



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN,
ON MONDAY, 17TH NOVEMBER 2014 AT 10.00 AM**

PRESENT:

Councillor D. Havard - Chair

Councillors:

M. Adams, P.J. Bevan, D.T. Hardacre. .

Together with:

D. Jones (Service Manager, Health, Safety and Welfare), G. Hardacre (Head of HR and Organisational Development), T. Phillips (Health and Safety Manager), P. James (Health and Safety Manager), S. Hawkins (Community Leisure Officer), E. Townsend (Deputy Health and Safety Manager), K. Evans (Occupational Health Manager), S. Wright (Service Manager - Learning Disability/Mental Health), S. Ruddock (Senior Insurance and Risk Officer), S.M. Kauczok (Committee Services Officer).

Trade Union Representatives:

S. Brassinne (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB), J.A. Garcia (UNISON), D. A. Williams (UCATT).

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors A.G. Higgs, G.J. Hughes and S. Kent, Mr B. May (T&G), L. Donovan (Personnel Manager) and M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Health and Safety Committee held on 16th June 2014, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute No. 9 - Darren Valley Traffic Issue

Councillor D.T. Hardacre expressed concern in relation to the ongoing problem of Council owned vehicles travelling at speed through the Darren Valley particularly in 20 mph zones.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. RESULTS OF AUDIOMETRIC SCREENING PROGRAMME - PRESENTATION

Kath Evans, Occupational Health Manager, gave a Powerpoint presentation on the Council's Audiometric Screening Programme, which had commenced in 2013. The aim of the programme is to provide an independent assessment of employee hearing levels for identified CCBC employees exposed to noise levels as indicated by risk assessment. Employees who are considered to be exposed to noise at work and who have been identified via a risk assessment are included in a Health Surveillance programme.

The testing of 742 employees commenced in July 2013 at the Occupational Health Department, Tredomen. The areas which have been identified as at risk requiring a hearing test include Refuse and Cleansing staff, Parks and Bereavement Services, Housing, Duty Officers within the Directorate of Education and Leisure, some Social Services staff, Highways, Print Room staff, Facilities and some Caerphilly Passport employees.

All the staff involved completed an initial/follow up questionnaire in relation to their hearing and signed a consent form for release of information to management. Staff were given an otoscopic examination (a visual inspection of the external ear canal and tympanic membrane) within a sound booth in a clinical room at the Occupational Health Unit. During the test employees were asked to listen to a series of tones through headphones and press the responder button. The majority of staff had been at work on the day of their test; some staff attended at the beginning of their shift and some at the end.

Of the 742 staff who were screened, 415 were found to have acceptable hearing ability (Category 1), 239 had a mild hearing impairment (Category 2), 85 were found to have poor hearing (Category 3) and 3 people were assessed as having rapid hearing loss (Category 4). 168 initial Category 3 results were all repeat tested, 85 proved to be true Category 3 and were referred for follow up and if necessary ENT referral. To date 11 have been referred for ENT. Members were advised that overall it appears that the organisation hearing conservation programme is of a sufficient standard as trends have been shown in the majority to be upward. Managers in each Directorate would be encouraged to continue to promote good hearing conservation by enforcing the wearing of recommended hearing protection stipulated in the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005.

The Chair thanked Kath for the informative presentation and a full discussion ensued. Officers responded in detail to the issues raised by Members and Trade Union representatives.

6. RAMIS: STATUTORY MAINTENANCE COMPLIANCE

Donna Jones, Service Manager, Health Safety and Welfare, updated the Committee on RAMIS (Risk Assessment Management Information System), which is used by the Authority to help manage its statutory maintenance responsibilities for all of its workplace premises and provides a live record of compliance across all Authority premises.

RAMIS collates all statutory maintenance inspections undertaken by contractors, records all cyclical tasks to be undertaken by CCBC staff and all H&S inspections/audits of buildings. Building Managers receive emails reminding them of tasks due and overdue and reports are generated from the system on compliance.

A significant amount of work had been undertaken to ensure the Authority is compliant. Electrical testing (17th edition) is carried out every 5 years, gas safety certificates are required annually and legionella risk assessment are required every 2 years. In addition, regular water quality/fire alarm and fire fixed alarm wiring testing are undertaken. Fire risk assessments are undertaken of large corporate buildings and comprehensive schools annually with other buildings every 2-3 years. Portable fire fighting equipment is tested on an annual basis. In addition, air conditioning/sprinkler systems are tested annually, emergency lighting six monthly, fixed ventilation every 14 months, lifts six monthly and asbestos surveys are carried out every 3 years.

Reference was then made to high-risk inspections i.e. electrical reactive tasks, legionella reactive tasks and gas safety reactive tasks and their priority ratings. Priority 1 - requires urgent attention (to be undertaken within 60 days); Priority 2 - requires improvement (to be undertaken within 90 days) and Priority 3 - is advisory only (no time limit). Members received details of the inspections undertaken for each directorate, including the number of sites inspected, the number of outstanding tasks and a review status/comments column, which provided up to date information on progress. It was intended that the scope of compliance presentations would be extended in the future and schools would be included in future presentations.

Following the officer's detailed presentation, a question and answer session ensued on the issues raised. Discussion took place in particular on the feasibility of CCBC using its own employees, rather than contractors, to undertake the work involved. All parties present felt that this justified further exploration whilst noting that some of the skills that would be required in domestic properties in terms of gas and electricity would not necessarily transfer to commercial properties. In addition to training requirements consideration would need to be given to the availability of resources, together with the cost implications. It was agreed that officers would prepare a business case to determine whether this proposition would be viable.

7. EDUCATION HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION UPDATE

Terry Phillips, Health and Safety Manager, presented the report, which advised the Committee of recent developments and resulting inspections undertaken by Health and Safety Officers within maintained Caerphilly schools and non-education premises during 2014 in relation to automatic powered access gates.

The Health and Safety Section had completed a total of 10 inspections, 7 of which were primary schools. Two of the 7 primary schools had powered pedestrian access gates, all the remaining were vehicle access gates. Five of the sites inspected, three of which were primary schools, did not comply with the standard guidance of BS EN 12453. Six of the sites did not have an installation commissioning certificate or report for the gates on site. Three of these were primary schools. Six of the sites inspected had no regular maintenance or servicing contract in place, four of these were primary schools. Five sites had not had the gates pressure tested in the last six months, three of these being primary schools. Six of the sites on inspection had post installation faults that needed rectification. Four of these were primary schools.

Health and Safety Officers completed the audits during June and August 2014. Reports on the non-compliances have been identified and passed to the Head of the respective schools or building manager to initiate and rectify. All schools received support to advise the action they need to take to achieve compliance and officers are checking progress with the schools.

Further monitoring inspections at these schools will be undertaken in November 2014 and the powered gates will be added to the school RAMIS cyclical tasks to prompt maintenance servicing and pressure testing in future. The equipment will be added to the ongoing General Inspection and Management Health and Safety Audit exercises undertaken by Health and Safety.

It was noted that a Health and Safety Guidance Note has been issued on the installation and testing of powered gates since the inspection and this has been provided to Technical Service Areas who commission installation of such gates and to schools who may commission installation directly with a contractor.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report.

8. DRIVER CERTIFICATE OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE TRAINING UPDATE

Under European Union Directive (96/26EC) professional bus, coach and lorry drivers must hold a driver CPC in addition to their driving licence, this applies to any drivers of lorries over 3.5 tonnes. All drivers must complete 35 hours of periodic training every five years and on an on-going basis. This requirement came into effect in September 2009 with a 5 year deadline to September 2014.

Driver CPC training in Caerphilly Council commenced in 2011. Caerphilly adopted the modular approach and ran 5 sessions lasting 7 hours each, with health and safety and fleet services delivering the 5 modules. Since 2011 health and safety and fleet services have trained 245 drivers, all completing the 35 hours by the 9th September 2014 deadline, thus ensuring there are no operational disruptions.

In addition, Caerphilly CBC was approached by Torfaen and Blaenau Gwent Councils to deliver the Driver CPC programme to their drivers. Torfaen put forward 65 drivers with 30 completing all 5 modules, the remaining 35 attended up to module 4 but then gained further CPC hours by winter maintenance courses with Raglan Training. Blaenau Gwent put forward 62 drivers with all 62 completing 5 modules with Caerphilly CBC.

The Corporate Health and Safety Committee noted the report.

9. FIRE SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

The report provides an overview of the outcome of a recent programme of Fire Risk Assessment reviews and highlights where improvements are required. Health and Safety work closely with schools on improving fire safety and with technical divisions where alterations to buildings are planned. This has proved very successful and year on year improvements to fire safety in schools have been made. A progress update of Fire Risk Assessment Actions was circulated at the meeting.

There has been significant improvement in Fire Safety in Caerphilly Schools since 2006 when the fire risk assessment programme commenced. Education and Risk Management have jointly invested in improvements which include upgrading of fire alarms, improvements to alarm wiring, removal of redundant hose reels and installation of fire barriers where required. This work has greatly improved the risk to life from fire in schools.

The Committee noted the improvements that had been made to fire safety within schools. However, during the course of the discussion, reference was made to the need to raise awareness of the importance of completing a fire drill that has been initiated as a result of a false alarm in order to avoid possible confusion and complacency in the future.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed. The Committee endorsed the recommendations in the report as follows: -

1. Health and Safety will communicate the findings of this round of Fire Risk Assessment Reviews to Headteachers and request that they review the findings on the RAMIS system. For those schools named in the report which require improvements to their fire alarm system, a letter will be sent to each Headteacher from the Director of Education requesting that the works are undertaken by a given deadline and confirmation of the same in writing to the Health and Safety Department.
2. An update report will be submitted to Corporate Management Team in the New Year.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted: -

1. Recent HSE Updates.
2. Accident Statistics Report for April to September 2014.

The meeting closed at 12.08 pm.

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 Chair.

CHAIR