



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN
ON WEDNESDAY, 12TH APRIL 2006 AT 10.00 A.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Wiltshire – Chairman

Councillors:

J.O. Evans and A.J. Pritchard

Together with:

S. Delahaye (Head of Public Protection), K. Rogers (Senior Health and Safety Officer), A. Williams (Building Services – Client Manager), D. Llewellyn (Senior Health and Safety Officer- Social Services), H. Hortop (Occupational Health Nurse), Dr. P. Roberts (Back Care Advisor), A. Powell (Health and Safety Officer), D. Jones (Senior Health and Safety Officer – Education and Leisure), P. Neale and K. Meredith (Health Safety and Welfare Officers), D. Price (Principal Parks & Open Spaces Officer), B. Miller (Health and Safety Support Assistant), T. White (Refuse and Cleansing Officer), P. Griffiths (Senior Health & Safety Officer– Environment) and D. Phillips (Committee Services Officer).

Trade Union Representatives: J. Poole, A. Morton and Ms. G. Taylor.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan and L.R. Rees, R. Webb (Director of the Environment), A. Heaney (Assistant Director – Social Services), M. Meeson (Building Consultancy Manager) and A. Young (Client Manager), Ms. E. Thomas (Principal Personnel Officer), Mrs. J. Havard, M. Payne and J. Toner (Trade Union Representatives).

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED that subject to the change of representation to Unison for Mr. A. Morton and job title for Ms. K. Rogers to Senior Health and Safety Officer (minute 6) the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 11th January 2006.

2. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed new members to the meeting and also reported that Mrs. Emma Townsend had sent thanks to the committee for the gift and well wishes following the recent birth of her son.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports:-

3. Manual Handling Report

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers and Back Care Advisor, P. Roberts gave a joint presentation to the committee on Manual Handling in conjunction with a written report.

The presentation and report provided an overview of the current position with regard to manual handling within the authority and dealt specifically with:-

- Manual handling accident trends
- Information on current accident claims relating to manual handling
- Implementation of the All Wales Manual Handling Passport Scheme.

It was reported that due to the nature of the activities the authority carry out, manual handling accidents will occur and therefore these activities must be properly managed.

Reference was also made to the following:

- Employee Liability Claims- it was noted that employees have three years following an accident to register an Employee Liability Claim.
- All Wales Manual Handling Passport and Training Information Scheme - 'The Passport' – to ensure consistency of manual handling training and risk assessment.
- Provision of Training to 'Passport Standard' to be provided by external providers – (St. John Ambulance Wales and Back Action Training and Consultancy).
- Training to be provided to identified high-risk categories and received by 1st January 2007 (approximately 3,000 employees) – low risk employees will receive training as soon as all high risk staff are trained.
- Funding for implementation of the 'Passport' has been identified as £340,000 and £26,273 has been spent to date on training.
- Key Handlers (Train the Trainer) will be able to provide a basic level of in-house training in their respective departments.
- The Manual Handling Policy is presently in draft form (available on the intranet) and currently undergoing consultation with various equality groups.

Appendix 1 attached to the written report illustrated the percentage of accidents that were due to manual handling and it was noted that 44% of all accidents across the authority were due to manual handling activities.

Appendix 2 focuses on the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulation (RIDDOR) which have occurred and are reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) between 2003 and September 2005. It was reported that 61% of all RIDDOR reported incidences during this period were attributed to manual handling injuries and the majority to employees within the Directorate of the Environment.

Appendix 3 contains examples of the reportable injuries that have occurred and Appendix 4 details of employee's liability claims. Appendix 5 detailed identified Manual Handling Training Requirements, Appendix 6 illustrated training across the directorates and Appendix 7 the numbers of employees trained to date and numbers left to be trained.

The evidence illustrated that manual handling is a priority area for the authority and proactive action will be taken to ensure that associated risks are reduced to a level that is as low as is reasonably practical.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the presentation and a member congratulated staff on

the level of training and commitment to addressing manual handling.

4. Accident Statistics

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers introduced the report and its contents. The Committee noted a report that provided information in respect of the number and type of industrial accidents, which had occurred to staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council during the period 1st October 2005 to 31st December 2005.

A description of reportable accidents for each directorate was outlined in appendix A. A member of the committee raised a concern regarding an accident involving a bulk collection driver who fell one and a half metres off the rear of a vehicle. In response to this concern the Refuse and Cleansing Officer, T. White reported that a tender process was currently being undertaken to acquire new bulk collection vehicles fitted with tail lifts.

Members of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report and its contents.

5. Corporate Health and Safety Group

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers introduced the report and its contents. The report gave an update on the latest discussions that had taken place in the Health and Safety Liaison Officer Group.

The notes of a recent meeting held on 15th March 2005 were attached as an appendix to the report and it was noted that the next meeting would be held on 19th April 2006.

A question was raised on the meaning of PAT Testing (2.4) and an officer explained that it was Portable Appliance Testing which is a statutory requirement managed by Property Services.

A concern was raised on the number of outstanding high risk individuals not scheduled for training (minute 4.5) and an officer responded that they have all been allocated to the 9 training courses referred to earlier in the meeting.

Members also discussed the draft Violence at Work Policy and database which is expected to be completed in July 2006. It was agreed that a presentation be given to the next committee.

Members of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report and its contents.

6. Corporate Health and Safety Training

The report was requested at a previous meeting and informed members of the position regarding Corporate Health and Safety Training.

Following Corporate Health and Safety Audits it was identified that deficiencies existed in the arrangements to ensure building safety across the authority. It was decided therefore that training should be provided to Building Managers at a corporate level. The training will provide advice and practical guidance to managers to ensure that they can effectively manage the risks within their control. The training given will be a one-day session and a Building Managers Handbook handed out. A member questioned the contents of the manual and the need to include storage areas for record. It was also suggested that a special dedicated file could be provided on site for contractors.

It was noted that a Corporate Health and Safety Trainer had now been appointed with a start

date of 8th May 2006.

7. Health and Safety Audits

The report informed the Committee of the recent Health and Safety audits carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

The Corporate Health and Safety Unit commenced auditing in January 2005 with an annual target of 200 audits. The report outlined the number of completed audits for each directorate and the Action Plans outstanding from Managers. The Senior Health and Safety Officer for Social Services reported that the outstanding action plans from her service were near completion.

The report was noted

8. Recent HSE Updates

The report informed the committee of the recent updates in Health and Safety information, advice and guidance.

Members noted the summary outlined in the report.

9. Grass Mowing Operations on Embankments

The Principal Parks and Open Spaces Manager, D. Price outlined a report on proposals in relation to mowing operations on embankments. The report was requested at a previous meeting following concerns by trade union representatives on the current practices adopted in parks operations.

Mr Price reported that discussions had been held with the Health and Safety Officers from the Education and Leisure Directorate and Park Managers to develop a risk assessment and a series of measures and action plans proposed from both sides.

The report listed the 7 proposals of the action plan and it was noted that it would be communicated to all supervisors and team leaders employed within the Parks Service.

Where a major change from the plan is agreed to a current operation the client will be approached to seek agreement for payment of the new procedure. If a client feels the new method is not affordable the area will be left unmaintained and left to give a wildlife appearance. Members discussed this proposal and expressed concern regarding the possibility of litter and broken glass being hidden in uncut grass. Mr Price responded that the bottom of an embankment which usually attracts the most litter would be cut and the higher part of the embankment left.

The refuse and Cleansing Officer, T. White requested that all information on this matter be shared with his section.

The report was noted.

10. Management Policy Briefings

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers introduced the report which gave information regarding the provision of Health and Safety Policy Briefing for Managers. The Corporate Health and Safety Unit has a planned programme of Health and Safety Briefings to cover new

policies that have recently been adopted. The briefing sessions are intended to provide managers with an overview of the policy's requirements and provide details of the specific responsibilities that are placed onto managers within the policy.

The Briefing sessions are scheduled to last approximately 2½ hours and 13 have been scheduled before June.

Further briefing sessions will be scheduled when the new Health and Safety Policies are adopted.

The report was noted.

11. Draft Health and Safety Policy – Violence at Work

The report informed the committee of the draft Violence at Work Policy which has subsequently been approved by the HR Strategy Group.

The policy has undergone extensive consultation, direct management consultation via the Directorate Safety Officers and has received agreement with the various union representatives. It was noted that although Unison have attended meetings and been given extra time they have not responded. The policy cannot however be delayed any longer as it is required to protect the safety of the Authority's employees.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Violence at Work Policy be endorsed and submitted to Cabinet for approval.

12. Draft Health and Safety Management – Asbestos Management

The report informed the committee of the draft Asbestos Management Policy.

The Corporate Health and Safety Unit had prepared a draft policy on Asbestos Management (a copy of which was attached as an appendix to the report).

The policy has undergone extensive consultation and received agreement with the various union representatives.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Asbestos Management Policy be endorsed and referred to Cabinet for approval.

13. Any Other Business

It was noted that Mr. Mike Workman the former Commercial Trading Standards Officer had retired. It was agreed that a letter be sent to him expressing thanks for all his contribution to the committee and wishing him a long and happy retirement.

The meeting closed at 10.50 a.m.

CHAIRMAN