WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL	EMPLOYMENT - 15th September 2009 COMMITTEE	Agenda Item No.
Title	Corporate Health & Safety – Annual Report	
For further information about this report please contact	Richard Hall (01926-456700)	
Service Area	Environmental Services	
Wards of the District directly affected	None	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	**No**	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	Health & Safety Policy. Minutes Joint Communication Forum August 2009. Internal Audit report on Corporate Health & Safety – 3rd July 2007	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No

Officer/Councillor Approval

With regard to officer approval all reports _must_ be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).

Officer Approval	Date	Name
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott
CMT		
Deputy Chief Exec	27.08.09	Bill Hunt
Section 151 Officer	27.08.09	Mike Snow
Legal	1.09.09	Peter Oliver
Finance	27.08.09	Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)	27.08.09	Felicity Bunker

Consultation Undertaken

The report has been agreed by Joint Communication Forum meeting of August 2009.

Final Decision?	Yes

1.   **SUMMARY**

A review of the last year has been conducted, in relation to the management of the Council's own Health & Safety and this has been summarised as an annual report. An internal audit report has recommended that the information be published on the internet as well as within the organisation, on the intranet. This is the first time that an annual health & safety report has been prepared.

2.   **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1   That the Corporate Health & Safety annual report for Warwick District Council be noted.

2.2   That there is agreement to publish the report on the internet and on the Council's intranet system.

3.   **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1   In effectively managing health & safety within an organisation it is important, not only to have the involvement of all staff, but to be open and honest about how matters are dealt with and about successes and failures.

3.2   An annual report draws relevant information together and assists in monitoring performance over time.

3.3   Openly publishing the information available demonstrates the Council's commitment to workplace health & safety and the importance which it attaches to it.

4.   **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1   There is no obligation to make the report available to the public.

5.   **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

There are no budgetary implications.

6.   **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Council is committed to 'provide clear community leadership and effective management of resources' through its Corporate Strategy.

There is a legal requirement to competently manage health & safety within any organisation. The Council's Health & Safety Policy provides a means by which this is brought about.

7.   **BACKGROUND**

7.1   Corporate Health & Safety is managed on a day to day basis through the Environmental Services department. The Health & Safety Adviser, Alan Richardson, is employed within the department's Environmental Protection team and devotes 0.6 FTE to health & safety work, reporting directly to the Head of Service.

7.2   Over the last two years (approximately) there has been good progress with improving management of corporate health & safety. We now have better systems for conducting risk assessments and monitoring these; for

tracking lone workers and for updating our 'Staff Alert' system. There is also more involvement from staff with health & safety, with a dedicated health & safety zone on the intranet, regular safety representative meetings etc. A staff survey has been conducted to gauge the effectiveness of the measures put in place.

7.3   The annual report attempts to briefly summarise how health & safety is being managed within the organisation, to report on accidents, the staff survey and also to provide a framework for monitoring progress and performance over future years.

Warwick District Council

Corporate Health & Safety

Annual Report 2009

INTRODUCTION

Health & Safety of the workforce is an important issue for any organisation, not least because of the need to comply with legal requirements. However, it goes much further than that, as good health & safety management protects and promotes the health and wellbeing of staff and makes for a better working environment generally.

In the last couple of years WDC has put emphasis on improving its management systems and making sure that there is more staff awareness. The importance of keeping staff involved and informed about health & safety matters has been recognised; because it is only through this that we can all gain from the benefits of an effective and consistent approach to health & safety in the workplace.

Effective health & safety management is about a sensible and risk-based approach in dealing with issues. By everyone playing their part we can maintain a safe and healthy working environment whilst avoiding some of the more irrational responses to risk.

This Annual Report is the first that WDC has prepared and it is intended to inform people of the work which has taken place in the last year. The report also sets out a means by which progress with health & safety issues can be reviewed year on year.

The report is drafted to reflect the Council's obligations under the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations and so looks at our management systems, methods of communication and training as well as looking at accident statistics. The results of the corporate health & safety staff survey have also been included. Alan Richardson, Health & Safety Advisor, is thanked for pulling the report together and I trust that you will find it informative. We will obviously take into account any feedback for future reports.

Richard Hall
Head of Environmental Health

MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

1.2 ***Health & Safety Policy Review***

 The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations requires employers to periodically review its H & S management systems and to consult with employees and representatives on such matters. Therefore to ensure the effectiveness of the WDC Health & Safety Policy is maintained and to comply with H & S Law, a major review has been undertaken of the Corporate Health & Safety Policy issue 1.

1.3 Throughout 2008 the review took into account much feedback and comments from employees at various levels, and had union involvement. This resulted in considerable changes and additions to the previous issue. Codes of Practice added to the policy included *Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans, Induction of Non-WDC Staff, Management of Workplace Stress, Personal Protective Equipment, Working at Height, Confined Spaces, Young Persons, Drving for Work and Hand Arm Vibration* with a series of appendices, such as risk assessment checklists.

1.4 The policy in its entirely was eventually submitted to the Employment Committee in December 2008 and agreed by its Members. In Janaury 2009, the document was sent out to Service Area Managers promoting the need for it to be communicated to staff members.

1.5 ***Assessnet***

 The provision of the Assessnet Online Health & Safety Management was agreed in the summer of 2008.

1.6 The purpose of AssessNet to allow those designated to perform risk assessments to record them in an online database, giving clarity as to what actions have been generated, responsibilities for these actions with timescales for completion and tracking of review dates. The familiar website interface makes it easy to use for those who use the internet with a uniform approach throughout the various modules. Although incorporating a number of modules the 'Risk Assessment' module was the first priority for roll out of the system.

1.7 From knowledge of members of staff who had previously performed risk assessments, a training programme was produced and commenced in August 2008. The 14 'classroom' training sessions consisted of basic principles of risk assessment and how to record and manage them using the Assessnet system. Those unable to attend these sessions were met on a one to one basis and trained in the same way. As a result, around 70 people consisting of Chief Executive, Directors, Service Heads, Line Managers and Safety Representatives have received the training.

1.8 *Tunstall Lone Worker Monitoring System*

As of February 2009, 120 Warwick Distrct Council employees who perform out of office Lone Working have been given access to the Tunstall Lone Worker system. The purpose of the system being to provide a quick response to the relevant personnel and authorities in the unlikely and unfortunate event of the lone workers safety being compromised. This system utilises the employees Council mobile telephone and allows the lone worker to leave details of the out of office visit where required via an automated system operating from the Warwick Response Centre, e.g. address to be visited and the duration of the visit.

1.9 The details of the visit are immediately recorded by the Warwick Response computer system. In the event of the lone worker failing to cancel the visit details within the given automated check call period, the lone worker can then receive up to three automated check calls. If the lone worker answers any one of these calls and 'logs off' , this confirms that they are safe with no need for further chack calls. In the event of lone worker failing to respond, the escalation procedure is initiated via the Warwick Response Controller (as per the 'Lone Working / Out of Office Visits, Staff Tracking Procedure').

1.10 An audit to examine how many employees used Tunstall Lone Worker between March 2008 and March 2009, showed that 43 people use it regularly for hundreds of out of office visits as part of their day to day routine – this equates to 35% of the 120 people who have access to the system. The remainder use Tunstall occasionally, as and when required.

1.11 *Staff Alert List database*

As many WDC employees and Members will be aware, the Staff Alert List holds the names of individuals and addresses of properties that have the potential to pose a risk to Council employees, Members or contractors if they were to visit the individual or if the individual were to visit them.
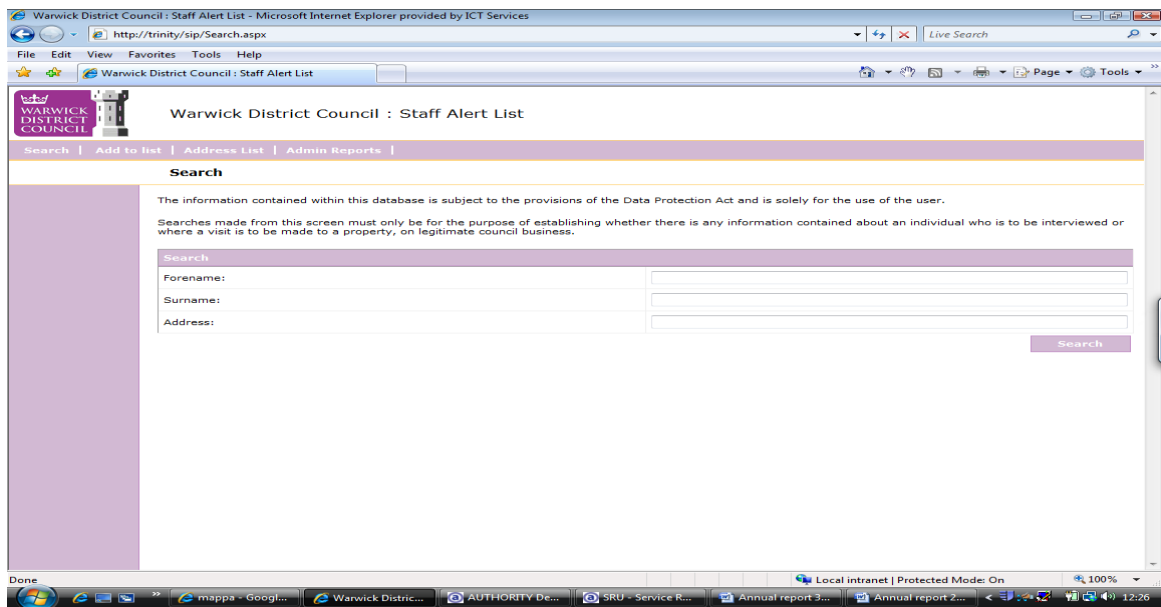
1.12 Throughout 2008 and 2009, the Staff Alert Group consisting of the Health & Safety Adviser, Head of Environmental Health, Head of Legal, Head of Members Services, Head of Community Safety, representatives from Housing & Property Services, Housing Strategy and Council Tax continued to hold periodic meetings to review the effectiveness of the database. The review meetings ensure that information held on individuals' and their addresses is accurate and that where necessary, people who are on the Staff Alert List are removed from it if they no longer pose a threat or to ensure that the information stays on the database if the threat remains. The group also discusses any arising issues relating to the SAL and to ensure that the Freedom of Information Act and the Data Protection Act are complied with.

1.13 An improvement that had been put in place during 2008 was having a link to MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) information. This is being provided by a staff member within Housing Strategy who attends regular MAPPA meetings and feeds back information on potentially dangerous individuals, which may be supplied by the likes of Police, Mental Health services, Probation Service and Social Services for instance.

1.14 An audit of the system to find out how often the database is being used by officers who may be about to visit members of the public, showed that between March 2008 and March 2009 the database had registered over 250 searches.

1.15 ***Quarterly Health & Safety Inspections***

This system was introduced to allow the Safety Representative from each service area to carry out an inspection using a simple checklist to identify potential workplace hazards in a structured way. This system which now forms part of the Council's Health & Safety Policy requires the person undertaking the inspection to report any required actions to the appropriate people.

1.16 The training of the representative to enable them to perform the inspections consisted of the Health & Safety Adviser attending the first inspection of the Service Area to help the representative identify hazards. Most of the Safety Representatives are individuals who in the past received risk assessment training.

2. **METHODS OF COMMUNICATION**

2.1 *Intranet Homepage* -

The intranet's homepage continues to be used to display important health & safety messages. Past messages have included:

- Details of accidents that have occurred
- Communication of new Policies and Procedures
- Advertisements for Health & Safety training
- Requirements of Health & Safety legislation
- Reminders of how various H&S systems work and how to use them
- Health & Safety Survey
- General H&S guidance

2.2 *Health & Safety – Meeting Agenda*

2.3 A standardised system had been created so that Health & Safety issues can be discussed at Dept and Team meetings and appears on agendas and minutes as a matter of routine under specific headings. The principle being that H&S is included and documented as agenda items and minuted in a structured way.

The agenda items to be covered are:

- **H & S Procedures**: Are there any new items of advice/guidance etc to pass on?
- **Accidents:** Any reports of accidents relating to Service Area?
- **Risk Assessments:** Discuss RA's completed and review if necessary
- **Health & Safety Zone:** Do staff have access to this link via the intranet and its documents?
- **Staff Alert List:** Are there any people or premises that need to be notified or removed from the list?
- **PPE** Up to date, is it maintained, records held?
- **Contractors:** Any defaults on contracts, have contractors been kept

up to date with Staff Alert List?
- **Training needs:**   Any training or refresher training required?

2.4 This enables an audit trail and demonstrates a systematic approach to the communication of Health & Safety issues. Decisions as to how matters were resolved will appear in minutes. Issues not able to be dealt with at Team or Dept level will be passed up to DMT or CMT as appropriate and similarly appear in minutes.

2.5 *__Health & Safety Representatives Meetings__*

Throughout 2008, three H&S Reps meeting were held. This group consists of a member of staff from each service area, acting as its representative.

2.6 The meetings have proved to be a valuable method of consulting with employees and union members on various health & safety matters. The discussions at these meetings have played a large part in discussing policies and procedures at their draft stage and a chance to get valuable input as to how they were to be implemented. Many of the new additions and amendments to overall Health & Safety Policy have formed part of this process.

2.7 Other topics of discussion during the meetings have included:

- Assessnet Implementation
- Training issues
- Fire Safety
- Riverside House accommodation changes
- General feedback on how H&S Management can be improved.

2.8 *__Employee Health & Safety Survey__*

In mid January 09 the survey was displayed on the Council's intranet homepage, with numerous prompts and reminders to staff and service heads to respond to the survey. The survey remained available for employees to respond until mid March 09.

2.9 The questions asked of employees were designed to tap into four key areas of their attitudes towards Warwick District Council's management of Health & Safety. These four areas were *Perception, Implementation (of policies & procedures), Awareness, General Feedback.* 102 Council employees responded to the survey. The paragraphs below give a snapshot of employees' views, which for the most part were shown to be positive but also highlighting areas for potential improvement.

2.10 Of the employees who responded to the survey, 73% thought that there were effective
health & safety management systems in place, 4 % did not, 23% gave a neutral view. So overall, there is satisfaction with our health & safety systems but with scope for influencing further positive attitudes towards the subject.

2.11 74% of employees thought the Council demonstrates a positive attitude towards health
& safety, with again 23% neither agreeing nor disagreeing and only 3% having a negative view.

2.12 When asked to give an indication on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being poor and 10 being excellent) on how employees rated the implementation of health & safety management at WDC 93% gave a view of 5 and above (76% in the 6 -10 scale), with 7% on the lower scale.

2.13 An encouraging answer to the question that asked if employees knew what to do in the event of an emergency, e.g. fire evacuation – 99% of those who responded said that they did know what to do. With also 77% knowing how to gain advice on health & safety issues.

2.14 Given these figures of the areas covered in the survey, generally a positive picture was painted by Council employees on how health & safety is being managed throughout the organisation. A number of examples of areas for improvement include:

- The speed at which health & safety concerns or hazards are addressed
- More Departmental meetings to include health & safety issues as part of their agenda.
- 21% informed that they would benefit from further training.
- A significant number thought that more frequent health & safety inspections of their work areas were required.

2.15 The charts below also show a glimpse of what employees thought of WDC's H&S
   Management system. For full details of the survey results, please refer to APPENDIX 1 at the end of this report:

Q – There are effective health & safety management systems in place -
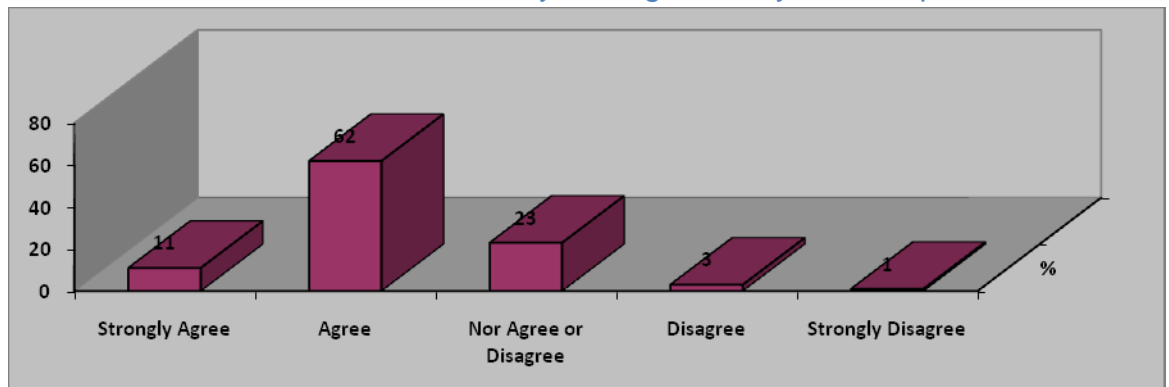
Q – The communication and management of health & safety issues throughout the Council has improved in the last 18 months –
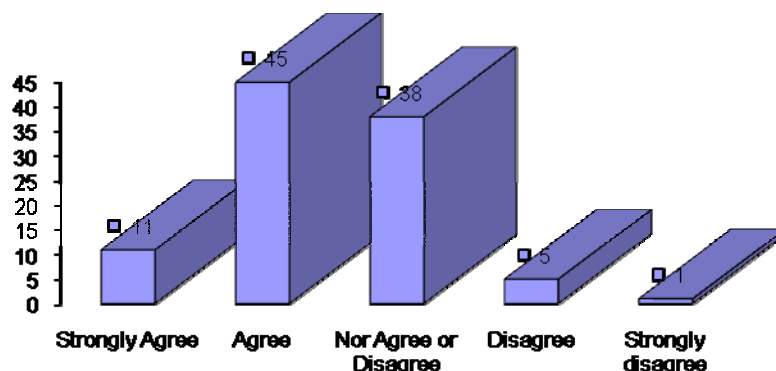
Q – The Health & Safety information provided on the intranet is adequate –
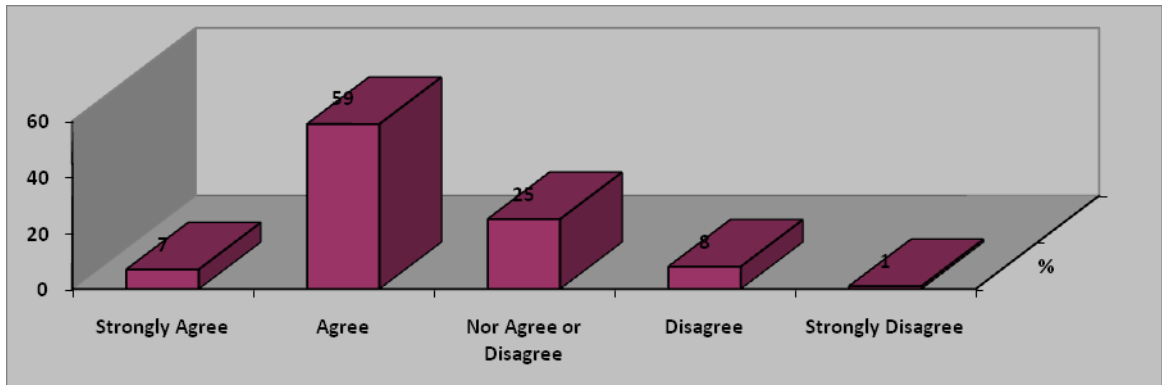
Q – The Council demonstrates a positive attitude towards the health & safety of its employees –

Q – Overall on a scale of 1 to 10 (**1 being poor and 10 being excellent**), how would you rate the implementation of health & safety management at Warwick District Council?-

	1 Poor	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
%	0	3	3	1	17	8	32	29	3	4
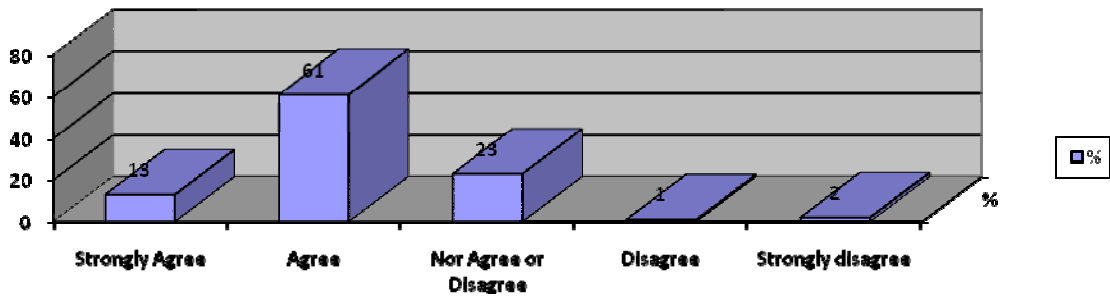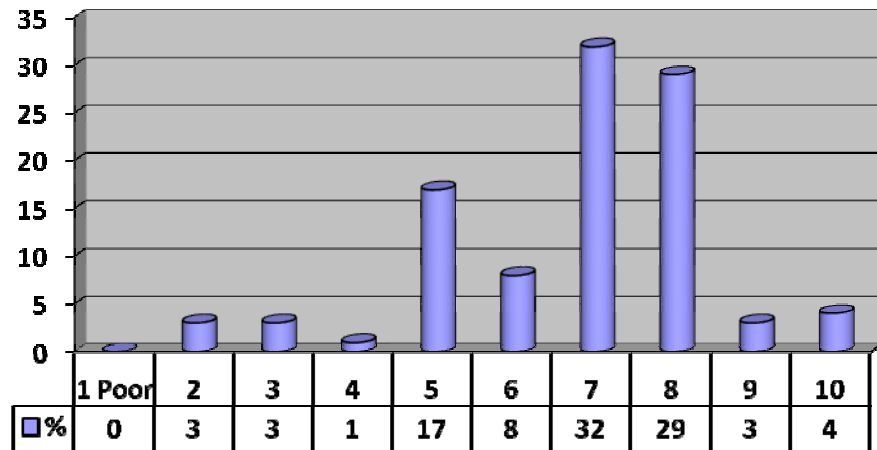
7% of employees said Poor (below 5), 93% gave a view 5 and above

3. TRAINING

3.1 As this is the first Annual Report on Corporate Health & Safety, some figures shown below on number of employees that have received H&S training date back to before 2008/2009* period. The purposes being to also show the numbers trained on subjects that are not yet due to be refreshed:

- Health & Safety Induction   109*
- Tunstall Lone Worker (since start of 2007)   120
- Fire Awareness / Warden   35*
- Manual Handling   41*
- Risk Assessment (since start of 2007)   114
- Assessnet   70*
- DSE Assessment / Training   60*

Stress related training provided by external consultant 2007 - 2008

- Managers Guide to Managing Stress   72
- Wellbeing Workshops   65
- Employee Support Officer   27

Total = 713

4. HEALTH & SAFETY REFERRALS

4.1 From the end of March 08 to mid March 2009 approximately 180 Requests for Service were allocated to the Health & Safety Adviser. These included requests for:

- Risk Assessment advice / assistance
- Advice on / assistance with Safe Systems of Work
- Workstation Assessments
- Staff Alert List referrals
- H&S Inspection assistance
- First Aid enquiries
- Accidents
- Training requests
- Meeting requests
- Advice on H&S Legislation
- Enquiries on general working environment
- Environmental Protection duties

5. ACCIDENTS

5.1 The graphs below summarise the number of significant accidents that have occurred to employees and members of the public. This format will hopefully be useful to all and will allow comparative data to be tracked annually:
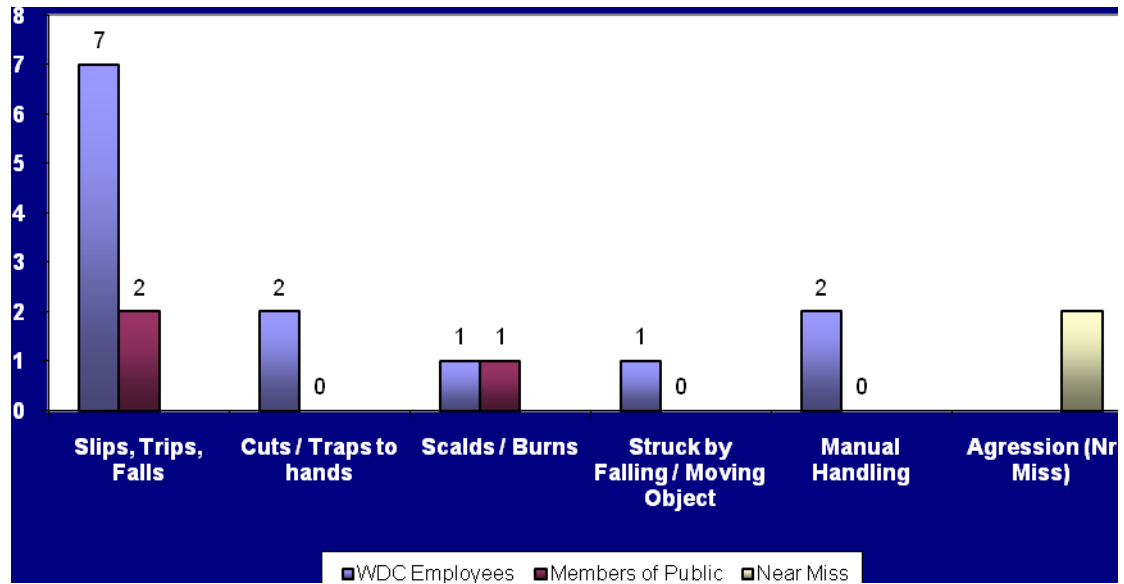
5.2 Total number of accidents 16. Of the above, 13 accidents to WDC Employees 6 were lost time incidents (1 x Manual Handling, 5 x Slips, Trips & Falls) reportable to the HSE as required by the RIDDOR Regulations (Reporting of Incidents, Diseases & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995)

5.3 The RIDDOR accidents above resulted in a total of 124 lost working days. 71 of these days were a result of a broken leg caused by a slip whilst performing a manual handling activity. The other 5 accidents averaged just over 10 days lost time each.

5.4 As shown the vast majority of employee accidents are a result of a slip, trip or fall. Of these accidents, the following was observed:

- 1 x person tripped and fell over obstacle in walkway
- 2 x slipped and fell as a result of wet floor surfaces
- 2 x caused by human factors – (1 x taking unnecessary risk, 1 x not paying attention).

APPENDIX 1

Employee Health & Safety Survey Results - March 2009

Employee Health & Safety Survey – In mid January 09 the survey was displayed on the Council's intranet homepage and remained available for employees to respond until mid March 09.

The questions asked of employees were designed to tap into four key areas of their attitudes towards Warwick District Council's management of Health & Safety.   These four areas were *Perception, Implementation (of policies & procedures), Awareness, General Feedback.* 102 Council employees responded to the survey.

The results of the survey are as follows:

Q – There are effective health & safety management systems in place -
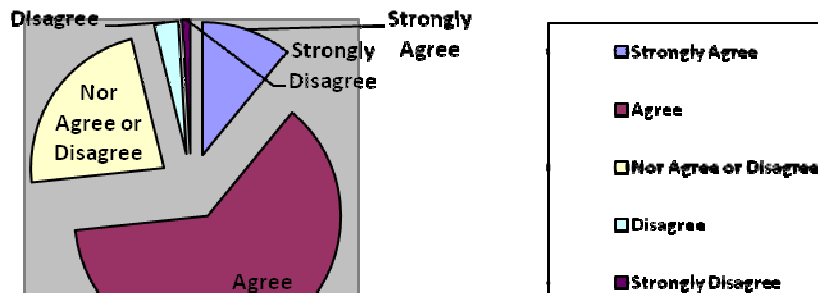
Q – My Line Manager takes his / her responsibility for health & safety seriously –
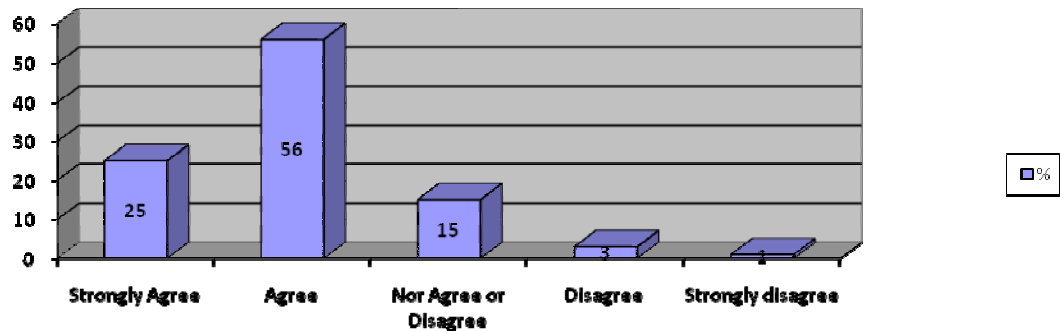
Q – Health & Safety is a high priority when I am performing my responsibilities –
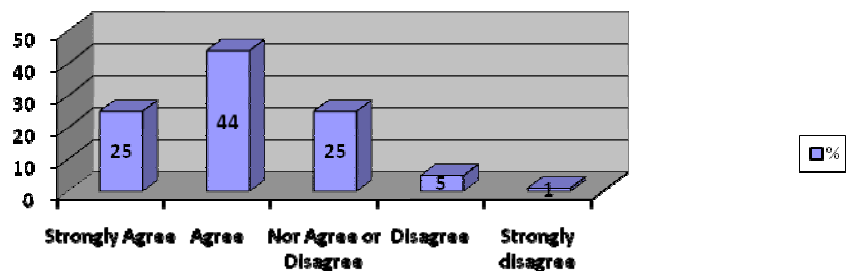
Strongly Agree
Agree
Nor Agree or Disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
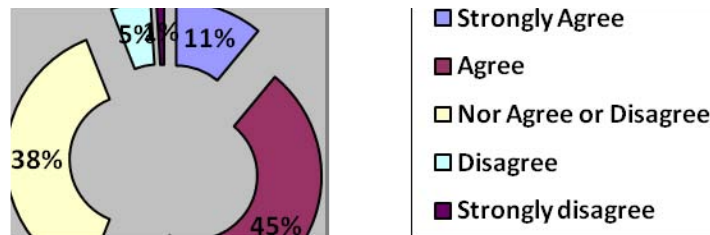
Q – Health & Safety Concerns or hazards are addressed or corrected in a timely manner
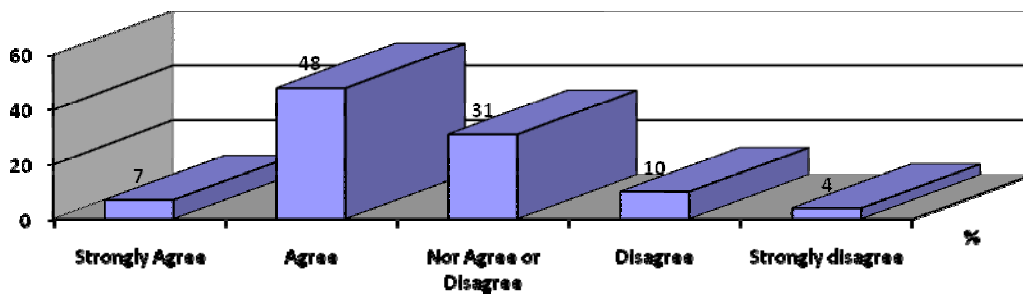
Q – My supervisor / department conduct periodic and effective safety meetings –
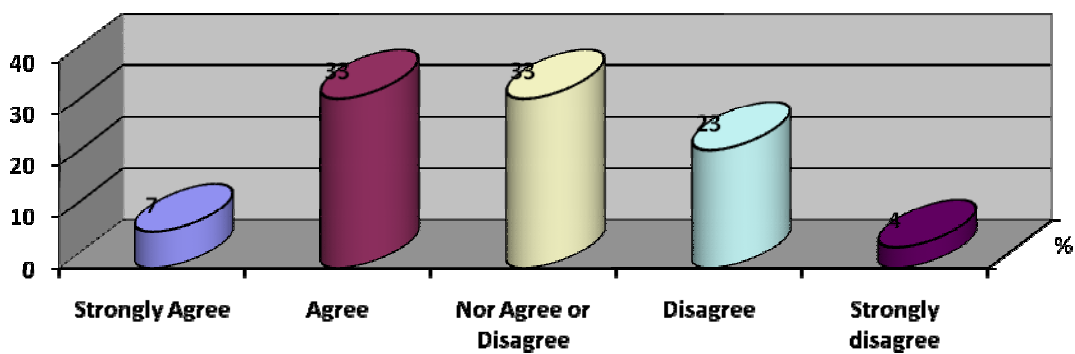
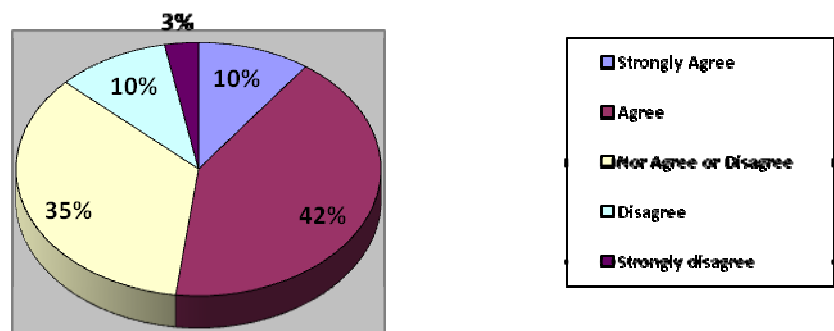Q – I have received appropriate health & safety training (0% strongly disagreed)

Pie chart legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

(6%, 13%, 25%, 56%)

Q – I would benefit from further training

Bar chart:
- Strongly Agree: 3
- Agree: 18
- Nor Agree or Disagree: 48
- Disagree: 27
- Strongly disagree: 4
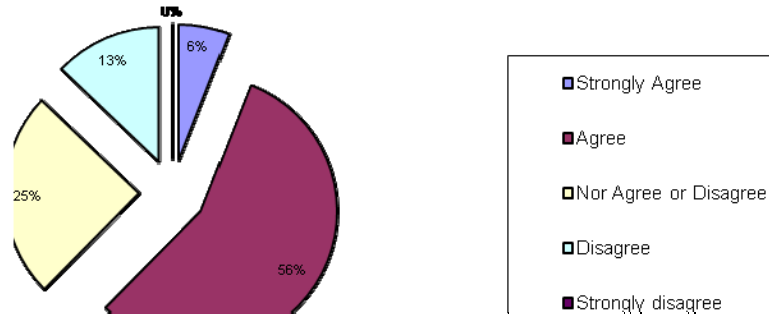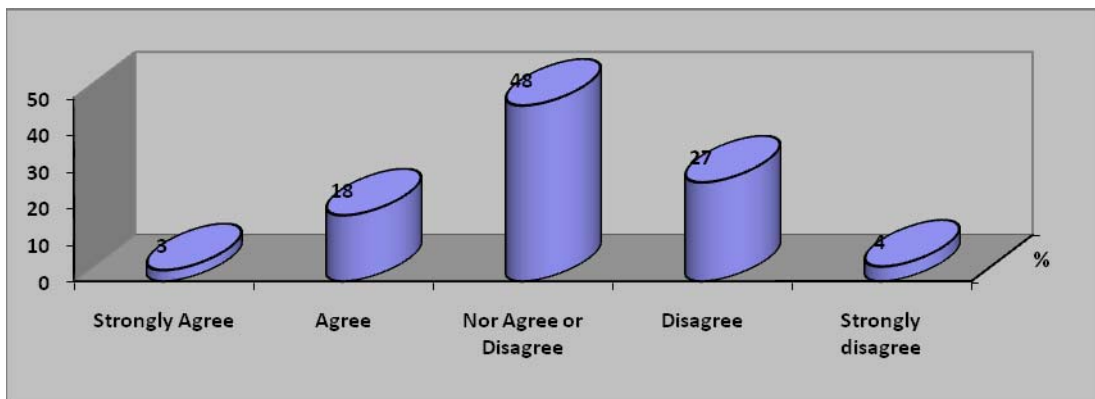
Q – Safety Policies and procedures are reviewed and revised as necessary

Bar chart:
- Strongly Agree: 7
- Agree: 50
- Nor Agree or Disagree: 38
- Disagree: 3
- Strongly disagree: 2
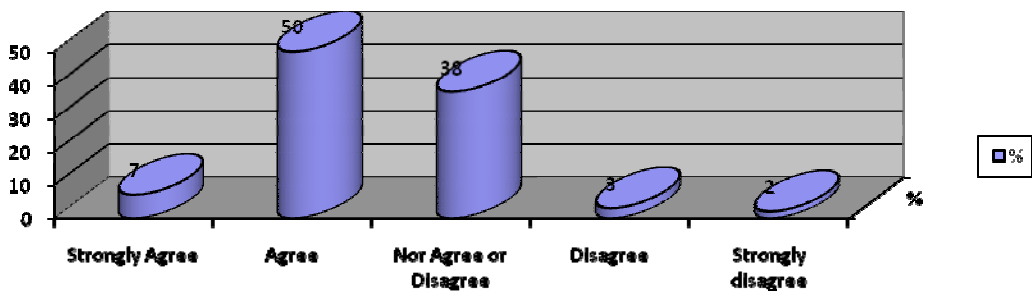
Q – I have opportunities to provide input into the health & safety program

