

# NOTICE OF MEETING

**Meeting:** HR COMMITTEE

**Date and Time:** THURSDAY, 12 MARCH 2026, AT 10.00 AM

**Place:** COUNCIL CHAMBER - APPLETREE COURT, BEAULIEU ROAD, LYNDHURST, SO43 7PA

**Enquiries to:** Email: [lee.ellis@nfdc.gov.uk](mailto:lee.ellis@nfdc.gov.uk)  
Tel: 023 8028 5719

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION:**

This agenda can be viewed online (<https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk>). It can also be made available on audio tape, in Braille and large print.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting. The seating capacity of our Council Chamber public gallery is limited under fire regulations to 22.

Members of the public can watch this meeting live, or the subsequent recording, on the [Council's website](#). Live-streaming and recording of meetings is not a statutory requirement and whilst every endeavour will be made to broadcast our meetings, this cannot be guaranteed. Recordings remain available to view for a minimum of 12 months.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

Members of the public may speak in accordance with the Council's [public participation scheme](#):

- (a) on items within the HR Committee's terms of reference which are not on the public agenda; and/or
- (b) on individual items on the public agenda, when the Chairman calls that item. Speeches may not exceed three minutes.

Anyone wishing to attend the meeting, or speak in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme, should contact the name and number shown above no later than 12.00 noon on Monday, 9 March 2026.

**Kate Ryan**  
Chief Executive

Appletree Court, Lyndhurst, Hampshire. SO43 7PA  
[www.newforest.gov.uk](http://www.newforest.gov.uk)

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# AGENDA

## Apologies

### 1. MINUTES

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2026 as a correct record.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To note any declarations of interest made by members in connection with an agenda item. The nature of the interest must also be specified.

Members are asked to discuss any possible interests with Democratic Services prior to the meeting.

### 3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

To receive any public participation in accordance with the Council's public participation scheme.

### 4. HR UPDATE REPORT (Pages 3 - 8)

To receive the HR Update Report.

### 5. GROWTH AND GOALS FEEDBACK (Pages 9 - 18)

To receive a presentation on the Growth and Goals feedback.

### 6. HR POLICY CHANGES REQUIRED IN APRIL 2026 AS A RESULT OF THE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT 2025 (Pages 19 - 88)

To agree the HR Policy changes required in April 2026, as a result of the Employment Rights Act 2025.

### 7. QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (Pages 89 - 158)

To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report.

### 8. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 159 - 160)

To note the Committee's Work Programme.

### 9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

To:

#### Councillors

Jill Cleary (Chairman)  
Steve Davies (Vice-Chairman)  
Mark Clark  
Kate Crisell  
Sean Cullen

#### Councillors

Jeremy Heron  
Colm McCarthy  
Alan O'Sullivan  
Joe Reilly

## HR COMMITTEE – 12 March 2026

### HR Update Report

Purpose	For information
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	The report provides an overview of the work undertaken within the HR Service over and above the re-active casework.
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<b>That members note the ongoing work within the HR Service</b>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	Much of the work supports the council ambition to be an Employer of Choice and the corporate LEAF values
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jeremy Heron
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Services.
Officer Contact	Heleana Aylett Service Manager - Human Resources 02380 285662 Heleana.aylett@nfdc.gov.uk

### INTRODUCTION

1. This report gives an update on HR matters since the last HR Committee. These matters are in addition to the reactive caseload which includes job evaluations, restructuring advice, grievances, disciplinaries and sickness absence matters.
2. We also continue to provide Payroll, HR Advisory services and Health and Safety advice to the National Park Authority.

### RECRUITMENT UPDATE

3. Recruitment Update

There has continued to be a high level of recruitment activity. In the last 3 months we have had 43 live recruitment campaigns. Just over 50% (22 no) related to the introduction of the new waste

service. Other campaigns included LGR backfill resource in ICT, casual CCTV operators, mobile cleaners and a new multi-site depot supervisor.

We have received a total of 506 applications.

The highest number of applicants were for Coastal Scientist and Project Manager, both of which attracted over 50 applications.

We had the highest number of applicants for a Grounds Maintenance role that we have ever received, with 36 applications. We believe that this was down to using different external advertising which hasn't been used before. This consisted of being advertised in CV library, an Indeed Sponsored advert and a website designated for Grounds Maintenance jobs.

## **LEARNING**

### **LGA Equality Impact Assessment Leadership and Report Authors Training.**

4. The LGA delivered Equality Impact Assessment Leadership and Report Authors Training across two sessions, attended by 33 colleagues (including a representative from the NPA). Led by senior advisers Luann Donald and Alison Leitch, the practical and interactive half-day sessions built participants' confidence in planning inclusive policies, services and events, and in meeting the needs of diverse staff, service users and stakeholders.

The training provided a clear understanding of the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process, including NFDC's framework, legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, and good practice principles. Participants explored how to assess impact on different groups, mitigate risks, involve the right people at each stage, and use NFDC's documentation effectively. Group exercises enabled attendees to apply learning to real NFDC projects.

Those attending included leaders, senior colleagues, report authors and staff involved in frontline service delivery or service changes.

### **How to Handle Challenging Conversations – Webinar from October last year – 85 Watched**

5. This training was arranged following concerns about the phase 3 rollout and feedback from Enforcement that admin staff are increasingly handling confrontational or distressed callers. To support teams affected by ongoing organisational changes—and to offer a useful refresher—we've scheduled a session on managing difficult conversations.

The webinar focuses on building resilience, identifying the root cause of issues, showing empathy, structuring challenging conversations, using appropriate assertiveness, gaining confidence, and applying wellbeing strategies to maintain resilience.

### **Young Local Authority of the Year**

6. This is an annual team competition enhancing the professional development of people in the early stages of their local government careers. A highlight of the charity run Young Programme's calendar, the event exists to improve communication skills and build confidence. It is also a valuable opportunity to meet others in similar positions across the UK, and it provides a creative and inspiring environment for the exchange of ideas and experiences away from the demands of everyday professional life.

We are supporting Ros Cavell and Millie Hicks to attend this event taking place in March in Crewe.

### **External Opportunities**

7. Solace Springboard 2026 – Dean Brunton successful in his application – commences March

DCN Staff Programme 2026 – Kim Gray successful in her application

We have signed up to Tri Sector Challenge again (not until October) – attendees TBC.

### **LGBTQ+ EMPLOYEE NETWORK**

8. The LGBTQ+ Network continue to meet regularly on a quarterly basis, hosting drop ins for staff to grow their network and support the workforce. The group have a chair, vice chair and secretary who support the group to agree discussion topics and focus for any drop-in sessions that are organised.

The LGBTQ+ Network has been developing a renewed strategy aimed at strengthening visibility, engagement, and participation across the council. As part of this approach, the Network will be increasing the number of drop-in sessions available to colleagues and acknowledging key awareness days through tailored initiatives designed to promote learning and encourage open conversation. The council will also continue to fly the LGBTQ+ flag at appropriate points throughout the year to demonstrate its commitment to inclusion.

In addition, the Network are recently offering pin badges for colleagues who wish to visibly express their allyship. Collectively,

these initiatives are designed to broaden awareness of the Network's purpose, foster a more inclusive workplace culture, and encourage greater uptake in membership and involvement.

The Network contributes directly to the EDI group providing valuable support in this area, as well as continuing to plan how to expand and raise awareness for both groups across the Council.

## **EDI GROUP**

9. The EDI group continue to meet quarterly, discussing various work issues, commenting on policy and contributing to upcoming initiatives that support our inclusive culture.

The group continues to focus on policy updates, new initiatives across the Council, and celebrating areas of success. Members are also keen to gather feedback from colleagues who are part of the group but do not regularly attend meetings, in order to understand any barriers to participation. This will help ensure that the group's overall aims are consistently met and that it remains representative of staff across the Council.

At the most recent meeting, the group held a dedicated discussion on digital inclusion for operational teams, with senior colleagues from Waste, Transformation, IT and HR in attendance to share their insights. This conversation expanded into the wider 'Digital Skills for All' project, with the group agreeing that receiving updates and having the opportunity to contribute feedback is valuable to their role and the broader aims of the initiative.

The group also considered internal communications and recognition activity led by the Transformation team, followed by updates from several employee sub-groups, including the Women's Group, Early Careers, and Neurodiversity networks).

The next meeting is scheduled for 21 May 2026.

## **SUPPORT TO OPERATIONAL DEPOTS**

10. We regularly attend the operational depots to give support to both managers and employees. In addition we have recently instigated a monthly arrangement with our depots to ensure that there is support available from Payroll, HR Advisory and HR Admin on site to answer any queries or concerns the first Wednesday after payday.

This has been well received by staff and works particularly well having all three teams available at the same time.

## **BRIEF BITES**

11. We continue to offer Brief Bite training to managers, typically delivering two sessions per topic each year. These sessions include Bullying and Harassment, Sickness Absence, Performance Management and Recruitment. The next upcoming sessions include Bullying and Harassment and our newest brief bite of investigations. Managers can book onto these brief bites via the LMS, and if any problems, the Learning Team are on hand to support.
12. The HR Team continues to monitor attendance for these sessions through the LMS and issues regular communications, including reminder emails, to encourage participation.

## **UPDATED HR POLICIES**

13. As a result of the Employment Rights Act there will be further policy changes necessary before October. These will be presented to HR Committee in due course.

## **Corporate plan priorities**

14. Much of the work undertaken by the HR Service supports the council's ambition to be an employer of choice.

## **Options appraisal**

15. Not Applicable

## **Consultation undertaken**

16. Not Applicable

## **Financial and resource implications**

17. None

## **Legal implications**

18. As the Employment Rights Bill progresses there will need to be changes made to some policies to ensure we remain compliant.

## **Risk assessment**

19. There are no risks associated with the recommendation.

## **Environmental / Climate and nature implications**

20. None

### **Equalities implications**

21. None from this report, however future changes in legislation may have implications but these will be reported as each policy changes.

### **Crime and disorder implications**

22. None

### **Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications**

23. None

### **Appendices**

None

### **Background Papers:**

None

# Growth and *Goals* conversations

3 months post-implementation

Zoe Ormerod – Senior HR Advisor

# Overview

- 250 G&G's completed in 3 months
- Survey to review manager feedback on:
  - holding the conversations
  - meaningful conversations training
  - using the process and forms
- Sent to 144 reporting managers
- 21 respondents (15% of managers)
- 84% rated the conversations Good or Excellent (remaining 16% = Fair)



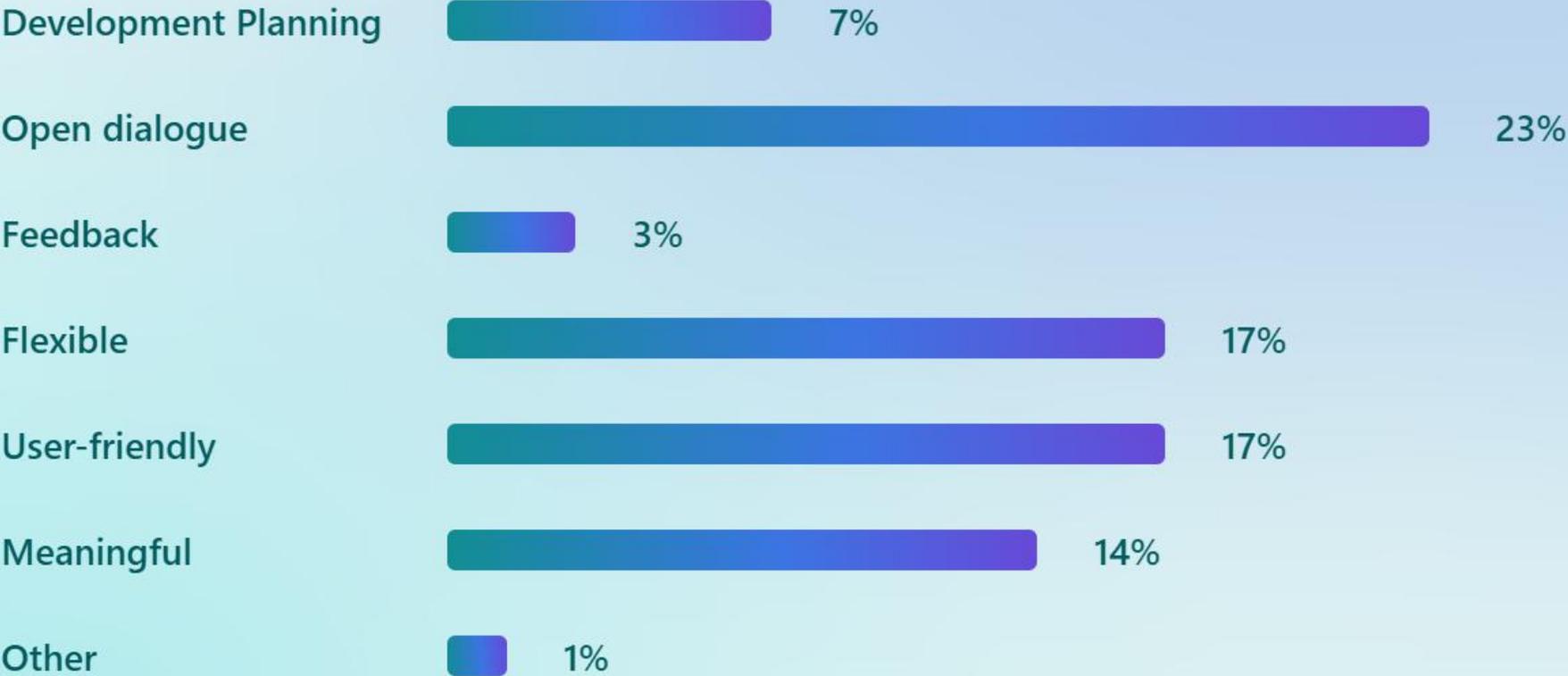
# G&G Purpose

- Move away from annual reviews and 1:1's
- Frequent, positive, proactive and meaningful conversations
- Help us stay agile and ready for the future
- Consider:
  - wellbeing and resilience
  - Reflect past achievements and performance
  - Look ahead to future goals
  - Discuss and review development opportunities
- Have a simple way to record and monitor level of conversations
- Ability to log and review training needs



21 responses submitted

### Which aspect of the new process do you find most valuable? (you may select multiple answers)



21 responses submitted

Do you feel the communication about Growth and Goals was adequate?

95%  
Yes

5%  
..

21 responses submitted

Have you made use of the Growth & Goals toolkit to support your conversation?

100%  
Yes

13

21 responses submitted

Do you know where to access the Growth and Goals Toolkit, forms and other supporting resources?

90%  
Yes

10%  
..

21 responses submitted

Are you aware of the new way to log Learning and Development requests?

56%  
Yes

28%  
Would like more  
information

14%  
No

For each statement below, choose the response that best represents your opinion.

Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree Neutral

The training clearly explained the purpose of Growth and Goals Conversations, aligned with new tools and organisational...

The content of the training was relevant and practical

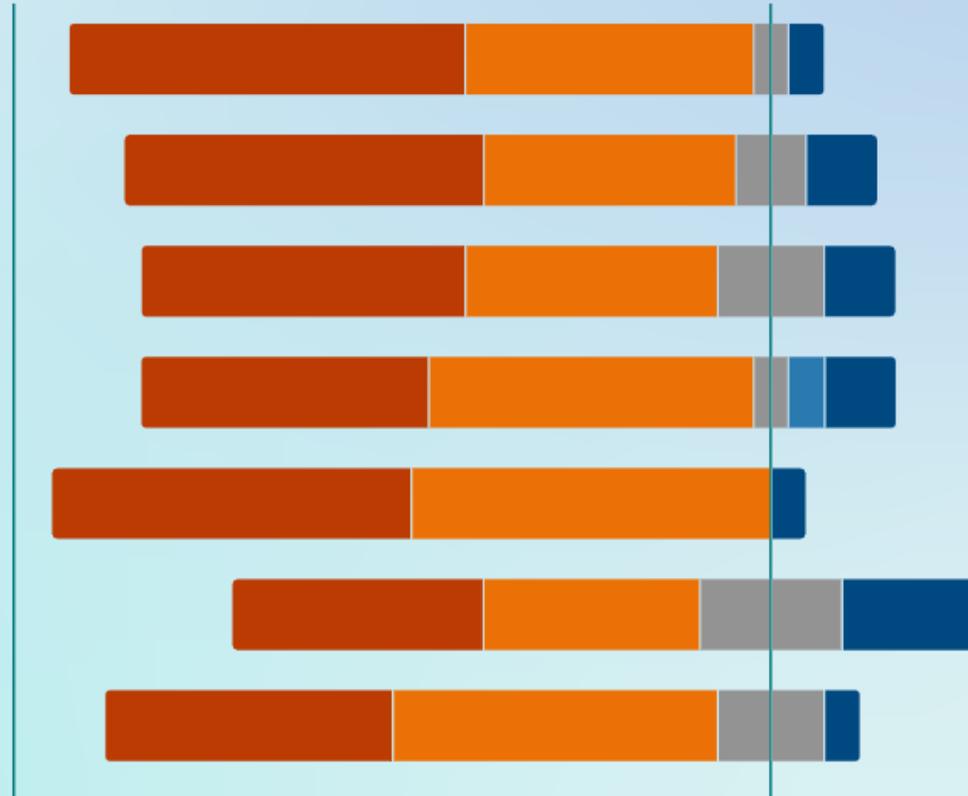
14 The training improved my confidence in having Growth & Goals Conversations

The examples and scenarios provided were helpful

The training was engaging and easy to follow

I feel better equipped to handle challenging conversations after the training

The training helped me understand the benefits of high-quality conversations for myself, my team, and the wider organisation



## Do you have any additional feedback about your experience with Growth & Goals conversations?

- Much better format and beneficial to both parties
- Toolkit and training really helped me to have constructive and meaningful conversations
- Relish the focus on the whole person
- Requires time to bed in to see true benefits
- Would like examples of good practice and sharing with peers
- Tips for completing the form would be helpful, eg saving part way
- More structured actions and progress metrics could benefit further



# Feedback actions

- In addition to existing toolkit and videos
- Hold bite size 45 min online sessions
- Two for managers, two for employees
- Agendas suited to cover the feedback received as applicable to the audience:
  - Show and detail the toolkit
  - Demo the form for G&G and Learning
  - Demo how the learning lists works
  - Talk through corporate learning requests
  - Top tips for how managers and employees can prepare for the conversations
  - Time for questions and sharing in the group
- Promote opportunities to discuss G&G at Learning & Work Week
- Carry out another survey in 6-months – keep Form simple for now





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## HR Committee – 12 March 2026

### HR Policy Changes required in April 2026 as a result of the Employment Rights Act 2025

Purpose	For information
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	The Employment Rights Act 2025 has changes phased in over the next 18 months. The first changes come into effect in April 2026 and a number of policies need to be reviewed in light of these.
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<b>That the HR Committee note the changes required to our internal policies from 6 April as a result of the Employment Rights Act 2025.</b>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	The changes will be subject to secondary legislation but this expected to be in place by 6 <sup>th</sup> April 2026.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Jeremy Heron - Finance and Corporate Services
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Services and S151 Officer
Officer Contact	Heleana Aylett HR Service Manager 023 80 285662 Heleana.aylett@nfdc.gov.uk

#### Introduction and background

1. The Employment Rights Bill was introduced as part of the Labour Government’s “Plan to Make Work Pay”. It is a significant overhaul of UK employment law and aims to modernise workplace protections, improve job security, and raise living standards.

2. It is being introduced over a period of approximately 18 months, and this report deals with those changes that are likely to be implemented in April 2026, and that will require changes to our own employee policies.
3. It should be noted that some of these changes require secondary legislation before implementation. The expectation is that this will be introduced prior to the anticipated implementation date of 6<sup>th</sup> April.

## **Policies Affected from April 2026**

### **Statutory Sick Pay**

4. Employees are currently eligible for statutory sick pay (SSP) if they are sick for a period of four days or more. Low-paid employees who earn less than the lower earnings limit are not eligible for SSP.

The Employment Rights Act 2025 removes both these requirements:

SSP will be available to employees from day one of their incapacity for work.

All employees will be eligible, regardless of their earnings.

If an employee earns less than the weekly SSP rate (currently £118.75), they will be entitled to SSP at the rate of 80% of their normal weekly earnings.

Unlike most measures included in the Employment Rights Act 2025, the changes will apply in Northern Ireland, as well as England, Scotland and Wales.

5. To implement this, we will require an upgrade patch for our payroll system, ITrent. The company are aware of this and will provide this in due course.

### **Statutory paternity and ordinary parental leave to become day-one employment rights**

6. The Employment Rights Act 2025 will remove the qualifying periods for paternity leave (currently 26 weeks) and ordinary parental leave (currently one year), making them both day-one rights. It will also remove the restriction on employees taking paternity leave and pay after they have taken shared parental leave and pay.
7. This will give employees the right to give notice of their intent to take leave from their first day of employment with us. The notice periods remain unchanged, with Paternity Leave requiring 15 weeks' notice before the expected week of childbirth, or as soon as is reasonably

practicable, and Unpaid Parental Leave requiring 21 days' notice or as soon as reasonably practicable.

8. Removing the continuity of service requirements bring Paternity Leave and Unpaid Parental Leave into alignment with Maternity Leave and Adoption Leave.

### **Other Changes from April 2026**

9. Also from April 2026 the Act strengthens protections against sexual harassment at work, including adding sexual harassment to the list of relevant failures in relation to which a worker may make a protected disclosure under s.43B of Employment Rights Act 1996. This will require an amendment to our Whistleblowing Policy and relevant parties have been notified. We will also undertake a review of the Sexual Harassment Risk Assessment and update it as necessary.

### **Further ERA changes from October 26**

10. The next set of changes are due to come into effect in October 2026. These are wide ranging and will necessitate policy updates in relation to Probation, Bullying and Harassment (including from a third party), time limits for tribunals and fire and rehire dismissals.
11. More changes are due during 2027 including changes to unfair dismissal, flexible working, zero hour contracts, bereavement leave, and the introduction of mandatory action plans for gender pay gaps and the menopause.

### **Other Changes to Note Unrelated to the ERA**

12. Other changes are being introduced under the Equality (Race and Disability) bill, namely rights under Equal Pay and Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap reporting but there is no confirmed date for this as yet.
13. There are also plans to review Paid Carers Leave under the existing Paid Carers Leave Act 2023. Again there is no confirmed date for this.
14. The Public Office (Accountability) Bill is also progressing through Parliament. This will lay out a Code of Ethical Conduct for both officers and members and will make Misconduct in Public Office a new Statutory Offence replacing the current common law one.

## **Next Steps**

15. Once the secondary legislation is passed then further communication with employees regarding the changes will happen and the revised policies will be available on Forestnet from April.

## **Corporate plan priorities**

16. As an Employer of Choice, we will seek to update all our policies to ensure full compliance with the updated legislation.

## **Options appraisal**

17. As these are changes in legislation there are no options to consider other than full compliance.

## **Consultation undertaken**

18. EMT were pleased to have been kept informed of the upcoming changes.

No further comments were received from Employee Side after Employee Side Liaison Panel.

## **Financial and resource implications**

19. There may be some increased costs due to the changes in SSP however it is expected that this would be minimal. For context, in 24/25, £133,743 was paid out in SSP. £118,106 was offset against occupational sick pay, leaving £15,637 of SSP paid out having not been offset.

## **Legal implications**

20. The changes will be enforced through relevant secondary legislation.

## **Risk assessment**

21. Not required

## **Environmental / Climate and nature implications**

22. None identified

## **Equalities implications**

23. Removing the continuity of service requirements bring Paternity Leave and Unpaid Parental Leave into alignment with Maternity Leave and Adoption Leave. For many this will be welcomed and seen as a step forward in terms of equality.

## **Crime and disorder implications**

24. None Identified

## **Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications**

25. The Councils ITrent payroll system will require an update to account for the proposed changes in the Statutory Sick Pay calculation. Unfortunately, this was not in time to be included in our annual upgrade in December, therefore a specific patch will be required.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Paternity Leave Policy  
Appendix 2 – Parental Leave Policy  
Appendix 3 – Short Term Sickness  
Policy  
Appendix 4 – Long Term Sickness  
Policy

### **Background Papers:**

None

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# Paternity leave

Human Resources

April 2026

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## Document History

Name of policy	Paternity leave
Purpose of policy	To set out the entitlements of employees to paternity leave to allow them to spend time with a new child and support their partner.
Policy applies to	All employees
Latest update	April 2026
Update overview	<p>April 2024: Policy review to reflect the Paternity Leave (Amendment) Regulations 2024. This entitles employees to split their leave into two separate one week blocks within 52 weeks of the child's birth, placement for adoption or entry into the UK.</p> <p><u><a href="#">April 2026: The Employment Rights Act 2025 removes the 26 weeks service qualifying period of employment for paternity leave, making it a day one right.</a></u></p>

## Paternity leave

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Introduction

This policy sets out the entitlements of employees to paternity leave to allow them to spend time with a new child and support their partner.

The following definitions are used in this policy:

"Adopter" means the person with whom the child has been or is to be placed for adoption, or where two people have been matched jointly, whoever has elected to be the child's adopter for the purposes of adoption leave.

"Expected week of childbirth" means the week, starting on a Sunday, during which the baby is due to be born.

"Matched for adoption" means an adoption agency deciding that a person would be a suitable adoptive parent for a child either individually or jointly with another person. A person

is notified of having been "matched for adoption" with a child on the date on which the person receives notification of the adoption agency's decision.

"Official notification" means written notification, issued by or on behalf of the relevant domestic authority, that it is prepared to issue, or has already issued, a certificate to the overseas authority concerned with the adoption of the child, confirming that the adopter is eligible to adopt and has been assessed and approved as being a suitable adoptive parent.

"Partner" includes someone, of whatever sex, who lives with the mother, expectant mother or adopter of the child in an enduring family relationship but who is not the mother's or adopter's child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew.

"Placed for adoption" means placed for adoption under UK adoption laws, including placement with a local authority foster parent who is also a prospective adopter ("foster to adopt").

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we can amend it at any time. This may be in response to changing UK legislation or to ensure it remains supportive for our workforce.

## 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to employees employed by us. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

## 2. Paternity leave

### 2.1 Entitlement to paternity leave

You can take paternity leave for the purpose of caring for the child and supporting the child's mother if:

- You ~~must~~ have or expect to have responsibility for bringing up the child; and
- You are ~~be one or both of the following~~: the child's father; married to, the civil partner or partner of the mother or birth parent (this includes same-sex partners).

If you have separated from your partner but have ongoing responsibility for your child, you remain entitled to paternity leave and pay.

~~You must have 26 weeks continuous service for at least 26 weeks up to the 'qualify week' (15th week before the expected week of childbirth).~~

In adoption, this means 26 weeks continuous service at the end of the week in which the

child's adopter is notified of being matched for adoption (or received official notification of adoption from overseas). ~~You will also~~ be the spouse, civil partner, or partner of the child's adopter, and have or expect to have the main responsibility (apart from the adopter) for the child's upbringing.

## **2.2 Amount of paternity leave you can take**

You can take up to 1 or 2 weeks' paternity leave. The leave can be 2 weeks together or two separate blocks of one week.

You can take only two weeks' paternity leave per pregnancy or adoption, even if more than one child is born because of the pregnancy or more than one child is placed under the same adoption arrangement.

## **2.3 Timing of paternity leave**

You can start your paternity leave on any day from the child's birth, but it must end within 52 weeks of the birth.

In the case of an adopted child, the 52-week period runs from the date on which the child was placed for adoption with the adopter (or the child's entry into the UK for adoptions from overseas).

If you wish to take shared parental leave, you must take your paternity leave first. You cannot take paternity leave if you have already taken a period of shared parental leave in relation to the same child.

## **2.2 Telling us you will be going on paternity leave**

To take paternity leave, you need to tell your line manager by email or in writing by the end of the qualifying week (the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the child is expected to be born), or as soon as possible afterwards that:

- You're having a baby
- The date of the week the baby is due
- Confirm your eligibility for paternity leave

We will also need to see the MAT B1 form which is provided after 20 weeks' pregnant.

You and your manager can start planning for your paternity leave and discussing your initial intentions for when and how much paternity leave you intend to take.

At least 28 days before starting your leave (or each period of leave if you intend to take two

separate blocks) you must tell us the dates of your intended leave. Talk to your line manager and use the **starting paternity leave** form to do this. Payroll will write to you confirming the dates of your paternity leave.

If you want to change the start date of your paternity leave, you should give us 28 days notice wherever possible. If the baby is born late, tell us the new date you are starting your paternity leave as soon as you can.

If you are adopting within the UK talk to your line manager about the process if you feel comfortable, this will help us to support you best and help plan your paternity leave. You need to tell us within 7 days you have been matched with a child and when the placement is expected to start (or started if its already happened). If you are adopting from overseas you must tell us within 28 days of receiving the official notification of adoption, including the date the child is expected to enter the UK, or if they already have, when this was.

## 3. Paternity Pay

### 3.1 Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP)

You will qualify for SPP if you have 26 weeks continuous service before the qualifying week, or in adoption, the week you are notified of being matched for adoption. Your average weekly earnings in the 8 weeks up to and including your qualifying or matching week must be at least equal to the Lower Earnings Limit for National Insurance contributions.

SPP is paid for 2 weeks and only payable when you are absent from work on paternity leave. You will be paid in the same way as your normal salary would have been. You get the same amount of paternity pay even if you have more than one baby, for example twins.

### 3.2 Maternity Support Leave Pay

This allows for 5 days with pay to be granted to the child's father, the partner or nominated carer of an expectant mother at, or around, the time of the birth. A nominated carer is the person nominated by the mother as their primary provider of support at, or around, the time of birth. This means that your first week of paternity leave will be your normal pay ~~(which will include SPP)~~. If you choose to take a second week and qualify for SPP, you will be paid the SPP current rate.

## 4. Supporting the pregnancy

### Attending appointments

If you qualify for paternity leave, you are able to time paid off work to attend two pregnancy related or adoption appointments. This includes pregnancy appointments with a surrogate.

Give us as much notice as you can of the appointments and wherever possible try to arrange them near the start/end of your working day. We expect that normally no more than half a day is needed for an antenatal appointment, the leave does include travel to and from it.

## 5. Bereavement during pregnancy

### 8.1 Miscarriage

If your partner has a miscarriage before 24 weeks, you're not entitled to paternity leave and pay.

You do not have to tell us you've about it. However, we encourage you to do so and communicate as openly as possible with your line manager so that we can talk about the right support for you. You can also find help and support from the [Miscarriage Association](#).

### 8.2 Supporting you if your baby is still born or your baby dies

You remain entitled to paternity leave and pay if your baby is stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy, or your baby only lives for a short time after birth at any stage of pregnancy.

Talk to us as soon as you can about what's happened. Someone else can do this, a friend or a family member, if you need them to. We will talk to you about the right support for you and will be led by you when having conversations about your health and leave.

You can find help and support following the death of your baby before, during or shortly after their birth from: [Child Bereavement UK](#) and [Sands](#)

### 8.3 If your adoption doesn't go ahead

If your adoption doesn't go ahead, this may happen if the child is returned to the adoption agency or foster care or has died, you remain entitled to paternity leave and pay.

Talk to us as soon as you can about what's happened. Someone else can do this, a friend or a family member, if you need them to. We will talk to you about the right support for you and will be led by you when having conversations about your health and leave.

### 8.4 Employee Support Line

The employee support line is available to us all for emotional and practical support to help us

manage and reduce the impact of life's events. Its available 24/7 and is free and confidential.

You can read more about it here: [Employee Support Line](#)

They are available on 0800 116 387 or online on [www.my-eap.com](http://www.my-eap.com) login: newforestwell



# Parental leave

Human Resources

April [2024-2026](#)

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## Document history

Name of policy	Parental leave
Purpose of policy	To set out entitlements and support for parents wishing to use unpaid parental leave.
Policy applies to	All employees
Latest update	April 202 <del>6</del> 4
Update overview	April 2024: Policy review to reflect all updates to historic work and parents handbook.  <a href="#">April 2026: The Employment Rights Act 2025 removes the one year's service qualifying period of employment for parental leave, making it a day one right.</a>

## Parental leave

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Introduction

Parents have the right to unpaid time off work when they need to look after their children, this is called parental leave. This is additional to other types of time off employees are entitled to including maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave and/or annual leave.

We are committed to supporting a positive work-life balance for all employees and recognise that time with children is important. If you are eligible for parental leave you can use it to care for your child, which might be to look after them during school holiday, be with them when they are unwell or enjoy more quality time with them.

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment and we can amend it at any time. This may be in response to changing UK legislation or to ensure it remains supportive for our workforce.

#### 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to employees employed by us. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

## 2. Parental leave

### 2.1 Entitlement to parental leave

All employees ~~with one year's local government service~~ who have parental responsibility for their child can use unpaid parental leave. This can include step-parents where you have parental responsibility and it is agreed between all parties.

Each parent can take up to 18 weeks unpaid parental leave for each child until they are 18 years old. This must be taken in blocks of weeks up to a maximum of 4 weeks a year for each child. A week means a working week depending on your working pattern.

If your child is disabled and you receive Disability Living Allowance or a Personal Independence Payment for them, you can take unpaid parental leave in blocks of days rather than weeks.

### 2.2 Telling us you want to use parental leave

To take parental leave, you need to tell your line manager by email or in writing with at least 21 days' notice before the date you want to start a block of parental leave. This will need to include the exact dates you plan to start and finish your parental leave so we can work together to plan your absence.

We may ask for your child's birth certificate or certificate of adoption to support your request.

We would normally expect to support your request for parental leave on the dates you have requested. Your absence will be recorded on the HR management system and will be unpaid. The Payroll team will keep a record of your unpaid parental leave in a 12 month period to ensure it is not more than the 4 weeks maximum.

### 2.3 Postponing your parental leave

If taking parental leave at the time you have requested will cause undue problems at work, for example there's an important deadline, we will talk to you about this in the first instance. We will email or write to you within 7 days after receiving your request explaining why the leave needs to be postponed and give other suitable dates.

These dates can be for up to 6 months after you originally asked for, but we will support you to take the leave before your child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

If you are adding parental leave to your paternity leave, we will not postpone your parental leave.

#### **2.4 If you need less than a week off to look after your child**

Review our [Support Leave](#) ~~SUPPORT LEAVE~~ policy to understand options available to you if your child is involved in an emergency or has a long-term care need.

If your circumstances do not fall within the support leave policy, we may be able to support you with annual leave, depending on operational needs.

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# Sickness Management Policy

Short Term Sickness

Human Resources

~~January 2025~~[April 2026](#)

Version 1.01

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
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<u>Name of policy</u>	<u>Sickness Management – Short Term Sickness</u>		
<u>Purpose of policy</u>	<u>To set out the Councils approach to short term sickness management</u>		
<u>Policy applies to</u>	<u>All employees</u>		
<u>Latest update</u>	<u>April 2026</u>		
<u>Update overview</u>	<u>April 2026: The Employment Rights Act 2025 makes statutory sick pay (SSP) available to all employees, removing the requirement to earn the lower earnings limit and the three-day waiting period.</u>		

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

The council aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work because of ill health.

While the council understands that there will inevitably be some sickness absence among employees, it must also pay due regard to its operational needs. If an employee is persistently absent from work, this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden on the employee's colleagues.

By implementing this policy, the council aims to strike a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its operational needs and the genuine need of employees to take time off work because of ill health.

This policy does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of the management.

## 1.2 Definitions

The following definitions are used in this policy:

**"Period of sickness absence"** or **"instance of sickness absence"** means any continuous period of sickness absence, of whatever length, during which the employee does not work.

**"Short-term sickness absence"** means any period of sickness lasting between one and 27 calendar days.

**"Long-term sickness absence"** means any period of sickness lasting 28 calendar days or more.

**"Formal review period"** means a defined period during which an employee is required to show an improvement in their sickness absence levels under the council's Sickness Absence Management procedure.

## 1.3 Scope

This policy applies to employees of New Forest District Council. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self employed individuals working for the council.

This policy covers short-term sickness absence. The council operates a separate policy on long term sickness absence. Once an employee's sickness has lasted 28 calendar days, the council's long-term sickness absence policy applies.

Where an employee's absences are being managed under this policy and they then go off on long-term sickness absence, management of their sickness absence will be switched over to the council's separate policy on long-term sickness absence.

## 1.4 Misconduct

This policy is formulated on the assumption that, if the council suspects there to be misconduct, its separate disciplinary procedure will apply. For example, the council may take disciplinary action if there is evidence that:

- absence is not genuine or not for the reason provided.
- the employee is undertaking inappropriate activities while off sick, such as carrying out work for another council; or another business including self-employment, or
- the correct sickness absence notification and evidence procedure has not been followed.

## 2. Responsibilities

### 2.1 Guidelines for Employees

As an employee, you are responsible for ensuring that:

- attend work unless unfit to do so.
- if you are unable to attend work because of ill health, or a workplace accident, you notify your manager by telephone as soon as reasonably practicable, preferably before you are due to start work and, in any event, no later than one hour after you are due to begin work;
- continue to notify and keep in touch with your manager while unable to attend work.
- you give your manager a clear reason (i.e.the nature of the illness or injury) why you cannot attend work, and estimate how long you think the absence will last;
- provide medical evidence for sickness of more than seven calendar days.
- attend a return-to-work meeting with your manager each time you return from a period of sickness absence.
- be open with your manager about the reasons for your absence, to give your manager the opportunity to provide support where possible.
- tell your manager of any extenuating circumstances, for example personal or family problems or an unmanageable workload.
- you bear in mind that the council may seek a medical report, for example from your doctor or the council's occupational health advisers; and
- you cooperate with the council regarding the possible implementation of any adjustments to job duties, hours or working conditions, particularly those suggested by a healthcare professional.

### 2.2 Guidelines for Managers

As a line manager, you are responsible for ensuring that you:

- manage attendance and absence in accordance with this policy.
- maintain a proper record of each employee's sickness absences by recording the absence correctly on the Council's HR System.
- require the employee to provide medical evidence (normally a Dr's certificate) for sickness of more than seven calendar days.
- conduct a return-to-work meeting each time the employee returns from a period of sickness absence.
- speak to the employee about the absence and the reason for it in a fair and factual way.
- be supportive towards the employee and, where appropriate, seek to identify ways in which to assist the employee to improve their attendance in the future.
- be alert to patterns of absence, for example frequent absences on Fridays or Mondays, or immediately before or after bank or public holidays.
- try to establish any underlying reasons for frequent absences and, where the underlying cause is identified, take steps to help the employee to manage the cause.
- seek medical advice, if appropriate, to determine whether there is any underlying medical cause for the employee's frequent absences.
- be particularly sensitive when absences are caused by personal or family problems.
- show a reasonable degree of tolerance and sympathy towards the employee's sickness absence, while at the same time making clear that continuing frequent absences from work are unacceptable.

- check whether the employee's absences are in any way work related, for example because of workplace stress.
- bear in mind that the council may seek a medical report on an employee, for example from the employee's doctor or the council's occupational health advisers.
- keep confidential records of all absences, including discussions and medical certificates, and make sure that the records clearly identify the reasons for the employee's various absences.
- be aware of the potential for discrimination when managing absence, particularly where the employee's ill health is related to pregnancy or disability.
- keep in mind the council's duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people when managing absence; and
- consult with Human Resources if unsure about anything or special circumstances arise, for example if it appears that the employee may have a disability.

## 2.3 Notification and Evidence of Sickness Absence

### *Reporting absence*

On the first day of sickness absence, you must inform your manager as soon as reasonably practicable that you will not be working because of illness or injury. You should notify your manager of non-attendance before you are due to start work and, in any event, no later than one hour after you are due to begin work. If your manager is unavailable, you should contact the next most appropriate person within the department. Managers may agree in advance different reporting requirements however this must take into account the requirements of the business and ensure that service to our customers is maintained.

You should provide a clear reason (ie the nature of the illness or injury) why you cannot attend work and estimate how long you think the absence will last. You should also be prepared to briefly discuss any consequences of your absence, for example if customer appointments need to be cancelled or any essential work needs to be covered.

Notification of sickness absence must be via telephone, rather than text message, email, or social media platform, unless alternative arrangements have previously been agreed with your manager. In exceptional circumstances where you are unable to telephone (for example, because of hospitalisation), another person such as a friend or relative can contact the council on your behalf.

Once notified your manager will enter your absence details onto the council's HR system.

If you come to work but need to leave during the day because of ill health, you should inform your manager before leaving work. If your manager is unavailable, you should inform the next most appropriate person within the department.

Sickness absence that begins part way through the day will count as one full day's sickness absence if you leave before completing 50% of your working day. Where sickness absence begins after you have completed 50% of your working day, this should be recorded as half a day's absence. It is important that the half day AM or PM is selected for this to be recorded as half a day sick. If the 'part day' option is selected the entry will show as a whole day sick.

For each subsequent sick day after the first day of absence, you must telephone your manager as soon as reasonably practicable in the morning, unless alternative arrangements have been agreed. Managers should use their discretion and can agree different

arrangements with you, for example depending on the nature of your illness or if you are hospitalised.

## 2.4 Self certification of Sickness Absence

If you are absent for seven calendar days or less, on the first day of your return to work you must update your sickness record on the HR System ensuring the dates of absence and the nature of the illness or injury are correct. If amendments are required, you should raise this with your manager. If you are unable to do this yourself then please speak to your manager.

Your manager will be alerted by email that the sickness entry has been updated. They must then approve the entry on the HR System which will inform the HR / Payroll department that you have returned to work.

## 2.5 Statement of Fitness for work (fit note or Dr's certificate)

While the first seven calendar days of sickness do not require a certificate, all periods of sickness absence that lasts longer than seven calendar days requires medical evidence. Medical evidence will normally be in the form of a fit note, also known as a "statement of fitness for work".

If you are absent for eight consecutive days or more (including weekends) you must provide your manager with a fit note as soon as possible. If your absence persists beyond the end of the first fit note, you must continue to submit further fit notes to cover the whole period of your absence. It is your responsibility to keep the council informed of your progress and your likely date of return to work.

If you feel well enough to return to work before the end date of your Dr's note then this may be possible and you should discuss this with your manager/supervisor in the first instance.

Fit notes can be issued by nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists, and physiotherapists if they have conducted an assessment of your fitness for work.

A fit note may state that:

- you are "not fit for work", in which case you should remain off work; or
- you "may be fit for work", if the healthcare professional's recommendations are followed (for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, or workplace adaptations).

While there is no legal obligation on the council to follow the recommendations in the fit note, your line manager will take the recommendations seriously and give fair consideration - in consultation with you and HR - as to whether any of the changes recommended can be accommodated.

## 2.6 Keeping in touch

It is important that we maintain regular contact with you while you are absent to:

- see how you are progressing in terms of your health;
- support you and actively maintain your engagement with us;

- provide information to you so that you may make informed decisions (for example, in relation to health-related benefits);
- provide practical support including from our occupational health advisers;
- encourage a return to work as early as possible;
- facilitate a phased return to work if required, by making appropriate temporary or permanent adjustments; and
- ensure that you are kept up to date about events in the workplace.

You and your line manager are both jointly responsible for maintaining contact with each other. When you are ill it is your responsibility to notify your manager. You can agree between you how often you will make contact in the first month. Once you are absent on sick leave for 28 continuous days we will manage your absence under the Council's Long Term sickness policy. Contact will be on a regular basis and at least monthly.

## 3. Sick Pay

### 3.1 Eligibility

~~Eligible~~ All employees are entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP), if you follow the council's usual notification and evidence requirements.

Statutory sick pay is payable for up to 28 weeks in any one period of sickness absence, at a weekly rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year.

#### 3.1.1 Contractual sick pay scheme

The council operates a contractual sick pay scheme that is more generous than statutory sick pay (SSP).

Details of the council's sick pay scheme are indicated in your contract of employment. The Council's occupational Sick Pay Scheme is:

during 1st year of service	During first 3 months - No sickness payments After 3 months - One week full pay After 6 months - Additional two weeks half pay
during 2nd year of service	2 months' full pay + 2 months half pay
during 3rd year of service	4 months' full pay + 4 months half pay
during 4th & 5th year of service	5 months' full pay + 5 months half pay

after 5 years' service	6 months' full pay + 6 months half pay
------------------------	--

The allowance shown above is reduced by the total of paid sick leave in the 12 months immediately preceding the first day of sickness. All employees both full-time and part-time shall have 7 qualifying days in each week for statutory sick pay purposes.

If you have exhausted your contractual sick pay and have any SSP remaining, you will move to SSP until this has also been exhausted.

Sick pay under the council's scheme is subject to the usual deductions for PAYE, national insurance, pension contributions, etc.

Payments under the council's scheme will be calculated by reference to your basic salary including any market supplement only and any payments made under the council's scheme are inclusive of any entitlement to SSP for the same period of absence.

### 3.1.2 Absence because of an Accident involving a Third Party

All employees who are absent because of an accident shall not be entitled to an allowance if damages may be receivable from a third party in respect of that accident. In this event, the Council will normally advance to the employee a sum not exceeding the sickness allowance set out above, provided the employee undertakes to refund to the Council the total amount of such allowance or the proportion of it which is represented in the amount of damages that are eventually received. Payroll will be happy to provide sufficient information to enable you to make your claim.

Any period of absence in such a case where a refund of the money advanced is made in full, shall not be recorded for the purposes of the Occupational Sick Pay scheme. If, however, the refund only represents part of the money advanced the Council will, at its discretion, decide to what extent the period of absence will be recorded.

### 3.1.3 Other employment or work whilst in receipt of sick pay

If you are in receipt of Sick Pay (including SSP) you are not allowed to undertake any form of paid alternative employment, self-employment, or voluntary work. Any breach of this rule would be regarded as gross misconduct which could result in dismissal.

### 3.1.4 Sickness due to sporting activity

The council encourages all staff to look after their own health and wellbeing however, if your sickness absence occurs as a result of active participation in sport as a profession, or in cases where the absence is as a result of your own misconduct then the sickness allowance is not payable.

### 3.1.5 Industrial Disease, Accident or Assault

Absence in respect of normal sickness is entirely separate from absence through industrial disease, accident or assault arising out of or in the course of employment with a local authority. Periods of absence in respect of one shall not be set off against the other for the purpose of calculating entitlements under the scheme.

### 3.1.6 Withholding or Suspending Sick Pay

The council reserves the right to withhold or suspend sick pay under its contractual sick pay scheme at its discretion. Circumstances in which contractual sick pay may be withheld include where:

- you have failed to comply with the council's sickness absence notification and evidence requirements.
- you refuse to attend a medical examination at the reasonable request of the council.
- your incapacity has been caused by participation in dangerous sports or activities or any other occupation that you have.
- you make or produce any misleading or untrue statement or document concerning your fitness to work.

You will normally be entitled to receive SSP when contractual sick pay is withheld or suspended, although the council can withhold or suspend SSP if it is not satisfied that you are ill, and no evidence of sickness is provided.

You will be given written notice if your SSP or contractual sick pay is being withheld or suspended.

## 3.2 Medical Appointments

The council recognises that employees will, from time to time, need to attend medical appointments.

You should endeavour to arrange medical appointments in your own time or, if this is not possible, at times that will cause the minimum amount of absence from work or inconvenience to the council.

However, we recognise that it is not always possible or practical to arrange medical appointments outside working hours, it is the council's policy to permit reasonable time off work for such appointments.

To make a request for time off to attend a routine medical or dental appointment, you should contact your line manager. You should provide them with as much notice as possible of when you need the time off and wherever possible arrange your appointments outside of your normal working hours or as near as possible to the start or end of the working day. If your working day finishes within the normal opening hours of a doctor or dental surgery, then you must endeavour to make an appointment at the end of your working day.

Your manager may ask you to provide proof of the date and time of your appointment.

Every effort will be made to meet your request. However, there may be circumstances where your line manager may turn down your request due to operational needs or where there is insufficient capacity within the council to accommodate high levels of leave.

Provided that you give your line manager reasonable notice of the date and time of an appointment, time off with pay will normally be granted, although this is subject to the discretion of your line manager.

Where time off for medical appointments becomes frequent or regular, or starts to cause difficulties for your department, your line manager has the discretion either to require you to make up for the time off by working extra time on another occasion, or to grant any further time off without pay.

If you have a disability or long-term health issues, we understand that you may need to attend regular appointments. Wherever possible these should be permitted, provided you have given advance notice.

If you are pregnant, you have the statutory right not to be unreasonably refused paid time off work for antenatal appointments where your attendance has been recommended by a registered medical practitioner, midwife or nurse. Paid time off in such circumstances will automatically be granted, although you should endeavour to arrange appointments outside working hours.

If you are a prospective father, or partner of a pregnant woman, the council allows you to take paid time off to attend up to two antenatal appointments.

Medical or dental emergencies requiring urgent, unforeseen medical or dental attention and cases where you are admitted to hospital for emergency surgery will be treated as sickness absence in accordance with this policy.

### 3.3 Returning to work.

#### 3.3.1 Actions required by you and your line manager.

On your first day back at work after any period of sickness absence, or as soon as is reasonably practicable, your line manager will arrange to meet with you to conduct a return-to-work meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to provide you with an opportunity to discuss the reasons for your absence and whether you need any particular support.

The manager should check absences 12 months prior to the date of your return to work. For example, if you return to work on 1 April, your manager should examine the period from 1 April the previous year to 31 March.

When checking your absence record, your line manager should also review whether your absences have been frequent, regular or repeated. Your manager should be alert to the possibility of any pattern, for example frequent absences on Fridays or Mondays, or immediately before or after bank or public holidays. Managers should, however, remain open minded and not jump to any hasty conclusions about your absences.

If you feel well enough to return to work before the end date on your Dr's certificate you should let your manager know. In most circumstances it will be possible to allow you to return in these circumstances.

Your manager should bear in mind that special considerations apply to absences related to pregnancy and disability.

Your line manager should invite you to an informal return-to-work meeting each time you return from a period of sickness absence.

When you return to work you should close your sickness entry on the HR System. This should be done quickly as failure to do so could affect your pay.

### 3.3.2 Return-to-work meetings

On the first day back at work after any period of sickness absence, your manager will arrange to meet informally with you.

If this is not possible on your first day back (for example, for operational reasons or because your manager is not available), the informal meeting should take place as soon as reasonably practicable.

At the meeting, your line manager will inform you if they have any concerns about your absence record and if there is a need for formal action under the council's sickness absence management procedure has been triggered.

The return-to-work meeting should take place in a private place, and all discussions between the you and your manager should be private and confidential.

Your manager should:

- welcome you back to work.
- explain to you that the purpose of return-to-work meetings is to manage and monitor your absence and attendance to identify any problem areas and offer support where appropriate.
- inform you that your absence will be recorded.
- ask you about the reasons for your absence, ensuring that the question is asked in a supportive way without any suggestion that you are "to blame" for the absence.
- ask you whether you have consulted a healthcare professional or attended hospital.
- if your sickness lasts for eight calendar days or more, ensure that you have provided a fit note, and this has been passed on to the HR team; and
- inform you if you have hit a trigger point, and the consequences of having done so (see section four below)
- The relevant forms should be completed by your manager. You should ensure that you take the time to read through the forms and raise any concerns that you have. Both you and your manager should sign the form and then your manager will save a copy to your HR file.

### 3.4 Updating your absence record.

When you return you should close your sickness entry on the HR System. Once alerted that this has been completed your line manager should confirm your absence record in the HR System. This should record the dates of your absence, and the reasons for the absence (ie the nature of the illness or injury that has led to your absence). It is very important that your manager completes this action each time you return to work, so that the council can keep track of your pattern of absence. Failure to record sickness absence correctly in the HR System can affect your pay.

There may be occasions when the underlying reason for your absence is not easily classifiable. For example, you may have more than one health condition, or you may have been feeling unwell because of a bereavement. If there is any doubt as to the reasons for your absence, the manager should consult the HR Advisory team to determine the most appropriate category to place on the absence.

### 3.5 Other Considerations

#### 3.5.1 Pregnancy-related absences

If you are off work because of pregnancy-related ill health, you must abide by the council's absence reporting procedure. For example, you are still subject to the usual notification and evidence requirements and can be asked to attend a return-to-work meeting when returning to work.

However, any sickness absence for a pregnancy-related reason should not be included when checking to see if the need for formal action under the council's absence management procedure has been triggered.

If your manager is in any doubt as to whether your absence is related to your pregnancy, they should contact the HR Advisory Team for clarification.

#### 3.5.2 Disability related absences

If you state that the reason for absence relates to an underlying health issue that could amount to a disability under the Equality Act 2010, your manager must seek advice from the HR Advisory team. This includes if you state that you are suffering from stress.

Managers should remember that the council is under a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled employees. The legal definition of a "disability" is wide, and managers should refer to Human Resources for further information. Where the absence is wholly or partly for a disability-related reason, the trigger points referred to in this policy may need to be modified to take proper account of the employee's disability, and other adjustments to the procedures set out in this policy may need to be made. If in doubt, the manager should contact Human Resources for clarification.

The council has in place a reasonable adjustments procedure. If you feel this is relevant and may help to support you then please speak to your manager. Full details of the procedure

including the form to record your Reasonable Adjustments Plan can be found on Forestnet under 'working here'.

## 3.6 Sickness Absence and Annual Leave

### 3.6.1 Sickness during holiday

If you fall sick or are injured while on holiday, the council will allow you to transfer to sick leave and take replacement holiday later. This policy is subject to the following strict conditions:

- The total period of ill health must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner.
- You must contact the council (by telephone if possible) as soon as you know that there will be a period of sickness during a holiday.
- You must submit a written request no later than 10 days after returning to work setting out how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that you wish to take at another time.
- If you are overseas when you fall ill or are injured, evidence must still be produced that you were ill by way of a medical certificate.

If you fulfil all the above conditions, the council will grant you the same number of days' replacement holiday leave as the number of holiday days lost due to sickness or injury.

If you are ill or injured before the start of a period of planned holiday, and are consequently unable to take the holiday, the council will agree to you postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time. Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance with the council's normal policy on sickness absence. You must submit a written request to postpone the planned holiday, and this must be accompanied by medical evidence confirming that you are unfit, or are likely to be unfit, to take the holiday.

### 3.6.2 Holiday during sick leave

If you are absent on sick leave you continue to accrue your contractual holiday entitlement and will be given the opportunity to take this at a later date, including in the subsequent leave year, if you do not take your contractual holiday entitlement due to being on sick leave.

If you wish to, you may apply to take your holiday entitlement while on sick leave. The holiday dates must be approved in accordance with the procedure set out in the council's Annual Leave Policy

## 3.7 Medical Advice – Occupational Health

### 3.7.1 Occupational health referrals

At various stages of managing sickness absence, your manager may want to obtain advice on your fitness for work from occupational health advisers.

Examples of when a line manager might refer to occupational health include to:

- seek a medical report on you;
- establish when you might be able to return to work.
- ask for guidance on your condition, for example if there is a possibility that you are disabled or ambiguity as to the exact nature of the condition; and
- if you are disabled, discuss any adjustments that could be made to accommodate your disability.

The council will treat personal data collected during the absence management process in accordance with its HR Privacy Notice. Information about how your personal data is used and the basis for processing their data will be provided in the council's HR Privacy Notice. Where the council is relying on its legitimate interests as the legal ground for processing your data, you can object to the processing.

### 3.7.2 Report from a medical practitioner who has been responsible for the employee's clinical care.

Where a report from your medical practitioner is necessary, your permission will be sought for the report to be obtained.

Your permission will be sought to contact the medical practitioner by the HR Team. You will be asked to complete a consent form.

You have the right to access the report before the council sees it. If you wish to see the report, you should inform the council of this, so that it can inform the medical practitioner. You will then have 21 days to contact the medical practitioner to see the report. If you do not contact the medical practitioner within this period, the medical practitioner can pass the report on to the council.

When requesting a report, the council will provide the medical practitioner with as much information as possible on your role and explain why the report is being sought. The council will provide the medical practitioner with:

- a copy of your signed form consenting to the request to seek a medical report.
- confirmation that you are aware of their rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988; and
- details of the major features of your job.

The council will ask the medical practitioner to identify:

- the nature of your illness or injury.
- whether or not there are any underlying medical conditions that explain your pattern of absences; and
- what reasonable adjustments could be made to working conditions or work premises to facilitate a return to work.

Where you refuse permission for the council to contact your medical practitioner, the council will explain to you the reasons behind the request and inform you that a decision relating to

your employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports. The same procedure will be followed where you delay in giving your consent.

Where you feel that the report is misleading or incorrect, you may ask the medical practitioner to amend it. If the medical practitioner does not agree with you and does not alter the report, you may attach a statement to the report to reflect your views.

Alternatively, having seen the report, you may request that access to the report be withheld from the council. In this instance you will be informed that a decision relating to employment may be made without the benefit of access to medical reports.

## 4. Sickness Absence Management

The trigger points that are used to decide when action needs to be taken to tackle an employee's sickness absence record are set out below. These provide a framework for managers to use and when applying these trigger points, the special rules that apply to pregnancy and disability must always be borne in mind. The stages set out below are guidelines only.

### 4.1 Stage 1

#### 4.1.1 Stage 1 trigger point

The trigger point for a "stage 1" short-term sickness absence formal review is:

- More than one unrelated episode in a one month rolling period.
- Three or more episodes in any three-month rolling period.
- Three or more episodes in any twelve-month rolling period, totalling six or more working days of sickness.
- Any other recurring, recognisable patterns such as frequent absenteeism on a Friday or Monday, before or after public holidays or during school holidays.

