



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE ON MONDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER 2012 AT 10.00 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Havard – presiding Chairman

Councillors:

P.J. Bevan, Mrs C. Forehead, D.T. Hardacre, G.J. Hughes

Together with:

D. Jones (Health and Safety Manager), E. Townsend (Deputy Health and Safety Manager), N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), G. Hardacre (Head of HR and Organisation Development), R.J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives:

J. Roberts-Garcia (UNSION), G. Parr (UCATT), D.A. Williams (Unison)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A.G. Higgs, S. Kent, together with Trade Union Representatives Mrs. E. Ashton (UCAC) and N. Funnell (GMB), and officer M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services)

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 25th June 2012 (minutes nos. 1 – 8, 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. PRESENTATION – ASBESTOS RAMIS

Mrs Donna Jones, Health and Safety Manager, gave Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives a presentation on the Asbestos sections within RAMIS, the online risk management system used by the Authority.

The six distinct steps in the Asbestos Management System, together with the individual workflows that sit behind them, were demonstrated and the Committee advised that the surveying team have a mobile surveying tool which is used to undertake new management surveys, re-surveys or re-inspections on site. This allows RAMIS to be updated in real time, with each user having an individual user name and password that allows any amendments to be recorded and audited.

Members were shown the system's simplicity by viewing various screens via drop down menus and Mrs Jones advised the Committee how automated reminders and outstanding actions were escalated.

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

Members received clarification of the processes in place for the authorisation and removal of asbestos, together with day to day monitoring and asbestos management. The use of contractors was discussed and the Committee was informed of the tight controls in place, through the Corporate Asbestos Management Team and specific training courses undertaken.

Members expressed concerns over the possibility of human error and the reliance on the contractor to check RAMIS before carrying out any emergency works. Officers confirmed the processes that were in place, but advised that while schools were encouraged to use the CCBC control centre for out of hour emergencies, the Authority could not dictate to schools which contractors to use in emergency circumstances.

General discussions followed. In closing, the two types of asbestos (white and brown) were described and the Committee informed that post 2000, no asbestos material was used in any building material. White asbestos was still available in some countries, but not in the United Kingdom.

The Chairman once again thanked the officer and the Committee gave their support to the work undertaken by officers.

4. ASBESTOS TEAM UPDATE

The report updated Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives on the newly established Corporate Asbestos Management Team.

Members were informed that the scope and work of the Asbestos Team had quickly expanded from the initial task of carry out new asbestos management surveys across CCBC workplaces. The additional work included the need for increased asbestos support in Housing Services to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard. The Deputy Health and Safety Manager reviewed the ongoing work commitments of the Corporate Asbestos Management Team

In June 2012, in order to fulfil the growing workload, it was agreed to recruit a further two Asbestos Officers. Two highly qualified officers have now been appointed; one officer is already in post and the other will start at the beginning of December.

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

5. HSE INVOLVEMENT/INVESTIGATIONS

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

Members were asked to note that the HSE do not plan on taking any enforcement action against the Authority in relation to asbestos debris in the attic voids of eight sheltered housing properties in St Peters Court, Panside. A programme of asbestos removal works was initiated and completed successfully with tenants being fully informed during the process.

Officers continued to monitor a number of Legionnaire issues and Members were informed of additional measures taken in regard to Bedwas Leisure Centre and Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymini. Members enquired as to whether some of these measures could be established at other sites. Officers confirmed this could be considered for certain high-risk sites, such as those that have no building management.

It was highlighted that a refurbishment project at St Martins School had led to the identification of asbestos dust in ceiling voids and that remedial work was completed in line with the Council's Asbestos Management Plan. With regard to asbestos and Cwmcarn High School, an interim report was being brought forward for discussion at Council the next day. In addition, following the collapse of a party wall that separated the garden of a private home and a council domestic property, officers were working with Legal Services and Property Services to review the arrangements in place to assess and rectify dangerous structures. In particular where there are joint responsibilities.

Members discussed the report and officers responded to general questions. Specifically officers confirmed the arrangements in place in regards to the management of Legionella in sports pavilions at the start of the season.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the contents of the report and welcomed the suggestion to invite an officer from Engineering Services to the next meeting of the Committee to illustrate monitoring arrangements in place that assess and rectify dangerous structures/walls.

6. CORPORATE ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN / FIRE SAFETY POLICY AND CORPORATE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS / MANUAL HANDLING AND MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS POLICY AND CORPORATE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

Officers introduced agenda items 3(4), (5) and (6) together, and sought the views of Members, Management and Trade Union Safety Representatives on the recent new drafts, as part of the formal consultation process, prior to their consideration by Cabinet.

Officers highlighted that:-

- the Corporate Asbestos Management Plan (CAMP) set out changes in arrangements and practises and in response to the need for new procedures following a HSE investigation;
- the Fire Safety policy and management arrangements on Fire Safety and Arson Prevention had been re-written due to changes in arrangements and practises, and in response to insurance requirements; and
- the Manual Handling and Musculoskeletal Disorders Policy and associated Corporate Management Arrangements for Manual Handling Inanimate Loads, Manual Care Handling of Children (Education) and Directorate of Social Services Manual Handling Arrangements had been substantially re-written due to changes in arrangements and practises. The revised Policy was all encompassing and divided into three distinct areas.

The documents were developed by specialised officers and in regards to the CAMP, with close involvement of the HSE. In addition, all documents had been subject to Trade Union consultation. Members of the Committee were asked to forward any comments onto the Health and Safety Manager or her Deputy.

Members thanked the officers for the comprehensive reports and welcomed the introduction of the Manual Care Handling of Children (Education) Arrangements. Members discussed the reports and officers responded to general questions, in particular in regards to the Fire Safety Policy and management arrangements on Fire Safety and Arson Prevention.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee endorsed the contents of the reports and agreed to forward any further comments onto officers at the earliest opportunity.

7. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted:

- (1) Accident Statistics Report for Quarter 1 April – June 2012;
- (2) Accident Statistics Report for Quarter 2 July – September 2012;
- (3) Recent HSE Updates.

8. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Committee agreed that meetings in 2013 should be held at 10.00 a.m. on Monday morning, in the months of February, June and November. Exact dates to be agreed and disseminated after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.30 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the next meeting, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN