



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN
ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH JANUARY 2006 AT 10.00 A.M.**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Wiltshire - Chairman

Councillors:

B.A. Barker, P.J. Bevan and A.J. Pritchard.

Together with:

R. Webb (Director of the Environment), S. Delahaye (Chief Trading Standards Officer), K. Rogers (Senior Health and Safety Officer), M. Meeson (Building Surveying Manager), M. Workman (Principal Commercial and Trading Standards Officer), P. Griffiths (Senior Corporate Safety Officer), P. James (Health and Safety Officer), A. Powell (Health and Safety Officer), R. Ellis (Health and Safety Officer), H. Hortop (Occupational Health Nurse), D. Jones (Senior Health and Safety Officer for Education and Leisure), K. Meredith (Health, Safety and Welfare Officer), P. Neale (Health, Safety and Welfare Officer), T. Phillips (Health and Safety Officer), B. Miller (Health and Safety Support Assistant) and S. Davies (Committee Services Officer).

Trade Union Representatives:

Mr B. Barrowman, Mr J. Poole and Mr A. Jones.

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.O. Evans, G.R. Price, L.R. Rees, E. Thomas (Personnel Manager), A. Morton (Senior Technician) and J. Rowlands (Safety Training Officer).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

2. MINUTES

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

Minutes of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 6th October 2005.

MATTERS ARISING

3. Building Managers Health and Safety Training (Minute No. 9)

In response to a member's question it was reported that an advert for the position of Health and Safety Trainer, on a temporary basis, would be posted on the 12th January 2006. It was further commented that the appointment of a member of staff to fill this role was likely to take place during February 2006.

It was reported to those present that the example recorded in the minutes regarding a manual worker attending a property to 'board up' late at night following a serious incident was inaccurate. It was noted that following further investigation it had been found that, although within the near vicinity, the property was not the actual location where the incident had taken place.

In response to a further question from a member it was reported that a list of training requirements identified is available and that details would be provided at the next meeting of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.

4. ACCIDENT STATISTICS: 1ST JULY – 30TH SEPTEMBER

Members of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee expressed their congratulations to E. Townsend, Health and Safety Manager, on the birth of her son.

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers, made a presentation to the Committee on the contents of the report. The presentation detailed the numbers and types of industrial accidents that have occurred to staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council during the period 1st July to 30th September 2005.

Members were given a brief overview of accident reporting and monitoring and were informed of the 3 accident categories identified by the Authority. An example of accident reporting procedures was given to those present along with specific data relating to the numbers of accidents recorded between 1st July and 30th September 2005, and the Directorates in which these accidents had taken place. It was noted, specifically, that over 51% of accidents had occurred within the Department of Social Services.

Members were informed that the accident statistics showed an increase of 26 compared to the same quarter in the previous year but that, in relation to reportable incidents, there had been a decrease of 2. Notably, the largest cause of accidents during the quarter was reported as manual handling. In light of this information it was reported that the Back Care Advisor, P. Roberts, would present a report at the next meeting on manual handling injuries and measures undertaken to reduce their occurrence.

A chart was presented showing an overall downward trend in accidents from 1999 to date and details of the National Performance Indicators were given. It was reported that on both Performance Indicators identified the Authority are achieving the targets set.

In reference to a specific incident it was reported that the root cause of a reported accident had been the gradient of a banking during grass cutting. The Senior Health and Safety Officer for Education and Leisure, D. Jones, reported that investigations are currently being undertaken to look at safe systems of working with regards to bankings within the County Borough and that the possibility of using chemical measures to reduce growth had been identified.

In response to a question from a member of the Union it was reported that manual workers are actively informed that they should not attempt to undertake work in environments they judge as unsafe. It was agreed by the Senior Health and Safety Officer for Education and

Leisure, D. Jones, that a report on bankings and related health and safety issues be brought before the next meeting of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee.

In response to a member the Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers, reported that performance indicators were not yet available from other Authorities to allow a comparison of performance but, once they became available, a report to the Committee would be prepared.

Following a question from a member of the Committee it was reported that an analysis of manual handling injury trends had not yet been carried out. It was reported that Occupational Health are leading on the implementation and facilitation of Manual Handling training on a risk prioritised basis within the Authority.

Concern was expressed over the contents of risk assessments carried out following manual handling injuries. It was highlighted that sufficient detail was not included on the route cause of the accident. It was reported that this issue is currently being examined. Officers present did, however, explain that preventative training is in place and that this proactive approach has undoubtedly increased employee awareness of Health and Safety issues.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report and its contents.

5. DRAFT HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers, introduced the report and its contents.

It was reported that the agreed draft policies on Lone Working, Display Screen Equipment and Contractor Selection – Management and Monitoring had been submitted to Cabinet for approval. Following consultation during November, it was also reported that the HR Strategy Group had not requested any changes to the draft policies. Subsequently, those present were informed that Cabinet had approved the policies on 13th December and that they have been implemented as official policies of Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Additionally, members of the Committee were informed that the draft Corporate Health and Safety Policy and the draft Risk Assessment Policy had not received any amendments from the HR Strategy Group and that they would be put to Cabinet for approval during February.

Lastly it was noted that the Corporate Management Team had endorsed the position of the Health and Safety Professionals and supported the existing draft policy relating to Mobile Phones and Driving. Members were informed that the policy will be subject to further consultation with the HR Strategy Group before being brought to the Committee.

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

6. HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDITS

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers, introduced the report and its contents. The report gave an update on information relating to recent audits carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

The Director of the Environment, R. Webb, emphasised the importance of ensuring that the relevant Heads of Service produce action plans and implement any changes in light of the information found from the audits. The Senior Environmental Health Officer informed those present that re-auditing would ensure necessary actions were being taken. In response to a member, it was also added that risks identified in the audit are prioritised to ensure that the most important areas are resolved first.

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

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY LIAISON OFFICER GROUP

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

A member drew attention to paragraph 2.7 of the appendix and, in response to a question, it was reported that information on telephone systems for lone workers could be passed on to contractors and their counterparts. It was reported that the 'In Check' system for lone workers needs upgrading at an annual subscription cost increase of £2,000. Furthermore, in moving towards a new web-based system, it was reported that funding of £10,000 would be required and that this should be shared amongst all Directorates.

A member expressed concern that Councillors also faced similar Health and Safety issues when dealing with constituents during unsociable hours. It was reported by the Senior Health and Safety Officer that guidance had been drafted to provide guidance to Councillors on this issue. A member advised the Officers that they should consult the National Association of Councillors who have developed a similar programme of guidance.

8. RECENT HSE UPDATES

The Senior Health and Safety Officer, K. Rogers, introduced the report and its contents.

The report provided an update of Health and Safety Information, advice and guidance. Members were informed of developments in comprehensive guidance on Hand-Arm Vibration work and the publishing of the Health and Safety Executive's Annual Offences and Penalties Report for 2004-2005. It was also reported that the Health and Safety Executive had issued a consultative document on the draft revised Asbestos Regulations.

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

The meeting closed at 11.05 a.m.