

# CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## CORPORATE SAFETY COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON MONDAY, 22ND JANUARY 2004 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, H.E. Styles and D.T. Wiltshire

Together with:

R. Gough (Personnel Manager – Standards and Development), P. Neale (Health, Safety and Welfare Officer), M. Workman (Commercial Services Manager), P. Griffiths (Senior Corporate Safety Officer), T. White (Refuse and Cleansing Officer), Ms D. Llewellyn (Health, Safety and Back Care Adviser – Social Services) and Mrs. K. Wall (Committee Services Officer)

**Trade Union Safety Representatives**

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

Also present - Councillor K.P. Viney (Cabinet Member for the Environment)

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.C.W. Bailie and Mrs M.E. Hughes, S. Davies (SHA) and R. Webb (Director of the Environment), S. Delahaye (Chief Trading Standards Officer), Mrs H. Hortop (Occupational Health Nurse), Ms E. Thomas (Personnel Manager) and D. Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer).

### **1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 23rd October 2003 were received and noted.

### **2. MATTERS ARISING**

(a) **The Management of Asbestos (Minute no 3(a), Page no 1)**

It was reported that the arrangements to permanently appoint the member of staff in Building Maintenance with asbestos training/qualifications, would soon be finalised.

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

### **3. Employee Survey**

The Committee was informed that an Employee Survey had been undertaken during the period September – October 2003 and had been sent to just under 5000 non-School based employees.

Just over 1800 responses had been received and the report before the Committee highlighted the results relating to health and safety issues.

The Committee noted the report.

#### **4. Occupational Health Provision**

The Committee was informed that occupational health provision in the authority had been reviewed and a new occupational health specification had been drawn up and agreed by Personnel Managers.

A copy of the tender documents sent to fourteen providers of occupational health had been included in the agenda papers and the Committee noted the information provided.

#### **5. Hand Arm Vibration Policy**

Consideration was given to the report that included a copy of the draft Hand Arm Vibration Policy. The Committee commended the authority for its actions in producing such a policy and several of the Trade Union representatives particularly welcomed the introduction of regular screening for employees using high vibration equipment.

#### **6. First Aid Training**

The Committee noted details of the First Aid courses that had been arranged since the last meeting.

#### **7. New HSE Accident Book**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the new HSE Accident Book, which allowed accidents to be recorded, while keeping details of individuals in a separate location to comply with the Data Protection legislation.

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

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

At the last meeting, consideration had been given to a report suggesting amendments to the Committee's Constitution. Members supported the proposed amendments, but also agreed that the views of the Monitoring Officer should be sought.

The Monitoring Officer had subsequently suggested a number of minor alterations and these had been incorporated in a revised version of the Constitution, which was included in the agenda papers.

Following consideration of the proposed alterations, the Committee approved the revised Constitution as outlined in Appendix 1 of the report.

#### **9. Actions and Enquiries by the Enforcement Authorities**

The Committee noted the report that provided information in respect of recent incidents, which had interested the Health and Safety Executive and the Fire Authority.

## **10. Health and Safety Liaison Officer Group**

The Committee was informed that the Corporate Safety Unit had fourteen Service Level Agreements with the various Directorates or Service Areas of the Council, and in order to keep each client informed about the work of the Unit, ensure consistency and interpretation of legislation and to receive their comments or requests for information or assistance, the Unit met representatives of all client groups on a quarterly basis in the Health and Safety Liaison Officer Group meetings.

These meetings also provided an opportunity for all matters relating to health and safety to be discussed by managers and full time practitioners.

The Committee welcomed the fact that such meetings were being held and noted the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Group held on 16th December 2003.

## **11. Corporate Health and Safety Training**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of corporate health and safety courses that were being provided for various levels of management. During discussion, the Trade Union representatives reported that they had been involved in the training courses and they thanked the Committee for providing them with this opportunity.

## **12. Transport Issues at Council Premises**

Consideration was given to the report that outlined details of the legal requirement to ensure pedestrian safety in and around workplaces.

Regulation 17 of the Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992 required that where vehicles and pedestrians used the same traffic routes, the safety of pedestrians should be maintained by ensuring sufficient separation from vehicles.

It was noted that some work on ensuring the safety of pedestrians had already taken place at Ystrad Fawr, where a pathway from the main gate to the Cenotaph and a pedestrian crossing from that point to the front doors had been installed some time ago.

A more detailed draft transport management plan had also been produced for the Tiryberth Depot last year, although little progress had been possible to date. It was noted however, that the next meeting of the Depot Management Group was expected to address the issue.

Several members of the Committee expressed their concerns about the dangers to pedestrians at the Tiryberth Depot and it was agreed that a full report outlining the proposed improvements would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

## **13. Health and Safety Policy Review Working Group**

The Committee noted that a Working Group had been established to review, rewrite and update the authority's existing Health and Safety policies and that following this review, new and revised policies would be submitted to future meetings of the Committee for approval.

## **14. The Management of Asbestos**

The Committee noted the report that provided an update in respect of progress made in the surveying and monitoring of asbestos in Council operated buildings and the introduction of an asbestos management system.

Several Trade Union representatives thanked the authority for taking notice of the concerns expressed previously by members of the Committee and welcomed the ongoing asbestos management-training programme.

## **15. Proposed Legislation**

Consideration was given to the report that provided details of proposed legislation, based on the Temporary Works at Height Directive, that aimed to reduce the number of deaths and major injuries caused from falls from height and to assist in realising one of the Health and Safety Commission's priorities to reduce fatalities and major injuries by 10% by 2010.

It was noted that under the proposed legislation, ladders could only be used for work at height if a risk assessment had demonstrated that the use of a more suitable work equipment was not justified because of the low risk and:-

- (i) the short duration of use or,
- (ii) existing features on site which could not be altered

Some of the Trade Union representatives made reference to the fact that ladders were often used to undertake emergency and urgent jobs and they stated that Management had taken away two men jobs, as clients were reluctant to pay the increased costs. The Committee discussed the dangers this practice posed to workmen and the Chairman and the Cabinet Member for the Environment agreed to draw it to the attention of Mr Couzens (Head of Building Maintenance).

## **16. Revitalising Health and Safety within Caerphilly**

The Committee was informed that following the Best Value Review of Personnel Services, it was agreed that a review of the provision of health and safety throughout the authority would be undertaken and specifically 'a review of health and safety management activity to ensure that the systems and approaches are co-ordinated and cost effective'.

The Terms of Reference of the review had been agreed and a Review Panel had also been established to consider the current situation and to make recommendations to Corporate Management Team.

The report provided a summary of the Review Panel's conclusions and the Committee noted the information provided.

## **17. Safety Representatives Concerns**

At the last meeting, a trade union safety representative had expressed concern about increases in risk to members of Building Services staff because of a lack of risk assessments and the selection of ladders in preference to scaffolding.

In order to address these concerns, the Building Maintenance Health and Safety Policy and risk assessments relating to the work of the service had recently been reviewed and were due to be issued on 1st February.

Area Managers had also been instructed to police the risk assessment process, within their spheres of operation on a daily basis so that safe systems of work could be determined and the requirement to use scaffolding instead of ladders could be addressed at that time.

It was noted that the above measures were likely to improve the number and quality of risk assessments available and result in an increased use of scaffolding, thereby lessening risks for Building Maintenance staff.

**18. River of Light Procession**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the measures taken to ensure the health and safety of participants in the River of Light Procession held in Caerphilly on 18th December.

**19. Accident Statistics**

The Committee noted the report that provided details of the numbers and types of industrial accidents, which had occurred to staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council during the period 1st July to 30th September 2003.

**20. Dates of Future Meetings**

The following schedule of meetings was agreed -

Monday, 19th April 2004 at 10.00 a.m. at the Council Offices, Tredomen  
Wednesday, 14th July 2004 at 10.00 a.m. at the Council Offices, Tredomen  
Wednesday, 13th October 2004 at 10.00 a.m. at the Council Offices, Tredomen  
Wednesday, 12th January 2005 at 10.00 a.m. at the Council Offices, Tredomen

The meeting closed at 11.30 a.m.

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CHAIRMAN