

The Moray Council**HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT
(January to December 2018)****1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide information on the performance of the council in ensuring the health and safety of staff and service users. Monitoring data is utilised and recommendations for improvements needed to procedures and systems are made.
- 1.2 The national situation on incidents and enforcement action in similar organisations is also considered so that continuous learning regarding the national context can take place.

2. Summary of Key Themes

- 2.1 Improving the Council's safety culture continues to be a key issue. While the long term nature of implementing and sustaining a change in culture is recognised as challenging, there are indications from the Council's workforce plans and previous health and safety reports that the safety culture is improving.
- 2.2 As an organisation with an extensive range of different work environments and activities and therefore differing cultures, a triage approach ensures that the Health and Safety resources within the Council will continue to be targeted on specific higher risk areas and groups. Regular and structured monitoring ensures that there is an overview of improvements to ensure they have been embedded within the requisite areas and work groups. This implements the remodelled approach using the Plan, Do, Check, and Act management system.
- 2.3 Demonstration of poor behaviours identified through analysis of incident investigation reports are highlighted at a strategic level through the Central Health & Safety and departmental safety committees and forums.

3. Review and Monitoring of Council Performance**3.1 Statistical Review**

- 3.1.1 **Appendix A** sets out an analysis of the Health and Safety incidents that were reported during the year January to December 2018 and compares these to previous years.
- 3.1.2 The main points to note are:
 - i) Four more accidents were reported in 2018 compared to 2017.
 - ii) There is a wider fluctuation in the numbers for types of incidents than last year with increases in some areas and reductions in others.

- iii) While the severity of the incidents on the whole continues to be declining, this is not to be relied on as a measure of success and recent fines have been imposed on other employers where no injury had been incurred, but there were multiple repeated examples of poor practice.
- iv) Certain good indicators of improvement have been noted among all the information collated to monitor safety performance and learning points will be extracted for wider application where appropriate.
- v) Reported incidents of violence and aggression in schools continue to rise, which are challenging in terms of categorisation and management.

3.2 Review of Incidents/Accidents

3.2.1 The following incident summary is presented as a sample to illustrate the nature and range of risks the council has faced and to inform decisions on improvements for the future with accompanying remedial actions.

- i. A case of equipment failure involving a cherry picker almost had catastrophic consequences. The platform was in its cradle at the time so no one was injured, but the consequences could have been extremely serious had it been fully in operation. An investigation was carried out, deficiencies with maintenance and inspection arrangements were highlighted and improvements have since been put in place.
- ii. A series of excavation collapses in graveyards highlighted that operatives were being put at serious risk while working in the lair to install or remove shoring. This suggested that shoring arrangements are inappropriate and information from other councils suggested that safer systems of work are indeed available. These are currently being pursued by the section in question.
- iii. A pupil was injured when an item of PE apparatus failed during a class. The injury was minor but this near miss identified opportunity for improvement. The cause was put down to a poor quality repair and this in turn led to questions about maintenance arrangements. Investigation into this matter is ongoing but the issues involved have implications for value-for-money as well as safety.
- iv. A series of vehicle incident reports was received towards the end of 2018 and this highlighted possible problems, mainly in Direct Services. No serious injuries were suffered, though financial costs in terms of equipment damage were incurred. Vehicles and transport are among the most high risk issues the Council faces and a study into this trend is currently being carried out to ascertain the causes.

3.3 Review of Policy and Development Work

3.3.1 Progress on agreed actions is noted below. Managing the unpredictability of the operational work and the requirement for a structured approach continues to be challenging. Looking ahead, the central Health and Safety resource has been restructured to be better able to balancing the reactive operational requirements and planned work. To support this change and the ongoing service, external support is being sought on a shared service basis to ensure

that strategic and specialist health and safety expertise is available to support the council team in the delivery of the council's statutory obligations for safety.

- 3.3.2 Improve workforce consultation and improvement – while it was identified as part of the workforce plan that joint inspections with trade union representatives should be arranged, this has not been possible due to the very low number of trade union health and safety representatives. It is hoped that arrangements to hold joint inspections may be implemented in the coming year.
- 3.3.3 Managing risk – risk assessment audits have been completed in 3 of the high risk areas. Action plans to improve quality are being progressed by one department and inspections to monitor adherence to controls are taking place. Training on revised systems of work is undertaken where improvements are implemented, however specific training on monitoring of practice and the full programme of audits has been impacted by the budget savings on the central Health and Safety team therefore this work will be carried forward to the 2019 plan.
- 3.3.4 Sharing success and learning from experience – the communications and engagement plan with topics agreed by the Health and Safety Committee saw a succession of safety related articles promoting learning published during the year and targeted activity within specific services for learning from incidents within other authorities.
- 3.3.5 Developing the Health and Safety culture – safety alerts are disseminated after serious incidents either within this Council or other councils and organisations to prompt control action and reports are being provided to Directors within higher risk areas. Communications in Connect and the HR Bulletin continue to promote the responsibilities of managers, supervisors and employees with regard to their and others' health and safety. A joint survey on violence and aggression in schools was conducted in March 2019 in conjunction with the trade unions as a response to concerns regarding increasing numbers of incidents being reported in schools and the impact on the workforce. This is the first such survey and analysis of this will help inform the Council's approach in putting improvements in place.
- 3.3.6 Contractor Control – a briefing for new contractors was completed and monitoring processes and arrangements are to be developed, however this work has been delayed due to the impact of budget savings and will be carried forward to the 2019 plan.
- 3.3.7 As part of the work to improve the health and safety culture of the workforce training to support Moray Management Methods, including Health and Safety, has been implemented and is now an integral and regular part of the corporate training calendar. Work on the integration of health and safety into all departmental service plans with regular measurement of progress which would also contribute significantly towards a faster pace of change has been delayed due to resource issues and will be carried forward as part of the improvement work in 2019.

- 3.3.8 While there continue to be a number of groups within services that consider specific health and safety issues, improved communication between the central health and safety team and the departmental and service groups will be developed to improve corporate oversight and to keep the health and safety profile raised within services and teams.

3.4 Service Demands and Update

- 3.4.1 The corporate Health and Safety function has been restructured as part of the 2019-20 budget savings work to address corporate and service requirements.

- 3.4.2 The main unexpected demands on the safety section came from the effects of budget savings, both within the team and across the wider Council. The staffing reduction within the team made it more difficult to devote resources to the provision of direct training and also required a greater focus on prioritisation based on risk. There has also had to be greater emphasis on the Health and Safety team being an enabling service, with more focus on providing professional advice and guidance in helping services look after their own health and safety and a subsequent reduction in undertaking inspections, risk assessments etc except in the most most high level situations.

3.5 Future Action Planning

- 3.5.1 The main health and safety themes arising from sections 3.2 and 3.4 will be incorporated into the current service plan, departmental plans and safety committee requirements will be merged into the next service planning cycle.

4. External Context and National Developments

- 4.1 A survey of the top ten health and safety prosecutions for 2018 show a continuation for the trend for high fines for defendants found guilty of safety breaches, ie, from £1 to £2.3M.
- 4.2 No local authorities featured on the list this year but a number of the prosecutions involved activities that councils carry out or could be involved in. Three of the cases were due to accidents involving vehicles or transport operations, which are high risk areas for this organisation also.
- 4.3 Significantly there was one fine (£1M) where no injury had been incurred and the defendant was found guilty of multiple breaches of poor standards, eg, blocked fire escapes and failure to observe the organisation's own procedures.

5. Conclusions and Proposed Developments

- 5.1 The number of accidents reported has remained relatively static during 2018 and more detailed work will be undertaken in higher risk areas to continue to work towards prevention of such incidents with improved reporting and monitoring arrangements where possible.
- 5.2 The Moray Management Methods training and the contractor control modules being offered in tandem with procurement will continue to provide a good

opportunity to further enhance the abilities of managers to better control the risks that their workers face at an operational level. Monitoring processes and arrangements will be developed to support this with reference to the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle to help ensure that risk elimination or control becomes more integral to our ways of working and will assist managers in creating a supportive environment of risk awareness and management.

- 5.3 Targeted auditing and inspection of the risk assessments for high-risk issues in all high risk areas will continue in line with the aims of the safety policy contributing towards improved use of safe working methods.
- 5.4 The results of the violence and aggression in schools survey will be fully analysed to provide quantitative and qualitative context to the situation with actions for improvement identified and taken forward as part of the planned work with services.
- 5.5 The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service have indicated that they are required to conduct further fire risk assessments through audits in schools and this work will require resourcing.

6. Action Plan

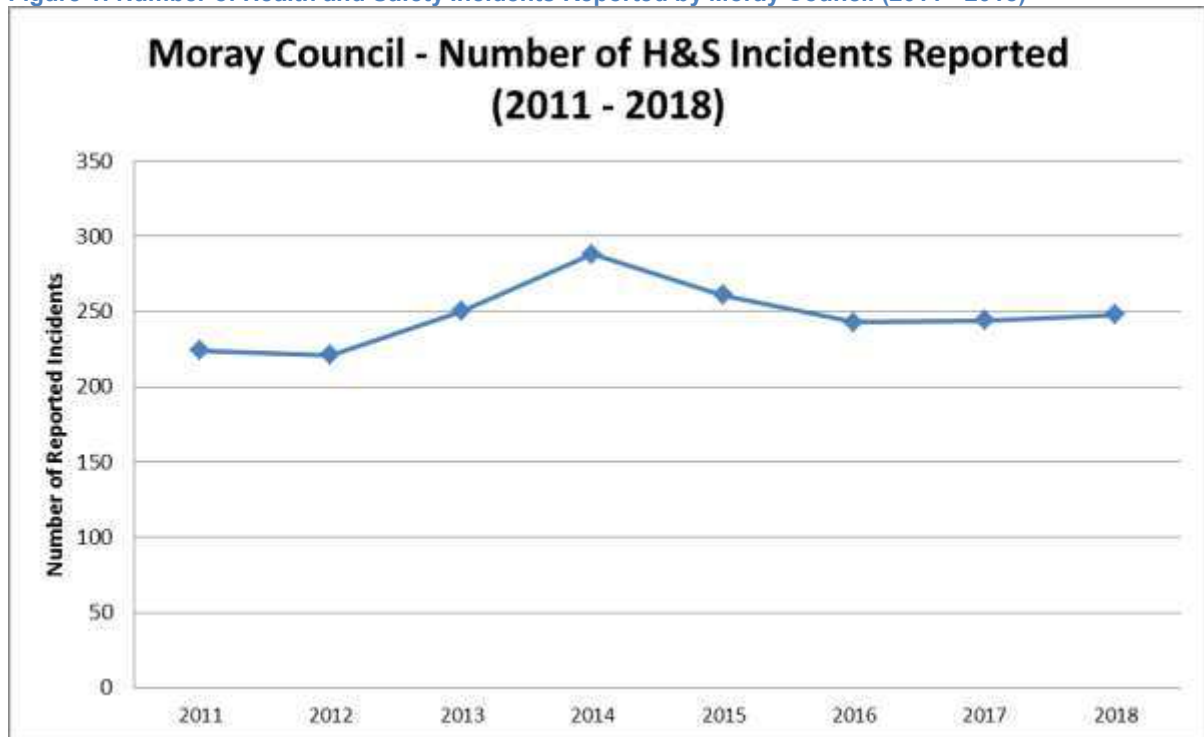
- 6.1 The developments above have been taken to create the action plan to address the main findings from this report. These will become the focus of the work of the Health and Safety service during 2019 in addition to the work carried over from the current action plan and management of operational work in response to reactive situations.

Actions	Target for Completion
Vehicle and Transport – investigate underlying issues and develop action plans to address and mitigate risks	December 2019
Violence and Aggression – use survey and statistics as evidence base for identification of issues, develop improvement plan in conjunction with services	July 2019
Contractor Control – development of arrangements and processes for monitoring of site performance	October 2019
Safe Working Methods – risk assessments in targeted high risk areas to be audited and improvement plans agreed with implementation milestones and timescales with training for all operatives to be carried out on revised safe systems of work using a prioritised approach	March 2020
Improved reporting and monitoring arrangements and training for all supervisors and managers on monitoring of practice	October 2019
Culture – communications and engagement activity in collaboration with Workforce Culture team to continue to enhance manager and employee awareness of health and safety responsibilities	March 2020
Fire Risk Assessments – audits in schools from Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	March 2020

HEALTH AND SAFETY INCIDENTS 2018 **SUMMARY FOR POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

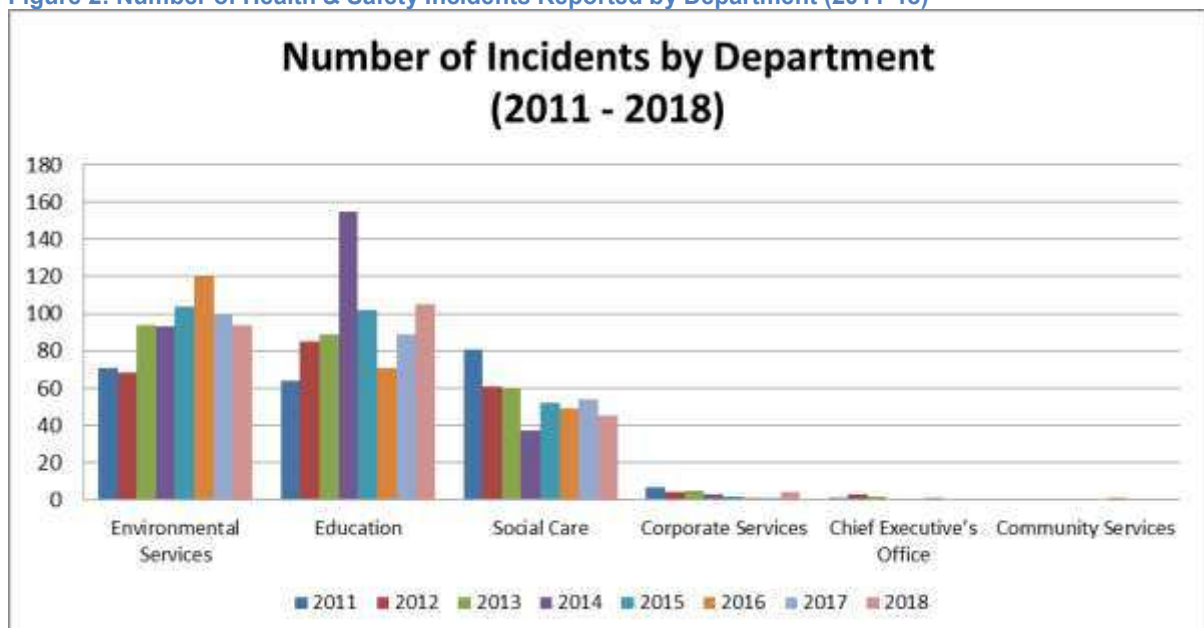
The following information is based on the data for incidents reported during 2018.

Figure 1: Number of Health and Safety Incidents Reported by Moray Council (2011 - 2018)



The number of accidents and dangerous occurrences reported in 2018 was broadly similar to the numbers reported in 2016 and 2017. The 248 reports received represent a 2% increase from the 244 reports submitted in 2017, and remains below the peak of 288 reported in 2014 (Figure 1).

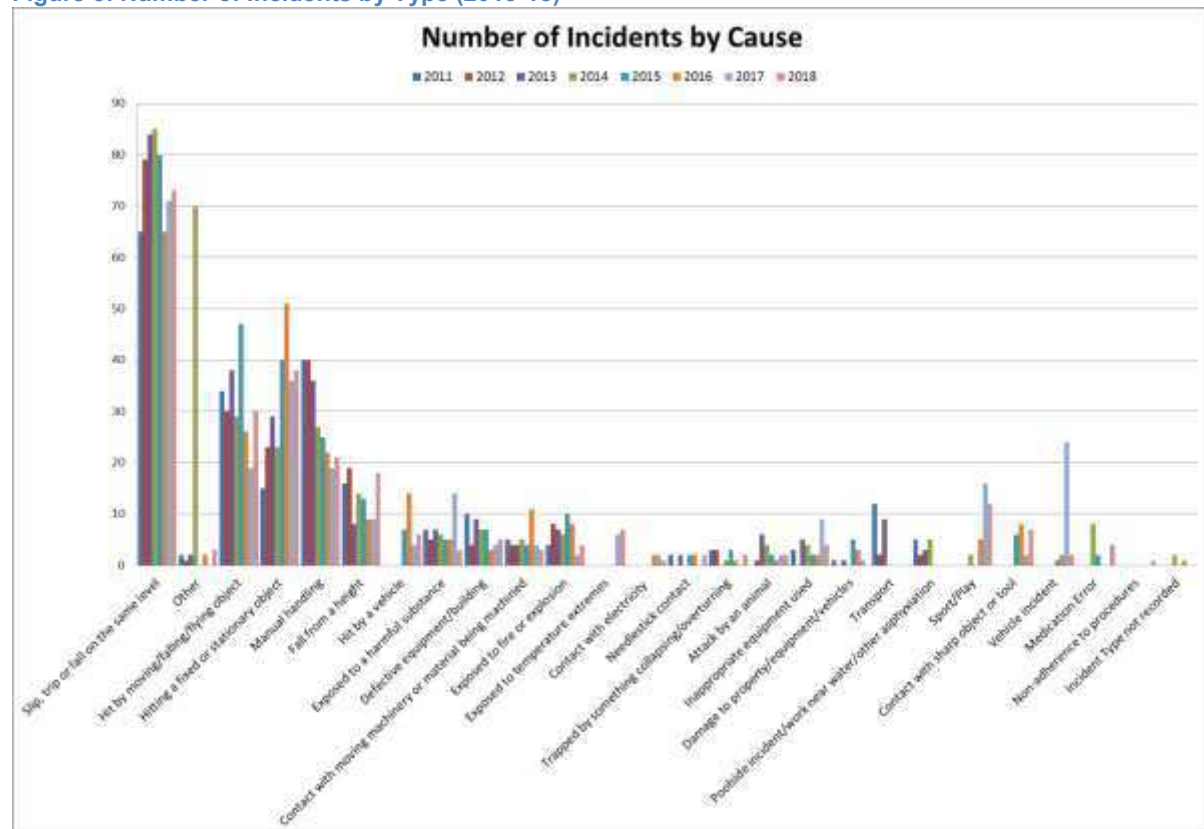
Figure 2: Number of Health & Safety Incidents Reported by Department (2011-18)



Appendix A

The number of incidents reported by the Education Department continues the upwards trend of recent years with 18% more reports in 2018 compared to 2017 (105 reports in 2018; 89 in 2017). At the same time Environmental Services has had fewer incidents reported (94 in 2018 compared to 100 in 2017; a 6% reduction). Social Care reported incidents are reduced from last year (45 in 2018 compared to 54 in 2017), but remains close to the average of 51 incidents reported per year since 2012 (Figure 2).

Figure 3: Number of Incidents by Type (2013-18)

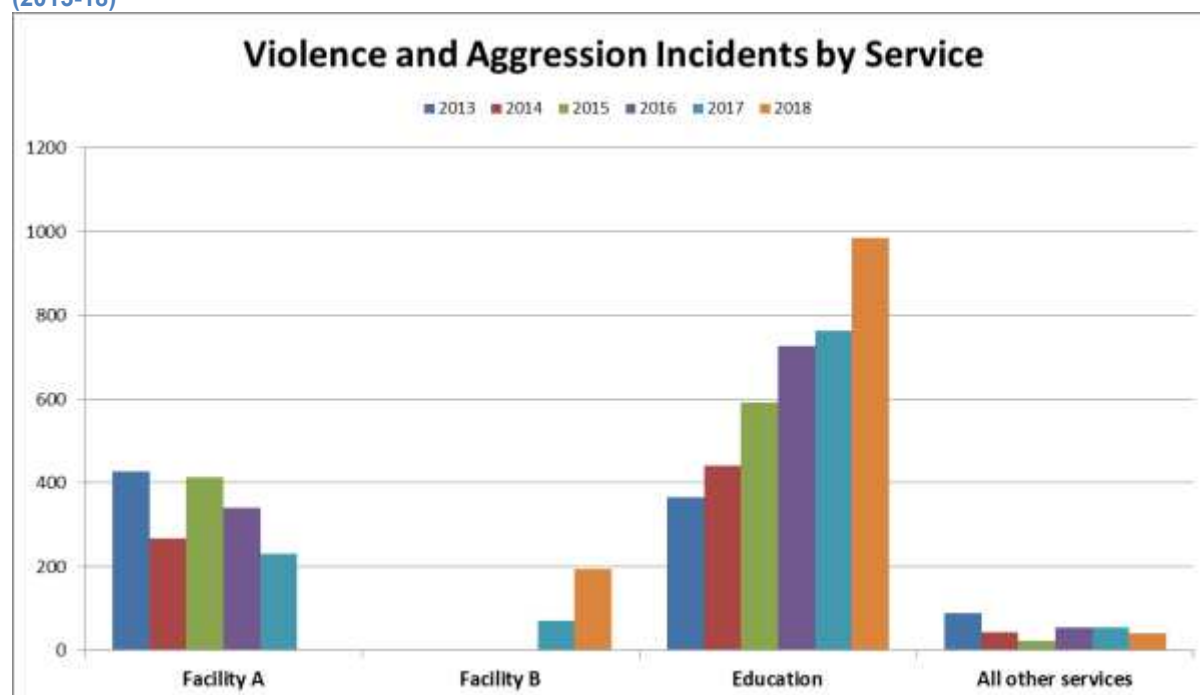


As Figure 3 illustrates “Slip, trips or falls” continue to be the highest number of incidents reported (73 in 2018) but remains below the 84 and 85 reported in 2013 and 2014. However, the trend for the past 3 years has shown a small, gradual increase. “Hitting a fixed or stationary object” accounted for 38 (15%) of reported incidents, similar to 2017, while “Hit by moving/falling/flying object” has shown an increase from the low of 19 recorded in 2017 up to 30, close to the 5-year average of 31.5.

In 2016 and 2017 there were 9 reports in each year of “fall from a height”. This figure increased to 18 in 2018, above the 5-year average of 11.8. The number of “Sport/Play” incidents is similar to the number reported in 2017 (12 incidents compared to 16 in 2017). The largest reduction in incident categories is “Vehicle incident”, which was the subject of 24 reports in 2017, but just 2 in 2018. There was a similar reduction in people who were “Exposed to a harmful substance” from 14 in 2017 to 3 in 2018.

INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION 2018

Figure 4: Violence and Aggression Incidents by Service, based on quarterly performance report data (2013-18)



Adult Services

During the first full year of operation of a purpose build adult care facility there has been a significant reduction in the number of incidents reported even with a two-fold increase in the number of service users. For the last full year at Facility A (2016) there were 85 incidents per user on average, whereas for the first full year at the Facility B (2018) the average number of annual incidents has been 24 per user, a reduction of over 70%.

Schools

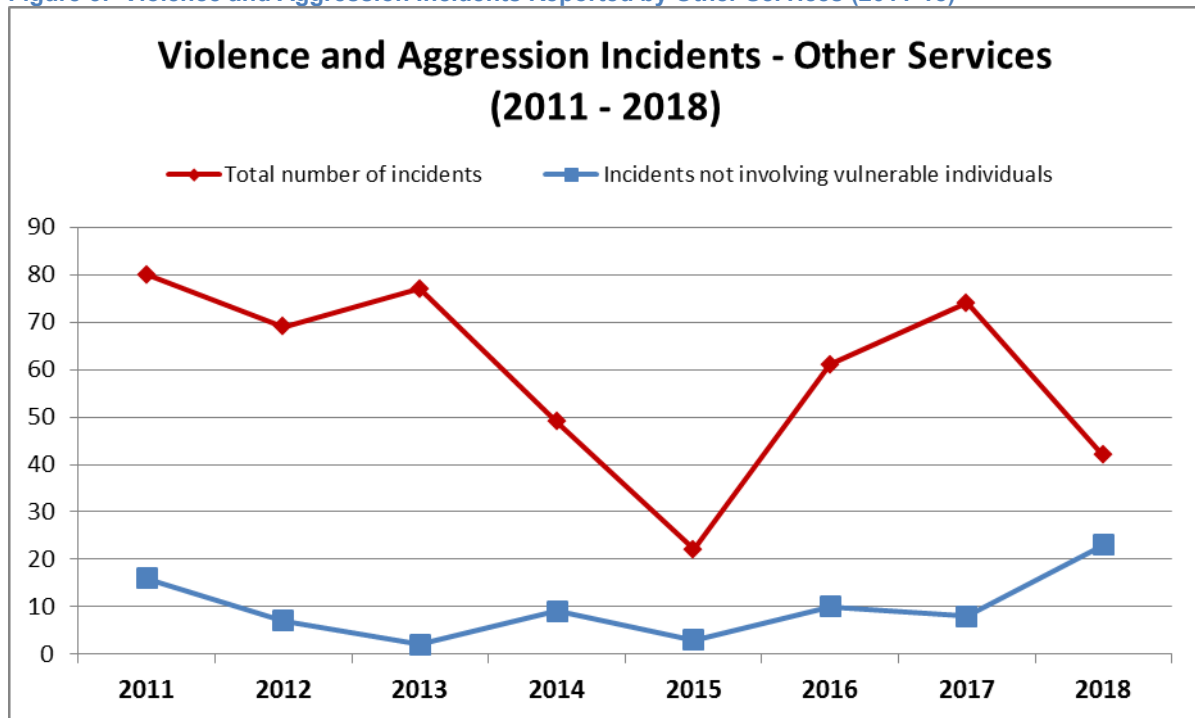
The number of incidents of violence and aggression involving school pupils/students fluctuates from year to year, but in 2018 the number reported has risen to 980, from 659 in 2017, which represents an increase of 48%. While increased reporting of incidents will be contributing to this, a survey has been undertaken to quantify the scope and scale of the situation and to contribute towards the formation of a baseline of information from which future improvement actions may be identified.

