

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the office of the Head of Human Resources and Payroll, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at 1020 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

J. Ritchie – Chair

### **Members:-**

Councillors J.A. Clifton and D. McGregor.

### **Officers:-**

L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll), T. Walker (Health and Safety Officer), A. Lowery (Street Services Manager) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

### **Unison:-**

R. Frisby.

### **Unite:-**

There were no Unite representatives in attendance.

### **953. APOLOGIES**

Some confusion had arisen in respect of the meeting's start time due to an error in the advertised meeting schedule. The meeting was called for 1020 hours.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R.J. Bowler, P.M. Bowmer, and B.R. Murray-Carr, W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer) and C. Dodsworth (Unite).

### **954. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

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### **955. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

### **956. MINUTES – 28<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2008**

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by R. Frisby.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2008 be approved as a true record.

### **957. WASTE IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Street Services Manager gave a verbal update on the waste improvement plan. The meeting was advised that the majority of outstanding actions related to the introduction of the alternate week collection. Risk assessments had not yet been carried out as the alternate week collection was not likely to be introduced until late 2010. