



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TŶ DYFFRYN
ON WEDNESDAY, 10TH OCTOBER 2007 AT 10.00 AM**

PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Wiltshire - Chairman

Councillors:

P.J. Bevan, G.R. Price, J.O. Evans, A.J. Pritchard

Together with:

G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development), E. Townsend (Health and Safety Manager), K. Rogers (Senior Health and Safety Officer), B. Kendrick (Health and Safety Officer) K. Meredith (Health and Safety Welfare Officer), P. Neale (Health and Safety Welfare Officer), R. Ellis (Health and Safety Officer), D. Llewellyn (Senior Health and Safety Officer), D. Jones (Senior Health and Safety Officer), T. Phillips (Health and Safety Officer), P. James (Health and Safety Officer), T. White (Refuse and Cleaning Officer), H. Hortop (Occupational Health Nurse), A. Williams (Client Manager) and R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives: B. Barrowman (GMB), P. Jones (Amicus), S. Brassine (UCATT)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L.R. Rees. A. Morton (UNISON) and Ms A. Stevens (ASCL)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 11th July 2007 be approved as correct records and signed by the chairman.

3. SOUTH WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - PRESENTATION

The Chairman welcomed Station Manager Paul Scourfield of the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, who gave a presentation on new legislation that affected all non domestic properties – Regulatory Reform Act 2001 and Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

Members were advised there was a need for change as the old legislation, Fire Precaution Act (FPA) was by its nature, restrictive in the type of buildings and persons it covered. In addition, there were other pieces of legislation that had to be taken into consideration alongside the FPA. This created legislative overlaps, duplication and/or conflict and public ignorance.

To combat this, the Regulatory Reform Act 2001 gave Ministers the power to reform legislation by order that *“has the effect of imposing burdens affecting persons in the carrying out of any activity”*. Such orders are known as Regulatory Reform Orders.

Additionally, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 consolidated legislation and removed legislative overlaps.

Members attention was then given to the following:

- the definition of a FSO risk assessment duty: “Responsible person must make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks to which relevant persons are exposed ... to identify general fire precautions ... to comply with the requirements/prohibitions imposed by the order”;
- enforcement powers of the local Fire and Rescue Authority;
- offences and appeals; and
- recording of risk assessment.

Members thanked Mr Scourfield for his informative and enlightening presentation, and went on to discuss the complexities of the legislation. Members enquired as to whether there was legislation governing the need for sprinkler systems to be installed within new buildings, particularly schools. This was discussed at length and members were advised, retrospective fits were very expensive, but building regulations governed the fit of systems into new premises, depending on the size and type of building.

4. CAREFIRST – PRESENTATION

Members welcomed Debbie Cullen, Service Manager of Care First, who presented an overview of the new counselling/assistance service available to CCBC staff. Leaflets were given to those present.

The presentation demonstrated:

- the range of services available to employees;
- contact information;
- hours of service (24 hour);
- free information service in addition to free advice (8am to 8pm);
- managerial support;
- mediation service;
- confidentially; and
- management information to monitor trends, service quality feedback etc.

Members received clarification as to a range of health and emotional states and were advised, sometimes the service just gave the caller sufficient confidence and information for them to take matters through the authority’s own internal procedures.

Members thanked Ms Cullen for her informative presentation and discussed the services available. Concern was raised as to the number of contacts reported within the first quarter of business (April 2007 to June 2007) and the significant difference between manager and employee contacts recorded. Officers highlighted that the success of the service would directly reflect employee levels of awareness of the service. The service's success therefore depended upon its promotion.

5. COUNSELLING SERVICE

The report informed Members of the first quarterly report from our new counselling providers, Care First, as introduced in the previous agenda item.

Officers highlighted Care First took over the delivery of counselling services from 1st April 2007 and while the appendix to the report gives an indication of the use of the service and the types of issues being raised by employers and managers, it was still considered too early to ascertain whether services had improved. In addition, Heads of Service had requested a greater analysis for their respective service areas.

Members were asked to note that the new service, in comparison with the old one, now offered a greater range of assistance and would shortly be promoted to CCBC employees through a range of events, including leaflets within payslips.

Members of the committee noted the content of the report and appendix.

6. WLGA OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH DOCUMENT

The report informed Members of the recent work of the WLGA Occupation Health nurse group. Officers highlighted that initially there were a number of groups, but six months ago, two groups of the forum were merged. The WLGA Occupational Health forum was integrated into the corporate health and safety forum that consists of occupational health nurses, advisors and health and safety representatives.

The nurses were tasked with developing a reference document on the provision of occupational health within the local government setting. While the document was completed in November 2006, the final content of the report is yet to be approved by all members of the integrated forum. Officers advised discussions were ongoing, with a balance to be struck between occupational health and health and safety officers.

Members of the committee noted the content of the report and appendix.

7. ACCIDENT STATISTICS REPORT

The report is to inform Members of the numbers and types of work related accidents/incidents, which have occurred, during the period of April - June 2007. Accidents contained within the report link into incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive. The Chairman advised he was impressed with the new format of the statistical report as it gave more details of incidents and of any follow up action. Fellow members of committee echoed this statement.

Members discussed the report and asked officers to clarify the heading on appendix 1 - 'physically assaulted by a person'. Officers confirmed this related to assaults by members of the public, not CCBC employees and they reminded members that the report encompassed a range of directorates, including care services.

Members of the committee noted the content of this report and agreed to amend the dates of future meetings to coincide with the end of accident reporting periods.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

- (1) Health and Safety Annual Report – the committee noted the borough’s annual report on health and safety performance for 2006-2007.
- (2) Corporate Health and Safety Relocation – the committee noted the information within the report regarding recent changes in health and safety reporting lines.
- (3) Corporate Health and Safety Group – the committee noted the latest discussions that had taken place in the Corporate Health and Safety Group and asked for a report from Education/Leisure about the trial of the automated system to ensure Legionella Compliance. It was agreed that each directorate should be asked to produce a report – one per quarter, starting with Education/Leisure.
- (4) Recent HSE Updates – the committee noted the recent updates in Health and Safety information, advice and guidance. A further handout was given to members present relating to the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act.
- (5) Health and Safety Executive Action – the committee noted the information within the report regarding recent Health and Safety Executive visits and associated actions.
- (6) Corporate Health and Safety Training – the committee noted the report giving an update on provisions of Corporate Health and Safety Training.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday, 13th February 2008 at Tŷ Dyffryn, Ystrad Mynach.

The meeting closed at 12.00 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 13th February 2008, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN