

## **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 25TH JUNE 2012**

**SUBJECT: HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE INVOLVEMENT / INVESTIGATIONS**

**REPORT BY: DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 The following report is provided as a formal update on Health and Safety Executive (HSE) involvement with the Authority.

### **2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 Dean Baker has been assigned the appointed HSE Inspector for the Authority, with Sian Clayton as the Principle Inspector. There have been a number of issues which have involved the HSE since the last update provided to the Committee and the following report provides an overview of the issues concerned.

### **3. REPORT**

#### **3.1 Fochriw Primary (Asbestos Incident) – Improvement Notices Closed Out**

At the beginning of 2011, the Authority was issued two improvement notices following the asbestos related incident at Fochriw Primary School in August 2010. The improvement notices required a significant amount of work to close them out, including development of an asbestos management system using RAMIS. The HSE was provided with a presentation on 20th February 2011 on the improvements made and closed out the notices in March 2012. The HSE have approved the Authority's Corporate Asbestos Management Plan which incorporates the RAMIS system. The Asbestos Management Plan will be submitted to CMT for approval prior to implementation in the summer which will include RAMIS Training.

On 15th June 2012, a presentation of the asbestos management system will be provided to public and private sector organisations that are interested in the developments made in Caerphilly Council.

#### **3.2 Pantside Sheltered Housing – Asbestos Issue**

The HSE are investigating the discovery of asbestos debris in the attic voids of eight sheltered housing properties in St. Peters Court, Pantside. The debris was discovered during routine insulation works on one property, after discovery all properties were inspected and sealed. A programme of asbestos removal works was initiated in partnership with Housing and Health and Safety, removing debris from each property by accessing through the roof to minimise disruption to residents. The removal project was very successful and tenants were kept fully informed during the process. The HSE visited site on several occasions and their investigation is continuing. The presence of the debris is likely to date back to work undertaken in the roof voids in 2002 which involved installation of new boilers and associated flues. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

### **3.3 Legionella Investigations**

#### **3.3.1 Bedwas Leisure Centre**

The leisure centre was identified as a possible source of a case of Legionnaires disease in September 2011. Remedial works and ongoing monitoring have been supervised by Health and Safety, recently monitoring of water quality has identified low levels of infection in water at the centre. Further engineering controls are being implemented and Welsh Water has been asked to investigate mains supply. The HSE have investigated the issues at the centre and we are keeping them informed of developments. Currently the showers at the centre have been taken out of commission and will be re-instated once water samples are clear.

#### **3.3.2 Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni**

On 1 March 2012, Legionella infection was identified in the water supply to the science labs at the school, through routine water quality testing. The risk of transfer of the infection to pupils and staff was regarded as low as there are no showers on the system. However, the presence of the infection was a concern and the system was immediately isolated until remedial works were completed.

The issue was reported in the press and the HSE and Public Health have been kept updated on the developments.

Health and Safety continue to monitor the situation via Mitie, the Management Company in control of the premises.

- 3.3.3 RAMIS is used to monitor compliance with Legionella Management Controls and further audits have been undertaken on high risk premises including schools, sheltered housing and residential homes to review compliance with management controls in terms of temperature checks and purging of little used outlets.

### **3.4 Asbestos – High Risk Schools**

During a refurbishment project at St Martins School during the Easter Holidays, the Asbestos Team sampled dust on ceiling tiles which were being removed as part of the refurbishment project. Asbestos dust was confirmed and the works stopped for further analysis to be undertaken. The results identified widespread asbestos dust in the ceiling void of the school block and remedial work was undertaken to remove and replace the contaminated ceiling by a licensed contractor. In addition, an environmental clean was undertaken on two areas of the building and all holes and cracks in ceilings sealed.

Although there was no evidence to indicate that there was an exposure to asbestos above the control limit, the HSE were informed of the issue.

The Health and Safety Team held two meetings at the school with staff to advise them of the issue and the remedial works which had been undertaken. On 14th and 15th June an OH Nurse will meet with individual staff at the school to discuss any health concerns they have.

Following the discovery at St Martins, similarly constructed schools (CLASP or SYSTEM Build) which equate to a third of our schools were advised in writing by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Education that they had to seek permission from Health and Safety to undertake any refurbishment work on the fabric of the school building, due to the risk of asbestos disturbance. In addition, schools affected were advised that they were restricted from accessing the roof voids in the school until further analysis had been undertaken. The arrangements were also communicated to Technical Service areas and uploaded to RAMIS.

On 21st May 2011, Headteachers and Site Management staff from the schools affected met to discuss the issues involved, the process of seeking permission to undertake refurbishment works and measures to take in an emergency i.e. dealing with a leak etc. The response from all involved has been very positive and all parties are working together to reduce the risk from asbestos within our school buildings.

The arrangements for high risk schools are detailed in the revised Corporate Asbestos Management Plan.

### **3.5 Suspension of Asbestos Surveying Contractor**

A further Asbestos Surveying Contractor has been suspended from use by the Authority. Life Environmental have not responded adequately to quality concerns raised over several deficient surveys undertaken on Council Premises. A recommendation was made to Technical Panel on 22nd May 2012 to formally suspend use of the contractor and advise Swansea Council who lead on the Asbestos Procurement Framework.

Health and Safety will continue to monitor the quality of asbestos work undertaken by external contractors to ensure that we protect the health of pupils, staff and members of the public who could be affected by such deficiencies.

## **4. RECOMMENDATION**

4.1 The Committee are asked to note the content of this report.

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