

# CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON THURSDAY, 10TH JULY 2003 AT 10.00 A.M.

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PRESENT:

Councillors:

H.A. Andrews, P.J. Bevan, A.J. Pritchard, H.E. Styles and D.T. Wiltshire

Together with:

R. Gough (Personnel Manager – Standards and Development), Ms H. Hortrop (Occupational Health Nurse), P. Griffiths (Senior Corporate Safety Officer), Ms E. Thomas (Personnel Manager), Ms D. Llewellyn (Health, Safety and Back Care Adviser – Social Services), M. Miller (Refuse/Cleansing), G. Richards (Network Contracting) and Mrs K. Wall (Committee Services Officer)

#### Trade Union Representatives

B. Barrowman, J. Reece, N. Short, L.V. Horrocks, J. Poole, D.A. Williams and A. Jones.

#### APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.C.W. Bailie, Mrs Hughes, M. Workman (Commercial Services Manager), D. Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer), P. Neale (Health, Safety and Welfare Officer), D. Griffiths (Insurance and Risk Manager), M. Lloyd (Network Contracting Manager), T. White (Refuse and Cleansing Manager) and M. Payne (GMB).

#### 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

Councillor P.J. Bevan was elected as Chairman and Councillor A.J. Pritchard as Vice Chairman for the ensuing year.

#### 2. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Councillor H.A. Andrews and Ms. Hortrop (Occupational Health Nurse) to their first meeting of the Committee.

#### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

#### 4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

[Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Safety Committee held on 24th April 2003](#)

#### 5. MATTER ARISING

##### (a) The Management of Asbestos (minute number 8, page 3)

A Trade Union representative referred to the fact that an employee in Building Maintenance with appropriate asbestos training/qualifications was still employed on a temporary contract and he enquired whether any progress had been made in resolving this issue and in providing asbestos training for other members of staff.

Mr Gough (Personnel Manager – Standards and Development) noted the comments made and agreed to 'chase up' up the issues raised.

#### REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Consideration was given to the following reports –

#### 6. Advice and Guidance Issued by the Health and Safety Executive

The report updated the Committee in respect of the following recent advice and guidance issued by the Health and Safety Executive –

- Use of contractors – advice aimed at clients and their relationship with the contractors engaged to carry out work for them, outlining the contractual responsibilities of both parties and the measures necessary to comply with health and safety legislation
- Revised BI 510 Accident Book – as a result of the Data Protection Act 1998, personal details recorded in accident books must be kept confidential – consequently the books had been re-designed so that record sheets could be removed and stored securely
- Approved Code of Practice – The Control of Legionella Bacteria in Water Systems

During consideration of the report, a Trade Union representative referred to incidents where risk assessments had not been undertaken and where in his opinion, Building Maintenance DLO staff had been put at risk and he made particular reference to cases where ladders had been used instead of scaffolding.

The Committee noted the concerns expressed and it was agreed that a report would be submitted to the next meeting.

#### 7. Enforcement Action by the Health and Safety Executive

The report advised the Committee of enforcement action taken against the authority by the Health and Safety Executive.

Following a visit to a construction site at Newbridge Comprehensive School, where the Building Maintenance DLO had been undertaking work, two Enforcement Notices had been served on the authority.

A Prohibition Notice had been served in respect of a lack of edge protection on tower scaffolding and other elevated workplaces on the site. However, it was noted that remedial work to replace guardrails, previously removed to build a ramp, had been completed by the following working day, thus obviating the terms of the Notice.

An Improvement Notice requiring site foremen to receive further instruction in health and safety site management had also been served.

In response to this Notice, an appropriate course had been identified and arrangements made for ten supervisors and foremen who undertook contract work to receive instruction during July. In addition, a course designed to equip foremen and supervisors to inspect scaffolding had been arranged.

The Committee noted the report and acknowledged the efficient manner in which remedial works and the required training had been arranged following service of the Notices.

## **8. The Review of the Council's Health and Safety Advisory Service**

An external audit of Personnel Services and a Risk Management Review of the Council carried out by the authority's insurance brokers had recommended that the Council's method of providing a health and safety service should be reviewed.

As a consequence, a Working Group led jointly by Messrs S. Delahaye (Chief Trading Standards Officer) and J. Wakley (Head of Personnel Services) had been established to review the current provision and recommend improvements.

It was noted that part of the Group's brief would be to canvass the opinions of managers, sections of the workforce and Trade Union representatives to gauge their perceptions of the current arrangements and that the recommendations of the Group were expected later in the year.

## **9. The Safe Management of Asbestos**

The report provided an update in respect of the programme to ensure that asbestos, contained in workplaces owned and occupied by the authority was managed safely.

Details of the surveys already undertaken in the authority's eighty primary schools was provided and the Committee was informed that secondary schools and leisure centres were currently being surveyed.

The Committee noted the information provided and members were also pleased to note that training sessions had been arranged for building managers and officers likely to come into contact with asbestos during their normal work.

## **10. The Use of Mobile Phones by Drivers**

A previous report submitted to the Committee in November 2002 had recommended the prohibition of mobile phones by drivers, whilst a vehicle was in motion.

However, the Building Maintenance DLO had recently purchased a number of 'plug and go' handsfree kits that could be set to answer calls automatically. To activate the system, a driver needed only to give a verbal acknowledgement of an incoming call before receiving a simple short message, following which the connection would automatically be terminated. Mr Griffiths (Senior Corporate Safety Officer) also advised the Committee that the refuse collection

service had installed a similar 'one touch' automatic system in their vehicles

It was considered that the use of these systems was unlikely to distract a driver and that its use to send short messages would be less likely to impair a driver's concentration following a call.

For these reasons, the Committee recommended that the advice to drivers be amended so as to permit those using automatic voice activated equipment to receive short messages only, whilst still prohibiting making calls by all other drivers, and that staff contacting vehicles fitted with automatic telephone systems be directed to give short, clear instructions to drivers when it was necessary to contact them as a matter of urgency.

During consideration of this issue, a Trade Union representative made reference to the authority's policy on the use of Council mobile phones and expressed his concern about the clause that stated that employees would be liable to pay for any lost equipment.

Mr. Gough noted the concerns expressed and agreed to examine the wording of the policy.

#### **11. Fire at Trinity Fields School, Ystrad Mynach**

The report advised the Committee of the circumstances surrounding a recent fire that occurred at Trinity Fields School on 10th June.

The report was noted and the Chairman and Committee members praised staff and pupils at the school for their speedy evacuation of the building.

#### **12. Accident Statistics**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the numbers and types of industrial accidents that had occurred to staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council during the period 1st January 2003 to 31st March 2003 and provided a comparison with the figures for this comparable period in 2001 – 2002.

### **REPORTS OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Consideration was given to the following reports –

#### **13. Health at Work – The Corporate Standard**

The Committee was informed that the authority had gained a silver award for workplace health promotion.

Mr Gough also explained that work was now progressing on an Employee Health Strategy and it was hoped that the draft document would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration.

The Committee was pleased to note that the authority had gained this award and the Chairman undertook to send a letter of congratulations to those involved in the process.

#### **14. Young Workers and the Law**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the controls in place to ensure the safety of young people at work.

**15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held at the Council Offices, Tredomen on Thursday, 23rd October 2003 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 11.10 a.m.