

# CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON THURSDAY, 23RD OCTOBER 2003 AT 10.00 A.M.

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PRESENT:

Councillor P.J. Bevan - Chairman  
Councillor A.J. Pritchard - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

H.A. Andrews, P.C.W. Bailie, Mrs M.E. Hughes, H.E. Styles and D.T. Wiltshire.

Together with:

M. Workman (Principal Commercial and Trading Standards Officer), P. Griffiths (Senior Corporate Safety Officer), R. Gough (Personnel Manager – Standards and Development), Ms. E. Thomas (Personnel Manager), D. Llewellyn (Health, Safety and Back Care Adviser – Social Services), Ms. H. Hortop (Occupational Health Nurse), P.V. Neale (Health, Safety and Welfare Officer), M. Miller (Refuse/Cleansing) and Mrs. K. Wall (Committee Services Officer).

**Trade Union Representatives:**

A. Jones, A.J. Reece, N. Short, J. Poole, L. Horrocks, A. Morton and B. Barrowman.

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from T. White (Recycling/Litter Officer), G. Price (Health and Safety Officer Education and Leisure), G. Richards (Senior Assistant Engineer) and J. Hogan (SHA).

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **2. MINUTES**

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

Minutes of the last meeting of the Corporate Safety Committee held on 10th July 2003.

### **3. MATTER ARISING**

#### **(a) Minute No. 5(a) – The Management of Asbestos**

At the last meeting, reference was made to the fact that an employee in Building Maintenance with appropriate asbestos training/qualifications was only employed on a temporary basis. It was reported that a business case was currently being made to make the post permanent and it was agreed that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

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

### **4. Consultation on the Effectiveness of the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981**

The Committee noted the report that provided information on the Health and Safety Executive's first ever review of the effectiveness of the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981.

### **5. First Aid At Work Training**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the first aid courses arranged by the Health, Safety and Welfare Officer from April 2003 to October 2003.

### **6. Stress Management In the Workplace**

The Committee noted the report that outlined details of the actions taken by the authority to meet the Health and Safety Executive's requirements in respect of management of stress in the workplace.

### **7. Manual Handling Policy**

Consideration was given to the report that outlined progress made in developing a Corporate Manual Handling Policy for the authority.

The Committee was reminded that the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992 had been in force since 1st January 1993 and that since then there had not been a corporate policy on manual handling in place within the authority.

A Corporate Manual Handling Policy had therefore been drawn up to reflect the Council's commitment to the health and safety of its employees and to clarify each individual's duties in order to reduce risks from manual handling to the lowest reasonably practicable level in accordance with current legislation and best practice and it was noted that a key part of the policy involved the appointment of a Back Care Adviser.

Following consideration, the Committee approved the draft Manual Handling Policy as attached to the Officer's report.

### **8. Manual Handling Passport**

Consideration was given to the report that informed the Committee of the advice and guidance issued recently by the Welsh Local Government Association and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in respect of the Manual Handling Passport scheme.

Following consideration, the Committee adopted the Manual Handling Passport as detailed in the report to demonstrate the Council's commitment to the health and safety of its employees.

## **REPORTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

### **9. The Constitution of the Corporate Safety Committee**

Consideration was given to the report that proposed changes to the constitution of the Corporate Safety Committee to reflect the Council's change to a Cabinet style of governance

and changes in Directorates.

During discussion, Officers asked the Committee to note that an additional objective relating to the need to produce an annual Health and Safety Report would need to be included in Section 2. A Committee member also referred to the current composition of the Committee and asked if Headteachers could be included.

This comment was noted and it was further agreed that the views of the Monitoring Officer would be sought on the proposed changes and an update provided at the next meeting.

#### **10. Employees Health and Safety Handbook**

The Committee was informed that the Corporate Safety Unit was currently developing a staff handbook in an effort to standardise the health and safety information available to employees. A considerable amount of work had been undertaken on the designated content of the handbook, but before progressing further, there was need for consultation with interested parties to ensure that the handbook covered every aspect of the Council's business.

To progress production of the handbook, it was therefore agreed to set up a Working Party comprising Management, Trade Unions and Safety Liaison Officers.

#### **11. Hot Air Balloon Festival**

The Committee noted the report that provided information in respect of the Corporate Safety Unit's involvement in the Hot Air Balloon Festival held at Blackwood Showfield in August.

The Chairman and other members of the Committee complimented all staff involved in making the event such a success.

#### **12. Revitalising Health and Safety**

The report provided the Committee with information in respect of an audit carried out by the Corporate Safety Unit of the authority's response to the HSE's initiative on Revitalising Health and Safety.

The HSE had recently contacted each local authority and asked them to consider their plan for revitalising health and safety.

In response the Corporate Safety Unit had carried out an internal audit covering the points raised by the HSE and had developed a checklist covering the following areas:-

- The Corporate Health and Safety Policy and its relationship with Directorate and Service Health and Safety policies
- The Council's organisation for Health and Safety
- The means of implementing the policies

The Committee noted and approved the checklist, position statements and action plan attached to the report and thanked Officers for the work undertaken to date.

#### **13. Action By The Enforcing Authorities**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of visits to Council premises by officers of the HSE and the resultant actions taken.

**14. Big Cheese**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the Corporate Safety Unit's involvement in the Big Cheese.

The Chairman and other members congratulated staff on their involvement in the event.

**15. Guidance on Teleworking**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the joint report by the Confederation of British Industry, Trades Union Congress and the Employers Organisation for Local Government in respect of teleworking.

**16. Safety Representatives Concerns**

At the last meeting, a Trade Union representative made reference to incidents where risk assessments had not been undertaken and where, in his opinion, Building Maintenance staff had been put at risk. Particular reference was also made to instances where ladders had been used instead of scaffolding.

The Building Maintenance Working Group had subsequently discussed the issues raised and had acknowledged that there had been a shortfall in the number and quality of risk assessments covering their work, which could affect the safety of some staff in given work situations.

It was noted however, that in recent months, a great deal of work had been carried out within Building Maintenance with assistance from the Corporate Safety Unit to address this anomaly and it was hoped that this work would effectively minimise the risks to staff.

With respect to the use of ladders in preference to scaffolding, discussions between the Head of Building Maintenance and the Senior Estimator aimed at reducing the use of ladders was progressing.

The Committee noted the report and it was agreed that an update would be provided at the next meeting.

**17. Hand/Arm Vibration Syndrome**

The Committee noted the report that outlined details of proposed measures to reduce the incidence of Hand/Arm Vibration Syndrome amongst the workforce.

**18. 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 April 2003 to 31st June 2003

The meeting closed at 11.35 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN