

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON 23RD NOVEMBER 1999 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors:

P.J. Bevan, A.J. Pritchard and H.E. Styles

Together with:

Principal Commercial and Trading Standards Officer, Personnel Manager (Advice and Consultancy), Senior Corporate Health and Safety Officer, Corporate Safety Officers (GN)(SM), Health and Welfare Officer, Environmental Health Student and Committee Services Officer (KW).

Safety Representatives

Admin. Officer (Welfare and Central Support) and Administrative Officer (DL) - Social Services and Housing Directorate

Trade Union Representatives

Mr S. Lane - UNISON
Ms C. A. Childs - UNISON
Mr. D. Quick - MPO
Mr. D. Andrews - TGWU

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillors P.J. Bevan and A.J. Pritchard were appointed as Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs M. Hughes and Mr J. Reece (UCATT), Mrs R. Agg (MPO) and Mr K. Meredith (Safety Officer - Competition Services).

MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 24th February, 1999 were received and noted.

The Committee was informed that in light of the new Cabinet system, the constitution of the Committee needed to be amended. A number of options were considered and it was agreed that opposition members should be invited to attend future meetings. The constitution would then be amended accordingly.

CS2 Violence at Work Policy - Information and Training

The Committee was informed that Personnel Services had issued the Council's Policy on Violence at Work to all Directorates in March 1999. Details of progress made in each Directorate were also provided.

It was noted that a report in respect of establishing a computerised violence warning system or an 'at risk register' had been submitted to Corporate Management Team and that further information was being sought before a final decision was made.

Members and safety representatives felt that it was important that risk assessments were undertaken at Council premises and it was agreed to ask all Directorates to carry out an audit of their 'at risk' areas.

CS3 First Aid at Work Training

The Committee was informed that in order to comply with the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981, employees were required to attend a four day H.S. E. approved course to attain a First Aid qualification. Consideration was then given to the Officer's report which gave details of the courses arranged by the Personnel Services Unit from March to November 1999.

CS4 Infectious Diseases - Scabies

The Committee was informed that the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Section 2 required the Council to ensure that their employees' health was not prejudiced by their work. This included taking such steps that were reasonably practicable to ensure that employees whilst at work, were not exposed to infectious diseases.

In order to meet the Council's obligations under Section 2, an information sheet on 'scabies' had been drawn up and approved by Dr. A. Misir, Consultant/Head of Occupational Health Services who provided the occupational health service to the Authority.

It was noted that a copy of this guidance had been circulated to all Directorates.

CS5 Management of Asbestos

The Officer's report advised the Committee of changes in the legislation governing the management of asbestos in buildings.

The third edition of the Approved Code of Practice on the Control of Asbestos at work Regulations 1987 published earlier this year required the Authority to ensure the health and safety of employees and contractors carrying out maintenance and building work on housing stock and other premises under its control.

In order to achieve this it would be necessary to research existing plans of premises and to undertake surveys of all buildings in order to identify the presence, type and condition of asbestos.

Once found, a decision on how to treat the material could then be made. If the asbestos was to remain in place, appropriate details should be kept at individual premises and made available to employees or contractors working in the building.

In order to comply with the regulations it would be necessary to ensure -

- (a) that existing records are traced and a corporate property register produced;
- (b) that a programme of surveys be undertaken of premises in which asbestos is likely to be found;
- (c) that a building log/register be kept for each premises which identifies where asbestos is located within the building.

The Committee noted that the Corporate Safety Unit would be preparing a paper on the financial implications of these requirements for Corporate Management Team.

CS6 Health and Safety Audits

The Officer's report advised the Committee of the inspection and audit regime used by Officers of the Corporate Safety Unit. It was noted that the Corporate Safety Unit had entered into Service Level Agreements with each of the Directorates under the terms of which it carried out a number of duties both corporate and non-corporate. One of the services provided was the periodic inspection of premises and audit of work activities to ensure that each directorate complied with legislative requirements.

This work was prioritised on a risk assessment basis and every month staff were presented with a randomly selected list of premises from the computerised data bank which would be the subject of examination.

Reports containing recommendations for improvements are then be forwarded to appropriate managers.

CS7 Action Against Industrial Deafness

The report advised the Committee of the work being carried out in an effort to reduce the incidence of work induced deafness amongst industrial staff.

It was noted that in addition to the existing programme of noise monitoring, the Council had also undertaken an audiometric testing programme for employees working in noisy environments. The results of the programme had allowed areas in which problems had been identified to be prioritised for the purposes of noise monitoring.

CS8 European Week of Safety and Health

It was noted that as a contribution to the above event, the Council had arranged a series of half day seminars entitled 'Awareness of Noise and Damage to Hearing' delivered by Mr D.G. Bull of Colchester Institute for 100 supervisory staff and invited guests.

It was anticipated that next year similar seminars would be arranged for the workforce and trade union representatives.

CS9 Accident Statistics

Environmental & Housing Scrutiny Committee - 7th December 1999
Resources Scrutiny Committee - 9th December 1999

Consideration was given to the Officer's report which included tables which detailed the numbers and types of industrial accidents which had occurred to staff, school pupils, clients of services provided by the Council and members of the public and which had been associated with the activities of the Council during the period 1st April 1998 - 31st March 1999.

It was noted that on an annual basis, the Corporate Safety Unit would prepare a report on the performance of each Directorate on a month to month comparison. When appropriate, these statistics would then be compared with the previous two years, to identify accident trends or possible weaknesses in safe working practices or control measures. In addition, a half yearly report would be presented following collation of the statistics for the period 1st April - 30th September of any year.

Meeting closed at 11.10 a.m.