

## **Cabinet – 16 July 2008**

### **Annual Health and Safety Performance Report 2007/8 Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)**

**Portfolio:** Councillor A Griffiths – Finance and Personnel

**Service:** Human Resources and Development (HRD)

**Wards:** All

**Key decision:** No

**Forward plan:** No

#### **1. Summary of report**

This report provides information on health and safety performance within Walsall Council over the last year (**Appendix 1**), a progress update on the Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) (**Appendix 2**), and the Corporate Health and Safety Plan 2008/9 (**Appendix 3**).

#### **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the report and its appendices be noted.

2.2 That Cabinet approves and endorses:

- a) the corporate health and safety plan 2008/9; and
- b) the corporate governance arrangements for occupational safety and health.

#### **3. Background information**

This public report is a requirement under the Government's "Revitalising Health and Safety" strategy. **Appendix 1** is structured using the headings of the Local Government Employer's template for health and safety reporting to permit regional and national performance benchmarking

#### **4. Resource considerations**

##### **4.1 Financial:**

Further improvements to our health and safety management and monitoring will reduce employee absence as well as criminal and civil claims against the

Council. Following the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) inspections during 2006/7, we continue to receive focused scrutiny from the HSE. There remains one active statutory improvement notice from the HSE, served on the North Walsall Depot and it is likely to remain open until the depot relocates to a new site in 2009/10.

#### **4.2 Legal:**

Failure to comply with health and safety legislation is a serious criminal offence which can lead to the authority, senior managers or individual officers being prosecuted. Fines may be unlimited and prison sentences are possible. It is not possible to indemnify individuals against fines.

4.2.3 The Health and Safety Executive and West Midlands Fire Service have lesser powers to prohibit work activity or use of buildings and equipment where serious risks to safety, health or fire safety exist. They may also statutorily require improvements to be made in a given time frame.

#### **4.3 Staffing:**

There was a review to the technical advice offered to the authority last year. This report presents no further staffing resource considerations. All staff must remain aware of their obligations under health and safety legislation and the Council's policy and standards for safety management.

### **5. Citizen impact**

No citizen accidents were reported to the council as a direct result of the council working near or with citizens. Citizen injuries on council premises occur but are not part of our occupational health and safety performance unless directly caused by an employee; there were no such accidents in 2007/8. We will continue to improve service quality as our employee accidents reduce and there is reduced time off for staff to recover from injuries.

### **6. Community safety**

Use of our buildings, especially schools and other community buildings and spaces, out of hours and at weekends, exposes members of the wider community to safety and health risks. Continued focus on health and safety management will continue to protect the community enabling them to safely enjoy our facilities.

### **7. Environmental impact**

None

## **8. Performance and risk management issues**

The Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP), in response to the HSE inspection report, continues to focus on management control. Strong progress has been made in achieving the targets set by the SHIP. Periodic progress meetings have been satisfactorily held with HM Inspector of Safety.

### **8.1 Risk:**

The risk of failure to adequately manage health and safety has been elevated to the Corporate Risk Register as there is some potential to disrupt Council services should the regulators determine to issue improvement, prohibition or prosecution notices.

### **8.2 Performance management:**

Each directorate Performance Board continues to scrutinise the directorates safety performance quarterly, reviewing safety plans, number of staff safety training events conducted and records of incidents and their management.

## **9. Equality implications**

None

## **10. Consultation**

Managers at all levels, staff groups and trades unions are routinely consulted in the development and application of health and safety plans and policies. This report was formally considered by the Corporate Health and Safety Board in May 2008, there were no trade union responses received for inclusion in appendix 1.

## **Background papers**

None

### **Author**

Lorenzo Visentin  
Manager of Safety, Health and Wellbeing Services  
01922 650454  
[VisentinL@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:VisentinL@walsall.gov.uk)



**Tim Johnson**  
Executive Director  
7 July 2008



**Cllr A Griffiths**  
Cabinet member  
7 July 2008

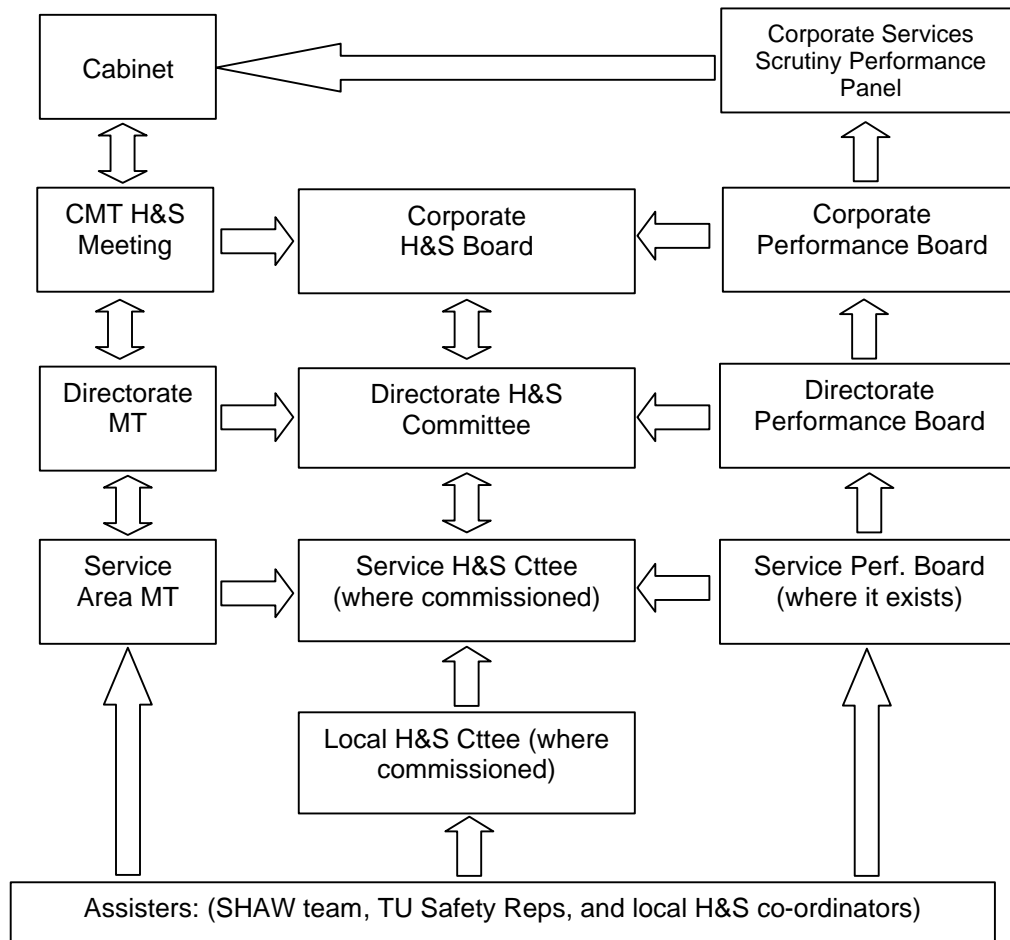
**2007/8 ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT TO CABINET****1. Annual Report Context**

- 1.1 The Government's "Revitalising Health and Safety" strategy document requires all public bodies to summarise their health and safety performance and plans in annual reports, and that Government (including local government) be exemplars of best health and safety practice. The appendix to this report provides information on last year's performance and is structured using the headings of the Local Government Employer's organisation template for health and safety reporting. This is to enable future benchmarking with other authorities.
- 1.2 Our employee assistance programme, (which provides 24 hour telephone counselling and access to financial and legal information services for staff and their families), confirm that half of all calls received raise employment issues (such as feelings of work pressure).
- 1.3 In 2007/8, the council continued to promote our safety performance regionally, nationally and again for the second consecutive year, internationally. Key achievements for the service included:
- Successful Nursing and Midwifery Council inspection
  - UK Contributor to the EU FOLIC Project (safety of the over 45 year old worker)
  - Expert witness at European Commission Committee, Brussels
  - Refresh of the internal smoking policy in preparation for new smoking legislation
  - Social care and inclusion directorate wide stress survey
  - Development of the Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)
  - Development of an internal Domestic Abuse Policy to respond to BV255

