
 - **Newly qualified social worker practitioners** - the wellbeing service have delivered two training events for newly qualified social workers, to support them to establish healthy ways of working, to manage workload, stay well at work and avoid burnout, which can have significant knock-on effects on service delivery.
 - **Depression training** – the Service are currently in the final stages of developing a depression awareness e-learning course to support employees struggling with low mood, to understand the disorder and find holistic ways of managing symptoms and finding a route to recovery.
40. The Corporate Wellbeing Board continues to be chaired by Lucy Littlefair (Assistant Director - People, Property and Business Services) and the group is working towards the action plan for April 2025-March 2027.
41. The Action Plan is aligned to the Health Needs Assessment undertaken by the Public Health, topics discussed in the counselling room and the Councils COMMS Plan on Wellbeing. This plan contains the seven topics:
- Mental Health;
 - Diet and Healthy Eating;
 - Physical Activity;
 - Sleep;
 - Line Managers;
 - Financial;
 - General Health and Wellbeing topics.
42. A Men's Mental Health Awareness Week was organised in January 2026 where activities took place including two men's talking groups organised by the wellbeing team and facilitated by two volunteers from within the council and an external speaker from Andys Man Club visited County Hall and Croft Highways Depot to deliver a talk on Mental Health accessed by over 200 employees both in person and online.

Recommendations

43. It is recommended that the Employment Committee notes the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2025-26 and endorses the work,

undertaken in partnership with departments, by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service to keep the Council compliant in this area.

Background Papers

44. None.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

45. None.

Equality Implications

46. There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.

Human Rights Implications

47. There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.

Officer(s) to Contact

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