



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON MONDAY, 23RD MAY 2011 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor P.J. Bevan – Chairman

Councillors:

D.T. Hardacre, A.G. Higgs, A.J. Pritchard

Together with:

D. Jones (Health and Safety Manager), E. Townsend (Deputy Health and Safety Manager), K. Rogers (Senior Health and Safety Officer), N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development), M.S. Williams (Head of Public Services), J. Rowe (Leisure Services Manager), R. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives:

S. Brassinne (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB), J. Roberts-Garcia (UNISON)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from P. Jones (AMICUS), K McAnulty (NAHT), B. May (T&G)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Councillor P.J. Bevan was appointed Chairman of the meeting for the ensuing year.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor A.J. Pritchard was appointed Vice-Chairman of the meeting for the ensuing year.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 21st February 2011 (minutes nos. 1 - 8, on page nos. 1 - 4), be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS ARISING

5. Fire Risk Assessments (Minute Item 4, Page 3)

An update was sought regarding exposed girders. It was confirmed that Fire Officers were to advise officers.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

6. STATUTORY COMPLIANCE SOFTWARE (RAMIS) UPDATE

The report and accompanying presentation gave an update to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee of progress made with the RAMIS project.

The majority of the historic asbestos and legionella information has been downloaded and the downloading of information relating to gas boilers and fixed electrical has commenced. Plans are in place for the initial roll out of the system to Facilities Management and Building Consultancy staff, while further system developments are being undertaken to streamline the completion of asbestos management surveys and monitoring of asbestos in situ.

Screen dumps demonstrating individual disciplines and auditing screens were shown. The use of the system as a compliance audit tool was promoted and the benefits of the system reiterated.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Health and Safety Officer for the informative presentation and invited comments and questions from the Committee.

Clarification of the achievable saving by using the RAMIS system was given, both in licensing fees and in efficiency savings. It was anticipated that the roll out of the system would commence in June 2011, with Facilities Management and Building Consultancy staff being trained first. In closing, Members were asked to note that additional uses for RAMIS were being established and the system was being constantly developed.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the contents of the report and welcomed updates at future meetings.

7. WELL-BEING UPDATE

The report informed Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of attendance at the employee Well-being Policy briefing sessions and management training and to gave an update on the well-being process in terms of cases progressing through the system.

Officers confirmed Councillors had not attended these sessions, but 64 Managers had attended a total of 6 courses delivered by Care First, who run CCBC's advice, information and counselling service. Due to their specialist support, it was expected that they would continue to take the lead at well-being training sessions.

Members commented on the higher number of referrals from the Education/Leisure Directorate and they were asked to note that the directorate was the largest and had been trialling the Policy for 3 years. The figures detailed were therefore proportional.

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

8. ASBESTOS SURVEYING TEAM PROPOSALS

The report gave an update regarding proposals to set up an internal asbestos surveying team due to quality issues with previous contractors. Issues have included poor customer service, considerable time delay in receiving the management surveys and asbestos containing materials being missed or shown in the incorrect location on the site plans.

It is proposed that an internal asbestos surveying team is set up to include, in the first instance, two qualified and experienced Asbestos Officers to undertake the surveying function and assist with managing the asbestos risk within the Authority. The team will use RAMIS to carry out and record the survey. The Authority will be the first in Wales to have a live register of asbestos containing materials in buildings.

The use of RAMIS was welcomed, but caution was requested as the potential for human error could not be completely eliminated. Officers reminded Members of the distinct benefits of the RAMIS system and the appropriate level of responsibility required by Building Managers and/or Head Teachers. It was agreed that significant benefits to setting up an internal asbestos surveying team included the Authority having overall control and an internal team would know the buildings better than any external contractor.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the contents of the report and supported the proposals therein.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE INVOLVEMENT

The report gave Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives a formal update on Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Involvement with Local Authority.

Two improvement notices in relation to the asbestos exposure incident at Fochriw Primary School in August 2010 have been received. Whilst this was disappointing, in light of the considerable work undertaken by officers to improve asbestos management in the Council, the HSE confirmed that if asbestos management had been of a lower standard, CCBC would have faced prosecution.

The notices have to be complied with by October 2011, however officers had already spoken to the HSE with a view of agreeing an extension to the end of the year. Following receipt of the improvement notices the Deputy Chief Executive issued immediate directions to all Heads of Service and also instigated an independent review of the incident. An urgent meeting of the Committee was sought to consider this review and Members were advised this would take place on the afternoon of 1st June 2011.

In closing, officers highlighted the considerable work undertaken to improve Hand Arm Vibration Management within the Council and advised the HSE are inspecting the Authority on HAVs. A general discussion followed.

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

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted:

- (1) Accident Statistics Report for Quarter 4 January - March 2011. While not brought forward for discussion at the meeting, clarification was given in regard to numbers of injures while handling, lifting or carrying in the Directorate of Education and Leisure;
- (2) Recent HSE Updates.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to be held on Monday, 15th August 2011 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 10.55 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 Monday, 15th August 2011, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN