

# Finance and Resources Committee

10:00am, Thursday 3 March 2022

## Health and Safety Performance in 2021

Item number	
Executive/routine	Executive
Wards	All
Council Commitments	

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 The Committee is recommended to review and note health and safety progress and performance in 2021.

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## Health and Safety Performance in 2021

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 In early 2021, the threat of Coronavirus once again re-emerged as the Country entered a second wave of the pandemic. The City of Edinburgh Council responded well to this given the learning from 2020 when responding to the first wave of the pandemic and in particular flexing workplace controls as regulations and guidance were changed.
- 2.2 The Council Health and Safety Team resource has principally been directed towards supporting workplaces to manage the ever changing COVID 19 environment. As rules changed on permitted business activity, the Corporate Health and Safety Team have supported a Service Resumption Process, assisting with risk assessment, safe system development/advice and carrying out site inspections and providing other advice as necessary. As part of this the team successfully supported the 2021 Election process and the re-opening project for Community Centres.
- 2.3 The Council set out its Health and Safety priorities for 2021 in the Council's Health and Safety Strategy and Plan for 2020 – 2022. The principal focus for 2021 was to consolidate and review the Council's Corporate Health and Safety offering. The Council Asbestos Policy, Fire Safety Policy and Water Safety (Legionella) Policy were all revised and approved during 2021. The new versions capture the aims and focus of the previous versions whilst reflecting the realistic, but wholly practical, challenges going forward.
- 2.4 Health and safety metrics for 2021 reflect the level of operational activity within the Council. Valid 'year by year' statistical comparisons of the metrics are not possible due to the unprecedented circumstances and continued business disruption. The longer-term incidents trends will require to be monitored as the new ways of operating are established in order to determine this measure of health and safety performance.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The Council has statutory duties under:

- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, and subordinate legislation,
- the Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006
- the Housing (Scotland) Acts, and,

the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 and associated Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland guidance documents, [Link](#) to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others who could be affected by its undertaking.

3.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Council on action taken to manage health and safety during 2021 in response to the above and to present the associated performance during this unprecedented time.

## 4. Main report

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### 4.1 Coronavirus (SARS-Cov-2) – COVID 19

4.1.1 Since the beginning of the Pandemic in March 2020 the Scottish Government and the Health and Safety Executive have provided employers with guidance on the measures they are required to take to protect employees and service users.

4.1.2 During 2020 the Scottish Government brought a range of prescribed measures into place which employers were required to follow, many of which were backed by legislative requirements.

4.1.3 Since 9 August 2021, the regulatory requirements for employers to work in specified manners and to limit certain industry sectors from operating came to an end. At the same time the Scottish government removed the previous prescribed social distancing requirements.

4.1.4 The City of Edinburgh Council applied a broad 1m distancing rule between colleagues in the workplace as part of COVID workplace controls. The 1m rule was applied as the law on wearing a face covering only applied where people could not be more than 1m apart. Therefore, having this broad rule afforded employees the opportunity to remove face coverings when sitting at workstations etc. Some teams and in particular Education applied a 2m rule. The logic for this was based around Test and protect defining close contacts of confirmed COVID cases where someone had been within 2m of that person for more than 15mins. Therefore, from a business continuity perspective this control had merit.

4.1.5 More generally the direction and guidance from the Scottish Government and Health and Safety Executive required employers to assess risk in workplaces and put in place adequate controls, the above distancing arrangements were supported by the following arrangements:

- good levels of ventilation,

- hand hygiene,
- surface cleaning,
- respiratory hygiene (face coverings)
- Protective arrangements for extremely vulnerable employees and pregnant employees

4.1.6 Currently there is a sustained focus from government on ventilation levels within workplaces, and this is evident through the government funded programme to assess these levels within all Scottish Schools, through the use of CO2 monitors. Given the differences in properties and level of natural or mechanical ventilation this needs to be assessed on a building by building basis and in some cases on a room by room basis.

## 4.2 **Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP)**

- 4.2.1 All service areas within the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership (EHSCP), have again continued to provide front line essential care and support services within the community, as well as within care home settings, throughout the pandemic in 2021.
- 4.2.2 All care employees undertake Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests on a daily basis, when attending work, and in all care home settings employees are still working to 2m distancing where it is reasonably practicable to do so. Through the year some restrictions relating to family visitors to Care Homes have been relaxed, though when spikes of COVID infection are recognised, the care home immediately closes to new admissions and all non-essential visits are suspended, including family visits to service users. All outbreaks are investigated are reported onto SHE Assure and to the Care Inspectorate. Following outbreaks, the Care Homes is inspected by Public Health and the Infection Control nurse, with the Council Health and Safety team making contact to the Care Home manager by phone.
- 4.2.3 In the later part of 2021, Ian Read, Lead Health and Safety Adviser for Health and Social Care visited EHSCP premises, to support an assessment of their suitability for use as essential training sites in response to ongoing training demand and advise on controls needed to operate them. The Council Health and Safety Team have attended several online HSCP/EHSCP Health and Safety meetings throughout the year, providing; support, advice and clarity on guidance.

## 4.3 **Education and Children's Services**

- 4.3.1 Education and Children's Services continued to offer services throughout the pandemic. Social work teams and other community services continued to provide the community's most vulnerable individuals with care and commitment. Schools were closed during the second lockdown at the start of 2021 but provided 'Hub' schools for vulnerable children and children of key workers. On return to normal schooling in Spring 2021, a strategy was employed that ensured both buildings were 'COVID 19 Secure', and effective

safe systems to protect children and staff including a Schools Operational Risk Toolkit [SORT<sup>[1]</sup>] were in place.

- 4.3.2 Weekly SORT briefings and COVID Scenario testing sessions were organised throughout the year to address any queries staff had in relation to COVID Guidance. SORT briefing sessions were also used as a training platform for staff. A number of bite-size virtual training sessions were carried out with positive feedback received.
- 4.3.3 Facilities for the community (Libraries, Community Centres) were re-opened following the second lockdown. Re-opening assessment visits were conducted for Libraries and Community Centres resulting in the re-opening of all Libraries and majority of the Community Centres across the city.

#### 4.4 **Corporate Services**

- 4.4.1 Corporate Services, as with other directorates, was re-structured during the year, with the most significant change being that the previous Property and Facilities Management functions moving to Place directorate. Corporate Services now includes the Divisions/Teams of Finance and Procurement, Human Resources, Customer and Digital Services, Legal and Assurance, as well as Policy and Insight, Strategic Change and Delivery and Communications.
- 4.4.2 Corporate Services has played a key role in the Council's ongoing response to the coronavirus pandemic, including through support to service resumption processes and oversight of the organisation's response and the measures being adopted to protect employees and service users. This includes aspects that have been delivered as support to the wider organisation, e.g. Commercial and Procurement Services and also in direct operational and public facing roles, e.g. Customer Services.
- 4.4.3 The Directorate has contributed to the organisation's wider operational response by adapting to new ways of working and business delivery in order to reduce risk, for example, through working from home where possible and adapting service delivery to remote working. Face-to-face activity has been resumed where safe to do so, e.g. Customer Services, Business Support, and essential Learning and Development.

#### 4.5 **Place Directorate**

- 4.5.1 All front-line facing services such as Waste, Recycling, Roads, Housing Property, Parks and Greenspace have been required to respond to the changing COVID climate ensuring that Council services continue but that work activities are continually being assessed to ensure both employee and public safety.
- 4.5.2 Council offices and depots have been adapted and maintained to ensure compliance with social distancing and infection control measures.

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[1] SORT: Schools Operational Risk Toolkit - a risk management control system that has seen the successful return of children to school and, when not at school, online learning.

4.5.3 Cultural venues and museums have been reopened in line with the various restrictions but have then to close again due to the emergence of the new Omicron variant.

4.5.4 With only critical face to face training being allowed, service areas were having to adapt to more of an 'online training option' with health and safety bite sized training modules being made available along with access to the 'MyLearninghub' topics.

#### 4.6 **Employees**

4.6.1 Employees of the Council have largely adapted well; from those on the first line delivering face to face services to those who work at home. Many issues have been raised, particularly in relation to mental health and wellbeing during this year as this has been a significant challenge for employees. Council wellbeing and counselling services have been available throughout and strategies have been developed to support those working at home, those returning to work and support provided for those with mental health issues.

4.6.2 The use of new technology, i.e. MS Teams etc. has kept colleagues/teams in touch and will prove useful in the future when considering future ways of working.

#### 4.7 **Trade Unions**

The recognised Trade Unions have supported their members and the Council in difficult circumstances and environments. Their significant contributions to Council services should be acknowledged and thanked for the collegiate and solution-focussed approach that they have adopted. Health and Safety Consultative groups at Service and Council levels operated throughout 2021 with the support of the recognised trade unions.

#### 4.8 **Leadership**

4.8.1 Leadership at all levels within the Council, from the Corporate Leadership Team to first line supervisors, have responded with care and commitment ensuring what needed to be done has been completed appropriately and future actions and plans reflect our current ability to respond.

4.8.2 As the Council responds to spikes in numbers affected by the virus, it continues to fully comply with Scottish Government and Health and Safety Executive advice and guidance in order to protect the health and safety of the Citizens of Edinburgh and the Employees of the City of Edinburgh Council.

## 4.9 **The Council Health and Safety Strategy and Plan 2020-22**

4.9.1 The Council Health and Safety Strategy and Plan 2020 – 22 was approved by the Finances and Resources Committee on 3 December 2020. The strategy, comprising three key aims, was designed to be achievable within the constraints of both the pandemic and Corporate Health and Safety resources.

4.9.2 These aims were designed to ensure that the Council is a learning organisation and a leader, sharing new ideas and information with our partner Councils. Section 4.10 – 4.12 sets out the action and progress against each of the plans strands during 2021.

## 4.10 **Consolidation, Adaption and Renewal**

### 4.10.1 **Delivery of an appropriately resourced Health and Safety team**

The Health and Safety Team has been operating throughout 2021 with depleted staffing levels in its senior roles, including the Lead Trainer role. This has only been sustainable given the reduction in face to face training delivery, as a result of the pandemic, and through the suspension of the health and safety workplace audit programme. While it has been possible to work with a reduced staffing level at this time, with resource directed towards supporting Service Resumption and the provision of advice on workplace COVID controls, the resourcing in 2022 and beyond will revert back to previous levels reflecting the Service needs of the Council.

### 4.10.2 **Internal development and succession planning within CHS**

Following the external appointment of the new Head of Health and Safety, the Council Health and Safety team have carried out a review of the Health and safety System in operation within the City of Edinburgh Council. This review has been used to inform a revision of the staffing structure of the team to support the future strategic and operation needs of the Council. It is proposed that the revised structure will be implemented in 2022 in line with the Service support requirements. This will create the ability for team members to develop and provide opportunities for staff to progress into senior roles within the team in the future.

### 4.10.3 **Greater communication and collegiate working between CHS Directorates/divisions and trade union safety representatives**

The Council Health and Safety Team are operating with Health and Safety Advisers being allocated as Service Leads to individual Council Directorates. This is enabling strong working relationships to be established and maintained between the Advisers, Service Managers and Trade Union Officials representing employees within the associated Directorate. This is evident in consistent officer attendance at Health and Safety Consultative forums and management meetings where health and safety matters are the focus.

**4.10.4 Working with directorates/service areas to ensure that the Council's policies, procedures and activities remain fit for purpose**

This is delivered through a combination of discussion on the application and impact of policies along with a focus on items which are resulting in higher levels of incident reporting by Service. This work has helped inform the review of the Council's Health and Safety Management System.

4.10.5 During 2021 the Council Fire Safety Policy was revised, taking account of the Scottish Government's Phase 1 Response to the Grenfell Tower Fire and the Chief Internal Auditor's – Life Safety Audit, which featured a range of audit subjects, including Fire Safety. Both documents influence the new Fire Safety Policy and support a more robust fire management system within the Council and its services. This policy was approved by the Policy and Sustainability Committee on 10 June 2021.

4.10.6 The Council Water Safety Policy was revised during 2021. It further clarifies the role of duty holders and the scope of water safety to include vehicles and assets that store water and/or produce aerosols/droplets. The policy was presented to the Policy and Sustainability Committee on 10 June 2021 where it was approved.

4.10.7 The final policy to be revised in 2021 was the Asbestos policy. The Policy review was completed with direct support from trade union colleagues with the policy reaffirming the position of the Council with regards regulatory compliance with asbestos legislation and approved codes of practice, standards and guidance, setting out the overall intent and key controls for managing risks associated with exposure to asbestos. The policy also provided further clarity on the need for specific Directorate/Divisional asbestos management systems, incorporating operational procedures to manage asbestos containing materials. The policy was approved on 5 October 2021 by the Policy and Sustainability Committee. This concluded a revision of all health and safety policies in place at the time with reviews set on a 3 yearly cycle going forward.

**4.10.8 Fully operable, supportive, governance and assurance**

The current model of testing assurance of health and safety arrangements in individual workplaces is to carry out programme workplace health and safety audits. This programme was paused during the pandemic to create capacity for wider ranging COVID workplace inspections and to have members of the Council Health and Safety team in a position to respond promptly to COVID related enquires.

4.10.9 While planning has been taking place to restart these assurance audits, the Council Health and Safety team carried out a review of the health and safety system in place against the regulatory framework the City of Edinburgh Council operates within. Following this work the team are exploring ways of making greater use of the electronic health and safety management system in place to support the recording of key workplace activities in relation to health and safety obligations which will directly support the auditing process and streamline the face to face element of the audit approach. Work will continue on this in 2022.

## 4.11 Leading, Comparing and Learning

### 4.11.1 **Subject to buy-in from other authorities, the formation of a Scottish Councils' Health and Safety Forum (or other like body), led by this Council initially**

The Council's Head of Health and Safety has significant experience in this area having Chaired a national Health and Safety Benchmarking group across 11 of the 32 Scottish local authorities for over 6 years before joining the City of Edinburgh Council. The Head of Health and Safety has sought through the Chair of the Society of Personnel Directors Scotland Health and Safety Forum to re-establish the local forum through which to drive forward health and safety benchmarking across Scotland's local authorities in the first instance.

### 4.11.2 **The establishment of consistent reporting data set and definitions**

The Council Health and Safety team have produced health and safety dashboard reports for service throughout 2021 in a consistent manner. The dashboard information has been well received, recognising there is scope to develop active indicators in the future as part of Policy and Management Arrangement review work to create a balance between the activity to manage health and safety and the resultant incident figures.

### 4.11.3 **Consulting on consistent approaches to health and safety issues throughout Scotland**

The Head of Health and Safety has engaged with the Chair of the local SPDS Health and Safety forum to re-establish the group with the purpose of discussing and sharing approaches to managing health and safety locally but also through the associated national forum. Progress is expected in this area in 2022 as the SPDS Health and Safety forum begins meeting on a regular basis.

### 4.11.4 **Using Scottish Council's data to compare performance with this Council**

Ahead of the pandemic, the principal of comparing health and safety performance, reactive indicators, with other Council's to establish how the City of Edinburgh's Council's performance compared was reasonable. In the current climate where the routine of work has been so disrupted over the past 2 years that our own year of year performance comparison has more limited value the benefit to be gained by comparing with partners is also more limited at this time. This will be progressed during 2022 as Service delivery in our own and other Council stabilises.

### 4.11.5 **Introducing, identified best practices to directorates/service areas.**

The review of the Council's Health and Safety system against the regulatory framework it operates within has clarified areas where the Council have well established arrangements and areas where arrangements require to be refreshed. The refresh of subject specific arrangements from 2022 on will create the opportunity to reflect on current practice and apply best practice approaches taking account of legal requirements and industry standards.

## 4.12 Embracing New Technologies and Information Systems

- 4.12.1 Many areas of health and safety in the workplace could benefit from deploying new technologies. Areas such as communications with employees who work in isolation (lone working) access to onsite best practice information and guidance when needed, immediate reporting of accidents, production of suitable and sufficient risk assessment, etc. could have a profound effect on how the Council operates services.
- 4.12.2 During 2021 the City of Edinburgh Council have made a number of enhancements to the system it uses to capture details of workplace accidents and incidents 'SHE Assure'. These developments were made following consultation with trade union officials. The adaptations made in 2021 included, combining three forms and a revising the listing for violence at work and harassment incidents. Reports of unidentified fire alarm signals (UFAS) and fire incidents are now captured on SHE Assure also.
- 4.12.3 It is recognised that technological advances in a wide range of areas and sectors have the potential to support managing workplace risk. The Council Health and Safety team will continue to make use of a develop the health and safety management information system to measure aspect of health and safety performance many of the strides forward in use of technology which impact employees on a day to day basis will come through assessment of workplace risk and deployment of workplace controls.
- 4.12.4 The Council Health and Safety team maintain knowledge of health and safety technologies on an ongoing basis through on going professional development. To ensure developments in technology which could benefit teams in the City of Edinburgh Council are promoted to the appropriate teams the Council Health and Safety Team have embarked on a risk profiling exercise which will conclude early in 2022 which will support the team to identify those teams where particular risk are found, enabling the link to be made between issue and possible solution. Its worth noting however that some new technologies aimed at mitigating one risk can create a new workplace hazard which needs to be managed.

## 4.13 Health and Safety Indicators

- 4.13.1 Due to the series of COVID 19 restrictions (Scottish Government; '*anyone who is able to work from home, must do so*' national strategy) no meaningful comparative analysis between annual data sets is statistically possible.
- 4.13.2 The table below includes 2019 Statistics to show the expected data over a 'normal' year. The Council utilises the 'SHE Assure' incident reporting system and other internal record management systems to provide this data.

**Table 1 Health and Safety Adverse Events**

Health and Safety Adverse Event Metrics	Full year 2019	Full year 2020	Full year 2021	Comments
RIDDOR events	44	41	73	
Employee injuries	1483	1469*	1730	*Included employee COVID submissions
Near Miss	1488	1555	1444	
Violence/Aggression/ Behaviours of Concern	1584	1244	1640	
<b>COVID 19 SHE Assure Reports</b>				
Education & Children's Services		456	931	
Place		9	151	
Health and Social Care		125	171	
Corporate Services		1	61	

4.13.3 COVID reports were captured in SHE Assure during 2021 with adaptations made to the form, from August onwards to simplify the form and information captured, which supported reporting on this platform. These reports include incidents involving employees and non-employees.

4.13.4 Table 2 provides a summary of insurance claims brought against the City of Edinburgh Council in 2021. These do not include incurred but not reported (IBNR) claims which may be presented in the future, as limitation for personal injury claims is 3 years post incident and property damage is 6 years post incident.

4.13.5 Not all claims that are submitted to the Council are paid out, and the defensibility rate is key in determining future premiums as it indicates the strength of the Councils policies and procedures.

**Table 2 Notifiable Claims**

Notified Liability Claims	Full year 2020	Full year 2021
<b>Public Liability</b>		
Damage	518	610
Injury	159	175
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>785</b>
<b>Employers liability</b>		
Damage	0	1
Injury	33	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>

4.13.6 Table 3 provides a summary of fire incidents experienced by the City of Edinburgh Council in 2021. The table also presents a summary of Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Audits following fire incidents. This table also reports the number of unwanted fire alarm signals, the automatic notification of fire to the Fire and Rescue Service arising from false activations through alarm call points, dust etc and system errors. The table shows a decrease in

fire incidents compared to 2019 but a rise in UFAS incidents for the same period.

**Table 3 Fire Safety Adverse Events**

<b>Fire Safety Metrics</b>	<b>Full year 2019</b>	<b>Full year 2020</b>	<b>Full year 2021</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Total number of fires	33	16	20	The Number of buildings in use increased during 2021.
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service audits	33	15	21	Thematic findings from audits related to Fire Stopping, UFAS, Evacuation Procedures, Fire Risk Assessments, condition of fire doors, instruction and training
Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS):				
Stage 1	203	224	260	Non fire alarm activation
Stage 2	1	9	4	5 UFAS in 3 months
Stage 3	1	0	4	10 UFAS in 6 months
Stage 4	0	0	0	20 UFAS in 9 months

#### 4.14 Health and Safety Specific Learning and Development

4.14.1 Table 4 provides a summary of Corporate leaning and development delivered carried out in 2021. In addition to this Service based face to face training sessions continued. Face to face training was limited to essential operational training such as working at heights, use of hoists in Care Homes, medicine/drug dispensing, etc. These training events were risk assessed, with risk controls indicated in Health Protection Scotland guidance applied.

**Table 4 Health and Safety Specific Learning and Development**

<b>Health and Safety Training Metrics</b>	<b>Full year 2019</b>	<b>Full year 2020</b>	<b>Full year 2021</b>	<b>Comments</b>
CHS courses delivered	391	39	18	The reduction in courses reflects COVID climate
Employee attendance	3,371	225	87	
MyLearning Hub online training				
Unique access	5374	12,844	<b>13,839</b>	
Successful completion	4081	9,699	<b>10,296</b>	The increase in home working makes on-line learning a more suitable delivery model for many
<b>Total trained</b>	<b>7,452</b>	<b>9,924</b>	<b>10,401</b>	

- 4.14.2 During 2021 the Council Health and Safety Team delivered 8 health and safety course types using the Microsoft Teams platform to deliver 'BITEsize' training to managers. This training has helped demonstrate the capability of this platform to deliver some traditional face to face training in a new way. This delivery option will be available in some of the courses delivered in the future, with face to face classroom sessions used where this is needed to meet a practical element or to facilitate delivery to a specific target audience.
- 4.14.3 The Council Health and Safety team will support Services in 2022 to assess training requirements across the Council and identify the most appropriate delivery model for these assessed training needs.
- 4.14.4 This is important now as the organisation reshapes the way it works and therefore the risk profile of the organisation changes and the means of receiving training develops in response to new ways of working. While face to face training will return for courses beyond essential learning on offer presently greater use will be made of MyLearning hub to address learning and development needs in combination with face to face training in the future. During 2021 there has been a continued reliance on online learning 'MyLearning Hub', previously 'Cecil'.
- 4.14.5 'MyLearningHub' has shown its ability to deliver a range of training solutions. 2021 figures above show a further increase in the number of completed online learning and development courses compared to last year which had seen a 100% increase in uptake.

#### **4.15 Council Health and Safety Team**

- 4.15.1 As noted above the new Head of Health and Safety was appointed on 31 May 2021. This allowed the temporary Acting Senior Manager for Health and Safety to leave the Council in June 2021. The remaining staffing within the team has remained stable throughout 2021.
- 4.15.2 Following a review of the Health and Safety system within the City of Edinburgh Council the recruitment of 3 Senior posts will take place in 2022. This will see the resourcing of the team brought back up to pre-pandemic levels as the City of Edinburgh Council builds back from the Pandemic.

#### **4.16 Governance and Assurance**

- 4.16.1 The health and safety audit programme was suspended in March 2020 due to lock down restrictions. Notwithstanding this, Corporate Health and Safety redesigned existing self-audit tools to include a 'COVID Secure' Field.
- 4.16.2 Additionally, the Council Health and Safety team, in partnership with Regulatory Services (Environmental Health) have operated telephone and email access to guidance. The 'Safe Working Practices Helpline' operated 24/7 throughout 2021 to ensure afford employees to raise any workplace COVID related concerns. This helpline Service was transition fully over to the Council Health and Safety team in November 2021 enabling Environmental Health to release capacity for core service activity. The support to provide by the Environmental Health Team has been greatly appreciated.

- 4.16.3 This assurance provision was further delivered through the Service Resumption Group chaired by the Director Operations, Place. The Service Resumption Group has sought to ensure those priority services have been supported to return in a COVID safe manner. A Community Centre Working Group was established and Chaired by the Acting Executive Director for Education and Children's Services to ensure the safe reopening of Community Centres during 2021 supported by a range of Council Officers.
- 4.16.4 Third Line audit/assurance continues through Internal Audit which has been focussed, among other things, on the performance of elements of COVID 19. The Council Audit team produced a report on 28 July 2021 on Covid-19 Physical Distancing and Employee Protection. While Services have been responding to the audit findings its acknowledged that changes to legal physical distancing measures were removed by the Scottish Government on 9 August 2021.

#### **4.17 Enforcing Authority Engagement**

- 4.17.1 There were no formal notices issued by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service against the City of Edinburgh Council in 2021.
- 4.17.2 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service consulted with the City of Edinburgh Council as part of a national consultation exercise on removing their routine response to automatic fire alarm systems, in an effort to reduce the impact unwanted fire alarm signals (UFAS) has on their service. The Consultation concluded in October, following which the Fire and Rescue Board took the decision in December to no longer respond to automatic fire alarm activation from April 2023. After April 2023 the Fire and Rescue Service will require a phone call confirming a fire before they deploy attendance. The exemption from this at present includes sleeping accommodation such as Care Homes. The Council Health and Safety Team and Property and Facilities Management team are preparing an action plan in response to this change with the purpose of ensuring all affected Services are prepared.
- 4.17.3 There were no formal notices issued by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in 2021.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 The work to deliver the Health and Safety Strategy and plan 2020-2022 is progressing with details outlined above in sections 4.9-4.12. The development of a new Health and Safety Strategy and Plan 2023 – 2027 is now required with a focus of building on the current arrangements in place to deliver a best in class health and safety management system for the City of Edinburgh Council. This will be brought to Committee in due course.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 There is no direct financial impact arising from this report, although any failure to manage health and safety appropriately can have a potentially significant impact.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 There is ongoing consultation and engagement with Trades Unions and stakeholders.
- 7.2 The potential impact of failure to manage health and safety and welfare includes: death, injury, ill health, in addition to legal liabilities, regulatory censure, financial losses, business disruption and reputational damage.
- 7.3 There are no adverse equality impacts arising from this report.
- 7.4 There are no adverse sustainability impacts arising from this report.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 None

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 None.