#### *Stage 1 invitation*

If you reach a stage 1 trigger point, your line manager will invite you in writing to a stage 1 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting. In advance of the meeting, your manager will provide all parties with a copy of all documents relevant to your case, including:

- your absence record form.
- any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels; and
- any other medical evidence [such as occupational health reports].

If you would like to submit any further evidence that you consider would be relevant, then please advise your manager as soon as possible and no later than 3 working days before the meeting.

The written invitation to the stage 1 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting should give you at least five days' notice of the meeting. The letter should advise you who will be present and that you can be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union representative.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your unsatisfactory attendance level.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be given a warning and moved to a formal review period.

The letter should also warn you that a possible outcome of the sickness procedure is that you may be dismissed by reason of capability.

### 4.1.2 Stage 1 meeting

The "stage 1" short-term sickness absence formal review meeting will normally be chaired by your line manager. The line manager may be accompanied by a member of the HR team. Notes of the meeting should be taken.

At the meeting, the line manager will:

- explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss your attendance in the previous 12 months, or that you have hit another trigger.
- make clear to you that the aim of the meeting is to find ways to improve your attendance.
- allow you to share your views.
- explain the impact of your non-attendance on the team.
- try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example a health issue or personal problems.
- gather as much information as possible on any underlying reasons identified, without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than you want to.
- discuss and agree any steps that can be put in place to help you to improve your attendance.
- if there is an underlying health problem, refer you to occupational health/encourage you to book an appointment with a healthcare professional, if this has not already been done.
- remind you of the support that is available to you, including the employee assistance programme; and
- at the end of the meeting, having considered the points discussed your manager will inform you of the outcome of the meeting and state that the outcome will be confirmed in writing to you within five working days.

### 4.1.3 Stage 1 outcome

After the meeting, your manager will set out in writing what has been decided as a result of the stage 1 meeting, for example if a warning is being issued and you have been placed on a formal review period, or if the decision is that no further action will be taken. The letter, which should be provided to you within five working days of the meeting, should include details of any steps or targets that have been agreed to help you to improve your attendance, and any support that the council is providing for you.

#### No further action

In limited circumstances, for example if there are extenuating reasons for the absences, the outcome of a stage 1 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting could be that your manager decides that it is not appropriate to move you to a formal review period.

If the decision is that no further action will be taken, the letter should inform you of this and provide an explanation for the decision.

#### Formal review period

An alternative outcome of a stage 1 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting could be that your manager decides that you should be given a warning and moved to a formal review period.

The letter should explain that you have normally 3-6 months to show an improvement in your attendance levels. The period set begins on the day after the warning is issued.

The letter should warn you that, while on the formal review period, the consequences of not showing an improvement in your sickness levels or taking more sickness than agreed in your outcome letter will mean that you move to stage 2 of the council's absence management procedure.

The letter should give you the right to appeal against the warning (see point 5 below).

### Stage 1 improvement

If your sickness absence levels improve during the formal review period, and you do not exceed the absence level set at the formal review, no further action will be taken. Your manager should write to you explaining to you that you have completed the formal review period.

If during the formal review period, your sickness absence exceeds the sickness standards set then you will be moved to stage 2. This may be brought forward and there is no need to wait for the end of the review period.

## 4.2 Stage 2

### 4.2.1 Stage 2 *trigger point*

The trigger point for a stage 2 formal review if you are on a stage 1 formal review period is:

- If you hit any of the other trigger points laid out in 4.1.1; or
- If you exceed the absence trigger laid out in your letter after the Stage 1 meeting.

### *Stage 2 invitation*

On reaching a stage 2 trigger point, your line manager will invite you in writing to a stage 2 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting.

The meeting will normally be chaired by your line manager and a member of the HR team will be present at the meeting. In advance of the meeting, your line manager should provide all parties with the documents relevant to your case, including:

- your absence record form.
- any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels, particularly the letter setting out the outcome of the stage 1 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting; and
- any other medical evidence [such as occupational health reports].

The written invitation to the stage 2 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting should give you at least five working days' notice of the meeting. The letter should advise you who will be present and that you can be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union representative.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your continued unsatisfactory attendance level while on a stage 1 formal review period.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be given a second, and final, warning and moved to a second formal review period.

The letter should also warn you that a possible outcome of the sickness procedure is that you may be dismissed by reason of capability.

#### 4.2.2 Stage 2 meeting

The "stage 2" short-term sickness absence formal review meeting will normally be chaired by your line manager. The line manager will be accompanied by a member of the HR team. Notes should be taken of the meeting.

At the meeting, your manager will:

- explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss your continued unsatisfactory attendance.
- make clear to you that the aim of the meeting remains to find ways to improve your attendance.
- allow you to share your views.
- try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example a health issue or personal problems.
- gather as much further information as possible on any underlying reasons identified, without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than you want.
- discuss and agree any further steps or targets that can be put in place to help you to improve your attendance.
- if there is an underlying health problem, refer you to occupational health, if this has not already been done.
- remind you of the support that is available to you, including the employee assistance programme; and
- inform you of the possible outcomes of the meeting, and that the outcome will be confirmed in writing to you within five working days.

#### 4.2.3 Stage 2 outcome

After the meeting, your manager will set out in writing what has been decided as a result of the stage 2 meeting, for example if a warning is being issued and you have been placed on a formal review period, or if the decision is that no further action will be taken. The letter, which should be provided to the you within five working days of the meeting, should include details of any further steps or targets that have been agreed to help you to improve your attendance, and any support that the council is providing for you.

#### No further action

In limited circumstances, for example if there are extenuating reasons for the absences, the outcome of a stage 2 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting could be that your manager decides that it is not appropriate to move you to a second formal review period.

If the decision is that no further action will be taken, a letter should inform you of this and provide an explanation for the decision.

### Formal review period

An alternative outcome of a stage 2 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting could be that your manager decides that you should be given a final written warning and moved to a second formal review period.

The letter should explain that you have 6 months to show an improvement in your attendance levels. The 6-month period begins on the day after the warning is issued.

The letter should warn you that, during the formal review period, the consequences of reaching sickness absence levels that either, exceed the target set for your review period or hit any of the trigger points laid out in 4.1.1 over a rolling period of 6 months will be that you move to stage 3 of the council's absence management procedure.

The letter should give you the right to appeal against the warning (see Point 5).

### Stage 2 improvement

If your sickness absence levels improve and you do not hit a trigger point in the Councils procedure during the formal review period, and do not exceed the target set as laid out in your letter then no further action will be taken. Your manager should write to you explaining that you have completed the formal review period.

If during the formal review period, your sickness absence reaches one of the trigger points as set out in 4.1.1, or exceeds the target you have been set you will be moved to stage 3.

If the outcome is to end the procedure, you will be made aware that any further absence that hits the trigger within 12 months will mean that you would be put back on the formal process at the step it ended at.

## 4.3 Stage 3

### 4.3.1 Stage 3 *trigger point*

The trigger point for a stage 3 final formal review if you are on a stage 2 formal review period is:

- If you hit any of the other trigger points laid out in 4.1.1; or
- If you exceed the absence trigger laid out in your letter after the Stage 2 formal review meeting.

### *Stage 3 invitation*

On reaching a stage 3 trigger point, a senior manager will invite you in writing to a stage 3 short-term sickness absence final meeting.

The meeting will be chaired by the senior manager and a member of the HR Advisory team must be present at the meeting. In advance of the meeting, the line manager should provide all parties with the documents relevant to your case, including:

- your absence record.
- any letters previously sent to you about your absence levels, particularly the letter setting out the outcome of the stage 2 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting; and
- any other medical evidence [such as occupational health reports].

The written invitation to the stage 3 short-term sickness absence formal review meeting should give you at least ten days' notice of the meeting. The letter should advise you who will be present and that you can be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union representative.

The letter should explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to review your continued unsatisfactory attendance level while on a stage 2 formal review period.

The letter should warn you that a possible outcome of the meeting is that you may be dismissed by reason of capability.

#### 4.3.2 Stage 3 meeting

The "stage 3" short-term sickness absence final formal review meeting will be chaired by a Service Manager or above, together with a member of the HR Advisory team. Notes of the meeting must be taken. Wherever possible the Service Manager will be from the same Directorate as you.

At the meeting, the manager will:

- explain to you that the purpose of the meeting is to discuss your continued unsatisfactory attendance.
- allow you to share their views.
- try to establish any underlying reasons for your poor attendance level, for example a health issue or personal problems.
- gather as much further information as possible on any underlying reasons identified, without putting undue pressure on you to reveal more information than you want.
- discuss and agree any further steps or targets that can be put in place to help you to improve your attendance.
- if there is an underlying health problem, refer you to occupational health if this has not already been done.
- remind you of the support that is available to you, including the employee assistance programme; and
- inform you of the possible outcomes of the meeting, and that these will be confirmed in writing to you within five working days.

#### 4.3.3 Stage 3 outcome

Within five working days of the meeting, the manager will set out in writing the outcome of the stage 3 final meeting.

The outcome of the meeting could be:

- a decision to take no further action.
- an offer to make adjustments to your work.
- redeployment with your agreement; or
- a decision to dismiss you.

You will have a right of appeal. You will be informed of your right of appeal in the outcome letter.

If the outcome is to end the procedure and take no further action at this point, you will be made aware that any further absence that hits the trigger within 12 months will mean that you will be put back on the formal process at the step it ended at.

## 5. Right of Appeal

If you are given a warning or are dismissed under this procedure you have the right of appeal. The appeal should be sent in writing to the Service Manager HR and set out the grounds on which you believe that the decision was flawed or unfair.

You should lodge your appeal within five working days of receiving written confirmation of the sanction imposed on you by the council.

An appeal hearing will be convened at least 10 working days, and within a reasonable period, after the appeal is lodged.

If the appeal is against a sanction other than dismissal then the appeal may be heard by another Service Manager, accompanied by a member of the HR Advisory team.

If the appeal is against your dismissal, then the appeal hearing will be chaired by a Strategic Director who is not responsible for the area that you worked within, who will be accompanied by a member of the HR Advisory Team. Notes of the meeting must be taken.

You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union representative.

At the hearing, the decision to impose the sanction will be reviewed and you will be entitled to make representations about the appropriateness of that decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to you in writing, within 5 working days, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

## 6. Unauthorised Absence

If you fail to attend work without permission, or you do not comply with the sickness absence reporting procedure or the evidential requirement set out in this policy, this will be treated as a disciplinary offence and dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure.

In this situation your pay will be suspended, and this will be recorded as Absent without Permission on the HR System.

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# Sickness Management Policy

Long Term Sickness

Human Resources

~~January 2025~~[April 2026](#)

Version number 1.1

<a href="#">Name of policy</a>	<a href="#">Sickness Management – Long Term Sickness</a>
<a href="#">Purpose of policy</a>	<a href="#">To set out the Councils approach and support for employees absent because of long term illness</a>
<a href="#">Policy applies to</a>	<a href="#">All employees</a>
<a href="#">Latest update</a>	<a href="#">April 2026</a>
<a href="#">Update overview</a>	<a href="#">April 2026: The Employment Rights Act 2025 makes statutory sick pay (SSP) available to all employees, removing the requirement to earn the lower earnings limit and the three-day waiting period.</a>



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

The council is committed to dealing fairly and sympathetically with employees who are absent from work for long periods because of ill health and aim to assist them with their rehabilitation and eventual return to work.

By implementing this policy, we aim to strike a reasonable balance between the pursuit of our operational needs and the genuine needs of employees to take time off work because of ill health.

This policy covers long-term sickness absence, which is defined as an absence lasting at least 28 calendar days or more (irrespective of work pattern). We operate a separate short term sickness policy which is defined as an absence lasting one to 27 calendar days. Where an employee is on long-term sickness absence, but returns to work for short periods, we reserve the right to continue to manage their sickness absence under this policy. This is to prevent us switching between this policy and our separate short term sickness policy solely on the basis that an employee has returned to work for a short period.

This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend it at any time.

## 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to employees employed by us. It does not apply to workers, contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

## 1.3 Definitions

The following definitions are used in this policy:

**"Period of sickness absence" or "instance of sickness absence"** means any continuous period of sickness absence, of whatever length, during which the employee does not work.

**"Short-term sickness absence"** means any period of sickness lasting between one and 27 calendar days.

**"Long-term sickness absence"** means any period of sickness lasting 28 calendar days or more.

**"Formal review period"** means a defined period during which an employee is required to show an improvement in their sickness absence levels under the council's Sickness Absence Management procedure.

## 1.4 Wellbeing Support

The council offers wellbeing support to all its employees. We have an Employee Assistance Programme which can offer support in a number of ways and is available 24 hours a day. This is completely confidential. Further information can be found at section 8.

We can consider reasonable adjustments that may be required depending on individual circumstances, and we have available the HSE stress questionnaire which can help inform any decisions that we take to support you.

We always encourage open communication between employees and managers to try and address issues at the earliest opportunity.

## 1.5 Misconduct

This policy is formulated on the assumption that, if the council suspects there to be misconduct, its separate disciplinary procedure will apply. For example, the council may take disciplinary action if there is evidence that:

- absence is not genuine or not for the reason provided.
- the employee is undertaking inappropriate activities while off sick, such as carrying out work for another council; or another business including self-employment, or
- the correct sickness absence notification and evidence procedure has not been followed.

## 2. Responsibilities

### 2.1 Your Responsibilities

As an employee, you are responsible for ensuring that you:

- attend work unless unfit to do so.
- if you are unable to attend work because of ill health, or a workplace accident, you notify your manager by telephone as soon as reasonably practicable, preferably before you are due to start work and, in any event, no later than one hour after you are due to begin work;
- provide medical evidence for sickness of more than seven calendar days (with sickness of seven calendar days or less being self-certified);
- continue to notify and keep in touch with your line manager/supervisor while unable to attend work;
- be honest with your manager about the reason (ie the nature of the illness or injury) why you cannot attend work and how long you think the absence will last;
- do what is possible to enable a return to work, for example by following medical guidance, taking steps recommended by healthcare professionals during rehabilitation and not undertaking any activities while on sick leave that could exacerbate your health problem;
- tell your line manager of any extenuating circumstances, for example personal or family problems or an unmanageable workload;
- bear in mind that we may seek a medical report, for example from your doctor or our occupational health advisers;
- cooperate with the possible implementation of any adjustments to job duties, hours or working conditions, particularly those suggested by a healthcare professional; and
- attend a return-to-work meeting when returning to work following long-term sickness absence.

### 2.2 Guidelines for Managers

As a line manager, you are responsible for ensuring that you:

- manage attendance and absence in accordance with this policy.
- maintain a proper record of each employee's sickness absences by recording the absence correctly on the Council's HR System.
- require the employee to provide medical evidence (normally a Dr's certificate) for sickness of more than seven calendar days.
- conduct a return-to-work meeting when the employee returns from a period of sickness absence.
- stay in touch with the employee at regular intervals.
- speak to the employee about the absence and the reason for it in a fair and factual way.
- be supportive towards the employee and, where appropriate, seek to identify ways in which to assist the employee to improve their attendance in the future.
- be particularly sensitive when absences are caused by personal or family problems.

- show a reasonable degree of tolerance and sympathy towards the employee's sickness absence, while at the same time making clear that the aim is to support them to enable their to return to work.
- check whether the employee's absences are in any way work related, for example because of workplace stress.
- bear in mind that the council may seek a medical report on an employee, for example from the employee's doctor or the council's occupational health advisers.
- keep confidential records of all absences, including discussions and medical certificates, and make sure that the records clearly identify the reasons for the employee's various absences.
- be aware of the potential for discrimination when managing absence, particularly where the employee's ill health is related to pregnancy or disability.
- keep in mind the council's duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people when managing absence; and
- consult with Human Resources if unsure about anything or special circumstances arise, for example if it appears that the employee may have a disability.

## 2.3 Notification and Evidence of sickness absence

### Reporting absence

On the first day of sickness absence, you must inform your manager as soon as reasonably practicable that you will not be working because of illness or injury. You should notify your manager of non-attendance by telephone, (unless an alternative method has been previously agreed with your manager) before you are due to start work and, in any event, no later than one hour after you are due to begin work. If your manager is unavailable, you should contact the next most appropriate person within the department. Managers may agree in advance different reporting requirements however this must take into account the requirements of the business and ensure that service to our customers is maintained.

You should provide a clear reason (ie the nature of the illness or injury) why you cannot attend work and estimate how long you think the absence will last. You should also be prepared to briefly discuss any consequences of your absence, for example if customer appointments need to be cancelled or any essential work needs to be covered.

Notification of sickness absence must be via telephone, rather than text message, email, or social media platforms, unless your manager has agreed previously agreed to an alternative method of notification. In exceptional circumstances where you are unable to telephone (for example, because of hospitalisation), another person such as a friend or relative can contact the council on your behalf.

Your manager will discuss with you the frequency of staying in touch – see 2.4.

### Statement of fitness for work (fit note)

If you are absent for eight consecutive days or more (including weekends), you must provide your line manager with a fit note (statement of fitness for work) as soon as possible. If your absence persists beyond the end of the first fit note, you must continue to submit further fit notes to cover the whole period of your absence.

Fit notes can be issued by doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, pharmacists and physiotherapists as long as they have conducted an assessment of your fitness for work.

A fit note may state that:

- you are "not fit for work", in which case you should remain off work; or
- you "may be fit for work", if the healthcare professional's recommendations are followed (for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, or workplace adaptations).

While there is no legal obligation to follow the recommendations in the fit note, your line manager will take the recommendations seriously and give fair consideration, in consultation with you and Human Resources, as to whether any of the changes recommended can be accommodated.

## 2.4 Keeping in touch

It is important that we maintain regular contact with you while you are absent to:

- see how you are progressing in terms of your health;
- support you and actively maintain your engagement with us;
- provide information to you so that you may make informed decisions (for example, in relation to health-related benefits);
- provide practical support including from our occupational health advisers;
- encourage a return to work as early as possible;
- facilitate a phased return to work if required, by making appropriate temporary or permanent adjustments; and
- ensure that you are kept up to date about events in the workplace.

You and your line manager are both jointly responsible for maintaining contact with each other. When you are ill it is your responsibility to notify your manager. You can agree between you how often you will make contact in the first month. Once you are absent on sick leave for 28 continuous days, your line manager will contact you to agree the method and frequency of contact. Contact will be on a regular basis and at least monthly.

## 2.5 Home visits

In some circumstances, contact may be maintained via home visits. A home visit will take place only with your prior consent and at mutually agreed times. A home visit would be made only where you were physically unable to attend a Council office, and all other alternatives had been exhausted for example video conference.

Home visits will be conducted by your line manager and a representative from HR may also be present depending on the reason for the visit.

Our preference will be to attend a Council office to meet, therefore we will explore all options with you, this may be another location near your home (such as an Information Office), that may be mutually agreed.

## 3. Sick pay

### 3.1 Eligibility

~~Eligible~~ All employees are entitled to statutory sick pay (SSP) if you follow the council's usual notification and evidence requirements.

Statutory sick pay is payable for up to 28 weeks in any one period of sickness absence, at a weekly rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year.

#### 3.1.1 Contractual sick pay scheme

The council operates a contractual sick pay scheme that is more generous than statutory sick pay (SSP).

Details of the council's sick pay scheme are indicated in your contract of employment. The Council's occupational Sick Pay Scheme is:

during 1st year of service	During first 3 months - No sickness payments After 3 months- One week full pay After 6 months- Additional two weeks half pay
during 2nd year of service	2 months' full pay + 2 months half pay
during 3rd year of service	4 months' full pay + 4 months half pay
during 4th & 5th year of service	5 months' full pay + 5 months half pay
after 5 years' service	6 months' full pay + 6 months half pay

The allowance shown above is reduced by the total of paid sick leave in the 12 months immediately preceding the first day of sickness. All employees both full-time and part-time shall have 7 qualifying days in each week for statutory sick pay purposes (irrespective of work pattern).

If you have exhausted your contractual sick pay and have any SSP remaining, you will move to SSP until this has also been exhausted.

Sick pay under the council's scheme is subject to the usual deductions for PAYE, national insurance, pension contributions, etc.

Payments under the council's scheme will be calculated by reference to your basic salary including any market supplement only and any payments made under the council's scheme are inclusive of any entitlement to SSP for the same period of absence.

### 3.1.2 Absence because of an Accident involving a Third Party

All employees who are absent because of an accident shall not be entitled to an allowance if damages may be receivable from a third party in respect of that accident. In this event, the Council will normally advance to the employee a sum not exceeding the sickness allowance set out above, provided the employee undertakes to refund to the Council the total amount of such allowance or the proportion of it which is represented in the amount of damages that are eventually received. Payroll will be happy to provide sufficient information to enable you to make your claim.

Any period of absence in such a case where a refund of the money advanced is made in full, shall not be recorded for the purposes of the Occupational Sick Pay scheme. If, however, the refund only represents part of the money advanced the Council will, at its discretion, decide to what extent the period of absence will be recorded.

### 3.1.3 Other employment or work whilst in receipt of sick pay

If you are in receipt of Sick Pay (including SSP) you are not allowed to undertake any form of paid alternative employment, self-employment, or voluntary work. Any breach of this rule would be regarded as gross misconduct which could result in dismissal.

### 3.1.4 Sickness due to sporting activity

The Council encourages all staff to look after their health and wellbeing however, if your sickness absence occurs as a result of active participation in sport as a profession, or in cases where the absence is as a result of your own misconduct then the sickness allowance is not payable.

### 3.1.5 Industrial Disease, Accident or Assault

Absence in respect of normal sickness is entirely separate from absence through industrial disease, accident or assault arising out of or in the course of employment with a local authority. Periods of absence in respect of one shall not be set off against the other for the purpose of calculating entitlements under the scheme.

### 3.1.6 Withholding or suspending sick pay

We reserve the right to withhold or suspend sick pay under our contractual sick pay scheme at our discretion. Circumstances in which contractual sick pay may be withheld include where:

- you have failed to comply with the organisation's sickness absence notification and evidence requirements;
- you refuse to attend a medical examination at the reasonable request of the organisation;
- your incapacity has been caused by participation in dangerous sports or activities or any other occupation that you have;

- you make or produce any misleading or untrue statement or document concerning your fitness to work;
- you have given or received notice to terminate your employment; and
- disciplinary proceedings are pending against you.

You will normally be entitled to receive SSP when contractual sick pay is withheld or suspended, although we can withhold or suspend SSP if we are not satisfied that you are ill, and no evidence of sickness is provided.

You will be given written notice if your SSP or contractual sick pay is being withheld or suspended.

## 4. Holiday during sick leave

You will continue to accrue your holiday entitlement during any period of sick leave.

If you are unable to take your full holiday entitlement due to sickness absence, or if you are still absent at the end of the holiday year, you may carry over any unused holiday to the next holiday year with the agreement of your Senior Manager.

Any holiday that is carried over under this provision is limited to the four weeks' annual leave that you are entitled to under EU legislation, and must be taken within 18 months of the end of the holiday year in which it was accrued.

Alternatively, you may book a period of holiday while on sick leave to receive holiday pay for that period, provided that you give your manager as much notice as possible of your proposed holiday dates.

## 5. Medical reports

At various stages of managing your sickness absence, we may need to obtain a medical report on you to:

- determine your fitness for carrying out your role;
- determine whether you are fit to return to work after a period of sickness absence, or when you might return to work;
- determine your entitlement to health-related benefits (eg sick pay);
- assess the need to make reasonable adjustments to your working environment; and/or
- comply with other legal obligations.

Depending on the circumstances, we might instruct your own doctor/consultant, occupational health, and/or an independent medical adviser. When deciding which medical practitioner to instruct, we will consider the purpose of the report and factors such as the need for objectivity, specialist expertise, and knowledge about your medical history and the requirements of your role.

If we decide that a medical report is necessary, we will write to you confirming why we intend to obtain a medical report and from whom the medical report will be obtained. In addition, you will be fully informed of your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Where we decide to obtain a medical report directly from your own doctor/consultant, the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988 applies. Therefore, when we write to you, we will also ask you to confirm whether you provide your consent for us to approach your doctor/consultant by requesting that you complete and return our consent form. You will be notified of all your rights under the Access to Medical Reports Act 1998, including the right to see the medical report before it is supplied to us.

Where we decide to obtain a medical report from occupational health, or any other independent medical adviser who has not been responsible for your clinical care, the Access to Medical Reports Act 1998 does not apply. However even though you do not have the right to access the medical report before it is supplied to us, we will ask that you are given the right to see it before we are given it.

Once we have received the report, we will arrange a meeting with you to discuss the contents and identify the appropriate next steps.

You should be aware that if you refuse to attend a medical examination, or you withhold your consent to a medical report being disclosed to us, we may need to make decisions affecting your employment without the benefit of medical input, which could be to your detriment.

## 6. Return-to-work meetings

We understand that returning back to work after a long period of absence can be difficult. When you return to work, your line manager will arrange to meet with you to conduct a return-to-work meeting to ensure that you are given adequate support. This will be in addition to any meeting under the sickness absence management procedure.

Meetings will have taken place with you prior to your return to work to discuss what support the council can offer you. Ideally on your first day back at work you will have a return-to-work meeting with your manager / supervisor. If it is not possible on your first day back then it will be held as soon as practicable.

The purpose of the return-to-work meeting is to discuss:

- the arrangements for your return to work, including any adjustments that are being made or have been made;
- what work you will be doing on your return to work, including an outline of work during your first week back;
- any medical issues of which the employer is not already aware, such as any updated guidance from a healthcare professional;
- what arrangements will be put in place to monitor your progress, including a timescale for the next follow-up meeting; and
- to whom you should report if you have any difficulties with the arrangements.

All discussions between you and your line manager will be treated sensitively and in confidence.

## 7. Other Considerations

### 7.1 Pregnancy-related absences

If you are pregnant and are absent from work for a pregnancy-related illness, your sickness will not be included when checking to see if the need for formal action under the sickness absence management procedure has been triggered.

### 7.2 Disability

If you have a disability, you do not have to tell us. However, we would encourage you to let us know so that we can support you, for example by making reasonable adjustments to our premises, aspects of your role, our working practices, and/or our sickness absence management procedure.

If your sickness absence is due to a disability, we will discuss potential reasonable adjustments that may help you return to work or support you after you have returned to work. We may also need to discuss your needs with you and your medical adviser or occupational health to help us get the right support in place.

### 7.3 Ill-health retirement

Retirement on the ground of ill health will be considered where:

- it appears unlikely from the medical advice that you will be able to return to your role; and
- you are entitled to a pension/lump sum under your pension scheme.

If ill-health retirement is raised as an option, your line manager will advise you in the first instance to contact the HR team for you to find out if you qualify for, and the financial implications of accepting, ill-health retirement.

### 7.4 Terminal illness

If you are suffering from a terminal illness, we will endeavour as far as possible to accommodate your wishes. This includes discussion of the possibility of ill-health retirement.

While we will support employees who wish to continue working, if you have been diagnosed with a terminal illness, you should bear in mind that there may come a time when you will be unable to continue working. In this case, your line manager will discuss the options with you under stage 3 of the sickness absence management procedure.

If you have a terminal illness and choose to continue working, you should bear in mind that while there is no obligation to inform the organisation or any colleagues about your illness, it is normally better to do so to ensure that you receive adequate support.

## 8. Employee assistance programme

Help and support is available through our employee assistance programme (EAP). You can use our EAP to speak to an independent adviser on a confidential basis about any issue that is troubling you.

### **To Access your EAP**

Online: [www.my-eap.com](http://www.my-eap.com) Login: newforestwell

Tel: 0800 1116 387

From Abroad: +44 845 330 5132

For Manager Support: 0800 1116 385 (9am - 6pm Mon- Fri)

## 9. Unauthorised absence

If you fail to attend work without permission, or you do not comply with the sickness absence reporting procedure or the evidential requirements set out in this policy, this will be treated as a disciplinary offence and dealt with under our disciplinary procedure.

## 10. Data protection

When implementing this policy, we will process any personal data collected in accordance with our data protection policy. In particular, we will record only the personal information required and keep the information only for as long as necessary.

# Sickness absence management procedure

The following sickness absence management procedure applies to employees who are absent on sick leave for 28 continuous days or more.

The stages set out in this policy are guidelines only. There are limited circumstances in which it will be appropriate for an employee to skip straight to a stage 3 final formal review meeting (see below). For example, this could be the case where the medical advice is that you will never be able to return to work. When applying the trigger points for each stage of the procedure, the special rules that apply to pregnancy and disability (see below) will be taken into account. There are also special considerations when ill-health retirement is a possibility or if you have been diagnosed with a terminal illness (see below).

Where it is not possible to hold a face-to-face meeting or hearing under this procedure, we will conduct the process remotely. We will ensure that you and your representative have access to the necessary technology for participating. Your rights will not be affected, and we will ensure that the procedure remains fair and reasonable.

If you are able to return to work and that means we are able to end the procedure, you will be made aware that any further absence that hits the trigger within 12 months will mean that you would be put back on the formal process at the step it ended at.

## Stage 1

### Stage 1 - Trigger point

The trigger point for a stage 1 formal review meeting is:

- 28 calendar days sickness absence; or
- as soon as we have received confirmation that you will be absent for at least 28 calendar days or more (for example, a fit note has signed you off for that period).

### Stage 1 - Invitation to formal review meeting

If you reach a stage 1 trigger point, you will be invited in writing to a stage 1 formal review meeting. You will usually be given at least five working days' notice of the meeting, to allow you to prepare and to arrange for a companion to accompany you.

You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official. The responsibility for finding a companion rests with you. If your chosen companion is not a fellow employee, we reserve the right to check their credentials as an accredited trade union representative.

We will give you a copy of all documents relevant to your case in advance of the formal review meeting, and you will be invited to submit any further evidence that you consider to be relevant.

## Stage 1 - The formal review meeting

The stage 1 formal review meeting will be conducted by your line manager. HR is not normally present at this stage. You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss:

- how you are doing and the likely length of your ongoing absence, bearing in mind the advice in your fit note and/or any other medical report;
- whether further medical advice is necessary;
- whether there is anything that we can do to facilitate your return to work (for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, or workplace adaptations) and any medical advice that you have received about this;
- your sick pay entitlement (and, if applicable, the possibility of making a claim under a permanent health insurance scheme, or similar insurance scheme); and
- the timescale for a follow-up review meeting.

At the meeting, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions and comment on the issues.

## Stage 1 - The outcome

The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing as soon as possible and usually within seven working days after the formal review meeting.

The letter will include details of any next steps that have been agreed to help you return to work, as well as any support that we will offer you and the timescale for a follow-up review meeting under this process.

## Stage 2

### Stage 2 - Trigger point

The trigger point for a stage 2 formal review meeting is:

- three months sickness absence; or
- as soon as we have received confirmation that you will be absent for three months or more (for example, a fit note has signed you off for that period).

A formal review will take place under Stage 2 every at least every three months as a minimum, but depending on circumstances, the Council may choose to set more regular or earlier review dates. For example, it may be appropriate to hold a stage 2 meeting earlier if it is to discuss immediate follow-up from the stage 1 meeting, or following any further medical appointments that you have had.

Only by exception would we hold a Step 2 meeting without first having either a formal Step 1 meeting or other review meetings with you to understand your absence.

## Stage 2 - Invitation to formal review meeting

If you reach a stage 2 trigger point, you will be invited in writing to a stage 2 formal review meeting. You will usually be given at least five working days' notice of the meeting, to allow you to prepare and to arrange for a companion to accompany you.

You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official. The responsibility for finding a companion rests with you. If your chosen companion is not a fellow employee, we reserve the right to check their credentials as an accredited trade union representative.

We will give you a copy of all documents relevant to your case in advance of the formal review meeting, and you will be invited to submit any further evidence that you consider to be relevant.

## Stage 2 - The formal review meeting

The stage 2 formal review meeting will be conducted by your line manager and a HR representative will also be present. You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss:

- how you are doing and the likely length of your ongoing absence, bearing in mind the advice in your fit note and/or any other medical report;
- whether further medical advice is necessary;
- whether there is anything further that we can do to facilitate your return to work (for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, workplace adaptations, temporary redeployment) and any medical advice that you have received about this;
- the possibility of permanent redeployment or dismissal [including ill-health retirement] if it appears that you will be unable to remain in your role;
- your sick pay entitlement (and, if applicable, the possibility of making a claim under a permanent health insurance scheme, or similar insurance scheme); and
- the timescale for a follow-up review meeting.

At the meeting, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions and comment on the issues.

## Stage 2 - The outcome

The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing as soon as possible and usually within seven working days after the formal review meeting.

The letter will include details of any next steps that have been agreed to help you return to work, as well as any support that we will offer and the timescale for a follow-up review meeting under this process.

## Stage 3

### Stage 3 - Trigger point

The trigger point for a stage 3 final formal review meeting is:

- 6 continuous months sickness absence;
- as soon as we have received confirmation that you will be absent for at least 6 continuous months or more (for example, a fit note has signed you off for that period);
- it is clear from medical advice that you are unable to return to your role in the foreseeable future; or
- all reasonable steps to assist you in returning to work (for example, a phased return, amended job duties, altered hours of work, workplace adaptations, temporary redeployment) have been exhausted.

### Stage 3 - Invitation to final formal review meeting

If you reach a stage 3 trigger point, you will be invited in writing to a stage 3 final formal review meeting. You will usually be given at least ten days' notice of the meeting, to allow you to prepare and to arrange for a companion to accompany you.

You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official. The responsibility for finding a companion rests with you. If your chosen companion is not a fellow employee, we reserve the right to check their credentials as an accredited trade union representative.

We will give you a copy of all documents relevant to your case in advance of the formal review meeting, and you will be invited to submit any further evidence that you consider to be relevant.

Only by exception would we hold a Stage 3 meeting with you without having followed Stage 1 and 2 of the formal process.

### Stage 3 - The formal review meeting

The stage 3 final formal review meeting will be conducted by a Service Manager or above who has not previously been involved in the case, accompanied by an HR Advisor. You will be entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or trade union official.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss:

- matters considered at the first and second stage of the process;
- the length of your absence and the likely length of your future absence;
- current medical advice on your condition;
- if applicable, the possibility of ill-health retirement or making a claim under a permanent health insurance scheme, or similar insurance scheme;
- any further reasonable adjustments that could be made to enable you to return to work within a reasonable timeframe;

- the effect of your continued absence on your colleagues and department; and
- the possibility of you being dismissed by reason of capability.

At the meeting, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions and comment on the issues and any proposal to dismiss you.

## Stage 3 - The outcome

The outcome will be confirmed to you in writing as soon as possible and usually within seven working days after the formal review meeting.

The outcome of the meeting may be a decision:

- for you to remain on sick leave until you have recovered (typically where an approximate return-to-work date can be identified);
- to make adjustments to your job;
- to redeploy you with your agreement;
- to issue you with a warning that your continued absence is unsatisfactory; or
- to dismiss you.

# Appeal

If you are given a sanction or are dismissed under this procedure you have the right of appeal. The appeal should be sent in writing to the Service Manager HR and set out the grounds on which you believe that the decision was flawed or unfair.

You should lodge your appeal within five working days of receiving written confirmation of the sanction imposed on you by the council.

An appeal hearing will be convened at least 10 working days, and within a reasonable period, after the appeal is lodged. However, if this is not possible, you will be informed of the reason for any delay.

You are entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a trade union official.

If the appeal is against a sanction other than dismissal then the appeal may be heard by another Service Manager, accompanied by a member of the HR Advisory team.

If the appeal is against your dismissal, then the appeal hearing will be chaired by a Strategic Director who is not responsible for the area that you worked within, who will be accompanied by a member of the HR Advisory Team. Notes of the meeting must be taken.

At the hearing, the decision to impose the sanction will be reviewed and you will be entitled to make representations about the appropriateness of that decision.

The outcome of the appeal will be confirmed to you in writing, within 5 working days, explaining the grounds on which the decision was reached. The outcome of the appeal will be final.

If the result of the appeal is that a decision to dismiss you is overturned, you will be reinstated with immediate effect. You will be reimbursed in full for any wages lost since your dismissal.

## Unauthorised Absence

If you fail to attend work without permission, or you do not comply with the sickness absence reporting procedure or the evidential requirement set out in this policy, this will be treated as a disciplinary offence and dealt with under the council's disciplinary procedure.

In this situation your pay will be suspended, and this will be recorded as Absent without Permission on the HR System.

## HR Committee – 12 March 2026

### Corporate Health and Safety Quarter 3 Report

Purpose	For Information
Classification	Public
Executive Summary	This Report highlights the significant work undertaken by the Corporate Health and Safety Team in Quarter 3 2025 – 2026. This report also includes key feedback from the Service Safety Panels and Working Groups, which are the Council’s primary function for health and safety cooperation and consultation.
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	<b>The HR Committee to consider and support the:</b> <b>1. draft Vibration at Work Policy;</b> <b>2. findings from the Q3 Accident/Incident Report; and</b> <b>3. draft Driving at Work Policy.</b>
Reasons for recommendation(s)	Support the legal requirement of the Council as outlined within the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and associated legislation and guidance.
Ward(s)	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jill Cleary – Leader of the Council
Strategic Director(s)	Alan Bethune – Strategic Director Corporate Resources - Section 151 Officer
Officer Contact	James Loring Corporate Health and Safety Manager 02380 285 332 <a href="mailto:James.loring@NFDC.gov.uk">James.loring@NFDC.gov.uk</a>

#### Introduction and background

1. This report highlights the significant work undertaken within the Corporate Health and Safety Team and throughout the Council from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2025 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2025 (Quarter 3).

2. **Vibration at Work Policy Review** – Appendix 1 contains the reviewed Vibration at Work Policy; this policy was last reviewed in June 2018. The policy outlines the following key requirements:
- when purchasing equipment, managers and supervisors must ensure that they consider the risk associated with vibration.
  - Managers and supervisors must ensure to provide suitable information, training and instruction to all employees who may be exposed to vibration at work.
  - Managers and supervisors must ensure that suitable and sufficient vibration risk assessments have been undertaken for any equipment used.
  - Where it is likely that an employee is regularly exposed to levels of vibration at or above the exposure action value (EAV) complete the initial health questionnaire before employment begins.
  - Ensure that individuals identified as being exposed to levels of vibration that are likely to exceed the EAV are identified to occupational health so that health surveillance can be carried out, if required.
  - Provide all employees with suitable and sufficient information and training on the hazards, symptoms and control measures related to vibration at work.
  - Employees must report any symptoms of vibration at work promptly to their line manager or supervisor.
  - Employees must cooperate with any programme of health surveillance and training which is identified as necessary following risk assessment.
3. **H&S Brief Bites (Accident Reporting and Investigation & CDM Awareness (Client Focused))** – The Corporate Health and Safety team have now created H&S brief bite training courses for accident reporting and investigation and CDM awareness. The team have been identifying dates to hold the sessions with HR and the learning team.

A number of teams within the council have also requested service specific training courses in a few areas. Unfortunately, the Corporate Health and Safety team do not have the capacity to provide regular service specific training. However, will look to increase the number of H&S brief bites in 2026 – 2027.

4. **Risk Assessments (Homelessness)** – The Corporate Health and Safety team have been working with the Housing Options Manager, the Senior Homelessness Navigator and the Homelessness Navigator to review all risk assessments and method statements in the team. Progress has been made on a number of assessments, this includes:
  - Verifying rough sleepers’ task specific risk assessment & method statement
  - Visiting clients face to face task specific risk assessment
  - Lone working generic risk assessment & method statement

As part of the risk assessment review process, a number of required actions and actions to be considered have been identified. The Corporate Health and Safety team have recommended the service review the current client-based risk assessment as part of the on-boarding process.

5. **Open Spaces Risk Assessments** - The Corporate Health and Safety team have been working with the Grounds Maintenance Supervisors on the review of all risk assessments and method statements in the service. A total of 40 assessments have been identified at this time. Grounds Maintenance Supervisors have made a positive start on reviewing the risk assessments however, due to the significant workload placed on supervisors within this team, progress is slow. The Health and Safety team will continue to support the service with this task. Due to the current gaps in risk assessment and method statements, it places the organisation at increased risk of enforcement and civil claims.
6. **Civic Buildings and Facilities Fire Procedures** – On 23/12/2025 Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service (HFRS) undertook an audit at Hardley Depot. The visit was very positive with no formal actions identified. HFRS have written to Chief Executive to confirm they are happy with the current level of fire safety management at the site.
7. **Control of Contractors Checklist** – In Quarter 3, the Corporate Health and Safety Team was asked to support Procurement in reviewing the contractor vetting elements of the procurement process. This request followed a number of contractor related incidents. An initial meeting between both teams identified several significant gaps in the existing process. To address these, the Corporate Health and Safety Team has developed a new contractor-assessment checklist for Procurement, which introduces additional controls, including:
  - Requesting copies of relevant health and safety policies and accreditations from contractors.

- Confirming of details of the contractor’s competent health and safety support, as requested under Regulation 7 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Obtaining risk assessments and method statements at the pre-tender stage (including examples of similar previous work).
- Requesting equivalent information for any subcontractor intended to be used on the contract

The review also identified a clear knowledge gap within the Procurement Team regarding Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (CDM). Specifically, this relates to understanding Client duties and the requirement to formally appoint a Principal Designer and Principal Contractor where more than one contractor is engaged. The Corporate Health and Safety Team has therefore requested that Procurement colleagues attend the CDM Awareness “H&S Brief Bite” session.

In addition, the review highlighted a lack of oversight by the Procurement Team in relation to contractor vetting. While contract administrators are responsible for obtaining and reviewing health and safety documentation, there is currently no subsequent review or audit by Procurement. In line with HSG65 *Managing for Health and Safety*, it is recommended that a formal review and assurance step be incorporated into internal procurement procedures.

8. **Driving at Work Policy** – The Waste and Transport Service Manager, the Human Resources Manager, and the Corporate Health and Safety Team have been developing a revised Driving at Work Policy. This draft policy expands on the scope of the current Occupational Road Risk (Grey Fleet) Policy by incorporating additional requirements for fleet vehicles. The draft policy is included at Appendix 2

### **Service Safety Panels**

9. **Housing Service Safety Panel** – The Housing Safety Panel was undertaken on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2026. All documentation including the minutes from the panel can be found on Sharepoint.
10. **Office Service Safety Panel** – The Office Safety Panel was undertaken on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2026. All documentation including the minutes from the panel can be found on Sharepoint.
11. **Operations Service Safety Panel** – The Operational Safety Panel was undertaken on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2026. All documentation including the minutes from the panel can be found on Sharepoint.

## Working Groups

12. **Control of Contractors Working Group** – The Control of Contractors Working Group was undertaken on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2026. All documents including the minutes can be found on Sharepoint.

## Accident/Incident Quarter 3 Report 2025 - 2026

13. Appendix 3 contains the annual accident/incident report for quarter 3 2025 – 2026. Key headlines from the report include:
  - A continual small decrease quarter by quarter for non-reportable injury incident reported this financial year.
  - 2 RIDDOR reportable incidents reported in Q3. Overall RIDDOR reportable incidents are down 30% when compared to this time last financial year.
  - A total of 40 days were lost in Q3 due to injuries. All days lost were reported in the place, operations & sustainability department. This is a 40.6% reduction compared to the previous financial year (April – December).
  - An increase in manual handling incidents was reported in Q3. However, only 2 were reported by the Waste and Recycling team.
  - A continual small decrease in the number of members of the public incidents reported compared to the previous financial year.

## Significant Incidents Q2 2025 - 2026

14. **#180 – Engineering Works - RIDDOR Reportable Incident** – when installing a concrete base for a public waste bin, the operative installed a timber frame filled with a type 1 stone. As part of the compacting process, two of the operatives were manual handling a vibration plate. During the process the injured person (IP) tripped on the wooden framework, fell over and landed on their hand with the weight of their full body. The IP continued with his task for several hours before reporting it to his supervisor. His supervisor then took him to hospital to receive treatment. The IP was provided a wrist support for his injuries. This incident resulted in 18 days lost due to injury. A Level 2 managers investigation was undertaken by the supervisor, supported by a member of the Corporate Health and Safety team. The investigation identified that no task specific manual handling or method statement was in place for the activity.

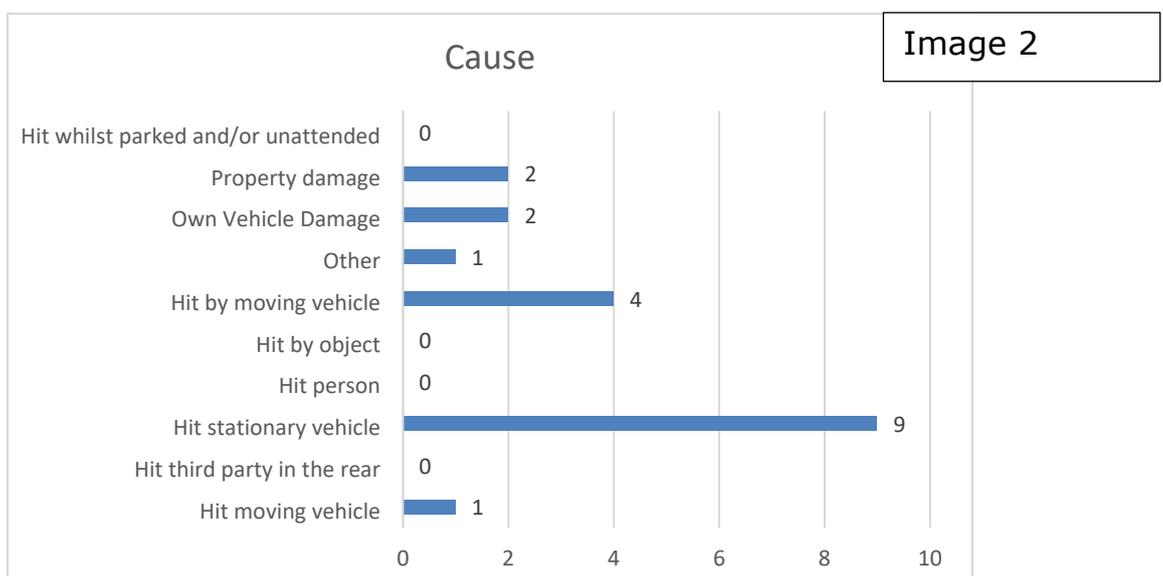
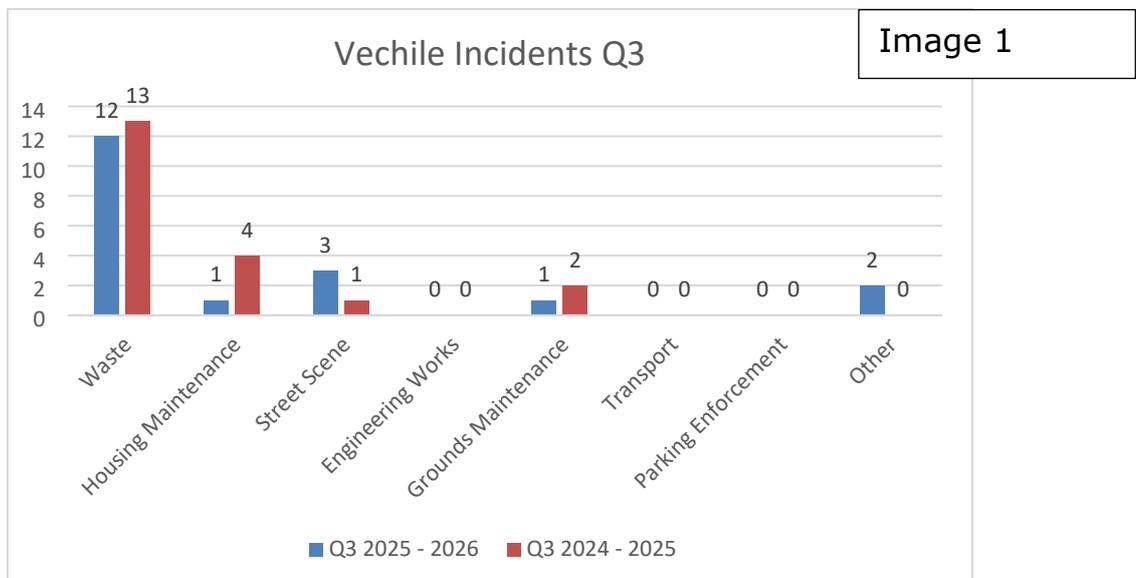
In addition, the IP last attended manual handling training in 2018. This training course should be refreshed every 3 years. 7 actions

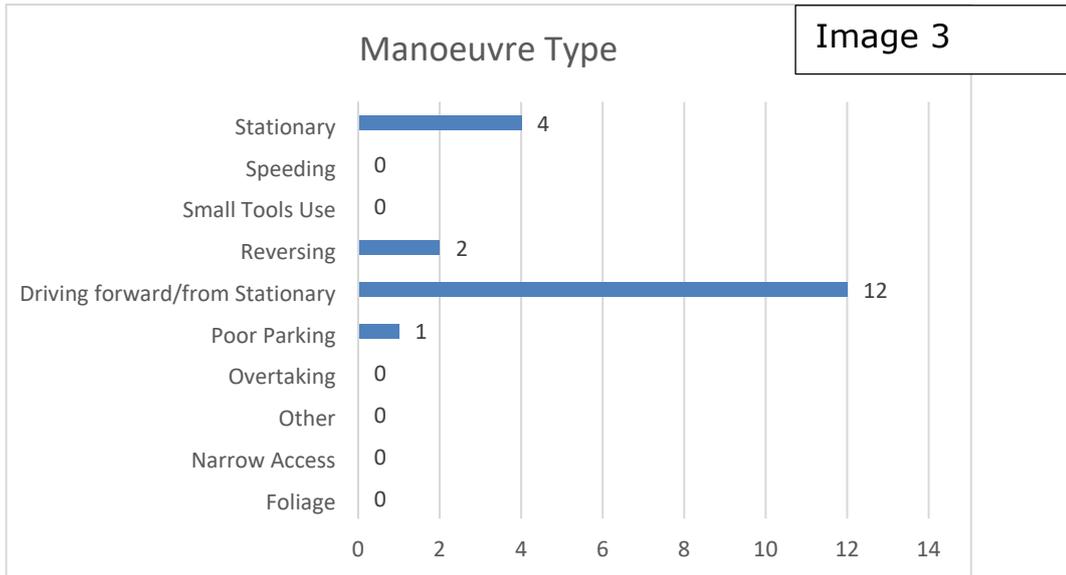
were identified as part of the investigation. At the time of writing this report, the Corporate Health and Safety team are waiting for an update on progress of all actions identified.

15. **#220 – Waste and Recycling - RIDDOR Reportable Incident –** the IP exited the vehicle. As he placed his feet on the floor they went over on their ankle as the floor was uneven. This resulted in a sprained ankle. This incident resulted in 13 days missed; therefore a report was submitted to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013. The employee was wearing appropriate PPE at the time, no issues were identified or reported with their PPE. No further action has been identified from this incident.

### Vehicle Incidents

16. The Transport & Depot Manager completes the quarterly vehicle stats for the Council. See Image 1, 2 & 3.





**Corporate plan priorities**

- 17. All recommendations fall under the corporate values (LEAF), specifically within the Learning and Ambition categories.

**Options appraisal**

- 18. All recommendations have been made to ensure the Council complies with its legal duties as set out in the relevant legislation.

**Consultation undertaken**

- 19. Not identified as part of this report.

**Financial and resource implications**

- 20. Not identified as part of this report.

**Legal implications**

- 21. None Identified

**Risk assessment**

- 22. A formal risk assessment is not required at this level. All significant risks are identified as part of this report.

**Environmental / Climate and nature implications**

- 23. None identified.

**Equalities implications**

- 24. None identified.

### **Crime and disorder implications**

25. None identified.

### **Data protection / Information governance / ICT implications**

26. None identified.

### **EMT Comments**

- 27. EMT requested that the exposure matrix be moved higher within the Vibration at Work Policy. This action has now been completed
- 28. EMT also requested that, once approved, the policy be communicated appropriately to all staff, and that the processes for purchasing new equipment be discussed with the Procurement team
- 29. EMT requested minor wording changes to the Driving at Work Policy to improve clarity throughout. This has now been actioned.
- 30. EMT reflected on the points raised under item 5 and will consider how best to ensure supervisors are upskilled through additional external or internal training.

### **ESLP Comments**

- 31. All members of ESLP approved the contents of the draft vibration at work policy.
- 32. All members of ESLP approved the contents of the draft driving at work policy.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – H&SP12 – Vibration at Work Policy  
Appendix 2 – DRAFT Driving at Work Policy  
Appendix 3 – Q3 Accident/Incident Report 2025 - 2026

### **Background Papers:**

None identified

# Vibration at Work Policy

Corporate Health and Safety Team

February 2026

Version	Author	Date
1	Corporate Health and Safety team	February 2026

## Document History

Name of Policy	H&SP12 – Vibration at Work Policy
Purpose of Policy	<p>New Forest District Council (NFDC) aims to minimise the incidence of workplace risk by providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.</p> <p>Prolonged exposure to vibration can cause debilitating conditions to the body, arms, hands and fingers of the operator, which is often permanent. Damage caused by working with vibrating tools, equipment and machinery is preventable.</p> <p>To comply with legislation, NFDC will implement risk assessments for work activities to identify tasks exposing operators to vibration and make suitable and sufficient arrangements to minimise or eliminate the risks of vibration to employees at work.</p>
Policy Applies to	This policy and subsequent arrangements apply to all New Forest District Council employees, contractors, agency workers and members of public.
Update Frequency	Every 2 years or sooner if required due to organisational or regulatory changes.
Latest Update	June 2018
Update Overview	<p>First issue February 2005</p> <p><b>February 2026</b></p> <p>Complete update of policy document to include roles and responsibilities, guidance and appendices.</p>

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# 1. Introduction

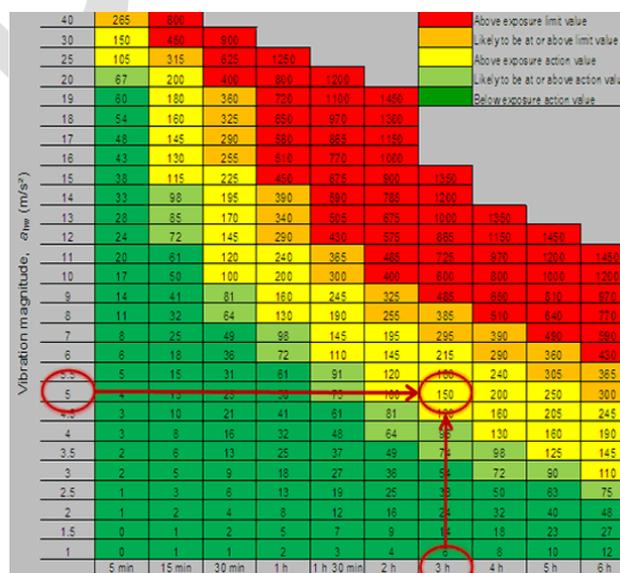
Employers have a legal duty to assess the risk of vibration exposure to their employees and to identify individuals who may be exposed above the action and limit values specified in the relevant vibration regulations. To ensure compliance with these legal obligations and to safeguard the health, safety, and welfare of its workforce, the Council has endorsed this policy through its Executive Management Team. This document outlines the arrangements for managing the risks associated with vibration exposure in the workplace.

## 1.2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of New Forest District Council (NFDC) and those individuals' undertaking works on behalf of NFDC, including agency and voluntary staff) and individuals who are affected by their acts or omissions.

## 1.2. Policy Approach

This policy uses the Exposure Points Ready Reckoner to illustrate how daily vibration dose is calculated by combining the vibration magnitude of a tool with the duration of use. The diagram highlights when a worker's exposure reaches the Exposure Action Value (EAV) or the Exposure Limit Value (ELV), helping the organisation identify when controls are required or when tool use must be restricted. It provides a clear visual guide for assessing risk, planning work safely, and ensuring compliance with the Control of Vibration at Work Regulations.



## 2. Legislative and Regulatory Context

### 1.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 is the primary piece of legislation covering occupational health and safety in Great Britain. This piece of legislation sets out the general duties which employers have towards employees and members of the public, employees have to themselves and to each other and certain self-employed have towards themselves and others. New Forest District Council acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities under The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and will ensure to control all risks to its employees, contractors and those who may be affected by its arrangements are controlled as low as is reasonably practicable.

### 1.2 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 is a piece of legislation covering the management of occupational health and safety in the workplace in Great Britain. This piece of legislation sets out the general duties which employers have relating to the expectations to risk assess, implement arrangements for planning, control, monitoring, and use of preventative and protective measures, provide instruction and training and consultation. NFDC acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and will ensure to implement all the necessary controls and management methods to minimise the risks to its employees.

### 1.3 Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005

The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005, (the Vibration Regulations), came into force on 6<sup>th</sup> July 2005 and aim to protect workers from the risks to health from vibration.

These regulation place specific duties on employers to assess risks, control vibration exposure, and provide health surveillance to employees.

### 3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Exposure action level (EAV)	<p>The daily amount of vibration exposure above which employers are required to take action to control exposure.</p> <p>2.5 m/s<sup>2</sup> A(8)</p>
Exposure limit value (ELV)	<p>The maximum amount of vibration an employee may be exposed to on any single day.</p> <p>5.0 m/s<sup>2</sup> A(8)</p>
HAVS	<p>Abbreviation of hand-arm vibration syndrome. A medical condition caused by prolonged exposure to vibration.</p>
WBV	<p>Abbreviation of whole-body vibration. Vibration transmitted through the body.</p>
Trigger time	<p>The actual duration during which a worker is exposed to vibration from a tool or equipment, specifically, the time when the equipment is switched on and actively vibrating while being held or operated by the worker.</p>
Suitable and sufficient	<p>Suitable for the level of risk and complexities for the task/project.</p>
Competent person	<p>Someone who has sufficient training, experience, knowledge, and skill for the task</p>

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

### 4.1 Service/Senior Managers Must:

- Understand the scope and content of the Vibration Regulations where this is relevant to work in their area.
- Provide adequate resources to ensure suitable and sufficient control measures can be implemented within their service area.
- Ensure vibration factors are considered when hiring or purchasing new equipment.

### 4.2 Supervisors/Line Managers Must:

- Understand the scope and content of the vibration regulations where this is relevant to work in their area.
- Ensure vibration factors are considered when hiring or purchasing new equipment.
- Ensure that necessary vibration risk assessments have been undertaken for any equipment used by those in their charge.
- Ensure that individuals identified as being exposed to levels of vibration that are likely to exceed the EAV are identified to Occupational Health so that health surveillance can be carried out, if required.
- Implement and enforce vibration control measures.
- Ensure that new employees who are likely to be regularly exposed to levels of vibration at or above the EAV complete the initial health questionnaire before employment begins.
- Ensure employees are suitably trained in all aspects of operating equipment, including vibration control.

### 4.3 Employees Must:

- Use all equipment provided in accordance with instruction and training received.
- Ensure any operator maintenance required is carried out.
- Visually check equipment prior to use (including ensuring that all vibration dampening attachments are correctly fitted) and report any identified fault or defect with equipment immediately ensuring equipment is tagged so that it cannot be used by anybody else.
- Report any symptoms of HAVS promptly to line manager or supervisor.
- Ensure completion of any training identified on the relevant service training matrix.
- Cooperate with any programme of health surveillance and training which is identified as necessary following risk assessment.

### 4.4 Corporate H&S Team Must:

- Provide competent advice and guidance to all services
- Assist managers/supervisors in carrying out vibration risk assessments if required.
- Advise on arranging vibration measurement where appropriate.
- Advise on the appropriate vibration control measures.
- Audit compliance with this policy and the underpinning regulations.

### 4.6 HR Recruitment Team Must:

- Liaise with managers/supervisors and the Council's Occupational Health Service to arrange appropriate health surveillance appointments and questionnaires as required.
- Maintain the health surveillance database and arrange new appointments/ongoing assessments for employees when necessary.

## 4.5 Occupational Health Must:

- Provide health surveillance on request.
- Give feedback and guidance on risk to individuals following health surveillance.
- Feedback results from health surveillance to the appropriate manager.
- Advise the appropriate manager if there are restrictions on an individual's ability to work due to health risks.

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## 5. Exposure Limits and Impact to Health

### 5.1. Exposure Limits and Action Values

The regulations introduce action and limit values for both hand-arm vibration (HAV) and whole-body vibration (WBV).

#### **Exposure Action Value (EAV)**

This value triggers the need for employers to implement measures to control vibration exposure. The EAV is  $2.5\text{m/s}^2 A(8)$ .

#### **Exposure Limit Value (ELV)**

This value **MUST NOT** be exceeded by an individual on a single day.

The ELV is  $5\text{m/s}^2 A(8)$ .

### 5.2. Effects of Vibration Injuries

Employees whose hands are regularly exposed to vibration may suffer from symptoms due to pathological effects on the muscles, circulatory and nervous system, and other tissues of the hand and arm. Where they affect the hands or arms, the symptoms are collectively known as hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS).

HAVS symptoms may include the following components:

- **Neurological symptoms** - include numbness and tingling in the fingers, and a reduced sense of touch and temperature. This nerve damage can be disabling, making it difficult to feel, and to work with, small objects.
- **Vascular component** - Episodic finger blanching is the characteristic vascular sign. This is sometimes known as 'vibration white finger', 'dead finger' or 'dead hand'. The main trigger for the symptoms is exposure to the cold, for example being outdoors early on a winter's morning. The symptoms can also be triggered by localised or general body cooling in otherwise warm environments. Although vibration causes the condition, it does not precipitate the symptoms.

- **Muscular and soft tissue** - Employees may complain of joint pain and stiffness in the hand and arm. Grip strength can be reduced due to nerve and muscle damage. An individual employee suffering from HAVS may not experience the complete range of symptoms, for example symptoms related to the neurological component can be present in the absence of vascular problems and vice versa. Neurological symptoms generally appear earlier than finger blanching. Carpal tunnel syndrome, a disorder of the hand and arm giving rise to tingling, numbness, weakness, pain and night waking, can be caused by exposure to vibration. The symptoms of HAVS are usually progressive with continuing exposure to vibration. There will be individual variation in the timing and rate of deterioration. The degree to which symptoms regress on removal from exposure to vibration is not known with any certainty and the condition may be irreversible. Exposure to whole body vibration (WBV) at low levels may aggravate existing back pain or other conditions whilst higher levels may cause symptoms to develop

## 6. Procedures

### 6.1 Risk Assessment

All Line Managers and Supervisors are responsible for ensuring suitable and sufficient risk assessments are in place which consider the risks associated with vibration at work.

The purpose of risk assessment is to enable managers/supervisors to make a valid decision about the measures necessary to prevent or adequately control the exposure of employees to HAV or WBV. It also enables managers/supervisors to demonstrate readily to others who may have an interest, e.g. employees, safety representatives and enforcement authorities that they have from the earliest opportunity considered the risks from vibration.

When conducting the assessment the following steps should be followed:

- Identify all existing powered tools, equipment and machinery which potentially pose a risk of hand arm vibration or whole-body vibration.
- Review and observe the conditions under which such powered tools, equipment and machinery are used to obtain a true and representative appreciation of the nature of the work.
- Identify the maximum duration of their use ('trigger time' for HAVS or work time for WBV) in any working day, if necessary, by keeping a log or using monitoring devices.
- Assess the vibration magnitude from each piece of equipment used. \*\*

*\*\* This information must be provided by the manufacturer; however, manufacturers' data will often come from testing under specific controlled conditions which are very different from normal working practices and therefore may significantly underestimate exposures in practice. Additional information from on-site measurement or from databases of vibration levels may be required.*

- Consider individual factors such as pre-existing health conditions that may increase risk from vibration exposure for individual employees.
- Ensure that employees use equipment correctly. Poor posture, technique etc. may increase vibration exposure from a particular activity by up to 50%.
- The risk assessment should identify the maximum trigger time, or usage time permissible for the equipment to ensure that exposure does not exceed the ELV.
- The risk assessment should detail the measures in place to reduce the risk from vibration exposure and where applicable may include an action plan indicating any further measures planned.
- The vibration risk assessment can be a standalone document or can be incorporated into a task specific risk assessment document.
- The risk assessment should be reviewed whenever there is a change in vibration exposure or otherwise at least every 2 years.

## 6.2 Reducing Vibration Exposure

Measures should be put in place to reduce vibration exposure to as low a level as is reasonably practicable – even if vibration levels are below the Exposure Action Value (EAV), consideration should be given as to whether further reduction is practical.

**Where vibration levels may exceed the EAV further risk assessment is required with the aim to reduce the level of vibration exposure.**

Personal vibration exposure MUST NOT exceed the Exposure Limit Value (ELV) of 5m/s<sup>2</sup>.

Measures to reduce risks from vibration exposure may include replacing tools and equipment with alternatives which produce lower magnitudes of vibration.

### **Purchasing & Hiring Equipment**

When purchasing or hiring equipment, suppliers must provide information about the vibration magnitudes their products are likely to create in normal use. This is a requirement of the Supply of Machinery (Safety) Regulations 2008.

Work equipment and tools are likely to be replaced over time as they become worn out, and it is important that replacements are chosen, so far as is reasonably practicable, which are suitable for the work, efficient and of lower vibration.

- Discuss your requirements with a range of suppliers
- Check with suppliers that their equipment is suitable and will be effective for the work, compare vibration emission information for different brands/models of equipment, ask for vibration information for the way you plan to use the equipment, and ask for information regarding any training requirements for safe operation
- Get operatives to try the different models and brands of equipment and take account of their opinions before you decide which to buy
- Find out the equipment vibration reduction features and how to use and maintain equipment to make these features effective
- Make sure there is a suitable purchasing policy in place, taking account of vibration emission, efficiency and any specific requirements you may have

- Training any employee responsible for purchasing equipment on the issues relating to vibration so that they can deal effectively with equipment suppliers

When planning purchasing of equipment consideration must be given to other methods of work which can eliminate or reduce exposure to vibration. This can include automation or mechanisation of work previously done with hand-operated or hand-fed machines.

### **Work Practices**

It is important to ensure that work activities are designed to consider ergonomic principles, and to:

- Encourage good posture and working techniques.
- Ensure correct selection of the most appropriate tools for the task.
- Ensure that all equipment is properly maintained.
- Minimise time exposed to vibration e.g. regular breaks, job rotation.
- Provide suitable clothing to protect employees from cold and damp.
- Provide suitable training and information for all those exposed to vibration.

### **Maintenance of Equipment**

To minimise the deterioration of equipment, items should be inspected and serviced on a regular basis. Advice from the suppliers/ manufacturers should be considered.

There may be certain routine checks or preventative replacement of parts required, in which case these should be carried out at a set frequency.

Individual users must carry out visual checks of the equipment prior to use and be made aware that if at any point they feel a machine performance has deteriorated in terms of vibration, they must report it at the earliest opportunity so that further investigations can be made.

An up-to-date inventory of all equipment must be kept, including date of purchase, maintenance information and vibration emission data.

### **Trigger time monitoring**

To assess daily vibration exposure, we need to know the total daily duration of exposure to vibration from each piece of equipment or tool used.

This figure needs to be the time that the employee is exposed to vibration only, a period where the employee has put down the equipment or tool or is holding but not operating it should not be counted.

The contact time or 'trigger time' is the time that the hands are exposed to the vibration from the tool or workpiece. The trigger time is often very much shorter than the overall "time on the job" and is usually over-estimated by employees themselves.

Vibration trigger time monitors can be used to assist with trigger time monitoring by being attached to vibrating tools and loaded with the vibration magnitude of that tool.

When the tool is in use and vibrating (trigger time) the vibration monitor will record the amount of time that the tool is in use.

### **Exposure Points System and Ready reckoner**

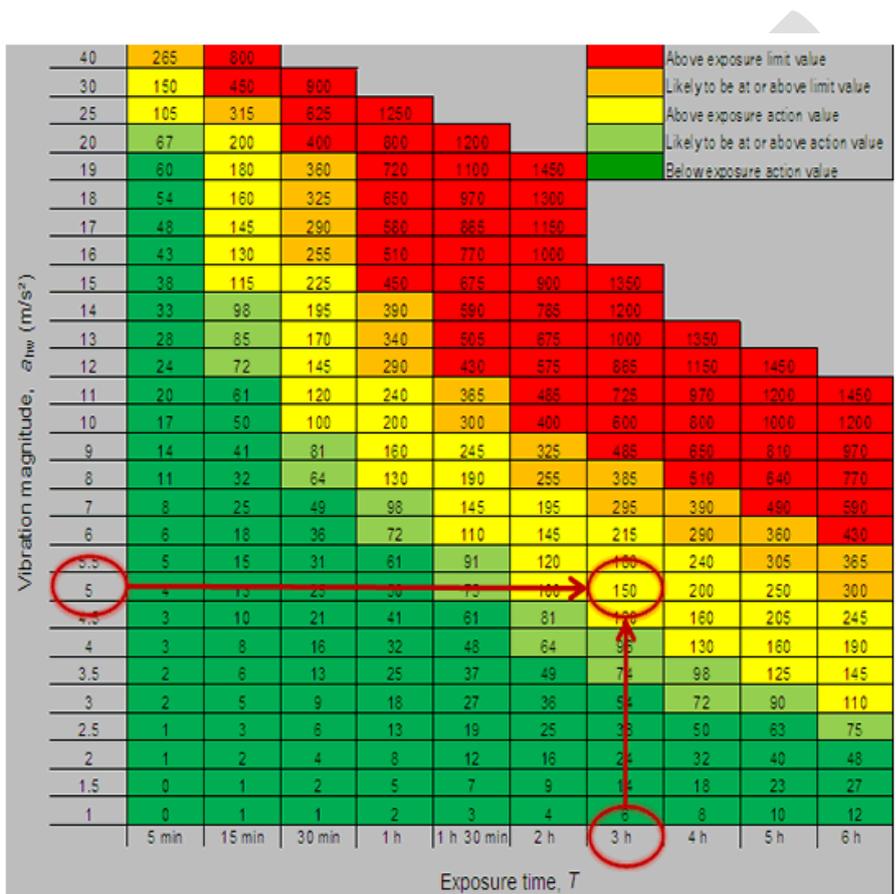
Daily vibration exposures can also be calculated using the exposure point system and the ready reckoner (fig 1.0).

The ready reckoner covers a range of vibration magnitudes up to 40 m/s<sup>2</sup> and a range of exposure times up to 10 hours.

The exposures for different combinations of vibration magnitude and exposure time are given in exposure points instead of values in m/s<sup>2</sup>A(8) and therefore can be easier to work with.

**Fig 1.0 Exposure Points Ready Reckoner**

- Exposure points change simply with time: twice the exposure time, twice the number of points
- Exposure points can be added together, for example where an operative is exposed to two or more different source of vibration in a day
- Exposure Action Value ( $2.5\text{m/s}^2 \text{A}(8)$ ) is equal to **100 points**
- Exposure Limit Value ( $5 \text{m/s}^2 \text{A}(8)$ ) is equal to **400 points**



## 6.3 Health Surveillance

Health surveillance is carried out by the Occupational Health Service provider and is mandatory for employees who are regularly exposed to vibration above the Exposure Action Value (EAV=2.5. m/s<sup>2</sup>).

Health surveillance is also offered to those exposed below the EAV if they are at increased risk e.g. if they report a pre-existing diagnosis of HAVS or any other condition of the hands, arms, wrists or shoulders, or any condition which affects circulation or nerve conduction such as diabetes, carpal tunnel syndrome etc.

Health surveillance will involve:

- As part of the recruitment process, identify the requirement for health surveillance.
- Undertake an initial assessment prior to commencement of employment, this will usually be by questionnaire, with face to face assessment follow up if required.
- An annual assessment questionnaire sent out to certain individuals by Occupational Health
- Face to face review - This will be arranged if the questionnaire reveals symptoms or if an individual reports symptoms between health surveillance questionnaires, or every 3 years otherwise.

All individual records are held confidentially as medical records and, where appropriate, summary results for groups of employees will be reported back to a manager to indicate the effectiveness of vibration control.

Specific recommendations may be made to a manager where an individual employee requires alteration to their duties to protect against HAVS.

## 6.5 Information, Instruction and Training

Training may be provided by a competent person. Alternatively, training may be computer based or through the distribution of written information.

Where new staff are employed and are likely to be exposed to vibration levels in excess of the EAV, they should be made aware of the risks of vibration prior to commencing work. This can be done at the same time as asking them to complete the initial health assessment form for return to Occupational Health.

In addition to these measures, all employees should be given appropriate training in the use of equipment.

This should include periodic supervised practice to identify work practices which may increase risk such as poor postures, gripping equipment too tightly etc.

Training should include information on the following matters:

- The items of work equipment that pose vibration risks and their respective levels of risk.
- How their personal daily exposures compare with the Exposure Action and Limit values (EAV and ELV).
- What symptoms of ill health they should look out for, to whom they should report them and how they should report them.
- What control measures are in place to minimise risks.
- What personal protective equipment is provided and when this should be used, e.g. the need to keep warm.
- The role of operators, supervisors and managers to ensure control of exposure, e.g. through correct selection, use and maintenance of equipment or restriction of exposure times.
- The health surveillance that is provided, how it will be carried out and why it is important.

## 7. Relevant Legislation, Guidance and Links

- **L140 – The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005**
- **The Control of Vibration at Work Regulations 2005**
- **HSE Webpages – control of vibration at work regulations 2005**
- **Indg175 – A brief guide to hand-arm vibration at work (employers)**
- **Indg296 – A guide for employees – hand-arm vibration**
- **The hand-arm vibration exposure calculator**
- **Corporate Health and Safety SharePoint Intranet pages**
- **Corporate Health and Safety – Risk Assessment SharePoint Intranet pages**

# Driving for work

## Waste and Transport Services

February 2026

1.0.

Version	Author	Date	Changes made
1.0.	Transport Services	Feb 2026	First version

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## Introduction

The Health and Safety Executive has recognised that driving for work is one of the most dangerous things many workers will do. It is estimated that up to a third of all road traffic incidents involve someone who is 'driving for work' at the time. This may account for around 12 fatalities and 150 serious injuries every week. Each year in Great Britain there are over 35,000 injury collisions that involve someone who was driving for work at the time.

New Forest District Council is committed to managing their road risk and delivering its legal and moral obligations regarding employees driving for work to ensure they get home safe and well at the end of each day. Driving for work refers to any work carried out on behalf of New Forest District Council that involves an employee driving a vehicle and covers all journeys other than to and from the employee's normal place of work.

Many vehicles used for work journeys are supplied by the employer, but there are also vehicles used for work that are owned, leased, or hired by individual members of staff. These are called "grey fleet" vehicles and drivers. New Forest District Council owes the same duty of care under health and safety law to grey fleet drivers as they do to employees who drive company owned, leased, or hired vehicles.

## Scope

This policy applies to all employees, agency staff and contractors working on behalf of New Forest District Council who drive on council business using a vehicle supplied to them by the council (council fleet drivers) or in their own vehicle (grey fleet vehicles).

This policy is referred to in conjunction with the Drivers Handbook which is provided to employees who are drivers of commercial vehicles which are owned, hired or leased by the council. Grey fleet drivers will have the handbook made available to them electronically.

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## Legislative and regulatory context

In the UK there are legal requirements for employers to manage health and safety risks associated with driving for work. This is underpinned by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which mandates employers have the following duty of care:

- Section 2 mandates an employer's duty of care to their staff.
- Section 3 extends this duty of care to others impacted by work-related driving.
- Section 7 outlines employees' obligations to adhere to safe working practices.
- Section 37 assigns management the responsibility for establishing safe working procedures.

There are also responsibilities under the Road Traffic Act 1988, such as having appropriate vehicle insurance in place at the time for the purpose the vehicle is being used (i.e. business insurance) and there may be some EU Legislation such as the Working Time Directive. The Working Time Directive refers to drivers' hours and rest periods.

## Definitions

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Accident	An unplanned event that results in vehicle damage, injury or ill-health.
Drivers	Includes all NFDC staff, including temporary staff and contractors.
Driving for work	Refers to vehicle and plant related activities while on the public highway or private land in the course of work. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Driving between NFDC sites for work purposes,</li> <li>• Travelling to and from a place of work where mileage is payable,</li> <li>• Driving a council vehicle, a hire vehicle, a grey fleet vehicle or mobile plant.</li> </ul> This includes commuting to a drivers place of work for staff issued an NFDC owned or hired vehicle. This excludes commuting to a drivers place of work in their own vehicle.
DVLA driver information	View your driving licence information ( <a href="http://viewdrivingrecord.service.gov.uk">viewdrivingrecord.service.gov.uk</a> ) Available to do at the DVLA website, allowing staff to show a relevant manager the vehicles they're legally allowed to drive, and any penalty points on the license.
Essential driver / user	Employees who are given an additional payment for driving on council business.
Fleet Vehicles	Vehicles owned, leased or hired to NFDC for use at work.
Grey fleet	Employees who use their private vehicles to drive for business purposes, e.g. essential users who drive their own car as part of their work role.

# Roles and responsibilities

## General responsibilities

These are detailed in the New Forest District Council Health and Safety Policy, which is available on New ForestNet. In summary, it states that management have duties under the Health and Safety at Work, etc Act 1974, and other regulations, to ensure that controls are in place to protect the health and safety of employees and non-employees. The health and safety objectives of the organisation must be monitored along with ensuring that there is suitable instruction and training provided to staff.

## The Council

NFDC will ensure all employees under their control have sufficient training, experience, knowledge, and skills to undertake their role competently and safely. This will usually involve the need for formal health and safety induction, regular training reviews as part of the corporate appraisal process, and training to be reviewed through the risk assessment process.

## Senior Managers

Senior Managers, from the head of the organisation down, will provide a safe working environment through the provision of well-maintained vehicles that are fit for purpose and encourage a positive safety culture ensuring good communication channels throughout the workforce. They will lead by personal example when driving themselves and not tolerate poor driving practice among colleagues.

## Managers, Supervisors and Team Leaders

Managers, supervisors and team leaders should ensure work duties and practices are not planned that pressurise employees into driving in an unsafe or illegal manner and will challenge any unsafe attitudes and behaviours, encouraging each other to drive safely. They will co-operate with the monitoring, reporting and investigation procedures following a reported incident of non-compliance with this policy.

## The Corporate Health and Safety Team

The Corporate Health and Safety Team shall monitor the health and safety performance within the organisation by establishing reporting arrangements for incidents and accidents, and undertaking investigations, audits, and reviews.

## The Transport Team

The Transport Team will manage the statistics, audit and review of vehicle accidents in partnership with the Insurance Officer.

### All staff

Office-based employees will inform their manager of any information or concern regarding the health, wellbeing and safety of an employee who is required to drive for work and maintain complete and full records for employees and vehicles being used for work journeys. Office-based employees must be aware of the company policy on mobile phone use while driving and not put colleagues who may be driving at risk in this way.

### Staff who drive for work

Employees who drive for work should make themselves aware of and comply with all company policy and procedures relating to driving for work, including those published on Forestnet and in the Driver's Handbook. They should raise concerns to their manager around anything that may affect their ability to drive safely or legally, and co-operate with any investigation procedures regarding reported incidents that may involve them.

In addition, any grey fleet drivers must:

- Have valid insurance to cover business use or occasional business use.
- Appropriate and valid driving licences
- Be fit to drive and report certain medical conditions to the DVLA.
- To be competent to drive the vehicle and to comply with relevant road traffic rules.
- Know what to do in an emergency or incident
- Ensure that their vehicle is maintained in a roadworthy condition
- Produce evidence of their driving licence (including DVLA summary), motor insurance policy and the vehicle's MOT certificate on request
- Ensure that business mileage is recorded

## Main body

New Forest District Council requires any employees who drive for work to comply with safe driving guidance and always follow the Highway Code. There is no requirement or expectation that an employee, regardless of their position, will break any road traffic law while driving on work journeys. There is no business activity that justifies placing an employee or others at risk of a road collision.

All employees who drive for work on behalf of New Forest District Council have a legal duty, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, to comply with this driving for work policy while doing so.

## Non-compliance

Employees who drive for work will be responsible and accountable for their own actions when driving for the purposes of work. Should New Forest District Council receive information that an employee may have breached this policy, an internal investigation will be carried out which may lead to disciplinary action being taken, including the possibility of termination of employment.

## Policy Monitoring and Review

New Forest District Council reserves the right to amend policy requirements relating to employees who drive and vehicles which are being used for work purposes.

This policy will be formally reviewed and updated by on at least an annual basis, or sooner if deemed appropriate, or by reasonable request.

## The Driver

### Driving Licence Checks

The Road Traffic Act 1988 states that as well as it being an offence for a driver to drive without a valid licence, it is also an offence for a person or organisation to permit a driver to drive without a valid licence. All employees who are engaged in work-related driving must:

- be holders of a full current driving licence, valid in the UK, for the category of vehicle which they are driving (including automatic or manual).
- notify their line manager immediately if their licence has expired, been suspended, revoked, or cancelled, or has had any limitation placed upon it.
- notify their employer immediately of any driving endorsements or prosecutions, including any that are accrued while driving a private vehicle, as this could affect any relevant insurance policies in place.

- notify the DVLA immediately of any changes to their name or address.
- allow their licence to be checked on a regular basis.

New Forest District Council will carry out checks of driving licences for all employers who are required to drive for work. Employees are required to provide details to facilitate the checking of their driving licence against the DVLA database.

Driving licenses should be reviewed at interview or during staff induction, to ensure the license is clean and/or to confirm the number of points the individual has on their license. New employees coming to live and work in the UK, who hold a foreign driving license, will have a maximum of 12 months from the date of entry to the UK to exchange this license with a UK license. The employee must do this within the 12 months otherwise they will be driving illegally

If you are driving and commit a road traffic offence, either when at work or in your leisure time, you may be liable to be issued a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) or you may be summoned to court for prosecution. In addition, you may attract penalty points to your driving license that can stay on your license for a period of four to eleven years depending on the offence. If you exceed a maximum of 12 points you may have your license removed resulting in you not being allowed to drive – this is likely to have a significant effect on your employment.

Knowingly driving on council business as a disqualified driver will be regarded as gross misconduct and will render the employee liable to disciplinary action. Also, if an employee knowingly drives on council business whilst above the legal limit for alcohol or under the influence of drugs, this will be regarded as gross misconduct.

If an employee is convicted of driving without due care and attention (careless driving) or a dangerous driving offence, it will be necessary to review that individual's authorisation to drive as part of their work duties. This will need to consider the level of risk posed by allowing the employee to continue to drive as part of their work duties, which therefore could lead to disciplinary action being taken.

If you are an essential user and issued with any FPN or a court summons and have points put on your license, you must inform the council of this. Speak to your line manager in the first instance and relevant HR advice will be sought.

## Fitness to Drive

A person's fitness to drive can be affected by a medical condition, by temporary illness and by the environment in which they work, drive and live. Health impairments – including stress, sleep disturbance, migraine, flu, severe colds, hay fever – can lead to unsafe driving. Sometimes, the treatment for these conditions can also impair driving. Employees must ensure they are fit to drive before embarking on any work journey.

## Eyesight

Employees driving for work are required to meet the minimum eyesight standards which involve being able to read an unfamiliar number plate from a distance of 20 meters (about 5 car lengths). Failure will result in the employee being stopped from driving on company business until they can demonstrate to their manager or supervisor that they meet the required minimum standard. Should an employee require spectacles to meet this requirement they must also always carry an additional pair.

## Medical Conditions

Employees should only drive when fit to do so. They should report to their manager any new condition, or a change in their health and wellbeing which may affect their ability to drive safely. Employees should make themselves familiar with Notifiable Conditions, which include epilepsy, diabetes, vision impairment or a course of medication amongst others and which must be reported to the DVLA.

## Impairment

Driving under the influence of drink or drugs is against the law. It is extremely dangerous and can seriously impair judgement and reactions leading to an increased risk of incidents and vehicle collisions.

No employee should attempt to drive whilst impaired or consume alcohol or any unlawful drugs in the workplace during work time or during a period prior to work where they may still be under the influence of alcohol and drugs effects which may carry over to the working hours. Employees should refer to the Council's *Misuse of Alcohol and Drugs at Work Policy* for further guidance.

Employees should also be mindful that many prescription medicines can cause drowsiness and affect the ability drive. If you are prescribed any drugs or medication, you should make your doctor aware that your job entails driving and ensure that you are aware of any restrictions on driving that are advised when taking the drugs or medication. Read any notes accompanying such medicines carefully and advise your manager if you think your driving may be affected.

The driver of a vehicle found to be over the drink-drive limit, and/or driving while impaired by drugs, can receive a criminal record, an unlimited fine, imprisonment, and an automatic driving ban. Driving while impaired by drink or drugs will be treated as gross misconduct and dealt with through the normal disciplinary process which could include termination of employment.

## Fatigue

It is estimated that 20% of road collisions are a result of driver fatigue. Lack of sleep, or poor sleep can impair performance to the same extent as being over the legal alcohol limit.

Employees should only drive when fit and healthy to do so which includes having had adequate sleep. Employees are expected to take adequate rest breaks during a journey – typically a 15-minute rest for every two hours of driving.

When travelling to a destination that is a significant distance away, an overnight stay should be considered and discussed with your line manager. UK legislation on drivers' hours states the maximum amount of driving and working during any one day should not exceed 11 hours and not exceed 4 hours continuous driving without a suitable break at any time.

Whilst it is not an offence to drive tired, if tiredness is suspected to be the cause of a crash, the police can investigate all aspects relating to the driver of the vehicle. In a fatal incident, the driver could be charged with death by dangerous driving or death by careless driving, with a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison.

## Wellbeing

All kinds of personal stresses can affect your ability to concentrate and drive safely. Financial worries, health issues, relationship problems and family situations such as a new baby can all understandably have a hugely distracting effect. If a personal situation is affecting your ability to concentrate while driving, please talk to your manager.

## Driver Competence

In addition to presentation of a valid licence, employees must also be deemed competent to drive and given the necessary skills to drive in a safe and secure manner considering the potential range of vehicle types they may drive and activities they may conduct. This is specifically important for activities involving use of commercial vehicles, towing and individuals who drive long distances on company business. The Council may occasionally require drivers to undertake additional training or refresher training.

Drivers will be required to complete a vehicle induction before they drive each type of NFDC vehicle. This training will include the safe operation of the vehicle and the driver checks required. On initial driver induction staff will be issued with a Drivers Handbook. Staff will be required to sign that they have received and understood both.

Drivers who are categorised as fleet drivers and essential users must also complete driving safely awareness e-learning training available on the LMS. This training must be undertaken as part of the employee's H&S induction; refresher training must be undertaken every 2 years.

Drivers driving LGV's are responsible for ensuring that they remain within CPC currency and that they have a valid Driver digi card.

## The Vehicle

### Vehicle Roadworthiness

A roadworthy vehicle is one that is safe to drive with all its safety-critical and other important elements in good condition and working order. Defect checks must be completed and recorded for any NFDC owned or hired vehicle before a vehicle is driven, further details on the specific checks for the vehicle types is detailed on Forestnet.

Grey fleet vehicles should be checked at least weekly. Drivers should conduct a walk around check of their vehicle to ensure there are no safety defects. A helpful aide is to remember the acronym POWDER: - Petrol (fuel) - Oil - Water - Damage - Electrics - Rubber. Electric vehicles do not require Oil or Water checks and the fuel element should consider the vehicle's charge instead. When checking tyres, ensure they are the correct pressure, do not have any cuts, bulges or other damage such as nails or screws, and that they have sufficient tread depth. The legal minimum tread depth is 1.6mm across 75% (three quarters) of the width of the tyre. Tyres should be replaced BEFORE they are at the legal limit.

Check the windscreen for any damage. Many chips can be repaired however, for damage larger than 10mm directly in front of the driver, the law usually requires the windscreen to be replaced.

Any defects and/or damage should be reported immediately. If safety-critical defects are found, then the vehicle must not be used until those faults or defects have been rectified. Non-safety-critical defects should be rectified at the earliest possible opportunity.

Driving a vehicle with major defects is a serious offence and can result in harsh penalties. The penalties a driver may receive for driving a defective vehicle will range depending on the type and severity of the offence. Any such penalties are the responsibility of the driver. If the vehicle's condition causes the driver to have a collision, they could face additional charges and penalties.

### Safe Loads

Insecure loads pose a significant risk to other road users and incidents involving insecure loads can easily result in loss of life or life-changing injuries. The Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the police have powers to issue fines to any driver in charge of a vehicle that is overloaded or if the load is insecure.

The load on a vehicle is not just restricted to goods being carried. The load is anything being carried on and in the vehicle including tools, equipment, machinery, load restraint equipment, signage, raw materials, samples, and

baggage. All can be classified as being part of the load being carried and must be safely and securely fixed to and/or in the vehicle.

Employees required to drive for work purposes will attend and comply with any training provided around safe and secure loads. They will check and ensure that 'their load' is within load limits and securely fastened before commencing a journey, and then again during a journey when any part of the load has been moved or removed. They should report any incident and near miss to their manager, that involves the safety and security of their load.

No goods are to be carried in a Council vehicle other than property, tools, equipment or materials being used on behalf of the Council, or which belong to the Council.

Tools and materials are not permitted to be carried in the same cabin space as personnel.

Personnel may only be transported in properly designed and fitted seats, and when wearing seatbelts.

When carrying hazardous or waste materials, the appropriate documentation must be completed and carried. These materials must be carried in a manner appropriate for the type.

When built, a manufacturer's identification plate bearing details of the maximum gross weight, axle and train weight is fitted to each commercial vehicle. Drivers should familiarise themselves with the requirements and location of these identification plates. The following terms are used on manufacturers and plates:

- **Maximum Gross Weight:** Is the maximum weight, which can be carried by the vehicle and includes the weight of the vehicle, fuel, vehicle load, driver and any passengers carried
- **Maximum Axle Weight:** The maximum weight to which each axle on the vehicle can be loaded is given for each axle location
- **Train Weight:** This is the combined gross weights of the vehicle and any trailer or towed unit

Drivers should be aware of their vehicle height and the impact of carrying loads on roof racks or above their normal vehicle heights.

Overloading is a serious offence and could lead to the prosecution of both the driver and the Council. Drivers must ensure that they are aware of the maximum loads, which can be carried on the vehicles in their charge and ensure that they are not exceeded. Any concerns regarding the loading of a vehicle should be immediately drawn to the attention of the supervisor and or the Council's Fleet Manager. All loads must be distributed evenly and securely on the vehicle/trailer.

## Vehicle Cleanliness

It is the responsibility of the driver of the vehicle to maintain the vehicle being driven for work in a high standard of cleanliness both internally and externally. The dashboard must be kept free of loose items including paperwork, food, litter

and/or tools and equipment. The rear of the vehicle must be kept free of debris and maintained in a clean, organized, and presentable state.

Some material types require enhanced cleaning regimes. The frequency of these cleans are included in the activity Risk Assessments.

## Vehicle Security

When driving a company-supplied vehicle for work purposes, employees are held responsible for its keys and security. Vehicle keys should never be left unattended in public and, when at home, keys should be kept out of sight and out of reach. Keys should be kept away from the front door to prevent remote vehicle theft where possible. Vehicles must always be locked when not in use, the parking break should be fully engaged, all doors and windows should be closed if no one is remaining in the vehicle cab, and any security device fitted to or supplied with the vehicle must be activated.

Vehicles should be parked in a place that is well lit and where possible, appropriate Council premises, the use of security patrolled car parks, or those covered by CCTV are preferred.

All Operator Licence vehicles must only be parked at Authorised Goods Vehicle Operating Centres listed on the Council's Operating Licence.

## Engine Idling

New Forest District Council is committed to protecting air quality by reducing the environmental impact of their operations in relation to engine idling by employees in company vehicles or in private vehicles being used on company business. Vehicle exhaust emissions from idling vehicles contributes significantly to air pollution which impacts on health, economic growth, and quality of life.

The driver of any vehicle being used on company business will:

- turn the engine off when a vehicle is stationary for more than 1 minute and only restart when they are ready to drive away.
- not use the engine to pre-heat the vehicle unless necessary due to safety considerations or weather conditions.
- always turn off the engine when on a break, loading or unloading.

Engines may remain switched on to perform a pre use walk around check, for the safety of the vehicle occupants, or when unforeseen emergency circumstances arise.

## Private Use of Company Vehicles

Company cars may be used for private journeys. Commercial vehicles must not be used for private journeys. No company-supplied vehicle may be raced, rallied, or otherwise used in a non-business-related, off-road environment.

## Towing

Employees being asked to tow a trailer or equipment should ensure that their driving licence allows them to do so legally.

Drivers should be competent at correctly hitching the trailer, checking the trailer before use including tyres, electrical and brake connections, ensuring loads are safe and secure, and manoeuvring/reversing the trailer. Drivers without this competence should seek additional training from their manager before towing on behalf of the organisation.

Employees towing a trailer or equipment should familiarise themselves with the relevant changes in speed limits and permitted motorway lanes while towing, along with the permitted weight limits for their vehicle/trailer combination. They should also remember to allow additional time for slowing down and manoeuvring their vehicle when towing.

## The Journey

### Journey Planning

Any journey should be reviewed, and a decision made as to whether the journey by road is necessary, whether it can be made by rail or air travel, or replaced with remote communications.

Where road journeys are required, driving during the higher-risk periods of 02:00-06:00 and 14:00-16:00 should be minimised or avoided altogether. Journey routes should be planned to use the highest quality roads, such as motorways and dual carriageways where possible.

Breaks and break locations should be planned in advance. Where employees are planned to travel a long distance to a work location at the beginning or end of the day, or if travel time risks making the working day unreasonably long, employees can discuss with their manager the requirement to arrange overnight accommodation to avoid driving tired.

Give yourself time – driving faster will not ensure you arrive sooner. Don't treat speed limits as a target, you must consider the road conditions.

### Safe Driving

It is important that all drivers of vehicles are aware of the requirements and any updates to The Highway Code, and that they are considerate to other road users and understand their responsibility for the safety of themselves and other road users.

Employees who drive for work are required to apply safe driving behaviours and techniques to help reduce their risk of collisions and incidents. When driving,

they should remain a safe distance from the vehicle in front, stay alert and ready to anticipate changes to road and weather conditions.

On no account should employees driving for work become involved in incidents of road rage or intimidation of other road users.

Read the road signs and anticipate -as well as looking at the vehicle in front and in your mirrors, anticipate what is happening ahead of you by looking at the further point along the road (note the hazards coming up).

Look for road markings and signs – generally speaking, the more signs and road markings, the greater the chance of hazards.

## Safe Speeds

One of the most significant risks drivers face, and create, is driving at inappropriate speeds. This includes both exceeding the speed limit and driving within the limit but still too fast for the road and weather conditions.

Employees who drive for work should know the speed limits for the type of vehicle they are driving and road they are travelling on and understand the importance of staying within speed limits. Van, 4x4 and other large vehicle drivers should remember that the applicable speed limit for a van is often lower than that of a car.

No employee driving for work should never drive faster than road conditions safely allow and should always obey speed limits. Employees driving for work are expected to always drive safely, responsibly, and legally. The minimum penalty for speeding is a £100 fine and 3 penalty points added to a driving licence.

## Seatbelts

It has been a legal requirement for drivers and passengers to wear seat belts since 1983. The minimum penalty if caught not wearing a seatbelt is a fine of £100, rising to £500 if the case goes to court.

Seat belts are the best protection against injury or death in a crash. Wearing a seat belt reduces the chance of serious injury or death by 40% to 60%. People thrown from a vehicle are **4 times** more likely to be killed than those who were wearing a seat belt and remain inside the vehicle.

Seat belts should be worn by both drivers and passengers while traveling for work in any vehicle, whether company-operated or privately-owned. The only exception to this is if you are operating a vehicle that is travelling less than 50m between stops. The driver of the vehicle is responsible for enforcing seat belt use by all occupants.

Where medically exempt from wearing a seat belt, a Certificate of Exemption from Compulsory Seat Belt Wearing should be obtained from a doctor. A copy

must be presented to the Manager and a copy kept in the vehicle being driven to present to the police if stopped.

## Driver Distraction

The use of a handheld mobile device in any vehicle whilst driving is illegal and employees face prosecution if caught doing so. Police can issue a fixed penalty notice (£200 fine and 6 penalty points) or summons the driver to court where they are likely to receive a more stringent penalty on conviction. Please note that any such penalty could affect your employment.

The use of hands-free mobile devices (including in-cab units) in all vehicles being driven for work is permitted though, while legal, hands-free use is not risk-free; using a hands-free device when driving creates an avoidable distraction that affects a driver's ability to concentrate and impairs their reaction times.

Drivers are permitted to use mobile phone devices with hands-free access, as long as they do not hold them at any time during usage. Hands-free access means using:

- a dashboard holder or windscreen mount
- a Bluetooth connection to the vehicle (earphones are not permitted)
- voice activation

A hands-free device fitted to the windscreen must not block the driver's view of the road and traffic ahead. Drivers must always stay in full control of their vehicle. The police can stop drivers if they think they are not in control because they are distracted, and they can be prosecuted.

Note: It is illegal to stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway to make or take a call.

## Driving in Adverse Weather

Weather can be unpredictable and can change quickly. When it does, the risk of a serious collision occurring substantially increases. Driving in adverse weather conditions can be extremely dangerous and can affect a drivers' awareness and concentration as well as their ability to drive safely.

Before commencing any journey, employees who are required to drive for work should always consider the weather conditions and potential for changes and deterioration in weather. They should adjust their driving style to the weather and road conditions at the time. Fuel levels should be checked at the start of a journey to ensure there is sufficient to complete the journey, and employees should have access to a fully charged mobile electronic device to provide updates to their managers if they need to postpone journeys or change routes when the police and travel organisations advise against road travel due to weather conditions.

If poor weather is expected, the necessity for the journey should be considered. Employees who still need to drive should ensure they have appropriate clothing to stay warm and dry, plus food and water in case of travel delays.

Employees driving for work should also have with them an up-to-date list of breakdown and emergency contact numbers.

The more space you keep around you, both front and rear, reduces the chance of having a collision. In good conditions you should maintain a suitable distance between you and the vehicle in-front. If conditions deteriorate (inclement weather) or it is dark, the distance should be at least doubled.

## Passengers

For safety and insurance reasons, under no circumstances are employees permitted to allow unauthorised passengers in any vehicle being used for work purposes. Employees are not permitted to pick up hitchhikers in a company vehicle, and employees using their own vehicles for work are not permitted to pick up hitchhikers while driving on company business.

The driver of the vehicle is responsible for the safety and conduct of everyone in their vehicle. If the carrying of passengers is permitted by management, the number of legally permitted passengers is not to be exceeded in that vehicle and seat belts must be used, unless medical exemption certificates apply.

The carriage of children, dogs or any other animal in a vehicle being used for work purposes is not permitted.

## Smoking and vaping

Under the 2006 Health Act, smoking is banned in the workplace, and any vehicles being used for work. Smoking by either driver or passengers is not permitted in any vehicle while traveling on official company business. This includes vehicles allocated to a single person. This policy includes the use of e-cigarettes and vapes. Employees and their passengers who smoke in work vehicles are breaking the law and can be fined. Employees and their passengers found smoking or vaping in work vehicles will be investigated and appropriate measures will be taken.

## Fines and Penalties

Any employee who is caught and prosecuted by the police for unsafe and dangerous behaviour whilst driving a vehicle for work, will be responsible for any fines, administration charges and subsequent penalties imposed. Parking fines are the responsibility of the driver and not the employer. Licence endorsements may affect the insurance of the driver concerned and mean they are unable to continue driving on behalf of New Forest District Council.

## Breakdowns, Punctures and Glass Repair

If your **NFDC**-supplied vehicle breaks down, suffers a puncture or suffers a broken windshield or window, call the relevant workshop if during working hours (06:00 to 17:00 at Marsh Lane, 06:00 to 16:00 at Hardley). Outside of these working hours, call the out of hours Transport Supervisor

- Marsh Lane Workshop - 023 8028 5544
- Hardley Workshop – 023 8028 5660
- Out of hours supervisor – 07867 550425

Please note that recovery agents will not repair a vehicle but will recover it to the relevant depot.

Drivers must wait with their vehicles until assistance arrives.

Vehicles must not be moved from the breakdown location unless advised to do so by the police. Any change in situation must be reported to the relevant workshop or Out of Hours Supervisor.

If the driver has to leave the vehicle, the vehicle must be left secured. The ignition key should be removed, all doors and access panels locked and portable items secured.

If you are on a motorway, you must not attempt to change the wheel or tyre yourself.

## Damage or Theft while Parked

If your vehicle is damaged or stolen whilst do not attempt to drive it. You must:

- Call the police.
- Inform your supervisor or manager, and the Transport Manager.
- Do not enter or move the vehicle until you have been instructed by the police that it is safe to do so and they have no further forensic interest in the vehicle.
- Call the vehicle workshops to confirm next steps, you may be asked to bring the vehicle to the workshop.

## Collisions

After any accident or collision **YOU MUST STOP**. Failure to stop at the scene of an accident is a criminal offence. If you are involved in a collision that results in injury to a third party, you are required by law to contact the emergency services immediately by telephoning 999. If nobody has been injured and your vehicle is not causing an obstruction, you are not required to call the emergency services.

If it is possible to move your vehicle to a safe location at the side of the road you should do so and switch off the engine.

Move all uninjured passengers to the side of the road. If you are on a motorway, ensure everyone remains behind the safety barrier. Do not attempt to move injured passengers unless they are in danger – wait instead for the paramedics to arrive. If a motorcyclist is involved, do not attempt to remove their crash helmet.

Once all vehicles and passengers are safe, exchange details with any other parties including name, address and insurance details. NFDC vehicle drivers should use the issued 'bump cards' in this instance. If there are any witnesses, collect their names and addresses as well.

If you are driving an NFDC vehicle, provide the following details:

This name and address: Insurance and Risk Officer New Forest District Council, Appletree Court, Beaulieu Road Lyndhurst SO43 7PA. Tel: (023) 8028 5000 or (023) 8028 5002

Details including:

- Your vehicle manufacturer.
- Your vehicle model.
- Your vehicle registration.
- Initial damage to your vehicle.
- Insurance company for NFDC.

If you are driving your own vehicle you will need to provide your business insurance details.

You must obtain as much of the same information from the third party as possible.

Do not admit any liability for the collision or enter into any discussion other than to exchange the details required to report the accident to your insurance company and your employer.

If possible, and without putting yourself in danger, take photos of the accident and any damage to the vehicles involved. You should also take photos of any road or landscape features that may have contributed to the collision.

You will need to complete a full report of the incident including a diagram of the vehicles showing how the accident occurred, why it occurred and what damage resulted. If possible, you should record:

At the time of the accident, the driver should note the following details:

- Date and time of the accident.
- Where the accident happened.
- Your vehicle manufacturer.
- Your vehicle model.
- Your vehicle registration.
- Initial damage to your vehicle.

- Insurance company.
- You must obtain as much of the same information from the third party as possible.
- Visibility and weather conditions at time of the accident.
- Speed limit in force at the location of the accident.
- Whether any directional signals or audible warnings were made immediately prior to the accident.
- Speed of vehicles involved.
- Extent of damage to all vehicles involved.
- Sketch of the location showing width of roads, position of vehicles before and after the accident. If possible take photographs of the position of vehicles as evidence.
- Take names and addresses of any witnesses, including the badge number and name of any attending police officer(s).

If no third party is available, the accident should be reported to the police and a bump card left.

Clear any debris to the side of the road so it doesn't present any danger to other road users but DO NOT try to recover any debris if you are on a motorway. If your vehicle is drivable, you may now continue your journey.

All communications received from insurance companies or third parties must be immediately forwarded to the Fleet Manager and the Insurance Officer and must not be answered in any way by the driver, supervisor or line manager.

If there are no spare 'bump cards' in the NFDC fleet or hired vehicle it is the drivers responsibility to request spares from their supervisor or manager.

## Incident Reporting

All work-related road incidents and near misses (including damage-only ones and ones involving privately owned vehicles when they are used for work) must be reported as soon as it is safe to do so. Prompt and accurate reporting and recording of work-related road incidents, and near misses help to keep employees safe and reduce the likelihood of similar incidents occurring again.

Incidents involving a company-supplied vehicle must be reported to the Manager or the organisation's appointed accident management agent immediately where possible or, at the latest, within 24 hours.

An incident is an event that resulted in personal injury to an employee or another person, or resulted in property or vehicle damage, or a dangerous occurrence. This could include a motoring offence, a crash or collision involving a vehicle being driven for work, or a vehicle breakdown. A near miss is a dangerous occurrence that had the potential to result in personal injury to a staff member or another person, or to result in property damage.

Accidents involving NFDC fleet vehicles, however minor, must be reported to the Insurance and Risk Officer, an online Motor Claim Form must also be completed. Drivers must report any accident to their Line manager and report the accident

damage sustained to their vehicle to the Workshops. Drivers should also ensure that they have a pen and paper available in the vehicle to record the required details.

Drivers (of fleet or NFDC hired vehicles) must report incident damage to the vehicle workshops or out of hours transport supervisor immediately by phone call. Your vehicle must not be driven with any defect that could be considered safety related or which could possibly attract a prohibition notice or a fixed penalty if checked by the DVSA or other enforcement agencies. If in doubt over whether a vehicle is roadworthy, this must be clarified with a mechanic and must be reported by defect sheet on return to the depot or offices.

## Grey Fleet Drivers

Please note that if you use your own car for work, the organisation's legal duty of care to ensure the safety of the driver, the vehicle and journey remain the same. Grey fleet drivers should make themselves aware of all the company policies relevant to driving for work and ensure they always comply with them.

Grey fleet drivers must ensure:

- They are fit to drive.
- They hold a valid driving licence for the vehicle being driven, and provide permission for the employer to check this licence directly with DVLA.
- The vehicle is appropriate for the journey and use, taxed, MOT'd and serviced in line with manufacturer recommendations.
- They hold appropriate and valid insurance cover for business use.
- They can produce documentary proof of the above, on request.
- The vehicle is regularly checked to ensure its roadworthiness and a walk around safety check is conducted prior to starting any long work journey.
- They will notify their Manager if they are unable to use a vehicle which meets the minimum safety standards required.
- They will notify their Manager of any Notice of Intended Prosecutions and collisions they are involved in whilst driving, especially whilst on a journey for work purposes.
- They co-operate with company rules and policies when using their own vehicle for work.

## Failure to comply

### Licencing

To have an effective policy in place it's important to monitor to ensure that proper procedures and practices are being followed, and to identify if changes need to be made. This will include the regular monthly checks of staff driving documents, checks undertaken will include:

- A check of at least 20 staff who are essential or casual users and are claiming mileage.
- Some of those selected will be because of high mileage.
- Some of those selected will be randomised, which may include those who have not made claims.

Monthly monitoring is undertaken by the Payroll Team linked to the monthly mileage claims received by staff.

### Broader compliance

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including summary dismissal. Each instance will be investigated and the appropriate measures taken.

For speeding (in fleet vehicles), weekly reports will be run from the tracker system to identify where this has happened. In the first instance employees will be invited to an informal discussion about their misconduct. The outcome of the discussion will be followed up in writing. This action is a safety measure for our employees and members of the public.

Further reports that show an employee has persistently continued to drive in an irresponsible manner, by excessive speeding, or erratic driving behaviour, will result in disciplinary action. This will be on the grounds of misconduct, by failing to follow the Council's policy, and bringing the Council into disrepute.

If there is an incident/accident which is significantly severe, for example if it results in an injury to persons or damage to the vehicle, then a higher sanction under the disciplinary procedure may be immediately warranted.

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# Corporate Accident/Incident Report Quarter 3 2025 – 2026

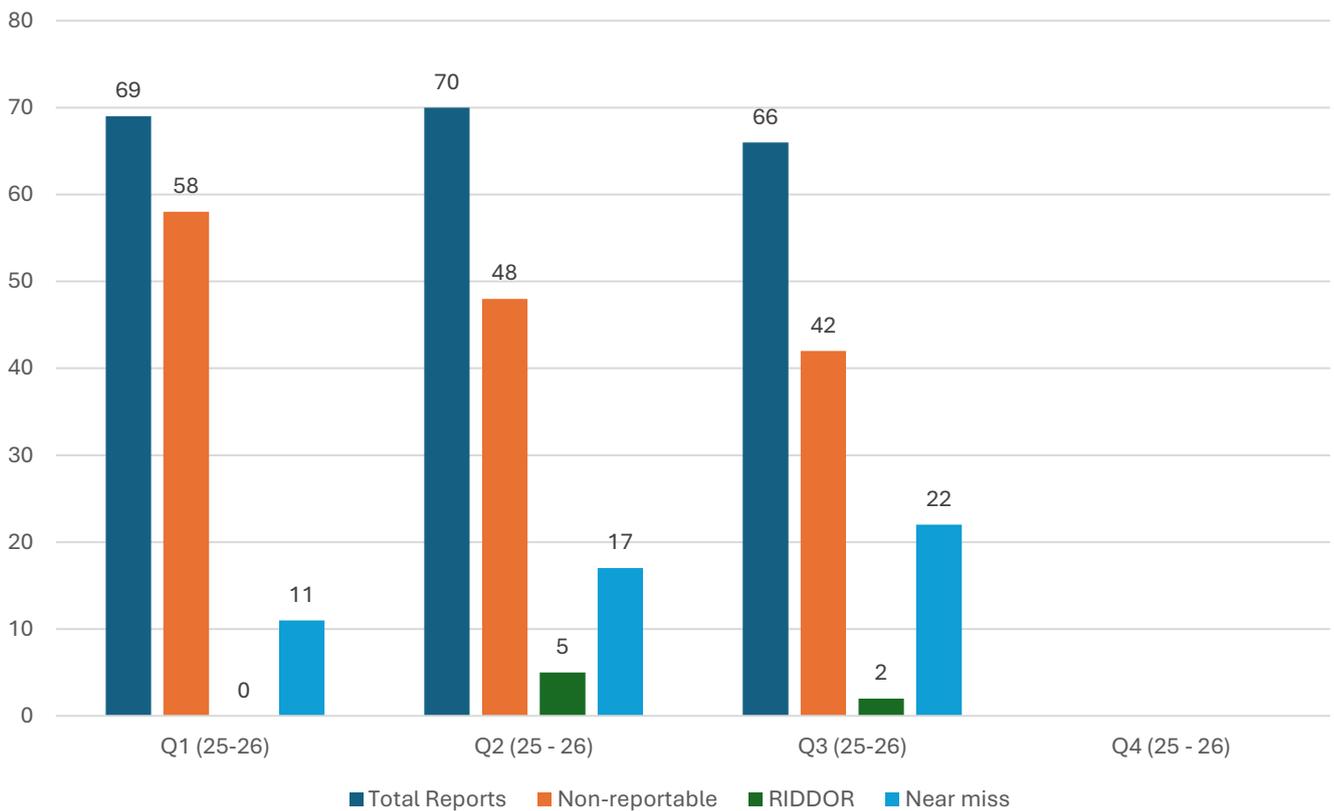
This report was taken on Monday 05/01/2026

## 1.0. Overall Reports 2025 – 2026

() = previous financial year

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	<b>69</b> (94)	<b>70</b> (80)	<b>66</b> (65)	(88)
Non-Reportable	<b>58</b> (78)	<b>48</b> (60)	<b>42</b> (50)	(62)
RIDDOR	<b>0</b> (4)	<b>5</b> (1)	<b>2</b> (5)	(1)
Near Miss	<b>11</b> (12)	<b>17</b> (19)	<b>22</b> (10)	(25)

All Reported Incidents/Accidents 2025 - 2026



2.0. Days Lost 2025 – 2026

( ) = previous financial year

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Days Lost	<b>17</b> (104)	<b>132</b> (29)	<b>40</b> (185)	(35)
Housing & Communities	<b>1</b> (37)	<b>21</b> (2)	<b>0</b> (123)	(21)
Place, Operations & Sustainability	<b>16</b> (66)	<b>111</b> (27)	<b>40</b> (65)	(14)
Corporate Resources & Transformation	<b>0</b> (1)	<b>0</b> (0)	<b>0</b> (0)	(0)

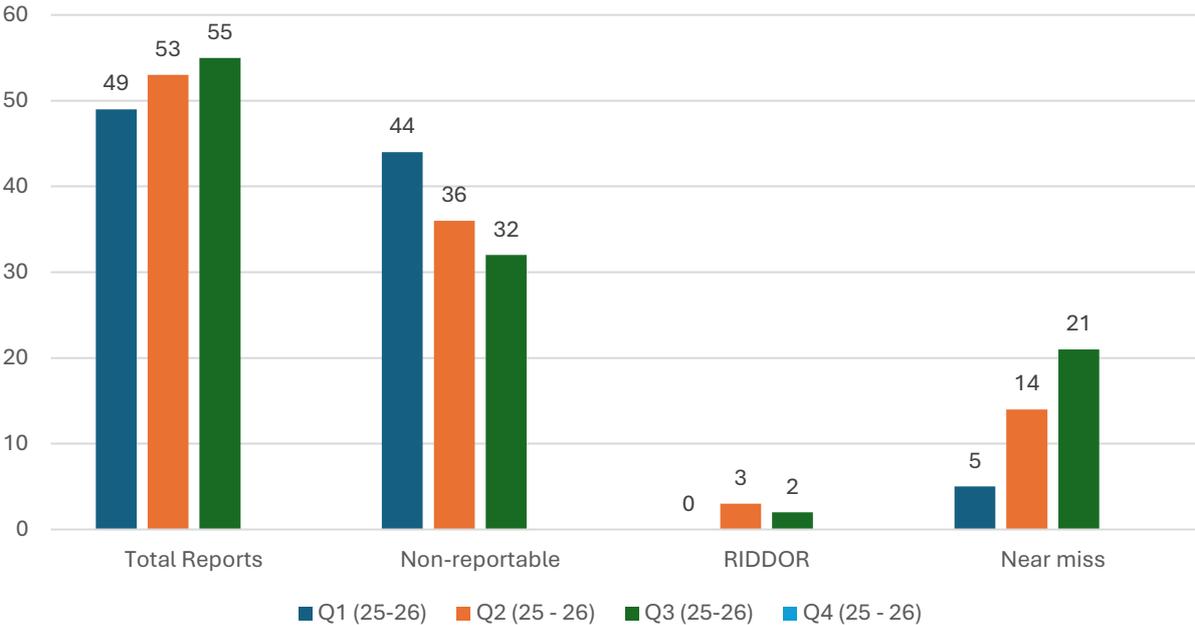


### 3.0. Employee Reports

( ) = previous financial year

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	<b>49</b> (64)	<b>53</b> (55)	<b>55</b> (44)	(67)
Non-Reportable	<b>44</b> (54)	<b>36</b> (39)	<b>32</b> (31)	(45)
RIDDOR	<b>0</b> (4)	<b>3</b> (1)	<b>2</b> (3)	(1)
Near Miss	<b>5</b> (6)	<b>14</b> (15)	<b>21</b> (10)	(21)

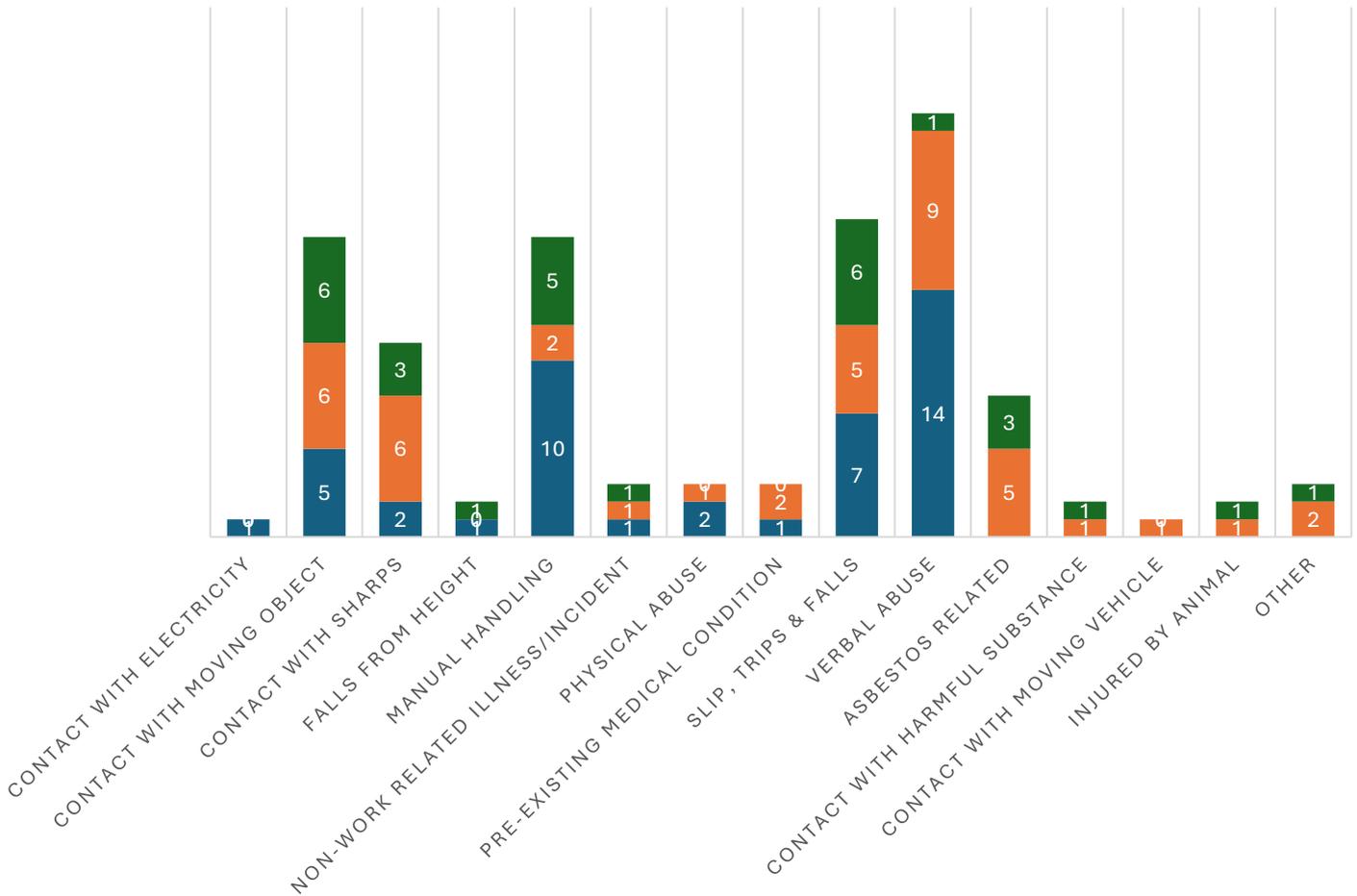
Employee Reports 2025 - 2026



Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Contact with Electricity	1	0	0	
Contact with Moving Object	5	6	6	
Contact with Sharps	2	6	3	
Falls from Height	1	0	1	
Manual Handling	10	2	5	
Non-Work-Related Illness/Incident	1	1	1	
Physical Abuse	2	1	0	
Pre-existing Medical Condition	1	2	0	
Slip, Trips & Falls	7	5	6	
Verbal Abuse	14	9	1	
Asbestos Related	0	5	3	
Contact with harmful substance	0	1	1	
Contact with moving vehicle	0	1	0	
Inured by Animal	0	0	1	
Other	0	1	1	

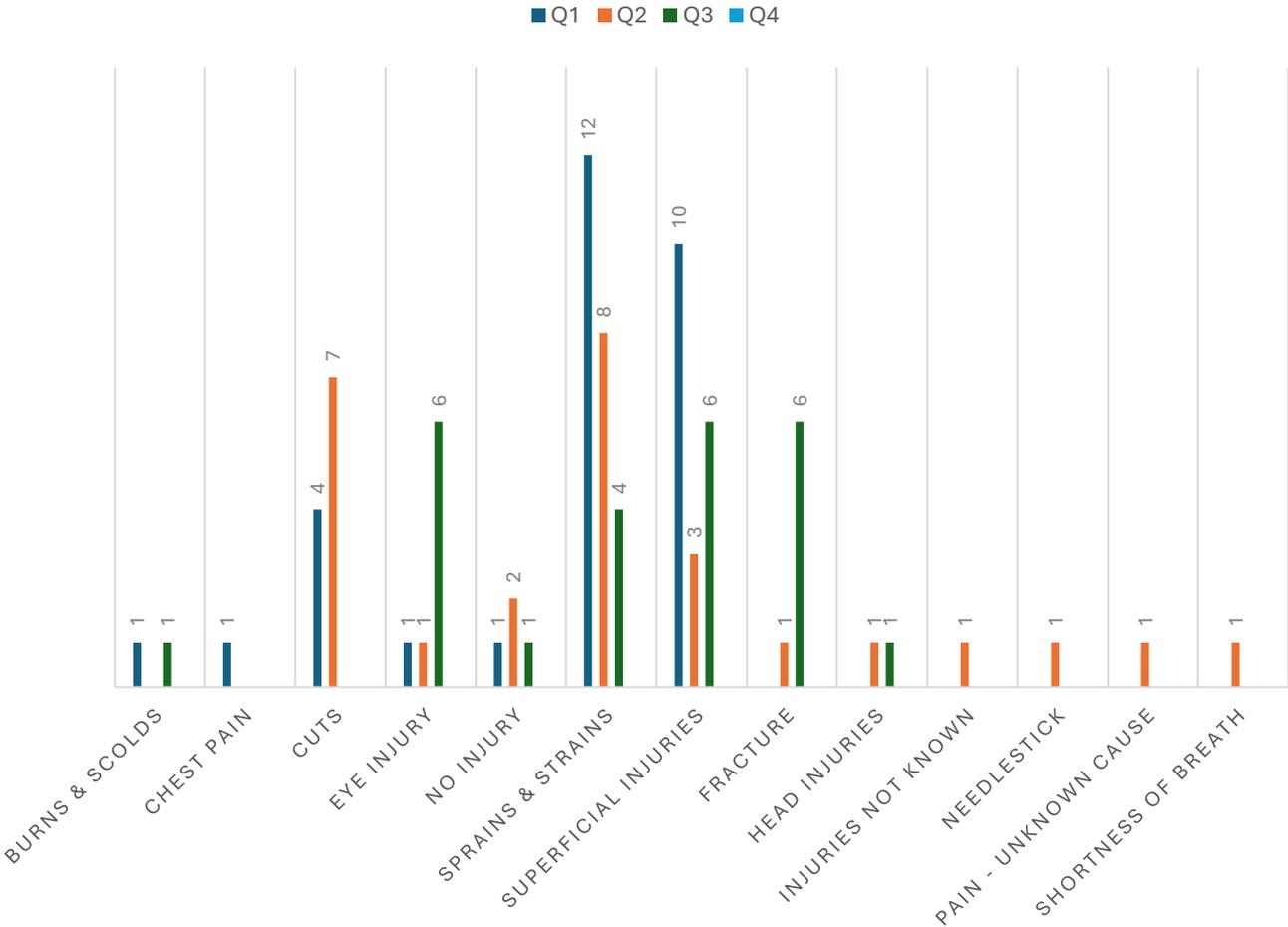
### EMPLOYEE CAUSE 2025 - 2026

■ Q1 ■ Q2 ■ Q3 ■ Q4



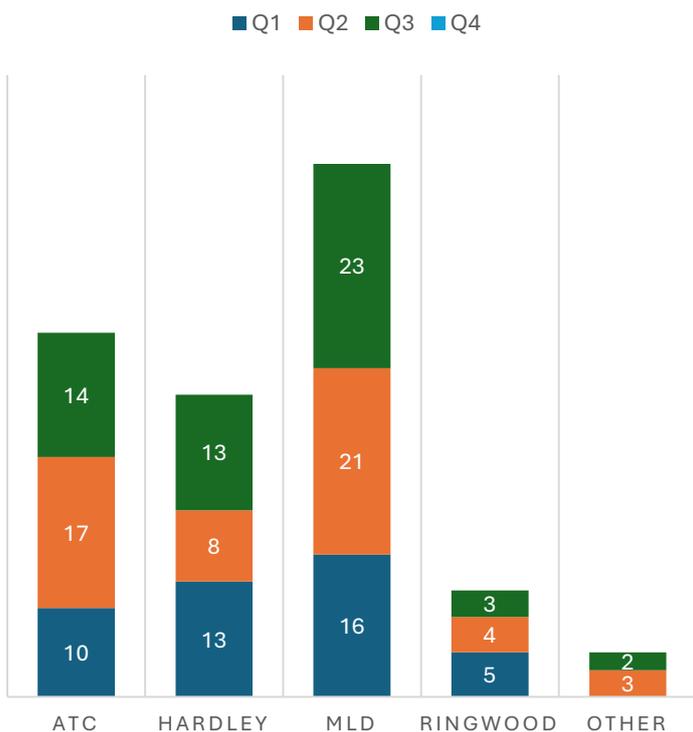
Injury Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Bite	0	0	1	
Burns & Scolds	1	0	0	
Chest Pain	1	0	0	
Cuts	4	7	6	
Eye Injury	1	1	1	
No Injury	1	2	4	
Sprains & Strains	12	8	6	
Superficial Injuries	10	3	6	
Fracture	0	1	1	
Head injuries	0	1	0	
Injuries not known	0	1	0	
Needlestick	0	1	0	
Pain - unknown cause	0	1	0	
Shortness of breath	0	1	0	

### EMPLOYEE INJURY TYPE 2025 - 2026

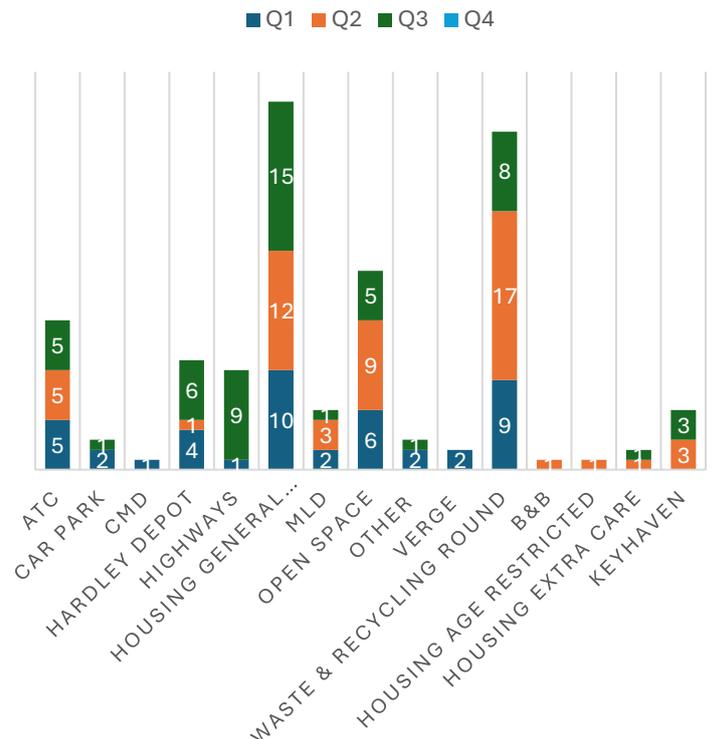


Reporting Team	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Asbestos Team	2	3	0	
CCTV	1	1	0	
Coastal	1	2	2	
Communications	1	0	0	
Environmental Health	1	0	1	
Gas	1	1	4	
Grounds	4	1	10	
Housing Anti-Social Behaviour	2	0	0	
Housing Maintenance - Reactive	7	6	7	
Housing Major Projects	2	1	3	
Housing Sustainment	2	0	2	
Open Spaces	1	0	1	
Parking Enforcement	3	2	3	
Private Sector Housing	1	0	0	
Streetscene	3	6	5	
Waste & Recycling	16	19	11	
Customer Services	1	2	1	
Housing Options	0	3	2	
Keyhaven	0	2	3	
Post room	0	1	0	
Civic buildings	0	1	0	
Estates & valuations	0	1	0	

### EMPLOYEE REPORTS TEAM BASE 2025 - 2026



### INCIDENT LOCATION 2025 - 2026

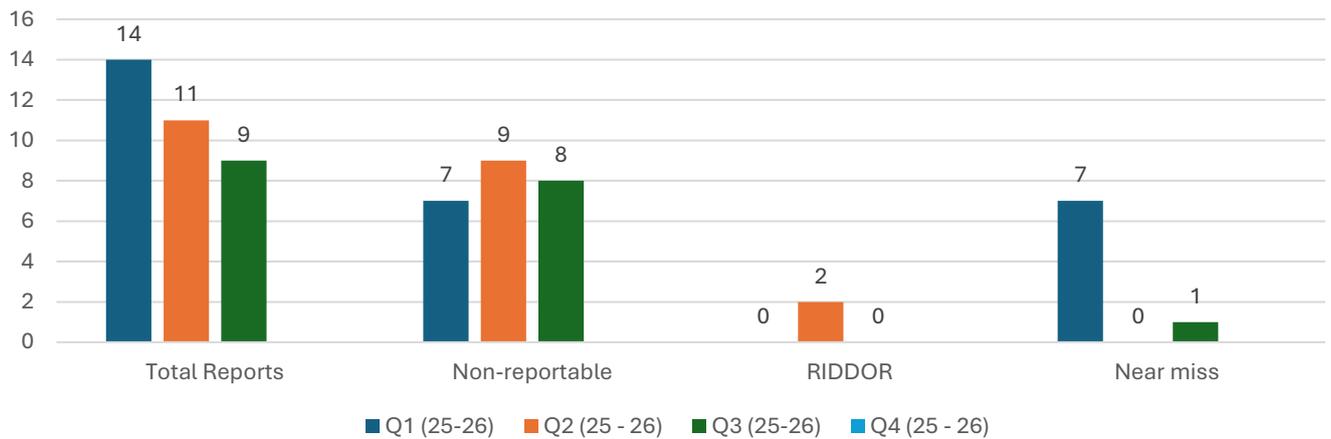


### 4.0. Member of the Public Incidents/Accidents

( ) = previous financial year

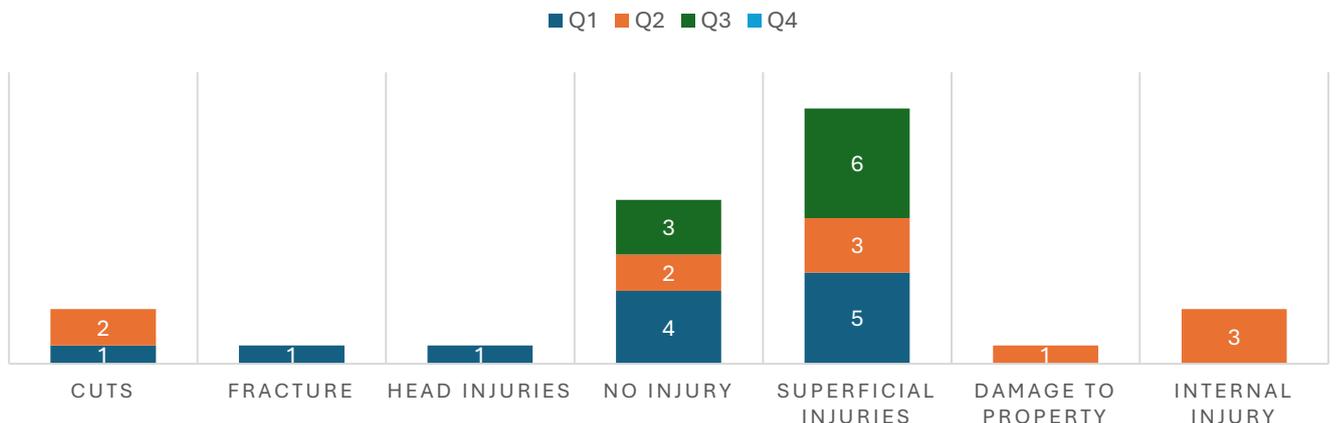
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	<b>14</b> (30)	<b>11</b> (26)	<b>9</b> (19)	(18)
Non-Reportable	<b>7</b> (24)	<b>9</b> (22)	<b>8</b> (16)	(16)
RIDDOR	<b>0</b> (0)	<b>2</b> (0)	<b>0</b> (0)	(0)
Near Miss	<b>7</b> (6)	<b>0</b> (4)	<b>1</b> (3)	(2)

Member of the Public All Reports 2025 - 2026



Injury Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Cuts	1	2	0	
Fracture	1	0	0	
Head Injuries	1	0	0	
No Injury	4	2	3	
Superficial Injuries	5	3	6	
Damage to property	0	1	0	
Internal injury	0	3	0	

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC INJURIES 2025 - 2026

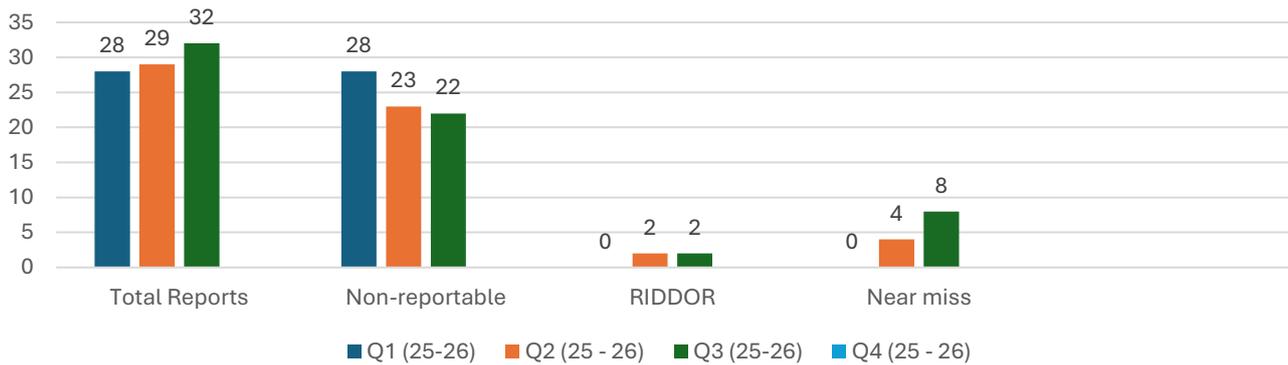


5.0. Place, Operations & Sustainability All Reports 2025 - 2026

() = previous financial year

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	<b>28</b> (34)	<b>29</b> (31)	<b>32</b> (19)	(45)
Non-Reportable	<b>28</b> (30)	<b>23</b> (26)	<b>22</b> (16)	(36)
RIDDOR	<b>0</b> (2)	<b>2</b> (1)	<b>2</b> (1)	(0)
Near Miss	<b>0</b> (2)	<b>4</b> (5)	<b>8</b> (2)	(9)

Place, Operations & Sustainability Employee Reports 2025 - 2026

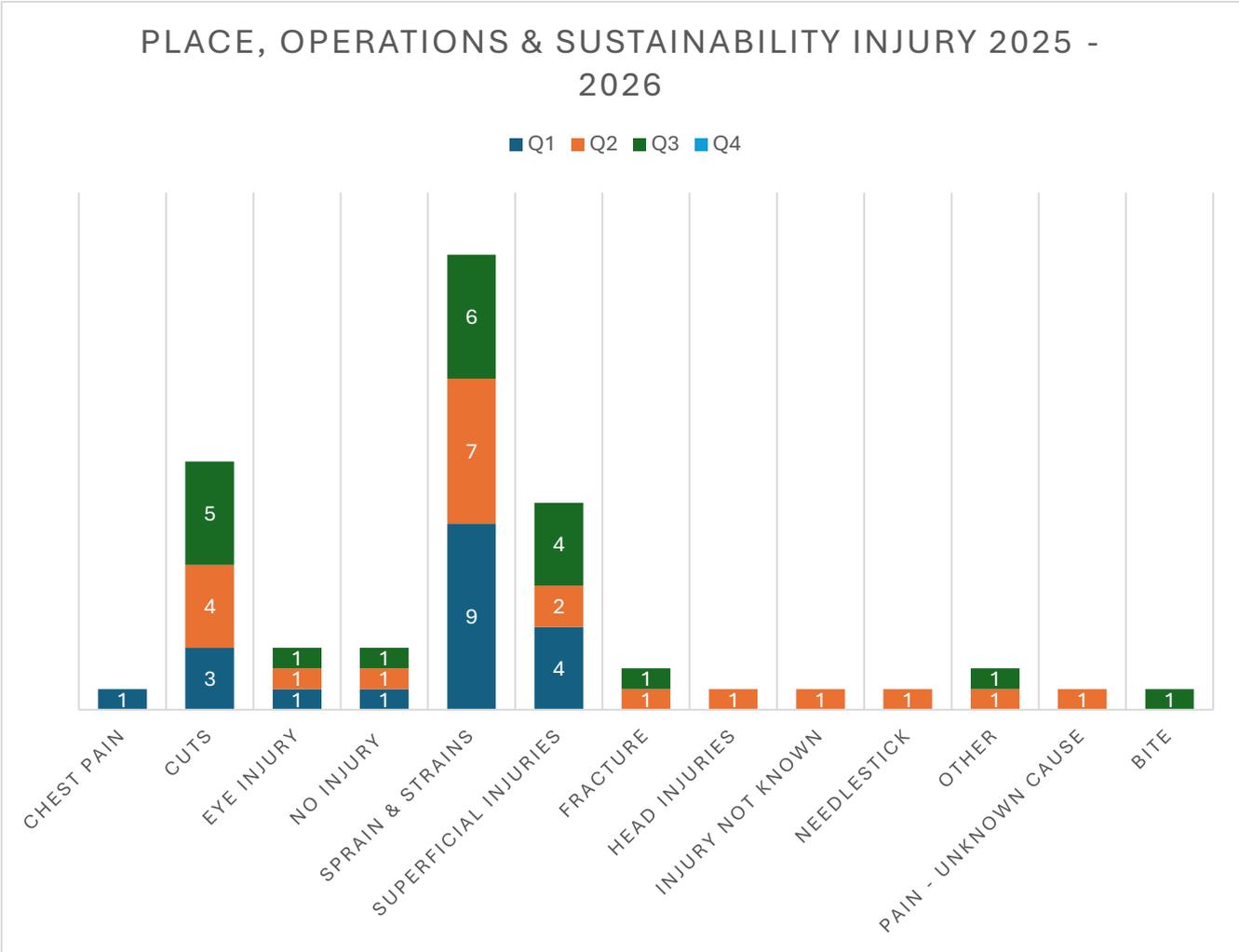


Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Contact with Moving Object	5	4	6	
Contact with Sharps	1	4	2	
Manual Handling	8	2	5	
Non-Work-Related Illness/Incident	1	0	0	
Pre-Existing Medical Condition	1	1	0	
Slips/Trips	3	5	5	
Verbal Abuse	9	5	5	
Asbestos related	0	1	1	
Contact with harmful substance	0	1	1	
Contact with moving vehicle	0	1	0	
Injured by animal	0	1	1	
Other	0	1	2	
Physical Abuse	0	1	0	

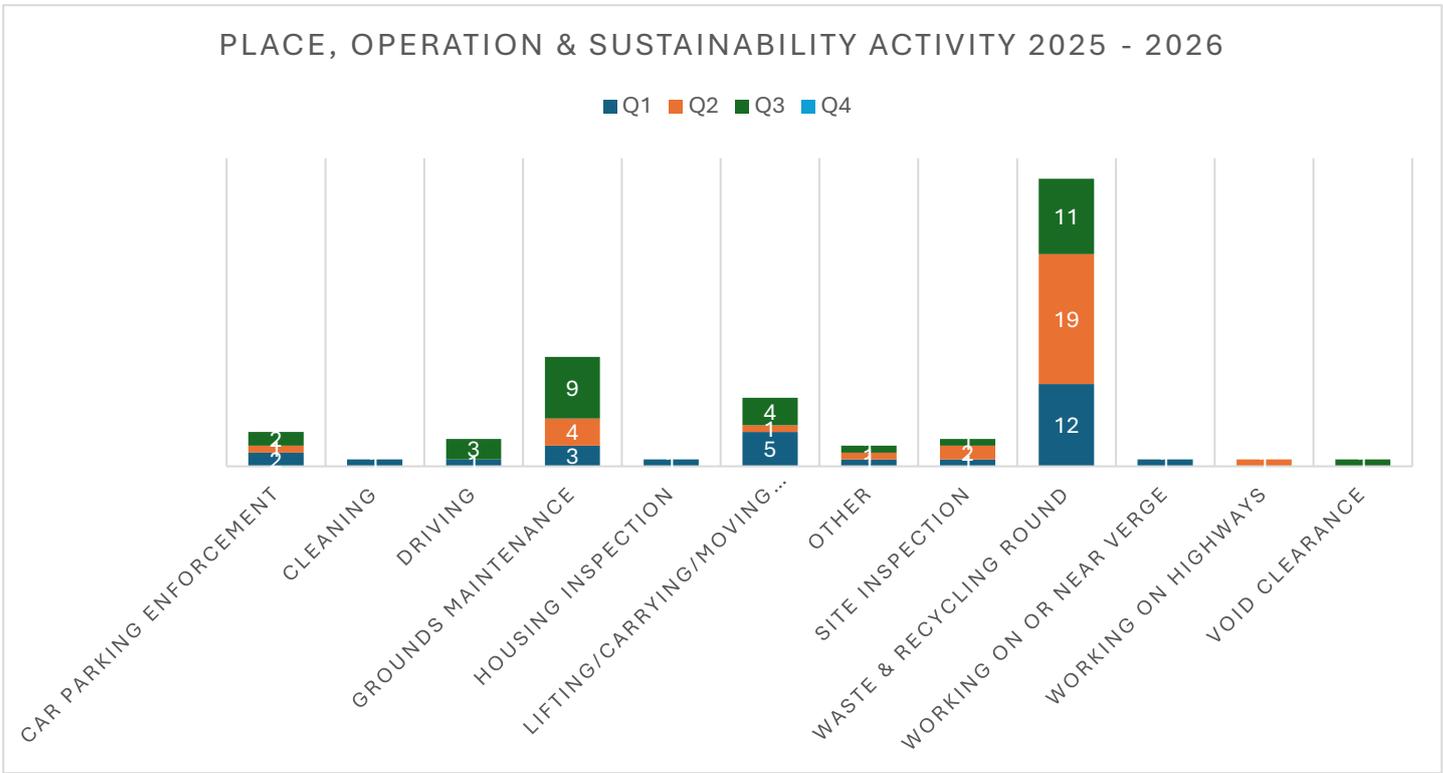
PLACE, OPERATIONS & SUSTAINABILITY CAUSE 2025 - 2026



Injury Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Chest Pain	1	0	0	
Cuts	3	4	5	
Eye Injury	1	1	1	
No Injury	1	1	1	
Sprain & Strains	9	7	6	
Superficial Injuries	4	2	4	
Fracture	0	1	1	
Head injuries	0	1	0	
Injury not known	0	1	0	
Needlestick	0	1	0	
Other	0	1	1	
Pain- unknown cause	0	1	0	
Bite	0	0	1	



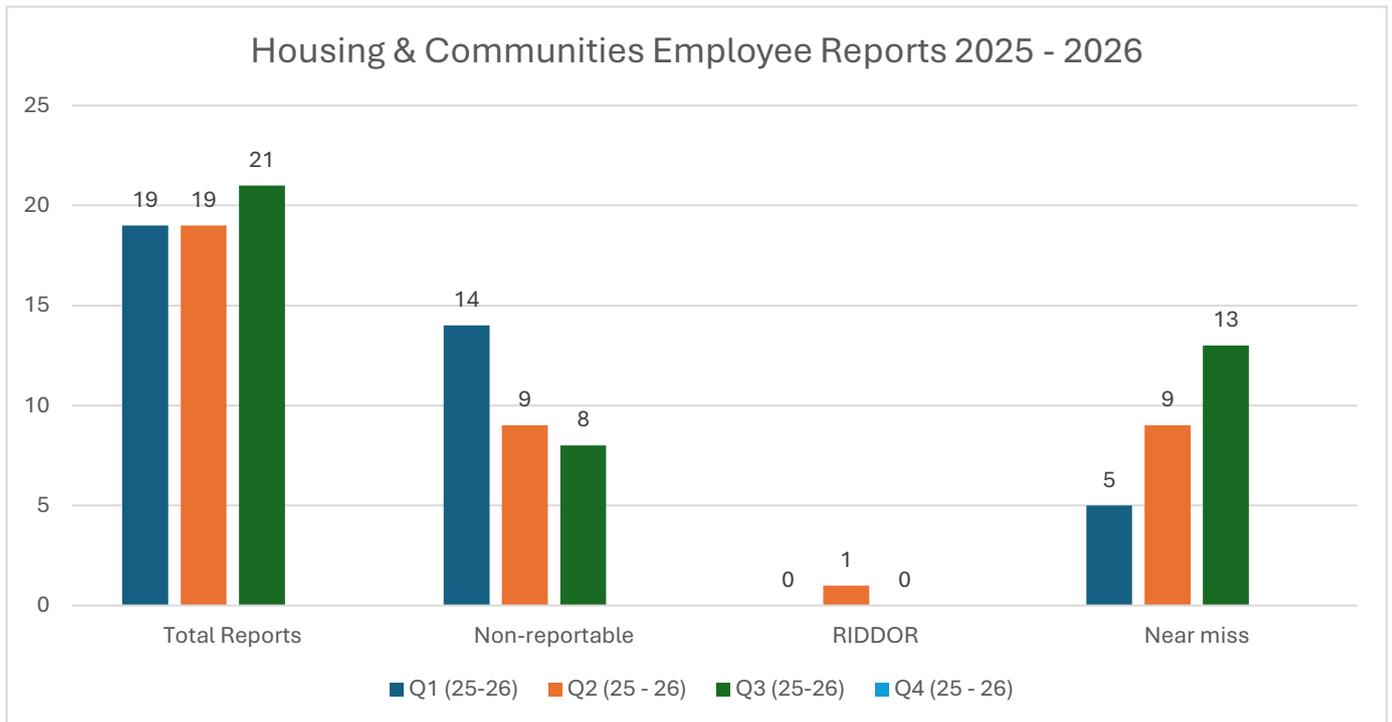
Activity	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Car Parking Enforcement	2	1	2	
Cleaning	1	0	0	
Driving	1	0	3	
Grounds Maintenance	3	4	9	
Housing Inspection	1	0	0	
Lifting/Carrying/Moving Activity	5	1	4	
Other	1	1	1	
Site Inspection	1	2	1	
Waste & Recycling Round	12	19	11	
Working on or Near Verge	1	0	0	
Working on highways	0	1	0	
Void Clearance	0	0	1	



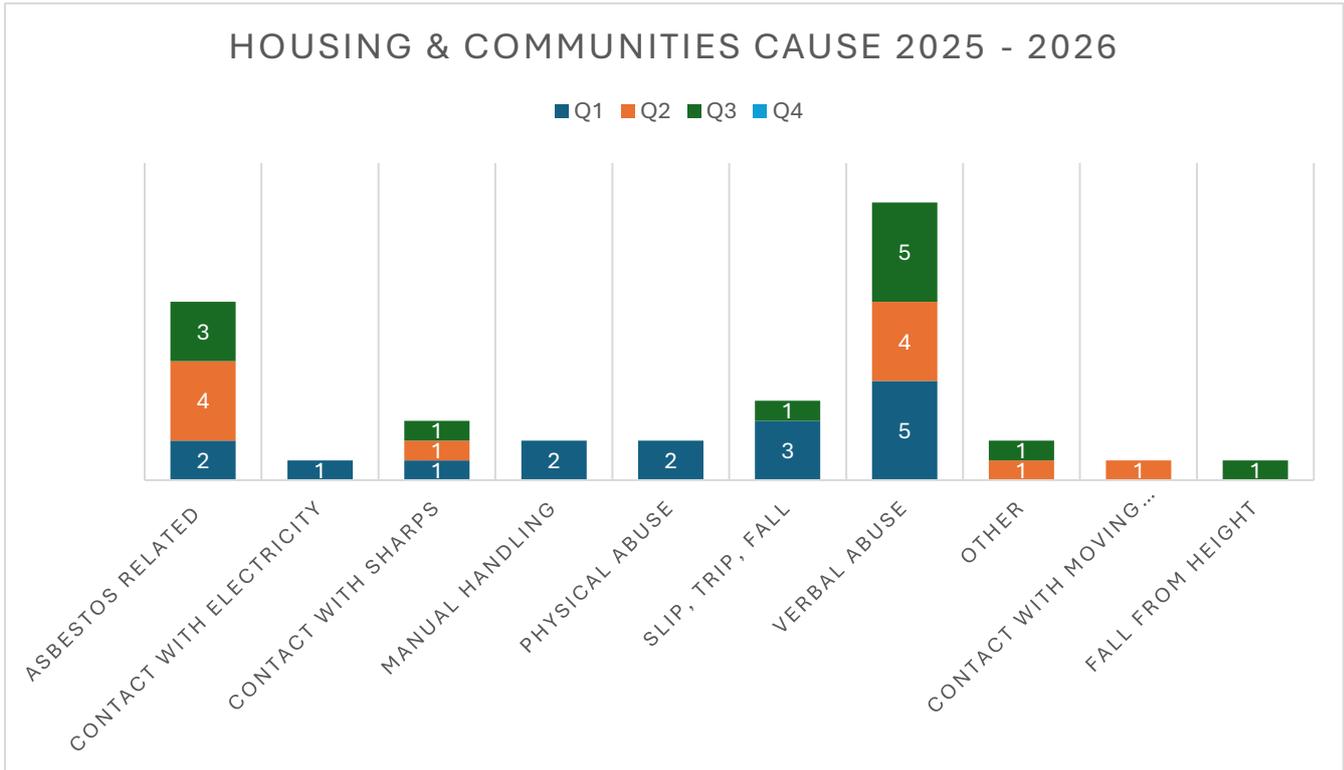
## 6.0. Housing & Communities 2025 - 2026

() = previous financial year

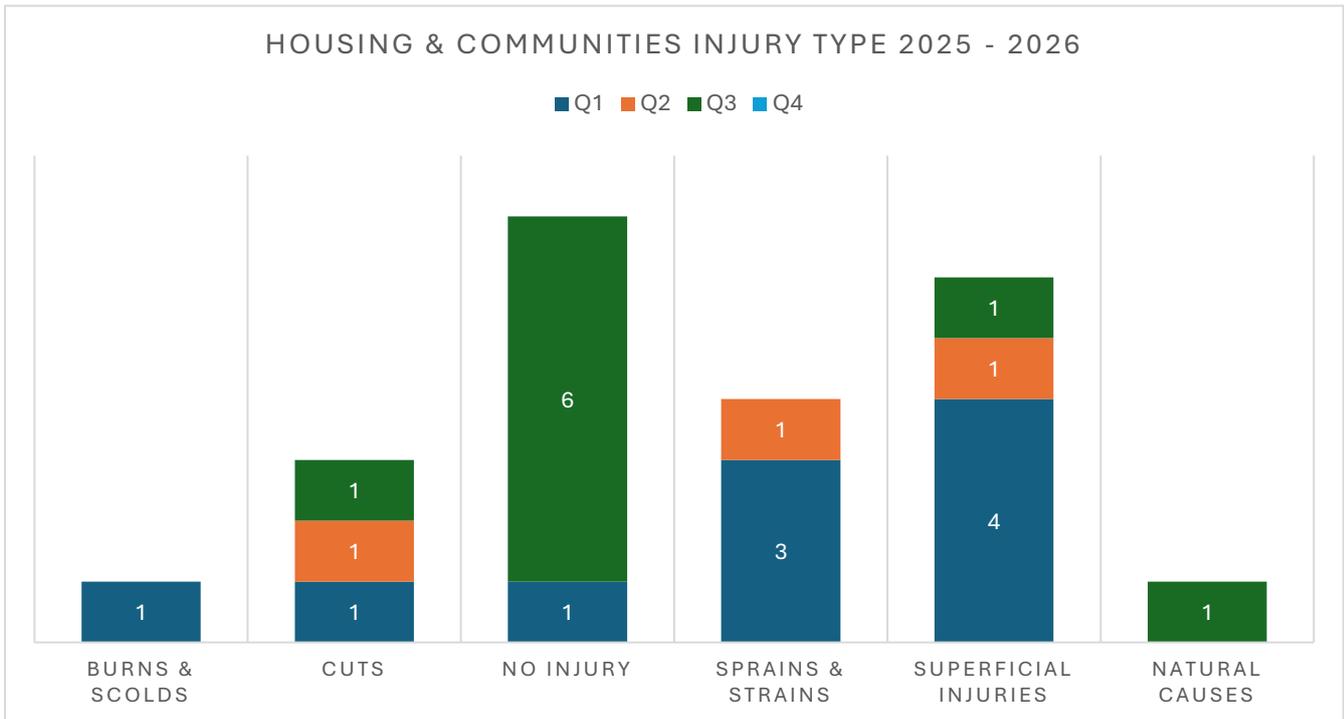
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	<b>19</b> (22)	<b>19</b> (20)	<b>21</b> (21)	(13)
Non-Reportable	<b>14</b> (16)	<b>9</b> (10)	<b>8</b> (11)	(7)
RIDDOR	<b>0</b> (1)	<b>1</b> (0)	<b>0</b> (2)	(1)
Near Miss	<b>5</b> (4)	<b>9</b> (10)	<b>13</b> (8)	(5)



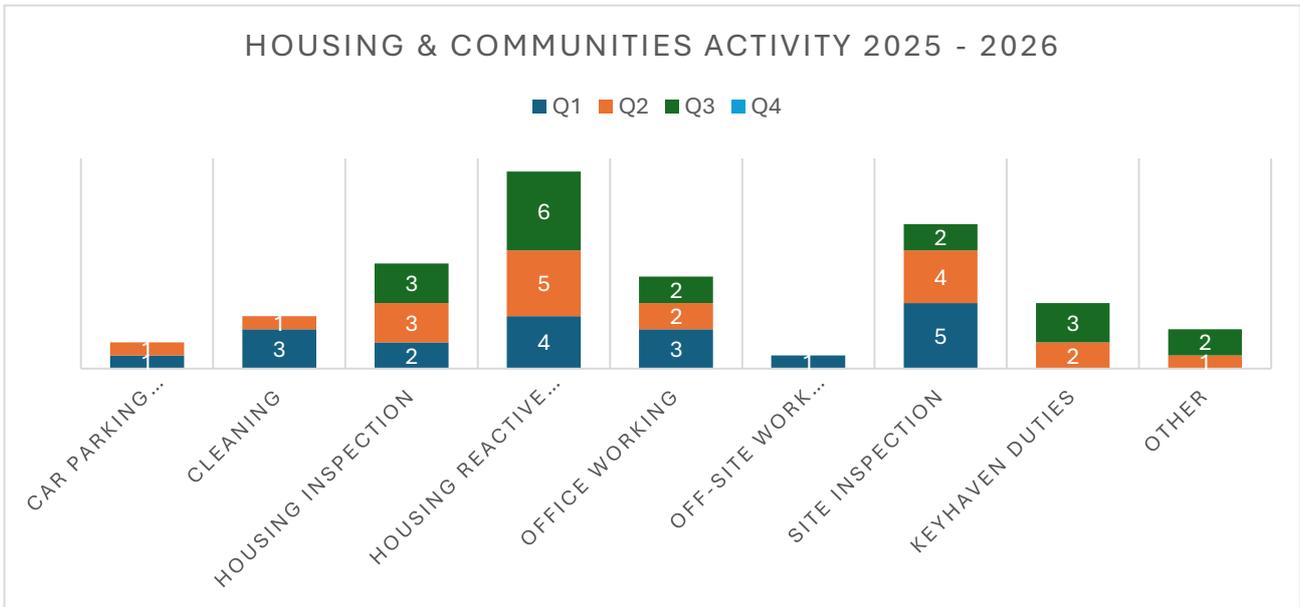
Cause	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Asbestos Related	2	4	3	
Contact with Electricity	1	0	0	
Contact with Sharps	1	1	1	
Manual handling	2	0	0	
Physical Abuse	2	0	0	
Slip, Trip, Fall	3	0	1	
Verbal Abuse	5	4	5	
Other	0	1	1	
Contact with moving object	0	1	0	
Fall From Height	0	0	1	



Injury Type	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Burns & Scolds	1	0	0	
Cuts	1	1	1	
No Injury	1	0	6	
Sprains & Strains	3	1	0	
Superficial Injuries	4	1	1	
Natural Causes	0	0	1	



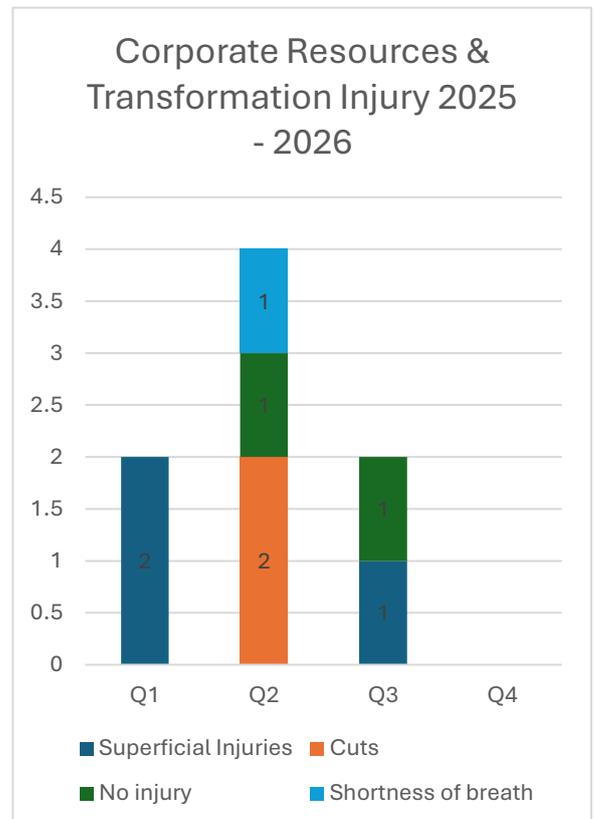
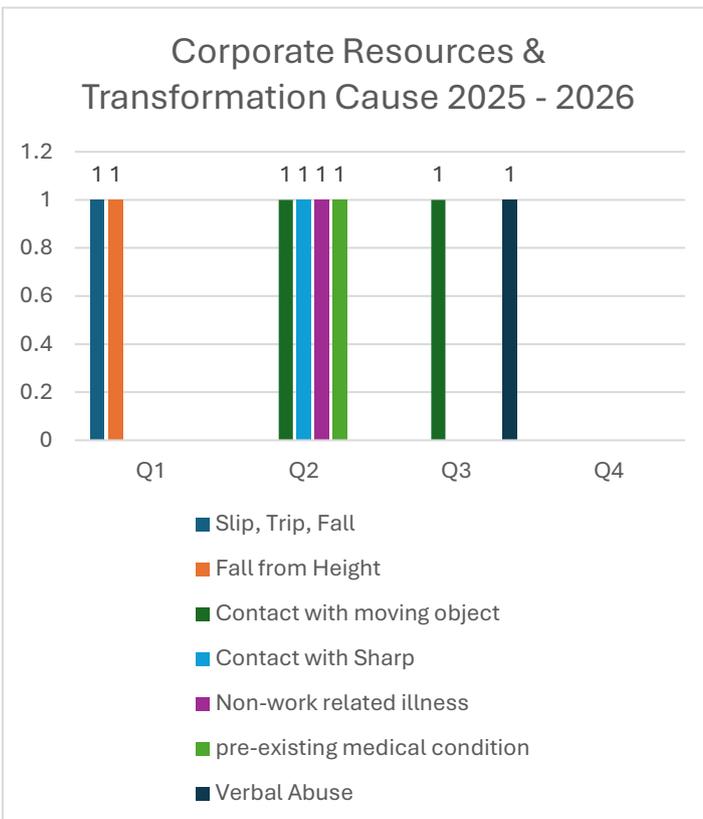
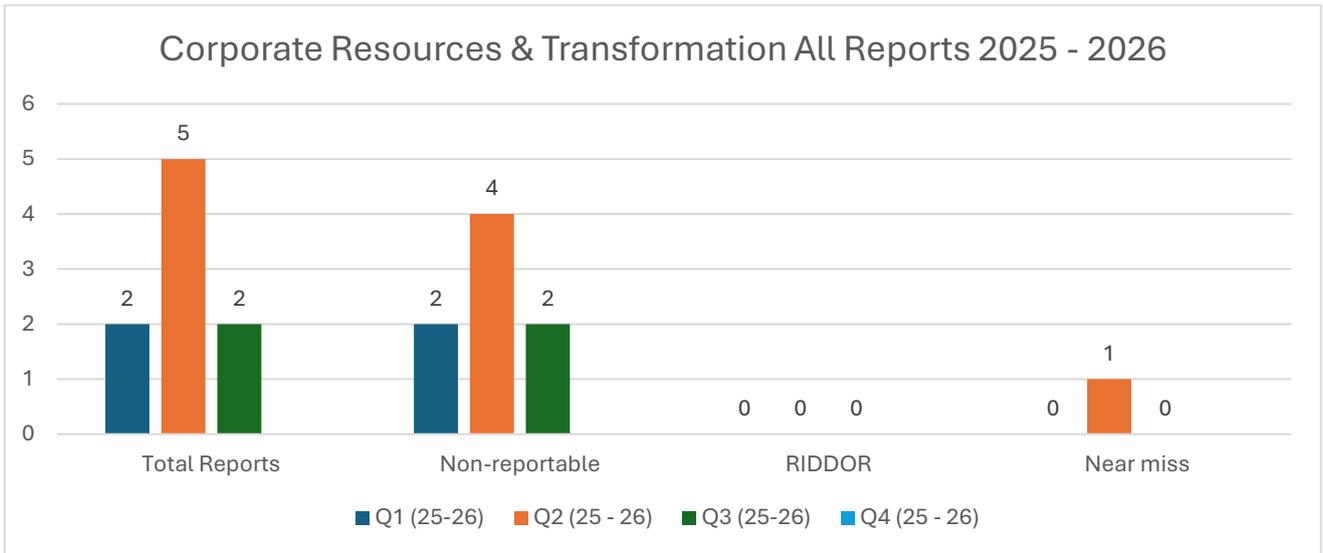
Activity	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Car Parking Enforcement	1	1	0	
Cleaning	3	1	0	
Housing Inspection	2	3	3	
Housing Reactive Repairs	4	5	6	
Office Working	3	2	2	
Off-site Work-Related Activity	1	0	0	
Site Inspection	5	4	2	
Keyhaven duties	0	2	3	
Other	0	1	2	
Client Visit	0	0	3	



7.0. Corporate Resources & Transformation 2025 - 2026

() = previous financial year

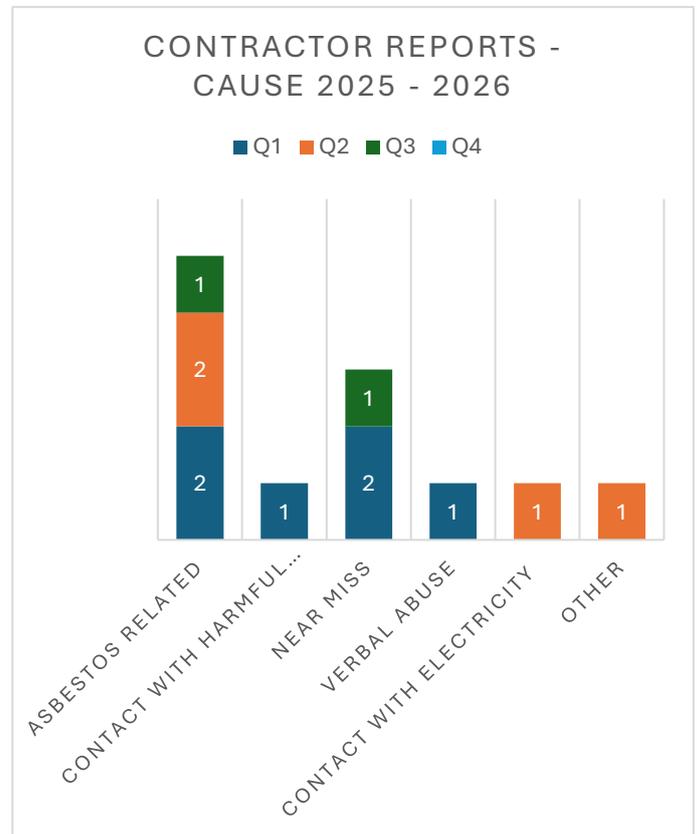
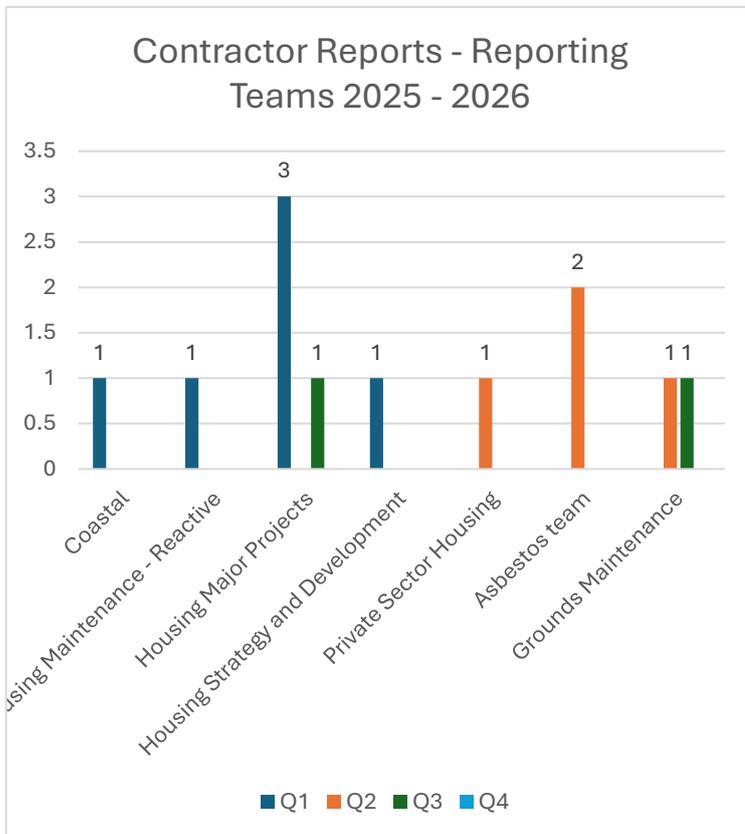
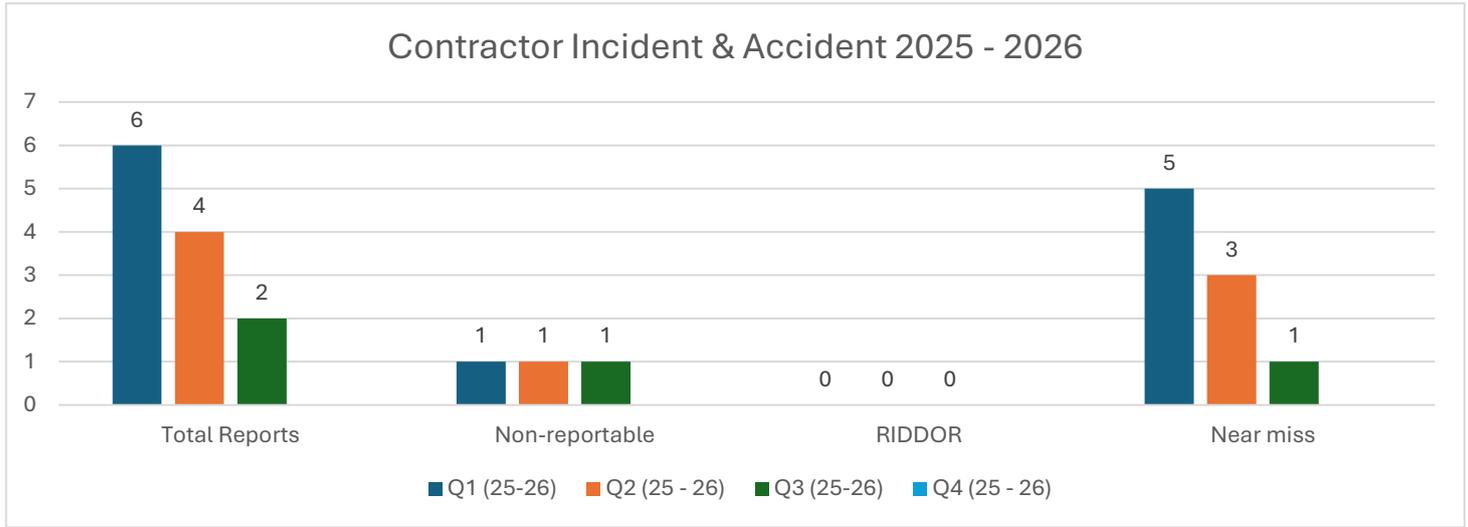
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	2 (8)	5 (4)	2 (3)	(7)
Non-Reportable	2 (8)	4 (4)	2 (3)	(4)
RIDDOR	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	(0)
Near Miss	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)	(3)



## 8.0. Contractor Incidents & Accidents 2025 - 2026

( ) = previous financial year

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total Reports	<b>6</b> (2)	<b>4</b> (1)	<b>2</b> (5)	(4)
Non-Reportable	<b>1</b> (2)	<b>1</b> (1)	<b>1</b> (1)	(1)
RIDDOR	<b>0</b> (0)	<b>0</b> (0)	<b>0</b> (2)	(0)
Near Miss	<b>5</b> (0)	<b>3</b> (0)	<b>1</b> (2)	(3)



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**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
WORK PROGRAMME 2026/2027**

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
<b>11 JUNE 2026</b>			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
People Strategy	To receive an update on the progress of the People Strategy.	Written Report	Zoe Ormerod/Kate Hardy
Market Supplement Report	To receive an update on the current position with market supplements across the Council	Written Report	Jade Carter
Health & Wellbeing Attendance Management	To receive a summary of the Council's sickness absence rate in the previous 12 months and actions taken to manage attendance.	Written Report	Shannon Smith
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
<b>10 SEPTEMBER 2026</b>			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
HR Policy updates relating to the Employment Rights Act 2025	To review the policies requiring updates or alterations due to changes in legislation due in October 26.	Written Report	Heleana Aylett

ITEM	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	LEAD OFFICER
Employee Workforce Report	To receive an overview of key workforce data and the relevant trends in the Council's workforce priorities, as well as initiatives in place to support employees over the past 12 months	Written Report	Shannon Smith
<b>14 JANUARY 2027</b>			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Gender Pay Gap	To receive Gender Pay Gap data for the previous year.	Written Report	Jade Carter
People Strategy	To receive an update on the progress of the People Strategy.	Written Report	Zoe Ormerod/Kate Hardy
Pay Policy Statement	To consider the Pay Policy Statement for 2026/27	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
<b>11 MARCH 2027</b>			
HR Update	To receive an update on the progress of the HR Service	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Quarterly Health & Safety Report	To receive the Quarterly Health and Safety Report	Written Report	James Loring
HR Policy updates relating to the Employment Rights Act 2025	To review the policies requiring updates or alterations due to changes in legislation due in April 2027.	Written Report	Heleana Aylett
Growth & Goals update	To update Committee with feedback received over the past year, monitoring information, and to detail how this will be actioned	Presentation	Zoe Ormerod