



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY 2009 AT 2.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor A.J. Pritchard - Chairman

Councillors:

A.G. Higgs, C. Hobbs, L.R. Rees.

Together with:

E. Townsend (Health and Safety Manager), B. Hopkins (Assistant Director, Planning and Strategy), G. George (Committee Services Manager).

Trade Union Representatives: S. Brassinne (UCATT), B. May (T&G), J.W. Poole (UCATT)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, J.O. Evans, D.T. Hardacre, N. Barnett (Director of Corporate Services), G. Hardacre (Head of People Management & Development), S. Howells (Acting Assistant Director, Resourcing & Performance) and P. Jones (AMICUS)

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 5th January 2009 (minutes nos. 1 - 8, on page nos. 1 - 4) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. DRAFT FIRST AID AT WORK POLICY AND CORPORATE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The report informed Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of the new First Aid Policy and Corporate Management Arrangements.

Members were advised that although the Authority currently had in place a First Aid Policy, introduced in 1996, as no details could be found of previous consultation this policy had been treated as a new policy. The draft document had received full consultation.

Members discussed the draft policy and sought clarification on follow up training that would be given by approved providers.

Members of the committee noted the contents of the report and agreed the Draft First Aid at Work Policy Corporate Management Arrangements, subject to agreement by the HR Strategy Group.

4. ASBESTOS UPDATE

The report informed members, management and trade union safety representatives of the current position with the ongoing HSE asbestos investigation and actions to ensure that the Authority had, in place, suitable and sufficient arrangements to control asbestos risks.

Officers reminded members of the two asbestos incidents that took place in June and July 2008. One of which had led to concerns over the quality of the asbestos surveys carried out on council premises. Quality checks had been carried out and initial results indicated a substantial amount of asbestos had been missed in the original surveys.

As a result cross-directorate meetings took place and a number of remedial actions had been agreed as detailed within the report, and work was underway to ensure that all arrangements were implemented promptly.

Evidence was being collated on both of the contractors originally engaged, with a view to recouping the costs associated with surveying and re-inspections to date. The HSE were conducting an investigation of one of the contractors used by the Authority and were prepared to consider action against the other contractor subject to further evidence. A further report will be brought when the HSE investigation was completed.

Members of the committee noted the contents of the report.

5. LEGIONELLA UPDATE

The report informed members, management and trade union safety representatives of the current position with legionella contracts. There were originally 3 contracts in place covering all Authority premises

Officers reminded members that previously there had been concerns on whether assessments carried out by one of the contractors were suitable and sufficient after unsatisfactory checks were completed upon water systems. A further two quality checks were carried out on assessments completed by the contractor, that again highlighted quality concerns. Following a meeting with them the contract was terminated at the beginning of December.

A new contract will be put in place to ensure that new legionella risk assessments are completed for all premises initially assessed by this contractor; and checks previously carried out by the contractor will be carried out by another contractor until the new contract is in place.

Recently further concerns have been raised through Education/Leisure as to the quality of the assessments and works carried out by another legionella contractor and these currently being investigated.

Members of the committee noted the contents of the report and agreed that a further report be brought to the next appropriate meeting.

Arising of consideration of this and the previous item (asbestos update) the committee expressed their grave disquiet that in both cases there appeared to have been deficiencies in the quality of the work carried out by contractors and whether this revealed serious weaknesses in the councils tendering processes. They asked that these concerns be conveyed to appropriate officers to investigate the tendering and contract monitoring processes.

6. ACCIDENT STATISTICS REPORT, JULY - SEPTEMBER 2008

The report gave details of the numbers and types of work related accidents/incidents that had occurred during the period of July to September 2008.

Members noted that the statistics had been updated for 2008 to reflect the changes to some service areas, such as catering staff were now categorised under Education and Leisure Directorate not under Chief Executives, and Parks had moved from the Directorate of Education and Leisure to the Environment Directorate. These moves would affect the numbers reported in all the associated Directorates.

Members of the committee noted the contents of the report.

7. ACCIDENT STATISTICS REPORT, OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2008

The report gave details of the numbers and types of work related accidents/incidents that occurred during the period of October to December 2008.

Members were reminded again, that following changes to service areas, the statistics were not comparable with the same time period last year.

Members of the Committee noted the contents of the report.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted:-

- (1) Corporate Health and Safety Group; minutes of meeting held on 7 January 2009;
- (2) Recent HSE Updates;
- (3) Health and Safety Audits carried out between July to September 2008.

The meeting closed at 2.54 pm.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 13th May 2009, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN