



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON MONDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY 2012 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor J.E. Fussell – Chairman (Presiding)

Councillors:

D.T. Hardacre

Together with:

D. Jones (Health and Safety Manager), E. Townsend (Deputy Health and Safety Manager), N. Barnett (Director of Corporate Services), M.S. Williams (Head of Public Services), P. James (Senior Health and Safety Officer), R.J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives:

N. Funnell (GMB), G. Parr (UCATT), J. Roberts-Garcia (UNSION)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan and Mrs A. Collins, Trade Union Representative Simon Brassinne and Officers G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development) and J. Rowe (Leisure Services Manager)

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 21st November 2012 (minutes nos. 1 - 10, on page nos. 1 - 4), be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

3. FREQUENCY OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives were reminded that the Constitution of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee specifies “Meetings of the Committee shall be held at three-monthly intervals or more often if deemed necessary”.

The terms of this Constitution may be varied at any of its recognised meetings, subject to notice of the terms of the proposed changes being circulated to each member at least seven days before the meeting. A letter was sent to all members on the 1st December to propose a reduction in the frequency of meetings from four per year to three per year, to take into account the main holiday period and members’ difficulty in attending in August.

If Members were in agreement to reducing the number of meetings, officers proposed future meetings be held on 28th May and 19th November 2012. In addition, for continuity in the receipt of quarterly accident statistics, data would be amalgamated for the purposes of the Committee. This would ensure no loss of information.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee considered the proposed amendment to the Constitution and RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Constitution be amended to show that meetings of the Committee shall be held at four-monthly intervals or more often if deemed necessary;
- (ii) future meetings in 2012 will be held on 28th May and 19th November.

For ease of reference, the amended Constitution is attached to the minutes.

4. RAMIS PRESENTATION

Mr Paul James, Senior Health and Safety Officer, gave Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives a demonstration of RAMIS (the online risk management system used by the Authority) whose roll out had started in October 2011.

To date over 240 managers and 35 contractors had been trained on RAMIS, with just schools left to train. Access to the Internet is required via the website “www.ramislive.com” and each user has an individual user name and password which allows any amendments to be recorded and audited.

The system and the flow of screens had been made as simple as possible, with three different ways to search for a premise:

1. By Directorate;
2. Via the search bar; and
3. By the RAMIS pin number which is unique to each property.

Currently there are 490 premises held on the system with up to date compliance details available together with a picture of the premise, name and address details, contact details, lease details and the key holder contact details in case emergency access is necessary.

Members were shown the system’s simplicity by viewing a maintenance schedule for a ‘live’ property and also the data retrieval facility, via drop down menus, for the individual disciplines relating to that property. As contractors upload their reports as soon as they are completed, RAMIS is the most comprehensive and up-to-date reference system in use.

The Chairman thanked the officer for his informative presentation and invited comments from the Committee.

Members received assurances that the uploaded information was secure and systems were in place to automatically escalate any outstanding actions. The 3 stages of automatic escalation were discussed. Officers also confirmed that audits could be completed more efficiently and that officers uploading information could annotate the data if necessary.

A Trade Union member, that had used RAMIS, confirmed the system was impressive and as contractors had access no issues should arise in the future.

In closing officers confirmed that the Authority's housing stock would be added to RAMIS, but this could take time due to the volume of information which needed to be uploaded to the system.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the contents of the presentation and supported RAMIS.

5. RECENT HSE UPDATES

The report informed Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives of recent updates in Health and Safety information, advice and guidance.

Members were asked to note that this was a period of change for the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). In particular the HSE will be supporting a new independent panel that will consider challenges to health and safety regulatory advice; and from 6th April 2012, the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 1995 will change the over three day injury reporting requirement. The trigger point for incapacitation will increase from over three days to over seven days.

The latter will not affect the way in which the Authority deals with reports of injury, but Members will notice an additional column on the Accident Statistics Report presented at each Committee.

The need to be proactive was highlighted by the recent prosecution of the owners of a private care home. Social Services were aware of the circumstances surrounding the breach of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and were carrying out checks. A member commented on problems with schools' window restrictors. Officers advised of the need to balance safety against ventilation requirements and highlighted that safety bulletins were on display. In addition, some school windows were very large and there was a cost implication on replacing them with more effective versions.

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

6. UPDATE ON HSE INVOLVEMENT

The report provided Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives a formal update on Health and Safety Executive Involvement with the Authority.

Once the necessary paperwork has been transferred, the HSE will close two Improvement Notices issued following the incident at Fochriw Primary School in 2010. It was anticipated this would happen at the end of the month.

On 20th February a presentation to HSE Inspector Steve Lewis had centred on the recently completed RAMIS Asbestos Management Interface. Mr Lewis advised he was very impressed with the extended systems in place to manage asbestos, as these exceeded the HSE's requirements. It was anticipated that other Local Authorities would be interested in reviewing CCBC's database.

Members were asked to note the suspension of an asbestos surveying contractor due to poor work standards. This action had been reported to the HSE. Two more contractors were under investigation and a further report regarding this would be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

A further historic asbestos incident involving a gas installation contractor had recently been discovered in Housing. The HSE have been advised and will be undertaking an investigation of the circumstances of the incident. Further information will be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.

Officers then advised that the Authority is still reviewing the Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) Health Surveillance Programme. Officers are looking to provide an in-house Service, working with the Occupational Health Unit. The review was going well.

Members discussed the report and voiced their appreciation that asbestos management and monitoring was working well, although concern was also raised that the number of available asbestos surveying contractors was now limited. Officers confirmed most problems occurred with the surveillance and removal of asbestos, and advised that the HSE could remove a contractor's licence, if they were found to be negligent.

A Trade Union representative commented on a recent issue with access to Housing Work's ticketing system, and it was suggested that DLO staff be given access to asbestos information on housing via RAMIS. Officers advised that once the Asbestos Management system had been extended to cover housing, careful consideration will be given to access requirements and the distribution of information that should be fed down to the appropriate staff. It was highlighted that a paper version was always available for DLO staff to take onsite. In addition, officers advised that they were aware of the ticketing problem, investigations were ongoing to ensure there is a failsafe system in place.

A Member advised the Committee of a recent incident in Fochriw where a substantial amount of asbestos had been dumped by a fishing pond. The Environment Agency had been called and the company quickly identified and were now being prosecuted. Officers advised Environmental Health officers would be informed by the HSE.

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

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following report was received and noted:

- (1) Accident Statistics Report for Quarter 3, October - December 2011. A Member raised a concern that accidents numbers may increase due to reduced staffing numbers and the resulting potential for stress and/or fatigue on remaining staff. Officers confirmed that there were no marked increases in accidents when comparing year on year figures and a brief discussion followed regarding the Authority's new Managing Sickness Absence Procedure.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is to be held on Monday, 28th May 2012 at 10.00 a.m.

The meeting closed at 11.05 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 28th May 2012, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION OF THE CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE



As approved by the Corporate Safety Committee
Updated, 27th February 2012

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

CONSTITUTION OF THE CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

1. TITLE

- 1.1 The title of the Committee shall be the corporate Health and Safety Committee.
- 1.2 The Committee is established under Section 2(7) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and is not a statutory committee under the Local Government Act 1972.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 Under Section 2(7) of the Health and Safety at Work Act, Health and Safety Committees have the function of keeping under review the measures taken to ensure the health and safety at work of employees. In carrying out this function, the Health and Safety Committee will consider the following:-
 - (a) The study of accidents/incidents and notifiable diseases, statistics and trends, so that discussions and recommendations can be made to Management for corrective action on unsafe or unhealthy working conditions;
 - (b) Examination of health and safety audit reports and the consideration of reports that safety representatives may wish to submit on a similar basis;
 - (c) Consideration of reports and factual information provided by the Health and Safety Executive;
 - (d) Assistance in the development of works safety and health communication and publicity in the workplace;
 - (e) Consideration of health and safety policies and procedures within the Authority; and
 - (f) Consideration of reports provided by the Corporate Health and Safety Unit, Directorate Health and Safety Officers and/or the Occupational Health Department.

3. REPORTING LINE

- 3.1 The recommendation of the Committee is made to the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

4. MEMBERSHIP

- 4.1 The Safety Committee shall be composed of representatives of three sides:-
- (a) Elected Members
 - (b) Representatives of Staff
 - (c) Representatives of Management
- 4.2 The Council shall be represented by seven Members of council, elected at the Annual General Meeting, from which number the chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee shall be elected.
- 4.3 Trade Union representatives shall comprise of one Appointed Safety Representative from each of the Trade Unions nominated by the Council together with any other nominated from time-to-time by the Council.
- 4.4 The Management side of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee shall consist of the four Directors or their nominated representatives. The Corporate Health and Safety Manager and Senior Health and Safety Officers shall attend on a regular basis.
- 4.5 Members shall retire from the Committee on ceasing to be members of the nominated Trade Union or, in the case of Officers, terminate their employment with the Council or on becoming ineligible as a consequence of any Directorate restructuring.
- 4.6 The Committee may invite any other person including employees, Managers and Directors who are not members of the group to attend the meeting if they deem it necessary.
- 4.7 If a member of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee is unable to attend any meeting, the member concerned may nominate a named substitute.
- 4.8 The recommendations of the Committee will be arrived at by consensus. In the event of disagreement, a further report, to clarify a situation, will be required.

5. MEETINGS

- 5.1 Meetings of the Committee shall be held at four-monthly intervals or more often if deemed necessary.
- 5.2 Any member of the Committee may place items or reports on the agenda by giving written notice to the Council's Committee Services Manager.

- 5.3 The Agenda for any meeting shall be circulated by the Committee Section to each member of the committee at least 72 hours prior to the meeting except in the case of Special Meetings.
- 5.4 No business, other than that appearing on the Agenda Paper, shall be transacted at any Corporate Health and Safety Meeting unless all sides agree to its introduction.
- 5.5 Attendance at meetings of the Committee is an approved duty for Councillors or Caerphilly County Borough Council and shall be in accordance with the provisions of the agreement for time off for Trade Union duties and activities.
- 5.6 The Committee shall not have power to come to an agreement inconsistent with the powers of the decisions of any standing Committee of Council and recommendations to appropriate Committees shall be arrived at upon the agreement of both sides.
- 5.7 The terms of this constitution may be varied at any of its recognised meetings, provided that notice of the terms of the proposed changes has been circulated to each member of the Committee at least seven days before the meeting.