**2. Corporate management**

- 2.1 In 2006/7 the HSE carried out an audit of the council's health and safety management system with on-site inspections and interviews of management, staff and union representatives. Walsall Council was in the third wave of councils audited in this programme within the West Midlands region. Our response to this inspection, the Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) focuses on increasing visible management control of health and safety matters. SHIP progress is scrutinised quarterly at Corporate Services Performance Panel. The latest version of SHIP (version 6) was agreed with HSE in April 2008 (see **Appendix 2**).
- 2.2 Corporate governance arrangements for our Occupational Health and Safety Management System have been developed, incorporating the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Good Governance Standard for Local Government as adapted for Health and Safety Management. They are depicted graphically below. Members and chief officers are actively involved in health and

safety management and scrutiny, providing visible leadership for managers and staff.



### 3. Statistical information

#### 3.1 Regulatory interventions – Health & Safety Executive (HSE)

- 3.1.1 The HSE served 12 statutory improvement notices this year. All 12 were identically worded and related to the asbestos fabric of some of Walsall schools. In the last intensive schools building programme (the Consortium of Local Authorities Special Project [CLASP]), some 30 years ago; the use of asbestos was commonplace. 12 Walsall schools were constructed using this method.
- 3.1.2 There are a range of corrective solutions to make these buildings safe. HSE were engaged in a national programme of inspections and automatic improvement notices during 2007/8. Walsall satisfactorily discharged all of these notices within the time limits set by HSE. Ongoing active schools' building management ensures any residual risks are kept well below any level of concern.
- 3.1.3 HSE have a further duty to investigate employers where complaints have been made or where serious injury has occurred. There have been no investigations during this year.

### 3.2 Regulatory interventions - The West Midlands Fire Service

- 3.2.1 There have been 25 enforcement notices and letters requiring action from this regulator during 2007/8, in 12 schools and 8 other council premises. The council employed two fire safety advisers during this year and their work plan is detailed in the SHIP.

### 3.3 Accident reports

- 3.3.1 The categories used for recording accidents are defined by the HSE. The commonest reasons for accident reports are:

- violent incidents (both physical and verbal abuse are included);
- being hit by moving, flying or falling objects; and
- slips and trips.

These are the same top three incident categories as 2006/7 and are consistent with data for public sector workers across the UK.

- 3.3.2 In 2007/8 the council has reported 687 accidents across all its services. This remains a very small number of incidents given the number of staff employed and the number of physical work locations.

- 3.3.3 The rise in reported incidents follows a concerted effort by all managers and staff for increased accuracy in recording accidents, but also a focus on reporting 'near misses' (those incidents that other than for chance may have resulted in injury).

- 3.3.4 Year on year comparators are given below:

Year	Total number of accidents	% Change
2007/08	687	+18%
2006/07	583	- 11%
2005/06	656	- 18%
2004/05	804	- 12%

### 3.4 Auditing Activity

- 3.4.1 Service areas are selected by the corporate safety advisers, on a risk basis, for a safety compliance audit on a single safety subject. The corporate safety adviser reviews paper systems and carries out a brief physical inspection. The service area is rated on a 1-4 star system.

- 3.4.2 During 2007/8, service areas achieved the following star ratings:

Star rating	% of service areas achieving this rating
4	<1
3	39
2	42
1	16
0 - 0.9	<1
Unrated	<1

3.4.3 Service areas that were audited in the previous year (2006/7) were subjected to a follow-up audit to confirm that recommendations have been implemented. These review audits are scored using a “direction of travel” descriptor (not improving, not improving adequately, improving adequately, improving well, and improving strongly).

3.4.4 During 2007/8, service areas achieved the following direction of travel ratings:

Direction of Travel	% of service areas achieving this rating
Improving Strongly	18
Improving Well	27
Improving Adequately	36
Not Improving Adequately	11
Not Improving	4
Unrated	4

#### **4. Partnerships**

4.1 There have been no active partnerships this year.

#### **5. Joint consultation**

5.1 The health and safety committee structure was reviewed in line with the new corporate governance arrangements. A new Corporate Health and Safety Board, chaired by the Chief Executive met in the fourth quarter and acts as the conduit between the ‘reactive monitoring’ carried out by performance boards and the ‘proactive monitoring’ of directorate safety committees and management teams.

#### **6. Occupational health provision**

6.1 The number of referrals to this in-house service continues to grow in accordance with the sickness absence policy and the mandatory training to managers in how to actively manage staff absence at the earliest possible opportunity.

6.2 The employee assistance programme continues to receive calls related to both home and work issues. The commonest work issue was workload and stress which was the primary work related reason for the call. This service will be further promoted during 2008/9 as part of the stress preventative work detailed in the SHIP.

#### **7. Safety organisational development**

7.1 A full range of health and safety courses are offered quarterly. Uptake varies widely as managers are audited on their team’s safety training during OHSMS audits. We have introduced new courses in Conflict Resolution, Health and Safety

in Social Care and First Aid, further building our organisational safety competence. There were 786 recorded staff attendances at health and safety training courses.

## **8. Monitoring health and safety performance**

- 8.1 In addition to this annual report, the Corporate Management Team receive a quarterly update report of major issues at a dedicated H&S CMT meeting. This has been reinforced by making better use of directorate performance boards, the CIPFA Good Governance Standard for Public Services adapted for Health and Safety and the Corporate Health and Safety Board. The format and content of such reports is being continuously improved to show more information on trends over time and the impact of interventions.

## **9. Strategic action plan - (long term corporate)**

- 9.1 Now that the framework system is complete and in order to respond to the HSE audit, there is a need for a corporately-led safety improvement plan. This will be outcomes focussed and flexible to respond to the demands made by the additional audits due in the coming financial year. The corporate safety plan for 2008/9 is at **appendix 3**.

- 9.2 Focus areas for the plan are slips, trips and falls and violence to staff.

## **10. Conclusion**

Commitment from CMT is strong. Substantial progress has been made in delivering the SHIP in response to the challenges identified by the HSE inspection. However, the risk to the authority of further regulatory intervention is strong, given the robust focus by both regulators anticipated in 2008/9.



### Safety and Health Improvement Plan Progress

1. The Safety and Health Improvement Plan was written to respond to the inspections of the HSE and West Midlands Fire Service during 2006. The plan is divided into theme groups each led by an Executive Director.
2. Both quarterly external review by HM Inspectors of Safety at HSE and quarterly internal review by the Corporate Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel have found the plan to be progressing satisfactorily.

### Themes update

**Performance management:** all actions are ahead of or on target. Quality assurance checks have been done on service plans, 60% have adequate Health and Safety references. The remaining 40% of services have planned for inclusion at the next service plan review and the Chief Executive has taken personal interest in their compliance.

**Assessment, reduction and management of stress:** all actions are ahead of or on target. Three month monitoring of stress action plans in Adult Social Care by SHAW will occur in late summer, with the first annual repeat scheduled for the end of year. Activity is now ongoing in Neighbourhood Services.

**Fire safety improvement:** all actions are ahead of or on target, with all technical (level 2) fire risk assessments completed by end July 2008.

**Policy and organisation:** progress had been made on the inclusion of health and safety matters in officer job descriptions and Individual Performance Management meetings. The changes to job descriptions will be finalised following the pay and re-grading exercise, in late 2008. All Executive Directors have successfully completed the "Safety for Senior Executives" training course from the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH).

**DSE management system and sustainability:** A simple solution was put in place in relation to the management of display screen equipment safety; that system is still in place. Work is now underway to establish a permanent ICT solution that permits ongoing assessment, recording, audit and review. The HSE are interested in seeing this in place and operational by December 2008.

### Summary of progress

The SHIP has been subject to quarterly management review by the Corporate Management Team, internal scrutiny by the Corporate Services Scrutiny and Performance Panel and external review by the HSE. It is accepted as on track for delivery of all elements of all themes by December 2008.

This is the HSE agreed deadline. The next interim formal HSE review is planned for August 2008.

**Corporate Health and Safety Plan 2008/9**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>10</b>
Setting the scene – introduction by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive	11
Purpose of the document	12
Last Year's Pledges and Achievements	13
Continuous Improvement - Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)	14
CiPFA Good Governance Standard	15
Comprehensive Safety Auditing Programme	16
Focus on incident reduction	17
Violent incidents	
Hit by moving, flying or falling objects	
Slips, trips and falls on the level	
Making things happen – using our performance management framework	18
2008/9 Pledges Summary	19

## **1 Setting the scene – introduction by the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive**

We are pleased to introduce Walsall Council's corporate safety plan for 2008/9 and to report on our achievements from last year's plan. The world is changing fast, as is local government. In last year's plan we made 19 pledges to improve the health and safety experience of our staff, customers and stakeholders.

In an environment of constant change it is important to keep a clear focus on the horizon, so that our safety improvement agenda is fixed on a consistent vision of a council that is efficient, forward-looking, self confident and optimistic; a place where individuals can safely thrive and develop their careers in an environment that provides for their health, safety and wellbeing – to become an exemplar of best health and safety practice.

If we are to achieve this ambition, we need to address the challenges of health and safety in such an environment, where there are other equally important pressures on us to succeed. We have a strong written occupational health and safety management system and our challenge is to make sure this is effectively translated into actions that protect our workforce and resident.

Last year was a period of intensive safety activity and that year's plan challenged us to improve in 19 areas. We achieved 18 of those in year or have progressed them to the satisfaction of our internal scrutineers or the external regulatory bodies to which we are accountable. The one outstanding pledge has been transferred to this year's plan and relates to changes to our people's job descriptions – we decided to postpone this piece of work pending the completion of the wider council job evaluation scheme and associated pay and grading review.

Our corporate health and safety plan:

- focuses the efforts of all the employees of the council on the issues that matter to both their and to our citizens' safety and health, encouraging safer working, reducing accidents, work related sickness absence and other losses to people, premises and service delivery;
- recognises the benefits to service delivery, efficiency and our employees' wellbeing, by developing health strategies to support staff in work and encourage early return to work if absent as well as striving to deliver healthy living messages to staff;
- ensures we put resources firmly behind these priorities;
- enables Cabinet, the corporate scrutiny panel, the corporate management team and partners in trades unions to judge how well we are doing and whether we are achieving our objectives as part of our governance arrangements

John O'Hare  
Leader of the Council

Paul Sheehan  
Chief Executive

## **2 Purpose of the document**

The Council has an important role in ensuring healthy and safe communities for residents to enjoy. It also has a specific responsibility to ensure that the working environment for its employees and service users is similarly healthy and safe. The annual Corporate Health & Safety Plan sets out how the council is going to achieve this objective, demonstrating its commitment and intent, and thereby providing community leadership and an example for others to follow.

The plan is a key element of the occupational health and safety management system and as a response to the challenges and direction set by Cabinet following the publicly accessible annual safety report. The plan sets out the council's vision for safety and health improvement in the coming year, its aims and objectives, and the key safety and health priorities for the year ahead, both corporately and within each directorate.

It gives a firm indication of the Council's plan for the forthcoming year, provides the safety and health agenda for service planning, management teams, performance boards and the network of health and safety consultative committees headed by the Corporate Health and Safety Board.

This framework for the delivery of health and safety to our teams and services encourages greater operational ownership of safety and health matters and will serve as another example of our leaders' and managers' commitment to our people in addressing safety, health and wellbeing in local government in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, while maximising the benefits to citizens of a workforce that are happy, healthy and here.

### 3 Last year's pledges and achievements

Safety Pledge	Leader	Status
We will engage a dedicated project manager to co-ordinate the SHIP	S.Homer	● COMPLETE
We will deliver the SHIP on time, within identified resources and to the satisfaction of both safety regulators	S.Homer	● GREEN
We will restructure and adequately resource competent safety advice to all areas of the council	CMT	● COMPLETE
We will explicitly outline roles, responsibilities and safety improvement targets to all staff at the next IPM review or following the pay and grading review	SHIP and all HoS	● AMBER
We will develop and embed a new governance structure in line with the CIPFA "Good Governance Standard for the Public Sector as Adapted for Health and Safety"	SHAW	● COMPLETE
We will maintain the Council's OHSMS to the ISO 18001 standard	SHAW	● GREEN
We will establish a Corporate Health and Safety Board to lead health and safety communication, consultation and active management	P Sheehan	● COMPLETE
We will explore the most economically advantageous approach to increase health and safety auditing capacity provided either internally, externally or by a mixed economy of provision	SHAW	● GREEN
We will introduce a Violent Incident Perpetrator Early Reporting (VIPER) email distribution network, in accordance with new guidance from the Information Commissioner on sharing sensitive personal data in order to protect public servants	SHAW	● GREEN
We will introduce staff training in Conflict Resolution and Personal Safety recognised by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	SHAW	● COMPLETE
We will re-carpet common areas in the Civic Centre and Council House	Property Services	● COMPLETE
We will increase inspection (housekeeping) auditing activity	SHAW	● COMPLETE
We will recruit specialist advisers to the corporate team for fire, stress and occupational road risk safety	SHAW	● COMPLETE
We will engage a specialist adviser within the Neighbourhoods directorate to advise on highways, internal transport and depot safety	M.Holden	● COMPLETE
We will engage a specialist within Children and Young People directorate to act as the authority's Outdoor Education Safety Adviser.	L.Hughes	● COMPLETE
Each service area will produce a health and safety action plan as part of this year's service planning process	SHIP and All HoS	● GREEN
Each service area will identify at least one person to carry out risk assessment activity	All HoS	● GREEN
SHAW must revise their current communication and marketing strategy to provide visible supportive partnering to service areas and schools	SHAW	● GREEN
SHAW will provide quarterly reports to Directorate Performance Boards on safety activity, incidents, auditing and training volumes	SHAW	● COMPLETE

#### **4 Working together - Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)**

The Health and Safety Executive and West Midlands Fire Service inspections in early 2007 demonstrated gaps in the practical implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System and visible active management of safety and health issues.

Our Safety and Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) has been developed and actioned throughout last year and continues to the end of this calendar year. It has been published in agreement with the Health and Safety Executive, clearly setting out the council's path to safety improvement throughout what remains of 2008.

To deliver this plan the corporate management team have taken an active clear leadership role in delivering aspects of the plan, co-ordinated by a dedicated project manager.

We addressed the corporate governance requirements to set the performance management framework for active health and safety management last year. This year we will continue our improvement by focusing on real, tangible, felt improvements in the health, safety and wellbeing of our people.

We will continue to build the stronger partnership approach developed between our advisory teams, social partners and council managers mainstreaming health and safety objectives in equal partnership with other service objectives.

#### **Walsall Council pledges to**

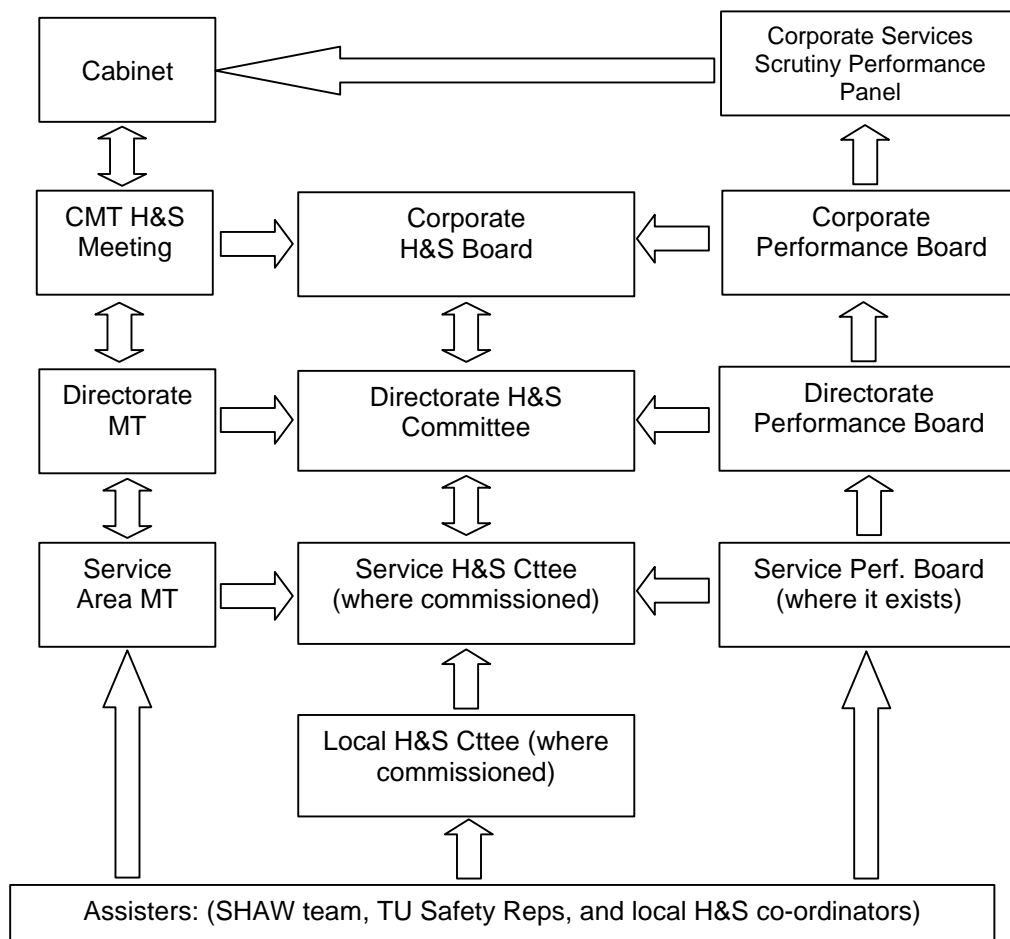
- Deliver the remaining items within SHIP to the satisfaction of the Health and Safety Executive.
- Actively encourage our employees' positive health choices through a series of staff health fairs.
- Actively support employees who experience ill health and sickness absence with the aim to reduce time off sick through a positive rehabilitation strategy that minimises absence and promotes early return to work.

## 5 CiPFA Good Governance Standard for Public Services

We all need governance of our public services to be of a high standard. Good governance leads to good management, good performance, good stewardship of public money, good public engagement and, ultimately, good outcomes both for our employees and for citizens.

The goal of the corporate governance framework for H&S is to ensure that it addresses the safety and health objectives of the council. It must bring about positive outcomes for the people who use the services, as well as providing good value for the taxpayers who fund these services in an increasingly complex regulatory environment, and motivate front-line staff by making sure that good executive leadership is in place.

The framework below was introduced last year and we will build further on its purpose, focus and achievements this year.



### Walsall Council pledges to

- Maintain the Corporate Health and Safety Board, and actively monitor the activities of our management teams, performance boards and health and safety consultative committees to make sure that we embed the corporate governance framework for safety and health.

## **6 Comprehensive Safety Auditing Programme**

Auditing is a key feedback mechanism within both HS(G)65 and ISO 18001 (these are the recognised national and international frameworks for safety management systems) and it is instrumental in recognising the existing achievements and outstanding challenges to further improve health and safety management.

There is also a statutory obligation (Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations) to monitor and review the protective measures put in place for health and safety at work.

We will redesign our safety auditing activities to recognise the changes to our management system made last year, to enable appropriate, speedy and summary auditing activity that builds on our achievements, recognises and shares best practice across the council as a whole and is challenging in its approach.

Each of our premises will be audited to assess its physical environment safety. Each of our Heads of Service will be audited to assess the suitability of safety management controls of our people and the activities we ask them to carry out whether in our premises or not. We will require an annual safety return from each service area confirming their active control and monitoring of the physical, chemical, psychological and statutory protections we provide for our people and citizens.

### **Walsall Council pledges to**

- Design a rolling programme of safety auditing activity to comprehensively assess the adequacy of our managers' safety control measures.
- Deliver that programme on time, on budget and in a format acceptable to our leaders and manager to deliver continuous health and safety improvements.



## **7 Focus on incident reduction**

- a. Violent incidents**
- b. Hit by moving, flying or falling objects**
- c. Slips, trips and falls on the level**

The three commonest causes of reported incident in 2007/8 were violent incidents, being hit by moving objects and slips and trips. These are typical incident types for a large, diverse multi-site public service organisation. They require a concerted management effort to reduce risk of injury. They are the same 'top three' as in 2006/7

The Health and Safety Commission have a Strategy for Workplace Safety for Great Britain as a whole, not just for HSC or HSE. Everyone engaged in work, whether they are trade associations, employers, trades unions and workers need to think what they can do to deliver them. The targets for the UK health and safety system are to:

- reduce the number of working days lost per 100,000 workers from work-related injury and ill health by 30% by 2010
- reduce the incidence rate of fatal and major injury accidents by 10% by 2010
- reduce the incidence rate of cases of work-related ill health by 20% by 2010

In support of this goal, Walsall Council has consistently delivered year on year improvement on the number of recorded incidents:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Total number of accidents</b>	<b>Reduction</b>
2006/07	583	11%
2005/06	656	18%
2004/05	804	12%

In 2007/8, as a direct result of our focused attention on health and safety matters, there was an increase in the reporting of incidents by 18%. This is a commendable demonstration of our improved approach to health and safety and a reflection that staff are better considering health and safety matters.

### **To further reduce our commonest incidents, Walsall Council pledge to:**

- Further improve a Violent Incident Perpetrator Early Reporting (VIPER) email distribution network, whilst simultaneously exploring other ICT solutions to speedy communications across the council.
- Continue to improve the physical work environment for our staff focusing specifically on replacing or refurbishing carpets and floor coverings to reduce slip and trip risks.
- Introduce better housekeeping through a programme of workplace inspections (audits).

## **8 Making things happen – using our performance management framework**

Although the governance framework outlined in this strategic plan provides the skeleton for management, communication, consultation and monitoring activities, it does not detail the specific actions that need to occur to make things happen.

Clear target-setting through health and safety action planning as an integral part of service planning is key and will involve individual safety targets for all staff, managers and directors through the IPM process; a review of safety risk assessments in all directorates, services and teams; and the use of Performance Boards to monitor action plan progress, incident reports, training reports and to escalate non-compliance to the appropriate management team as necessary

As part of our formal governance arrangements the Corporate Scrutiny Panel have an independent role in monitoring the progress of each theme of SHIP and a quarterly report must be presented to this panel.

In order to achieve this, each employee must be clear about how their roles and responsibilities support the change to safety culture that these improvements will develop. Each safety function is explicitly stated in the Corporate Health and Safety Plan, but this must be more clearly communicated to staff and managers, through the review of job descriptions to include specific safety responsibilities. Where it is appropriate to explicitly refer to individual accountabilities this should occur.

### **Walsall Council pledges to**

- Positively confirm that each service area has a health and safety action plan and a series of appropriate risk assessments, through the annual safety return.
- Require SHAW to improve quarterly reports to Directorate Performance Boards on safety activity, incidents reported, auditing and training volumes, and usage rates of the Employee Assistance Programme.

## 2008/9 Pledges

No.	Walsall Council Pledges to	Owner	Status
1	Deliver the remaining items within SHIP to the satisfaction of the Health and Safety Executive	S Homer	
2	Actively encourage our employees' positive health choices through a series of staff health fairs.	L Visentin	
3	Actively support employees who experience ill health and sickness absence with the aim to reduce time off sick through a positive rehabilitation strategy that minimises absence and promotes early return to work	P Smith	
4	Maintain the Corporate Health and Safety Board, and actively monitor the activities of our management teams, performance boards and health and safety consultative committees to make sure that we embed the corporate governance framework for safety and health	P Sheehan	
5	Design a rolling programme of safety auditing activity to comprehensively assess the adequacy of our managers safety control measures.	S Homer	
6	Deliver that programme on time, on budget and in a format acceptable to our leaders and manager to deliver continuous health and safety improvements.	S Homer	
7	Further improve a Violent Incident Perpetrator Early Reporting (VIPER) email distribution network, whilst simultaneously exploring other ICT solutions to speedy communications across the council.	M Sadler	
8	Continue to improve the physical work environment for our staff focusing specifically on replacing or refurbishing carpets and floor coverings to reduce slip and trip risks	All HoS	
9	Introduce better housekeeping through a programme of workplace inspections (audits	SHAW	
10	Positively confirm that each service area has a health and safety action plan and a series of appropriate risk assessments, through the annual safety return.	P Sheehan	
11	Require SHAW to improve quarterly reports to Directorate Performance Boards on safety activity, incidents reported, auditing and training volumes, and usage rates of the Employee Assistance Programme.	L Visentin	