



Item: 7

Policy and Resources Committee: 26 November 2024.

Evaluation of Service Health and Safety Performance.

Report by Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

1. Overview

- 1.1. In accordance with the Health and Safety Policy, an annual report, evaluating the health and safety performance of each Service, should be prepared.
- 1.2. The Evaluation of Service Health and Safety Performance report, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, has been prepared for the year ending 31 March 2024 and is based on accident reports received by the Safety and Resilience service covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.
- 1.3. The total number of accidents/incidents occurring during the period increased from 72 for the previous reporting year to 93 this year.
- 1.4. This increase was expected as there have been improvements in reporting, including clarification that a separate report should be submitted for each member of staff involved in a single incident.
- 1.5. The total number of reportable accidents under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (over seven days lost time and specified injuries) was 5, which is a reduction from the previous report, when 6 accidents were reported.
- 1.6. The report follows a similar format to previous years and is specific to adverse events in relation to Council employees. Accidents to school pupils, service users in care establishments and members of the public in general are not included in this evaluation although all such accident reports are recorded and, where necessary, investigated.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that members of the Committee:
 - i. Note the Evaluation of Service Health and Safety Performance for 2023/24, attached as Appendix 1 to this report, to obtain assurance.

3. Legislative position

- 3.1. In terms of Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees.
- 3.2. In terms of Section 2(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council has a duty to prepare a written statement of its general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of its employees and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out that policy.
- 3.3. In terms of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 5, the Council shall make and give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the nature of its activities and the size of its undertaking, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventative and protective measures.
- 3.4. This evaluation of performance is a requirement of the Council's Health and Safety duties and Policy.

For Further Information please contact:

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Implications of Report

1. **Financial:** None.
2. **Legal:** See section 3 above.
3. **Corporate Governance:** Not applicable.
4. **Human Resources:** The report relates to adverse events concerning Staff.
5. **Equalities:** An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for performance reporting.
6. **Island Communities Impact:** An Island Communities Impact Assessment is not required for performance reporting.
7. **Links to Council Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Council Plan strategic priorities:
 - Growing our economy.
 - Strengthening our Communities.
 - Developing our Infrastructure.
 - Transforming our Council.

- 8. Links to Local Outcomes Improvement Plan:** The proposals in this report support and contribute to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the following Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities:
- Cost of Living.
 - Sustainable Development.
 - Local Equality.
- 9. Environmental and Climate Risk:** Not applicable.
- 10. Risk:** None.
- 11. Procurement:** Not applicable.
- 12. Health and Safety:** As detailed in the report.
- 13. Property and Assets:** None.
- 14. Information Technology:** None.
- 15. Cost of Living:** Not applicable.

List of Background Papers

None.

Appendix

Appendix 1: Evaluation of Service Health and Safety Performance 2023/24.



Evaluation of Service Health and Safety Performance 2023/24

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. In accordance with Orkney Islands Council's (the Council) Health and Safety Policy, an annual report, evaluating the health and safety performance of each Service, should be prepared.
- 1.2. Further to this, the report details changes and developments during this period regarding the management of health and safety in accordance with the Council's Health and Safety Policy.

2. Legislative Background

- 2.1. In terms of Section 2(1) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council has a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of all its employees.
- 2.2. In terms of Section 2(2) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council has a duty to prepare a written statement of its general policy with respect to the health and safety at work of its employees and the organisation and arrangements for carrying out that policy.
- 2.3. In terms of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 5, the Council shall make and give effect to such arrangements as are appropriate, having regard to the nature of its activities and the size of its undertaking, for the effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review of preventative and protective measures.
- 2.4. This evaluation of performance is a requirement of the Council's Health and Safety duties and Policy.

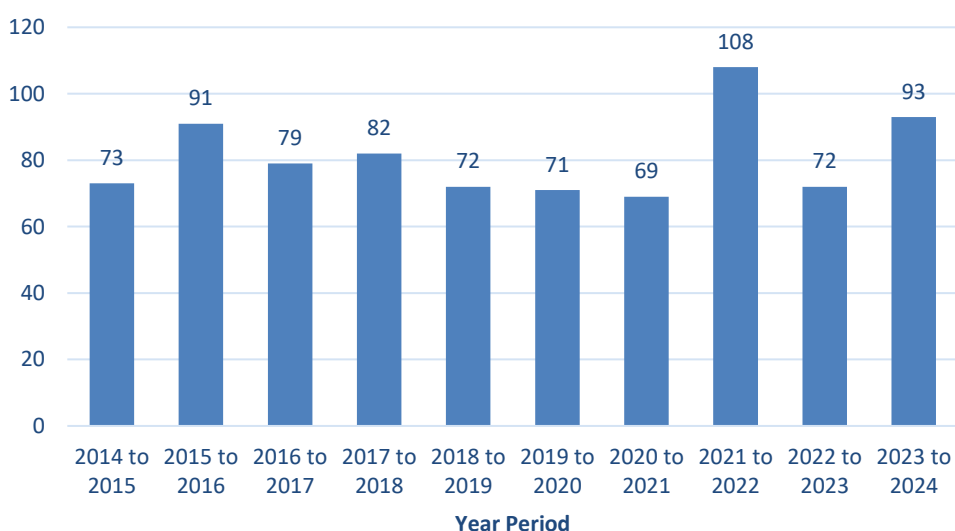
3. Executive Summary

- 3.1. This health and safety evaluation highlights an increase in accident rates increasing from 72 to 93.
- 3.2. This increase of 19% is attributed to improvements in levels of reporting as a result of ongoing awareness raising by the Safety and Resilience service to other Services in terms of reporting and investigation into causes attributed to the event, and the clarification provided by the Service on the requirement to report per employee rather than per incident.
- 3.3. The report details further the specific factors that contribute to this increase and outlines key areas for further focus to sustain and build upon this trend.
- 3.4. The findings support the Council's commitment to foster a safe and secure work environment for all employees. Continued strengthening of our health and safety systems is required to ensure a positive reduction trend is maintained.

4. Adverse Data Reporting

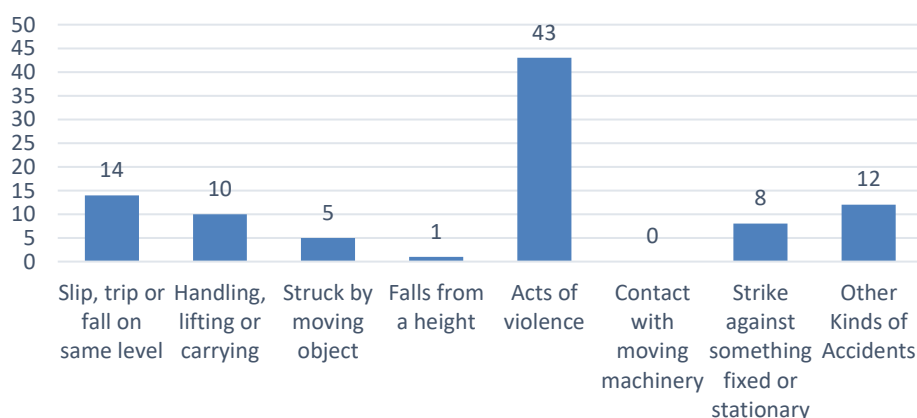
- 4.1. The total number of accidents/incidents occurring during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 was 93 reports as shown in Figure 1. The Council uses the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) categorisations of accidents and a full breakdown for this period is shown in Figure 2. As shown, there is an increase in accident reporting that will be discussed later in the report. This should be seen as a positive improvement as employees have improved their reporting to management and Safety and Resilience.
- 4.2. Changes and development since 2020, including the interim COVID recording as requested by HSE, the subsequent inclusion of the AIRIS Roads and Environmental Services reports since 2021/22 and the significant change in working patterns of staff during lock down in 2020/21 mean that comparative data is presently not as informative as with previous years. The Safety and Resilience service is working to strengthen this area and aims to establish a cohesive data handling and reporting system.

Figure 1: Total number of accidents Year on Year.



- 2021/22 and 2022/23 Includes COVID reporting, and Accidents reported in AIRIS (Roads and Environmental Services). As discussed in section 6.3.

Figure 2: Breakdown of accident data for the period of April 2023 to March 2024



- 4.3. Under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) there is a requirement on employers, and other people in control of work premises, to report and keep records of:
- work-related accidents which cause death;
 - work-related accidents which cause certain serious injuries (reportable injuries);
 - diagnosed cases of certain industrial diseases; and
 - certain ‘dangerous occurrences’ (incidents with the potential to cause harm) as all employers are required to report certain accidents and incidents to the HSE.
- 4.4. The RIDDOR definition of an accident is “a separate, identifiable, unintended incident that causes physical injury. This specifically includes acts of non-consensual violence to people at work”. As per the Council’s Health and Safety Policy all accidents are recorded. However, there are threshold criteria for reporting certain accidents to the HSE which are: the accident is work-related; and it results in an injury of a type which is reportable (as listed under ‘Types of reportable injuries’).
- 4.5. The total number of RIDDOR reportable accidents for this reporting period was five. The breakdown categorisations of these RIDDOR reportable accident are presented in Figure 3. Figure 4 shows the number of RIDDOR reportable accidents per year over the last nine years. It is important to note that comparisons at this time should not be drawn with previous years due to the points previously discussed in section 4.2.

Figure 3: RIDDOR Reportable Accidents for 2023/24

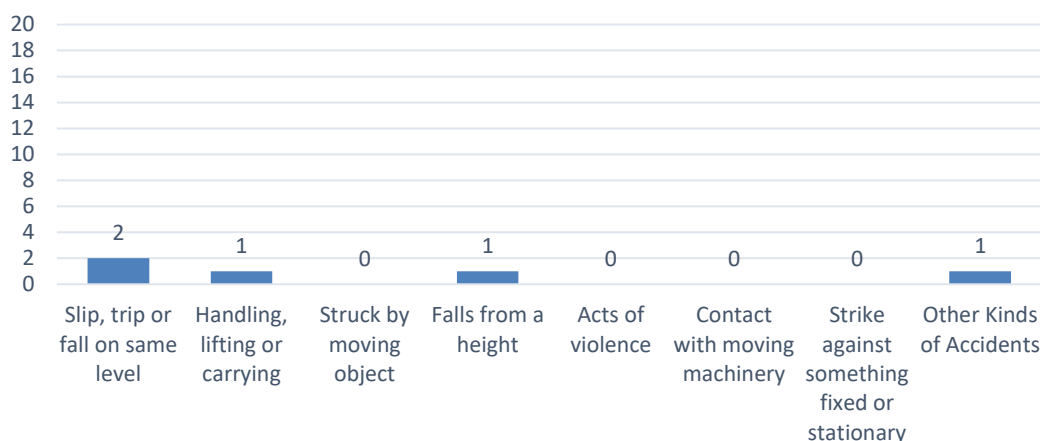
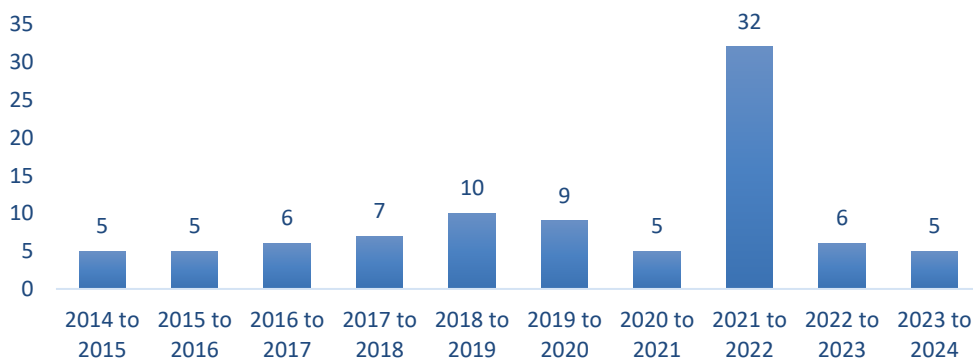


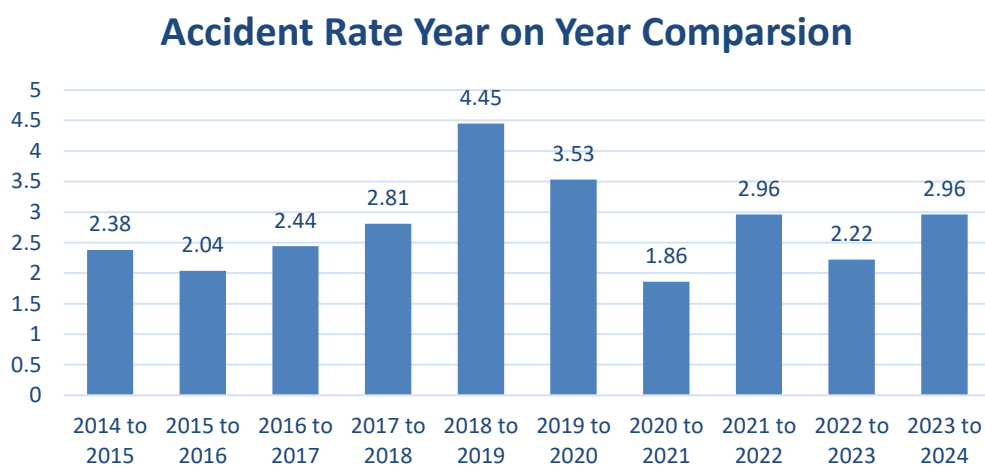
Figure 4: RIDDOR reportable accidents year on year.



- 2021/22*Includes COVID Reporting and part of the reporting period in 2022/23 also includes COVID Reporting.

- 4.6. Since August 2019, all RIDDOR reportable accidents have been investigated by the Safety and Resilience service and a findings report is produced which details the causal factors and recommendations, where appropriate, for prevention of a recurrence. These reports are shared with the relevant Service and an Executive Summary is shared with the Safety Committee.
- 4.7. The Accident Incidence Rate (AIR) figure is widely used to compare health and safety performance. The AIR is calculated using the number of work-related injuries, divided by the average number of employees then multiplied by 1,000. The figure of 2,705 has been used as the average total number of employees. It should be noted that this number also includes part time staff but does not include relief staff - the number is not FTE equivalent. These figures are provided by the Human Resources section.
- 4.8. For this reporting period the AIR figure is 2.96. Table 5 shows the AIR each year for the last ten years. For 2021/22 the COVID events have been removed to allow for a more comparative picture to be presented.

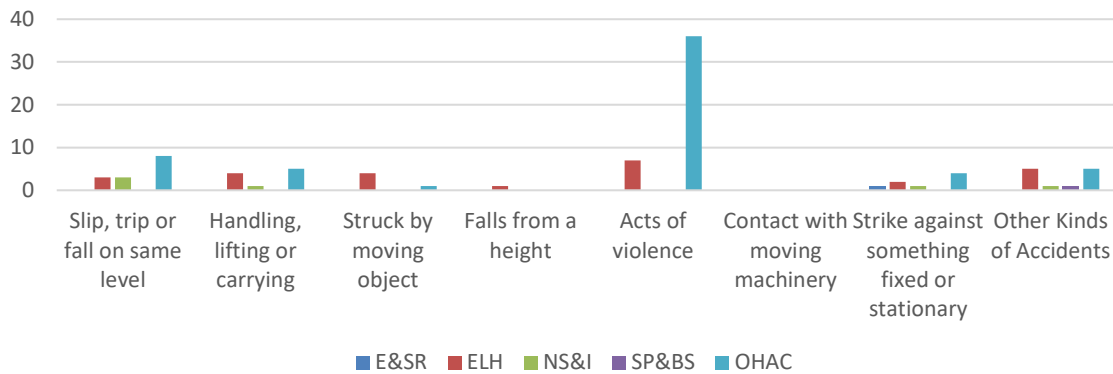
Figure 5: Accident Incident Rate year on year Comparison.



5. Statistical Evaluation

- 5.1. With the introduction of the realigned Council directorates, the Safety and Resilience team undertook a three-year review of all adverse events and have presented comparable data for all directorates over this three-year period.
- 5.2. Figure 6 presents the HSE categorisation breakdown across all service areas for this reporting period. Orkney Health and Care has a high accident rate recorded for acts of violence and has improved in other areas compared to previous reports.
- 5.3. The HSE definition of work-related violence is *'Any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'* This unfortunately requires employees to report as an adverse event incident where those in our care may commit an act of violence as per the HSE definition with no intent. Persons may not be aware of their acts to our staff; however, these still require to be recorded.
- 5.4. This diagrammatic presentation of accidents across the different directorates supports the need for targeted safety measures and interventions in the identified high risk-areas. This information is crucial for implementing tailored safety protocols and allocation of resources effectively to mitigate risk and enhance overall workplace safety, which will be discussed further in the directorate breakdowns.

Figure 6: Adverse event factors between the Council Directorates for April 2023 to March 2024.



Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions

- 5.5. During the 2023/24 period, there was one reported other kinds of accident. In the previous two years there was only one RIDDOR reported accident.
- 5.6. When considering the directorate variance with such a small, reported accident rate from previous years, any increase will have a notable result.

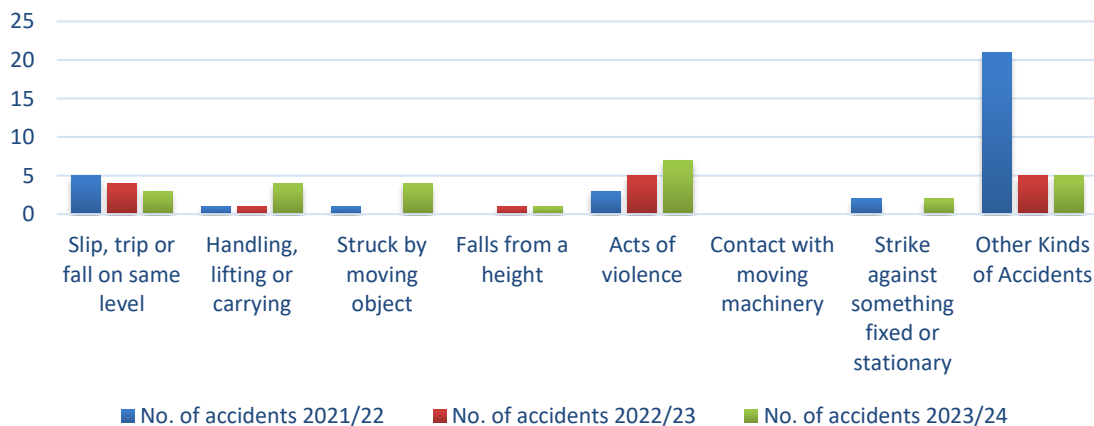
Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration

- 5.7. It is important to note that this directorate includes Marine Services which does not currently report incidents into this Annual Report. Ports and Harbours accident figures are reported separately to the Council.

Education, Leisure and Housing (ELH)

- 5.8. ELH has been working with Safety and Resilience on improving the reporting of adverse events, notably acts of violence. This is demonstrated by the steady trend in increased reports as shown in Figure 7. Records of handling, lifting or carrying, struck by moving object and acts of violence have risen.
- 5.9. There were three RIDDOR reportable incidents involving a slip, trip, fall same level and another kind of accident and one fall from height.

Figure 7: Adverse event factors between 2021 and 2024 for Education, Leisure and Housing.

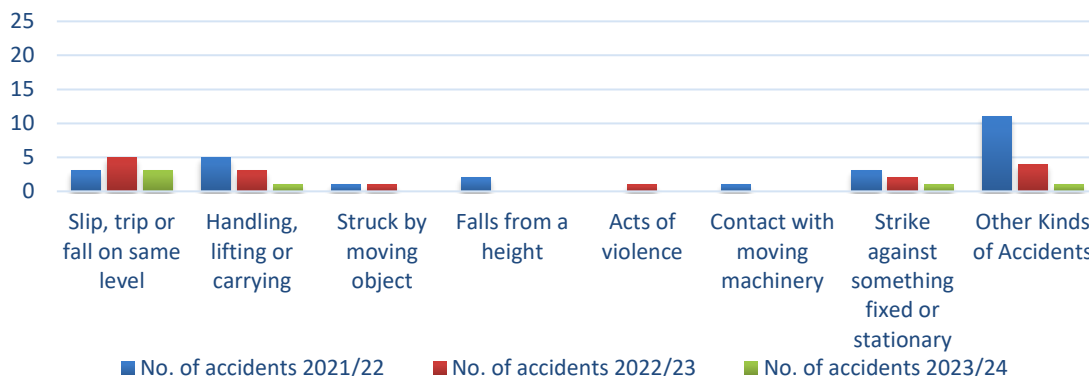


Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure (NSI)

5.10. There is a decrease in adverse events reported in this period predominately in the HSE category of Other kinds of accidents.

5.11. One RIDDOR reportable adverse incident occurred in this reporting period involving a slip, trip, fall same level.

Figure 8: Adverse event factors between 2021 and 2024 Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.



Orkney Health and Care (OHAC)

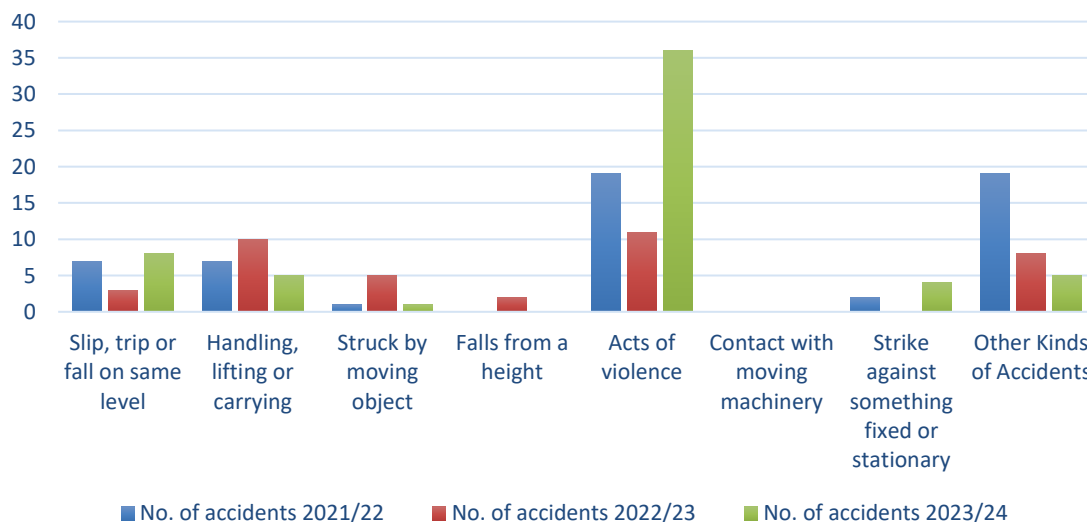
5.12. Working within any health and care setting involves certain unique risk factors such as dealing with challenging behaviour or the greater risk of violence. To address such risks, Orkney Health and Care employees implement multiple approaches to these challenges such as personal risk assessments, training and ongoing staff support.

5.13. The adverse events for OHAC predominately centre on the HSE categories of slips, trips or falls on the same level, handling, lifting or carrying, or acts of violence.

5.14. There were no RIDDOR reports during this period.

5.15. The service continues to proactively review risk assessments and provides further training to staff specifically around promoting the Promoting Positive Behaviour (PPB) Programme. While there has been a significant increase in Acts of Violence it is important to note that in many cases these are related to multiple occasions and multiple staff working with an individual service user.

Figure 9: Adverse event factors between 2021 and 2024 for Orkney Health and Care.



6. Near Misses

- 6.1. Near miss reporting is a crucial component of health and safety monitoring. Near misses are defined by the HSE as an event not causing harm but has the potential to cause injury or ill health and includes dangerous occurrences. The Safety and Resilience service receives near miss reports that identify potential hazards and prevent future accidents.
- 6.2. The current steps of the near miss reporting include –
- Identification of Near Miss.
 - Report Submission.
 - Documentation and Analysis.
 - Root Cause Analysis.
 - Corrective Actions.
 - Communication and Training.
- 6.3. The benefits of this approach to near miss reporting include –
- Prevention of Accidents.
 - Improved Safety Culture.
 - Data for Analysis.
 - Legal and Regulatory Compliance.
 - Cost Savings.
- 6.4. Whilst near miss reporting is a powerful tool for the enhancement of safe working culture, it is known that near misses are universally under-reported.
- 6.5. All submitted near misses for this reporting period were investigated and control measures installed, where appropriate, to prevent future accidents.

7. Health and Safety Management System

- 7.1. In accordance with the Council's Performance Management System, Services monitor their Health and Safety performance, using the last six months' accident data, taken from the previous 12-monthly period in performance reports and in subsequent reports to service management teams and service committees.
- 7.2. Other measures implemented throughout the directorates include:
- Health and Safety Committee.
 - Health and Safety Audits.
 - Engagement with Safety and Resilience Service.
 - Operational team meetings and toolbox briefs.
 - Works Representative Committee.
 - Quarterly Union engagement meetings, which include Health and Safety as standing item.
 - Quality Management System
 - Harbour Authority monthly meetings at which health and safety is a standard agenda item.
 - Operational team meetings and toolbox briefs.
 - Performance monitoring.
 - Promoting Positive Behaviours Training.

8. Recommendations

8.1. The following recommendations aim to provide a holistic approach to enhancing health and safety in the Council.

- **Continuous Vigilance** – Encourage a culture where all employees take an active role in reporting hazards and near misses.
- **Training** – Ensure appropriate training is delivered with emphasis on high-risk tasks and newly introduced procedures.
- **Proactive Risk Assessments** – Conduct regular, thorough risk assessments across all directorate areas. Prioritise areas with historically higher incident rates and implement targeted interventions to reduce risks.
- **Adherence to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) standards** – Emphasise the importance of wearing appropriate PPE for specific tasks and rigorously enforce compliance through regular checks and reminders.
- **Sustaining a Reporting Culture** – Sustain a robust reporting system, ensuring that all employees feel empowered to report actual and potential hazards.
- **Thorough Incident Investigations and Learning** – Conduct comprehensive investigations for all incidents. Use these findings to drive meaningful corrective actions and preventative measures.
- **Regular Review and Improvement** – Promote a culture of continuous improvement by routinely reviewing and updating safety policies and procedures based on lessons learned and industry best practices.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. In conclusion, this evaluation report provides a comprehensive overview of the health and safety environment within the Council. Through the analysis of adverse event data, and current implemented safety protocols, valuable insights into the Council's current performance has been presented.
- 9.2. The noted increase in overall adverse events from 72 to 93 has been investigated and is due to improved levels of reporting. The Council retains a collective commitment to raising a safer working environment. Targeted safety initiatives such as the Promoting Positive Behaviours training are having the affirmative benefit required.
- 9.3. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that there are areas warranting continued attention. The identification of a specific work area with higher adverse incidents underscores the need for tailored interventions to address unique risks associated within each directorate.
- 9.4. Moving forward, a proactive approach to health and safety remains paramount. This includes tailored training, regular safety audits and a vigilant focus on potential hazards. Additionally, ensuring a positive cross directorate communication culture will further strengthen health and safety throughout the Council.