Pie chart:
- 3%
- 10%
- 10%
- 35%
- 42%

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q – Health & Safety Inspections of my work area / department are conducted at regular intervals

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
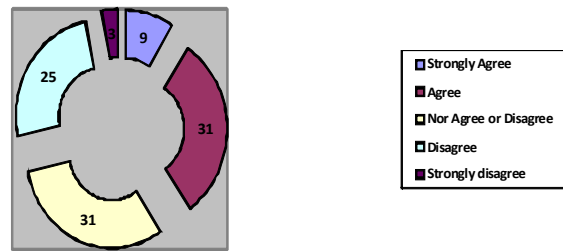
Q – There is enough health & safety representation throughout the Council –

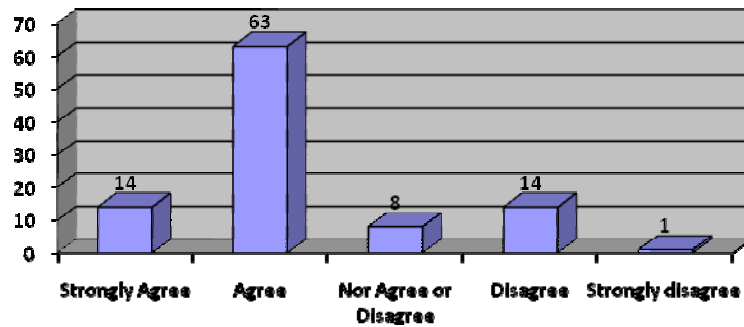Q – The Health & Safety information provided on the intranet is adequate –
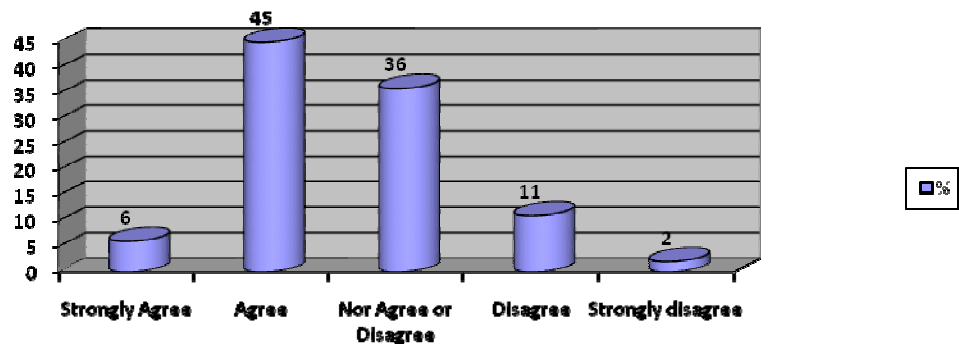
Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
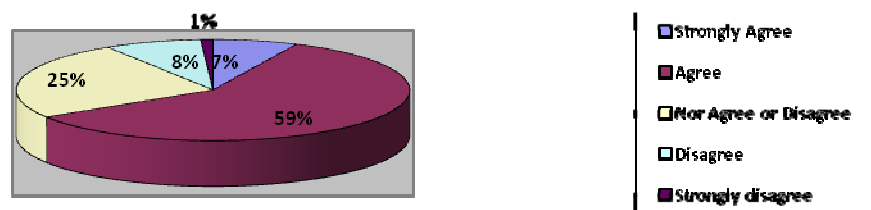
Q – I receive timely responses to queries about health & safety from the Health & Safety Adviser –
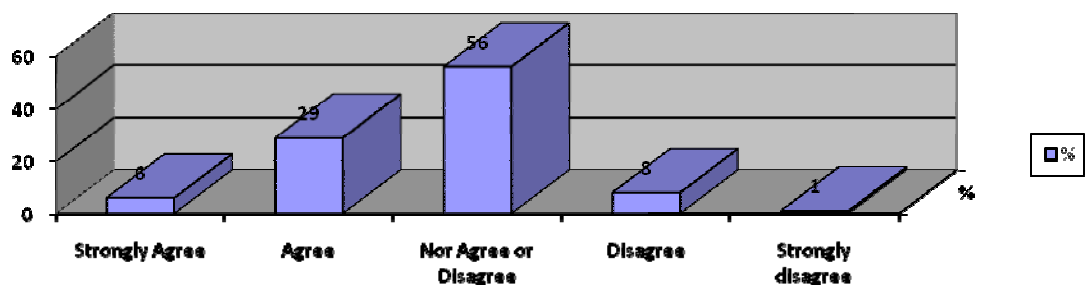
Q – The health & safety rules of the Council have been clearly explained to me –

8% 2% 9%

21%

60%

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
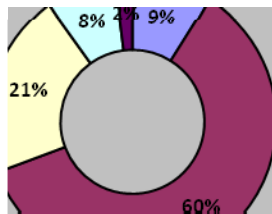
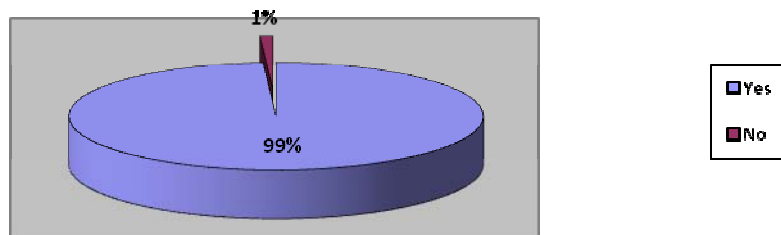Q – I know how to report accidents that happen at work –

Q – I know who to speak to about health & safety concerns that I have –
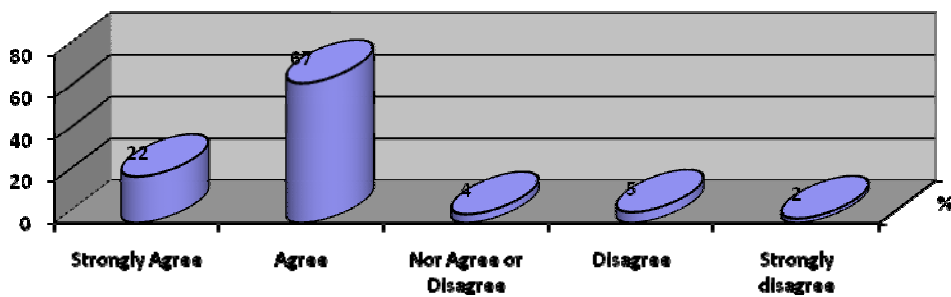
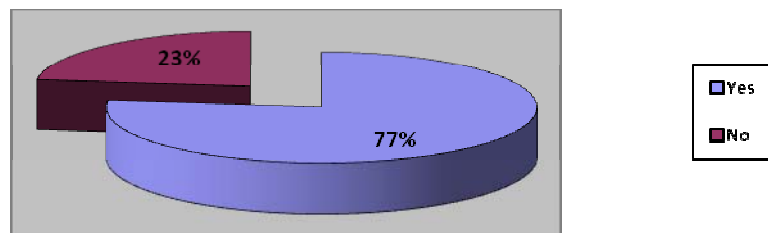Q – If I have a concern about health and safety, and my supervisor in not available, I know who to contact –
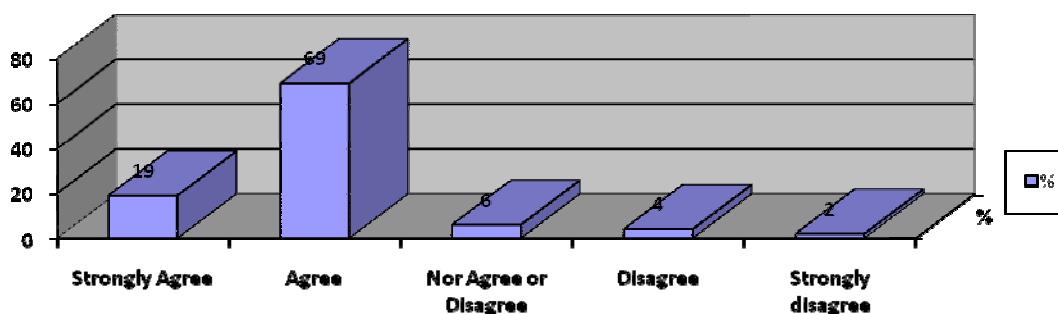
Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
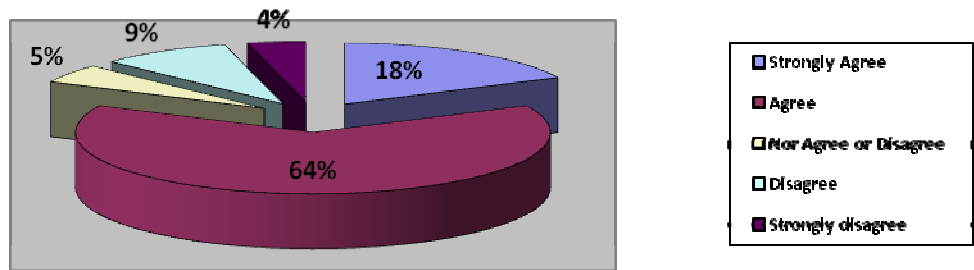
Q – I know what to do in case of emergency (i.e. fire, emergency evacuation etc.) –
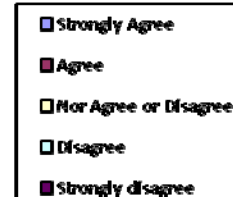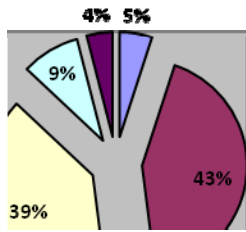

Legend:
- Yes
- No

Q – I know the name of the Council's Health & Safety Adviser and how I can contact him or her–
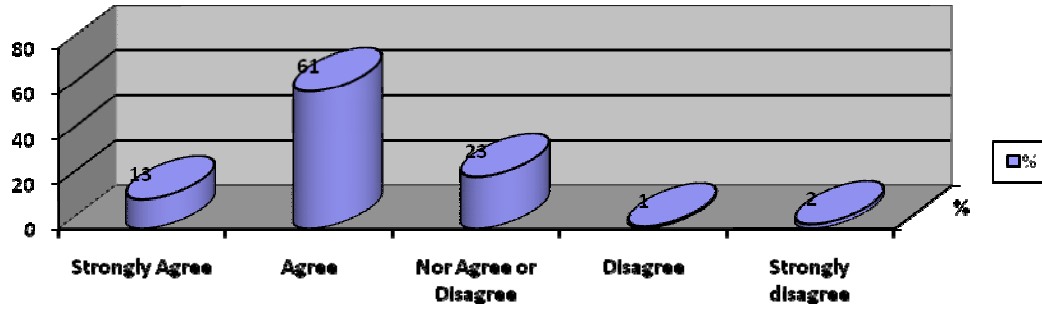

Legend:
- Yes
- No

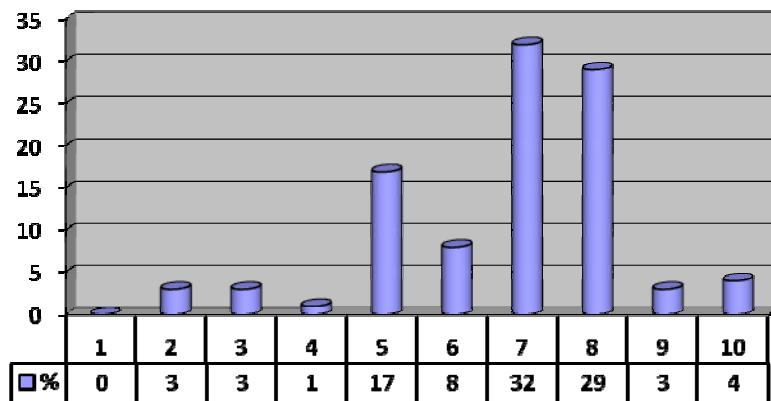Q – I know how to access the Council's intranet health & safety information –

Q – I make use of the health & safety information provided on the intranet–

Legend:
- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Nor Agree or Disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q – The Council demonstrates a positive attitude towards the health & safety of its employees –

Q – Overall on a scale of 1 to 10 (**1 being poor and 10 being excellent**), how would you rate the implementation of health & safety management at Warwick District Council?-

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
%	0	3	3	1	17	8	32	29	3	4

7% of employees said Poor (below 5), 93% gave a view of 5 and above.