



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, DYFFRYN HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH JANUARY 2007 AT 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Wiltshire - Chairman

Councillors:

P.J. Bevan, G.R. Price

Together with:

R. Webb (Director of the Environment), S. Delahaye (Head of Public Protection), B. Hopkins (Head of Planning and Strategy), E. Townsend (Health and Safety Manager), K. Rogers (Senior Health and Safety Officer), K. Meredith (Health and Safety Welfare Officer), P. Neale (Health and Safety Welfare Officer), D. Llewellyn (Senior Health and Safety Officer), D. Jones (Senior Health and Safety Officer), B. Miller (Health and Safety Support Assistant), T. Phillips (Health and Safety Officer), P. James (Health and Safety Officer), T. White (Refuse and Cleaning Officer), H. Hortop (Occupational Health Nurse), A. Young (Property Division), S. Henry (Parks Operations Manager), Chapman R (Parks Operations Supervisor), R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer).

Trade Union Representative: Ms A. Stevens (ASCL)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.O. Evans, A.J. Pritchard, L.R. Rees, A. Morton (UNISON) and Ms G Taylor (UNISON).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

A possible declaration of interest was received from Hazel Hortop, Occupational Health Nurse regarding the All Wales Manual Handling Passport, as her husband was the Manager of St John Wales Training Company that provides part of the manual handling training to Caerphilly CBC. She indicated she would leave the room should this be discussed. This was not necessary.

2. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Siân Clayton, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Inspector to the Committee.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 18th October 2006 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chairman.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Occupational Health Forum: Members asked Hazel Hortop (Occupational Health Manager) for an update. This has been recorded under 'Any Other Business' at reference 18.

5. VERBAL REPORT BY SIÂN CLAYTON, HSE INSPECTOR

Mrs Siân Clayton, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Inspector gave Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives a presentation on the history of the HSE, how and why it managed risks and its aims for the future.

Members were informed the HSE was implemented 150 years ago and under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, there were two main departments controlling the issue of Health and Safety, as below:

- (i) the Health & Safety Commission (HSC), who advise ministers; and
- (ii) the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), who monitor and advise organisations.

Mrs Clayton advised members of the HSE structure and of the organisations they evaluate:

- 22 Local Authorities
- All Education
- Police
- MOD
- Outdoor Activity Centres
- All Health Services in Wales
- National Government
- Fire
- Prisons

She reiterated that the HSE was not there to judge and hinder these organisations, but to protect people's health and safety by ensuring risks in the changing workplace were properly controlled. There was an economic, moral and legal duty to do this, and the HSE did it by advising, inspecting and enforcement.

Members were informed of the range of powers given to the HSE to carry out their duties. Mrs Clayton also reminded the Committee of the HSE's Revitalising Health and Safety Agenda that sets the following targets to be achieved by 2010:

- Reduce working days lost from work related injury and ill health by 30%;
- Reduce fatal and major injuries by 10%; and
- Reduce cases of work related ill health by 20%.

Statistical information was supplied detailing the major causes of accidents and ill health and the consequence to lost workdays and the monetary cost to society. Details of what was needed to improve these figures were outlined and the HSE reiterated it was about sensible risk management and that health and safety was everyone's responsibility.

Finally, Mrs Clayton advised members of CCBC's enforcement history compared with other Welsh Local Authorities. This was as followed:

	Caerphilly CCBC	Wales Local Authorities Ranges
Improvement Notices	4	0-8
Prohibition Notices	4	0-4
Prosecutions	1	0-2

The Chairman and members thanked Mrs Clayton for the informative presentation and discussed a number of issues including the proposed corporate manslaughter bill, the issue of cost v improvements and the comparative enforcement history. In addition, there was a question as to members' liability and Mrs Clayton reminded the committee that elected members are accountable under sections 8 and 36 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Health and Safety Manager introduced the report to highlight changes to the constitution and membership of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee, following previous discussions with Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives.

Officers confirmed it was recognised that the Corporate Health and Safety Committee played a valuable function in promoting, monitoring and supporting improvements in Health and Safety. And only minor amendments had been required to revise the constitution of the committee.

It was agreed that the effectiveness of the Committee depended upon members active participation and attendance. Committee members were encouraged to monitor, challenge, question, request information and actively review health and safety standards and health and safety performance across the Authority.

Members asked officers to clarify paragraph 4.7, in particular whether substitutes had to be named. Officers agreed to confirm this with the monitoring officer and report back to the next committee.

Members noted the contents of the report.

7. ACCIDENT REPORTING SYSTEM - PRESENTATION

The lead officer on the new system, Paul James, introduced the report and gave a presentation to Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives to update them on the new accident reporting system.

Members were reminded that as the authority did not currently have an electronic accident reporting system, the collation and maintenance of accident data and statistics was difficult and time consuming. These challenges resulted in a decision, made in 2004, to purchase an electronic accident reporting/occupational health system. Warwick systems were awarded the contract to provide the system in September 2006.

Officers confirmed the anticipated new system would allow for easier collation of accident/incident data, provision of improved statistics and more effective follow-up and monitoring of work related accidents/incidents. The system would also help identify trends, enabling officers to prioritise workload and budget to target problems as required. Work was ongoing to configure the system to meet the demands of the authority, but it was anticipated the system would go live on 1st April 2007, following a period of training for officers.

Officers confirmed managers would be able to view accident reports in their area, once the system had been tested and a review of management needs had been carried out.

Members discussed the proposals and welcomed the improvements.

8. ALL WALES MANUAL HANDLING PASSPORT

The Health and Safety Manager introduced the report to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the current position regarding the implementation of the All Wales Manual Handling Passport.

Members were informed the lead responsibility for overseeing implementation of the All Wales Manual Handling Passport had transferred from the Occupational Health Department to the Corporate Health and Safety Unit. The Corporate Management Team approved the transfer on 7th December 2006.

The authority was working towards compliance with the All Wales Manual Handling Passport, and although compliance with the All Wales Manual Handling Passport was not a legal requirement, the Passport was recognised as best practice and endorsed by the HSE. The authorities focus had been on delivering Manual Handling Training and the majority of high-risk training had now been completed. It was recognised that there was now a need to focus on ensuring manual handling risk assessments were in place and ensuring the provision of sufficient manual handling equipment in preparation for the planned HSE inspection, due to take place later this year.

Members noted the contents of the report and work ongoing by the authority to ensure we are complying with the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992.

9. HSE TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

The Head of Planning and Strategy presented the report to inform Members, Management and the Trade Union Safety Representatives of the outcome of the Council meeting, held on the evening of 9th January 2007.

Originally, the annexed report was presented to Cabinet on 12th December 2006, in which members were asked to approve the proposed way forward to respond to the HSE Improvement Notice served in June (for compliance by 20th December 2006), as outlined in the report. The report recommended to Council that a budget provision for 2007/08 for the staffing change be included, and approval of temporary staffing increases.

Members discussed the report and asked officers for clarification on whether police checks were carried out on all drivers and whether seat belts were compulsory for all vehicles. Officers confirmed police checks were carried out as a matter of course, but not all vehicles were required to have seat belts fitted. Members were also advised that the HSE had extended the improvement notice a further two months to allow further matters to be finalised.

Members noted the contents of the report and that Council had endorsed its recommendations.

10. HSE ALL WALES PROJECT – TRANSPORT RISKS AT LEA

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Members noted the contents of the report and that Council had endorsed its recommendations.

11. UPDATE ON REFUSE/RECYCLING IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

The appendix, HSE Improvement Notice (W4030163) was circulated at the meeting.

The Refuse and Cleaning Officer introduced the report to update Members, Management and the Trade Union Safety Representatives of the progress made towards complying with the requirements of the follow up the HSE inspection of Refuse and Recycling and the HSE Improvement Notice (W4030163).

The inspection was part of the HSE program to visit all Welsh Authorities over a 2 year period, in an attempt to work with them to improve safety standards within Refuse, Recycling and Waste Management.

Members were informed, where possible the new Route Risk Assessments (RRA) had taken on board the issues raised in the notice. There are however some aspects where this has not been possible as a balance had to be struck between cost, practicality and risk. Due to the volume of work needed to complete the RRA's an extension of time had been granted by the HSE to comply with the notice. Initially the deadline had been due to expire on the 13th December 2006, but this had now been extended until 27th June 2007, allowing sufficient time to complete all outstanding works.

Mrs Siân Clayton, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Inspector confirmed the HSE had been pleased with the work produced to date by CCBC and acknowledged that changing peoples' culture was a challenge.

Members noted the contents of the report.

12. BUILDING MANAGEMENT TRAINING

The Health and Safety Manager presented the report to update Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives on the provision of Building Managers Training following recent health and safety audits carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

Members were informed training for all CCBC employees who managed or controlled a premises was identified as necessary and the Corporate Management Team have agreed that attendance was compulsory.

The training covered premises related health and safety issues and set out for Building Managers their responsibilities regarding issues such as Asbestos, Legionella, Fire Safety, Electrical Testing, Lifts, Glazing etc. Training delivery had commenced on 7th December 2006 and to date 4 sessions had taken place (with a 5th taking place today – 10th January 2007).

Initial feedback had been positive with the sessions well received. Future training days would be made available and although not presently invited, the course would be rolled out to Education and Leisure departments. Managers were asked to be patient, due to the numbers requesting the training.

Councillor G.R. Price requested that Cabinet Members be invited.

Members noted the contents of the report.

13. ACCIDENT STATISTICS

A revised report and appendices were circulated at the meeting.

The Health and Safety Manager introduced the report to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the numbers and types of industrial accidents that had occurred to staff of Caerphilly County Borough Council during the period 1st July to 30th September 2006. Members were reminded that with the new reporting system, more up-to-date statistical information would be available.

The committee discussed the statistical findings of the report and asked officers to clarify a number of incidents recorded in appendix A - the description of reportable accidents for each Directorate. These were as follows:

- (i) Chief Executives – July 2006: the footwear worn by the Countryside Warden was confirmed as heavy duty boots, purchased by herself.
- (ii) Chief Executives – September 2006: members were informed there was no squashed grape in the dinner hall, as detailed in the report. However, the floor was slippery.
- (iii) Directorate of the Environment – September 2006: there were three main causes for a bin to fall off the lift:
 - the bin had not been placed on the lift correctly;
 - there was a fault with the bin; and/or
 - there was a fault with the lift

Members were informed the initial incident was considered to be the operator's fault, however when the second incident occurred shortly afterwards, the vehicle was taken to the service yard. While work had been carried out on the lift and a small fault was found on the bin itself, these were not thought to be the cause of the incidents.

The Refuse and Cleaning Officer confirmed he saw every incident report for his department and acted upon this accordingly.

Members noted the contents of the report.

14. HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDITS

The Senior Health and Safety Officer presented the report to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of recent audits carried out by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit.

Members were informed that 46 audits had been carried out during the second quarter of 2006-07, covering a variety of topics including risk assessment, display screen equipment, lone working, fire, housekeeping, COSHH, manual handling and latex. It was also recognised that a higher number of Managers were completing and returning their action plans, with all managers returning their plans for this quarter.

In addition, as per members' request at the last committee meeting, appendix 2 and appendix 3 of the report gave examples of an audit report and DMT report respectively.

Members noted the contents of the report.

15. RECENT HSE UPDATES

The Senior Health and Safety Officer introduced the report to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of recent updates in Health and Safety information, advice and guidance.

Officers highlighted the HSE's announcement that it would be updating its process for the retention of records with regards to the Public Register of Convictions database. The database currently shows records that are up to five years old, but will shortly reinstate the website records of Health and Safety at Work offences which have been committed more than five years ago.

Members noted the contents of the report.

16. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY BRIEFINGS FOR MANAGERS

The Senior Health and Safety Officer presented the report to update Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives on the provision of Health and Safety Policy Briefings for Managers.

Briefing sessions were being held to inform managers to their responsibilities and actions required under new policies and members were informed 28 training sessions had been held to date. A total of 336 managers would attend the sessions, once scheduled training had been completed.

Further sessions were to take place during January and February to cover the recently approved Health and Safety Policies on Working from Home, The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health and Mobile Phone and Driving policies.

Officers confirmed the sessions were brief and in plain English. Feedback had been good and requests for future attendance had been high.

Members noted the contents of the report.

17. CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY GROUP

The Health and Safety Manager introduced the report to inform Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the latest discussions that had taken place in the Corporate Health and Safety Group.

Members discussed the report and asked for reassurance regarding asbestos in council buildings. Officers confirmed that all buildings within the authority had received a 'type 2' survey and should any be scheduled for demolition, in addition a 'type 3' survey would be carried out.

Members noted the contents of the report.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Occupational Health Forum

Hazel Hortop, Occupational Health Nurse and Chair of the Occupational Health Forum confirmed the forum had recently been tasked by Jonathon Lloyd to review a HSE occupational health document in order to advise CCBC which practices to adopt. The group was producing a short report for the Chief Executive.

The HSE document was very specific but some items had been isolated as they were not relevant to the local authority.

A more detailed report, advising of the groups activities, would be put before the committee at the next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Date of next meeting - Wednesday, 18th April 2007 - Tŷ Dyffryn, Ystrad Mynach.

The meeting closed at 11.55 a.m.

CHAIRMAN