



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN,
ON TUESDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 10.00 AM**

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Havard - Chair
Councillor S. Kent - Vice Chair

Councillors:

M. Adams, A. Higgs.

Together with:

D. Jones (Service Manager, Health, Safety and Welfare), E. Townsend (Deputy Health and Safety Manager), T. Phillips (Health and Safety Manager), P. James (Health and Safety Manager), R. Phillips (Asbestos Officer), M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services). S. Hawkins (Community Leisure Officer), S. Wright (Service Manager - Learning Disability/Mental Health), S.M. Kauczok (Committee Services Officer).

Trade Union Representatives:

S. Brassinne (UCATT). N. Funnell (GMB), J.A. Garcia (UNISON).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from D. Andrew Williams (UNITE), Councillor P.J. Bevan and G. Hardacre (Head of HR and Organisational Development).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 17th November 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Arising from discussions at the last meeting on the feasibility of statutory maintenance compliance inspections being undertaken by suitably qualified employees within the Authority, Donna Jones (Service Manager, Health, Safety and Welfare), advised that the Statutory Maintenance Group were exploring the potential of this being progressed.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. RAMIS: STATUTORY MAINTENANCE COMPLIANCE - PRESENTATION

Donna Jones, Service Manager, Health, Safety and Welfare, updated members on information provided at the last meeting of the Committee in November 2014 in relation to RAMIS (Risk Assessment Management Information System), which helps manage its statutory maintenance responsibilities for all of its workplace premises and provides a live record of compliance across all Authority premises, which now includes schools. RAMIS collates all statutory maintenance inspections undertaken by contractors, records all cyclical tasks to be undertaken by CCBC staff and all H&S inspections/audits of buildings. Building Managers receive emails reminding them of tasks due and overdue and reports are generated from the system on compliance.

A significant amount of work is undertaken to ensure the Authority is compliant, for example, electrical testing is undertaken every 5 years, gas safety certificates are required annually and legionella risk assessments are required every 2 years. Regular water quality testing, fire alarm testing and fire fixed alarm wiring testing is also undertaken. In addition fire risk assessments of residential, large corporate buildings and comprehensive schools are undertaken and portable fire fighting equipment is tested on an annual basis. Air conditioning/sprinkler systems are tested annually, emergency lighting six monthly, lifts six monthly, fixed ventilation every 14 months and asbestos surveys are carried out every 3 years.

By means of a Powerpoint presentation, the Committee's attention was drawn to information relating to High Risk Inspections i.e. Electrical reactive tasks, Legionella reactive tasks and Gas Safety reactive tasks. Details were received of the sites inspected together with the number of outstanding tasks as at November 2014 and February 2015. Members were informed that improvements had been made across all three high risk disciplines.

Arising from queries raised during the ensuing discussion, officers advised of the need to engage specialist contractors via the procurement process who have the ability to work with RAMIS and cope with the large volume of work involved. In terms of electrical inspections in schools, it is generally the older buildings that require further investigation and this work is usually scheduled to take place during the school holidays. Tasks are generally updated on RAMIS within the 10 day period but this can take longer if a contractor has a number of tasks to close down on the system.

The Chair thanked officers for the informative presentation and for responding to queries raised.

6. POWERED GATES - HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION UPDATE

Terry Phillips, Health and Safety Manager, updated the Committee on ongoing developments and further inspections arranged by Health and Safety Officers within maintained Caerphilly schools and non Education premises in relation to automatic powered access gates.

It was noted that the Local Authority had found significant issues with powered gates installed at schools and depots. Five of the sites inspected in September 2014 did not comply with the standard guidance of BS EN 12453. Three of these were primary schools, the other two were depot sites. Six of the sites did not have an installation commissioning certificate or report for the gate on site. One had since obtained a certificate. Six of the site inspections revealed that no regular maintenance or servicing contract was in place. Two schools have agreements in place and are awaiting installation snags to be resolved before they sign the maintenance contract. Pressure gate testing had improved significantly with all but one site having up to date pressure tests.

Six of the sites on inspection revealed post installation faults that need rectification. The figure has not improved as schools and sites called in various contractors to undertake remedial improvements and the quotes are on hold pending an independent assessment of all sites. Those schools that did not have maintenance contracts, had not had appropriate pressure tests, or installation was not compliant with BS EN 12453, were instructed to switch the gates to manual and to open and close them manually.

The September reports on the non-compliances that had been passed to the Heads of the respective schools to initiate and rectify, resulted in schools and depots receiving very expensive quotes, some over £5k. When the quotes were reviewed, it was noted that some of the recommended actions e.g. flashing lights and alarms might not have been appropriate in the context of the school setting.

It was noted that the Health and Safety Section and Risk Management, in consultation with Building Consultancy, had decided to commission independent reports (by Gas Safe) for each site. These were completed on 20th and 21st January. Health and Safety will assess the reports when received and send them out to the schools and depots. It will be for the site itself to implement the recommendations and take appropriate remedial action. Further monitoring inspections at schools will be undertaken in the summer term 2015.

Following consideration and discussion, the Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY SUPPORT - SCHOOLS

Donna Jones, Service Manager, Health, Safety and Welfare, gave an overview of changes to Health and Safety support services provided to schools since the beginning of this year.

Since 2009, a Health and Safety SLA has been provided to all schools in Caerphilly. The service provides 5 days Health and Safety officer time. Three of the 5 days per annum are allocated to mandatory inspections, general Health and Safety inspections, Fire Risk Assessment and Health and Safety Audit.

At the beginning of 2014 several primary head teachers expressed a need for a higher level of Health and Safety support for their school. A review was subsequently undertaken and a premium Health and Safety SLA was offered to primary schools.

Since 2009 secondary schools have been provided with an SLA and schools' business managers/bursars have been offered a place on a NEBOSH National General Certificate course. To date 9 out of 11 of the schools have sent officers on the course. Both PFI schools have taken out a bespoke Health and Safety SLA Service, which reflects the split of responsibilities at these schools between the school and the PFI managing agent.

Cwmcarn High School has also been offered a bespoke SLA service to reflect the duties of a Foundation Maintained School. The school is free to engage its own competent Health and Safety advice and to date has not taken up an SLA with the Council's Health and Safety Division. The Council will undertake a two yearly Health and Safety inspection of the school

to ensure a safe learning environment is provided to Caerphilly pupils funded by the Authority as well as to assess the working environment of Council staff allocated to work with specific pupils at the school.

From September 2014 primary schools were offered two options for an increased SLA service. The service provides a named Health and Safety Officer to work with each school. Typical tasks covered by the Premium SLA are listed in paragraph 3.5. Paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 provide details of the level of Health and Safety support offered under Option 1 and 2 and the names of the schools that have taken up the service. Paragraph 3.8 lists the primary schools that have not taken up the Premium H&S SLA but are covered by the 5 day Core H&S SLA.

The Premium SLA commenced in January 2015 and feedback has been very positive. Headteachers have seen a positive effect on their workload and the cost of the SLA is able to be allocated from the school's building maintenance budget. The Council has seen an improvement on statutory maintenance compliance in terms of RAMIS statistics.

During the course of the ensuing discussion, during which questions were raised in terms of the suitability of some of the play equipment used in schools to encourage active learning, officers provided further information on the level of support they provide to schools in terms of health and safety.

Following consideration and discussion, the Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report.

8. INTERIM REPORT - ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS REMOVAL PROGRAMME

The report updated the Committee on progress with asbestos removal in occupied areas of Caerphilly owned schools. In July 2014 Cabinet approved the funding of a project to remove all amosite asbestos containing products from occupied areas of school buildings. This decision committed £800,000 of H&S budgets over two budget years for removal and reinstatement work across 37 schools.

Table 1, paragraph 5.1 in the report provides details of projects where asbestos removal works have been completed and schools re-categorised. Table 3 provides details of schools where work is still to be completed by December 2016. Photographs providing a visual account of schools where work has already been completed and showing the condition of premises before and after the asbestos removal works, were displayed.

Following consideration and discussion, the Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report.

9. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted: -

1. Accident Statistics Report for October - December 2014.
2. Recent HSE Updates.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 29th June 2015, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR