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**CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2012/13**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Audit Committee to review performance on health and safety. The report details both progress and future actions associated with implementation of the Council's plans for health and safety management.

**Summary**

2. The Health and Safety Executive issued an Improvement Notice against Highways, for failure under Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, Section 2 (1) and Regulation 6 (2) 'Eliminate or control of exposure to vibration at the workplace' of the Control of Vibration Regulations 2005, in May 2012.
3. The improvement notice was lifted on the inspectors return visit on the 31<sup>st</sup> July, however the HSE stated they would return in 2013 to inspect other aspects of Darlington Borough Council's health management system.
4. A Health and Safety Management Project was set up to focus on making improvements in the health and safety culture and ownership of the health and safety management system at all levels of the organisation to ensure health and safety was embedded and an integral part of the business.
5. The HSE returned and carried out a two day inspection in July 13. The feedback was positive in relation to improvements in Hand Arm Vibration management and generally the health and safety culture.
6. Overall reactive performance indicators show continual improvement in accidents and lost time as a result of accidents.

**Recommendation**

7. It is recommended that the progress to date and key planned actions for 2013/14 be noted.

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Director of Resources**

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## Background Papers

No background papers used in the preparation of this report.

S17 Crime and Disorder	There is no specific crime and disorder impact.
Health and Well Being	The report addresses improved health and safety across the authority.
Carbon Impact	There is no specific carbon impact.
Diversity	Diversity issues are incorporated into health and safety managers training.
Wards Affected	All wards equally.
Groups Affected	Employees, members of the public and pupils in schools.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not affect the budget and policy framework.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Action detailed in the report supports the Healthy Darlington aspect of the SCS.
Efficiency	Good health and safety performance has a positive impact on efficiency.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis – Reviewing Initiatives set for 2012/13

8. The Health and Safety Executive visited in May 2012 to follow up on reports of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (RIDDOR). During the visit the inspector observed vibration activities and issued an improvement notice as a result of failure to eliminate the risk to health from vibration and implement a programme of measures to reduce exposure as low as reasonably practicable.
9. A Rapid Improvement Event was initiated and the project team's role was to come up with an improved process that ensured statutory compliance in relation to Hand Arm Vibration Management.
10. On a return visit in July 12, the HSE recognised compliance had been achieved through the implementation of a system of controls to reduce risks and included a systematic approach to planning and mechanisation when possible.
11. The HSE stated that the organisation would be subject to a formal review of health management systems in 2013.
12. A Health and Safety Project was initiated in July 2012, in order to focus on producing improvements in the health and safety culture and ownership of the

health and safety management system at all levels of the organisation and to ensure health and safety was embedded and an integral part of the business.

13. The Project produced a number of improvements throughout 2012/13 these included Leading in Health and Safety initiatives (training in health and safety management for senior executives, COE action plan and Efficiency and Resources Task and Finish Project), review of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, the development of health and safety action plans for all services and the launch of a Think Safety approach.
14. On the return visit in July 13 the HSE were impressed with improvements in Hand Arm Vibration management and commented on how well embedded the changes had been. They also identified a few areas in health management (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and Manual Handling) that required improvement, however were confident in the organisations abilities to implement these.
15. This year has seen the number of reportable accidents reduce from 24 to 14, however there has been a reduction in the number of employees within the organisation. Therefore to accurately compare performance we look to the Accident Rate. In 11/12 the accident rate was 658 reportable accidents (per 100,000 employees) in 12/13 this had reduced to 502 reportable accident s(per 100,000 employees). This is an indication that health and safety management actions and initiatives are having success i.e. risk assessments, safe systems of work and training. Details of the Councils year on year accident data is provided in **Appendix 1.**
16. There were four major accidents in 2012/13, two as a result of trips, one hit by moving object (ball in a playground) and one manual handling. Investigations identified changes to safe systems of work and additional training requirements.
17. The number of minor accidents reported had reduced by nearly 40% from 207 in the previous year to 127. The highest categories recorded were violent incidents (verbal/threats/physical assault) and slips, trips and falls for both years.
18. Seven cases of disease were diagnosed in 2012/13 which is an increase on the previous year. The diseases reported were in relation to Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome. Following the HSE visit a Rapid Improvement Event was carried out and a number of actions identified including the need for improvements in health surveillance. A full hand arm vibration health surveillance programme was initiated for all employees exposed to vibration at work.
19. Lost time as a result of accidents during 2012/13 was 401 days, a decrease of 24% on the previous year. A breakdown of performance is provided in **Appendix 2.**
20. Recording of near misses is not a statutory requirement however it is good safety management to do so. Recording near misses can also help to identify any weaknesses in procedure and over time may reveal patterns from which lessons can be learnt. In 2012/13 there where 32 near miss reports, the highest number reported since the introduction of the 'near miss report cards' in 2003. Details are provided in **Appendix 3.**

21. Work continued throughout 2012/13 in Environmental Services to prepare for the introduction of wheeled bins in Darlington, as a means of reducing the risk of manual handling and cut / puncture injuries to employees.

22. The authority received one Improvement Notice in 2012/13.

### **Brief outline of key objectives for 2013/14**

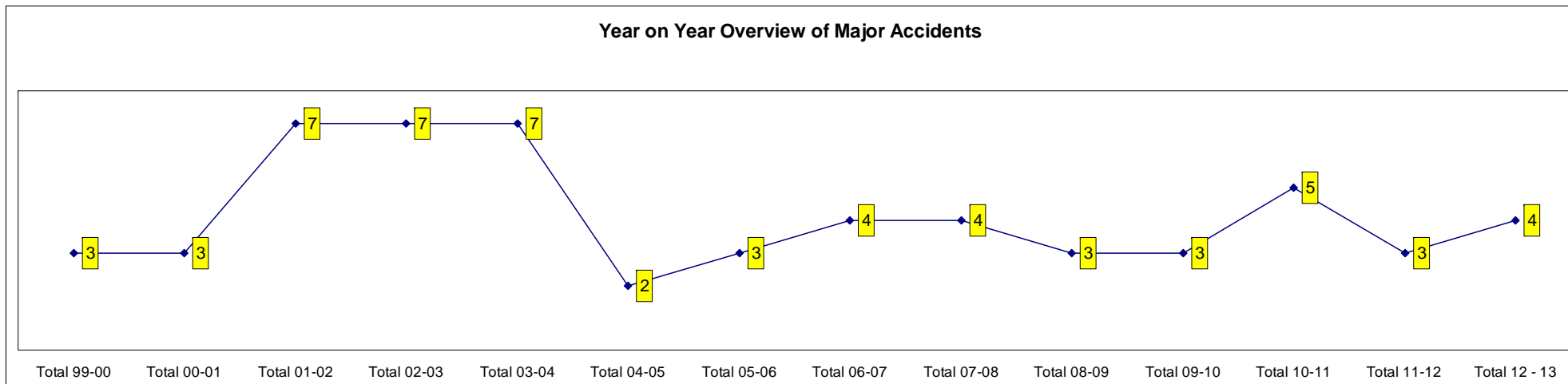
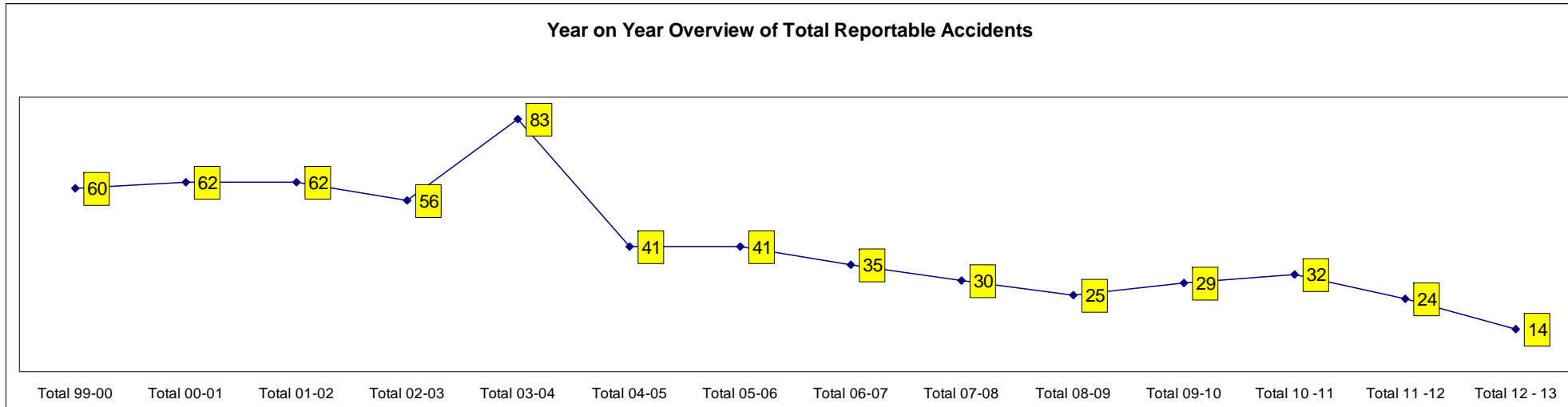
23. To ensure the organisation builds on the work carried out through the Health and Safety Project and drives forward cultural improvements in health and safety, the following strategic priorities have been identified as applicable for the whole authority. Each element compliments and supports the other in achieving the main aim of a safe and healthy workforce.

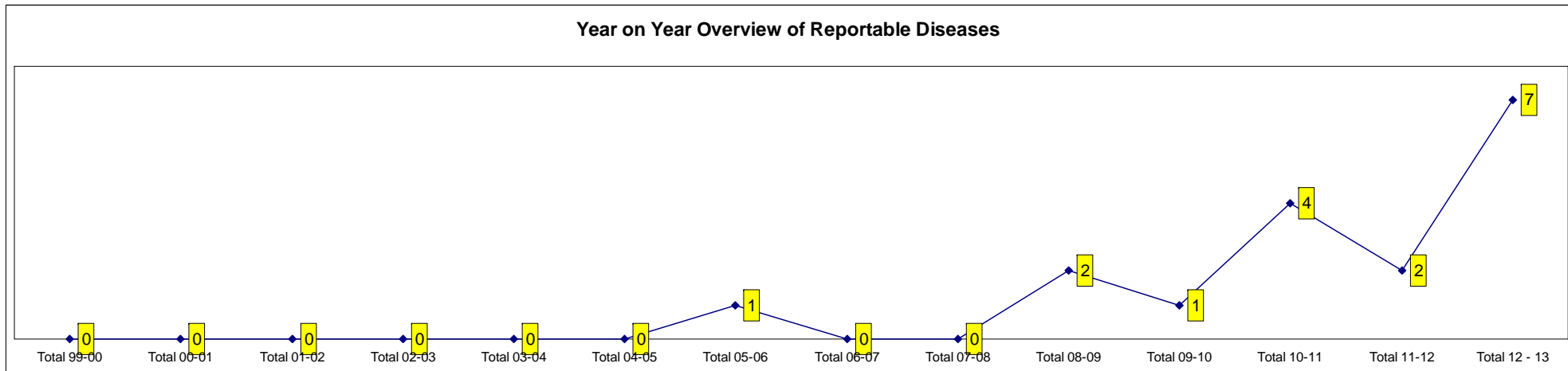
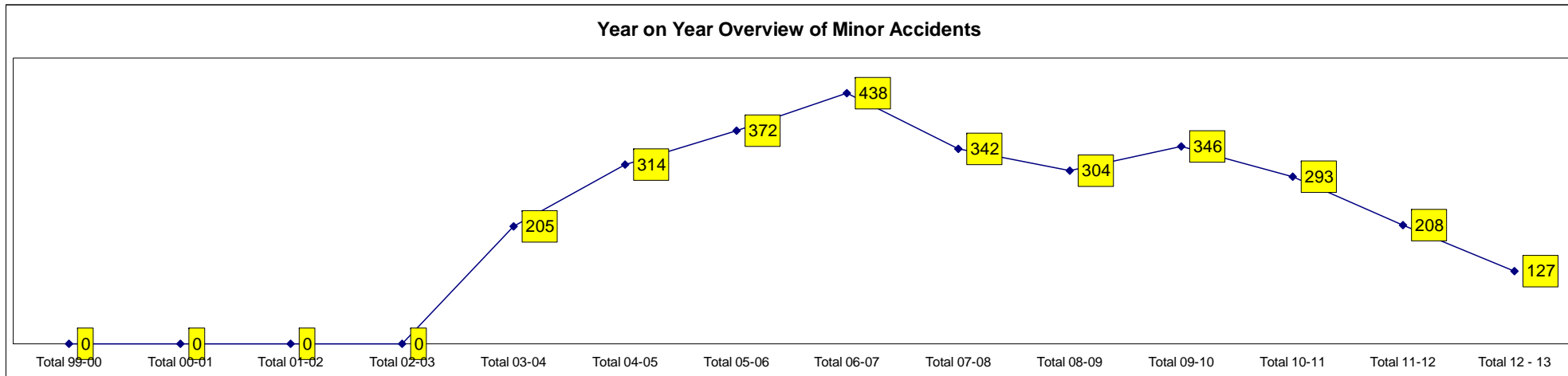
- (a) Ensure the health and safety management system is embedded within the Authority, by continuing the plan for hazard identification, risk assessment and risk control to include routine and non routine activities as well as addressing behavioural issues.
- (b) Continue the programme of health and safety management training.
- (c) Focus on the successful implementation of health and safety arrangements and effective self monitoring by services.
- (d) Continue to follow the 'Think Safety' approach, delivering the message across that authority and encouraging success through senior management leadership and support from all levels.
- (e) Continue to introduce effective health and safety documentation and data control of the health and safety management system.
- (f) Continue to ensure emergency preparedness and response, First Aid, Fire etc.
- (g) Continue to measure and monitor performance (key performance indicators) utilising both proactive and reactive measures.
- (h) Carryout a programme of audits ensuring non-conformance and corrective and preventive actions are followed up and closed out.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

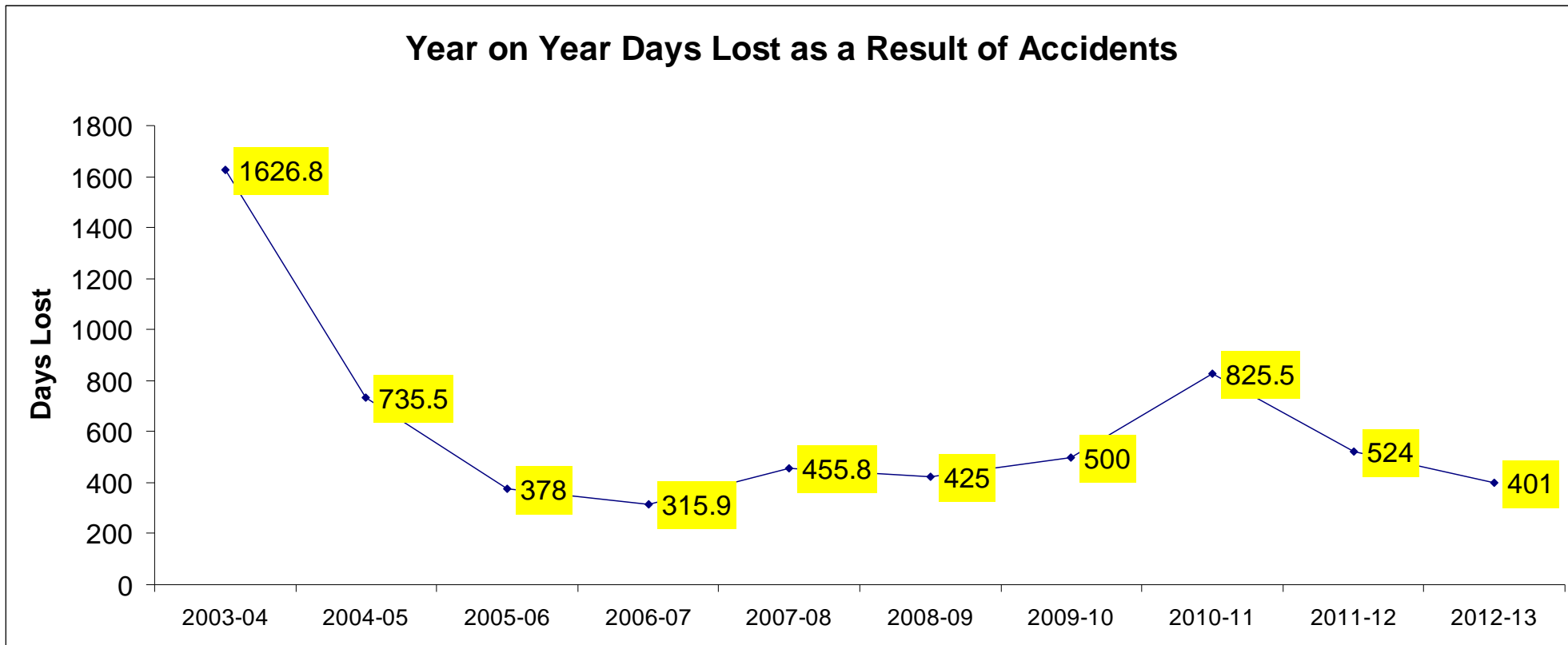
24. There was no formal consultation undertaken in production of this report.

## Appendix 1





Appendix 2



### Appendix 3