Other Services

The number of Violence & Aggression incidents reported by services within Moray Council during 2018 was 43% lower than in 2017 (42 compared to 74 the previous year). Figure 5 also illustrates the number of incidents that did not involve individuals who were identified as having additional support needs. The trend has generally

Appendix A

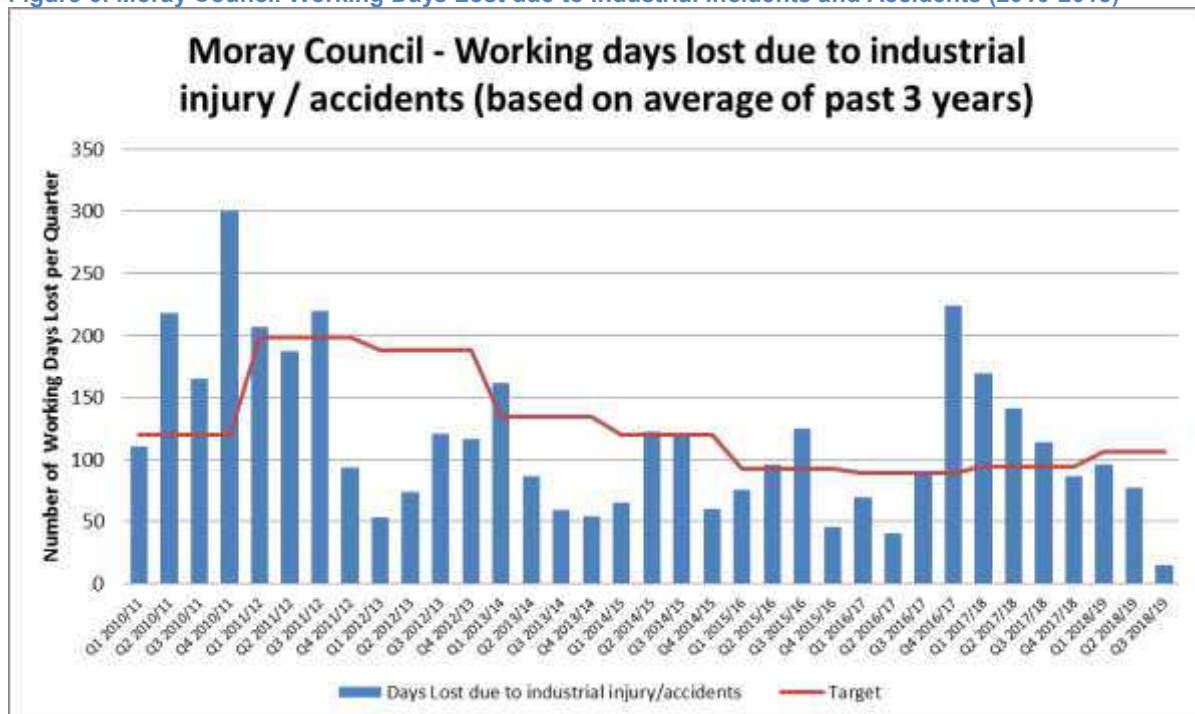
Figure 5: Violence and Aggression Incidents Reported by Other Services (2011-18)



been increasing since 2015, and had the highest annual rise in 2018 since recording started in 2011.

WORKING DAYS LOST DUE TO INDUSTRIAL INJURY/ACCIDENT 2010-2018

Figure 6: Moray Council Working Days Lost due to Industrial Incidents and Accidents (2010-2018)



The number of working days lost due to industrial injury or accident fluctuates from quarter-to-quarter, but after a step-change upwards in Q4 2016/17 (January to March 2017) has continued to reduce steadily each quarter and at the end of 2018

Appendix A

(Q3 2018/19) the lowest figure recorded since recording started in 2006 (just 15 days lost compared to 77 days in Q2 2018/19).

The statistics indicate that the continued efforts to improve the safety culture of the organisation, minimise the risk profile and identify hazardous situations before they result in injuries appear to be contributing towards achieving these aims.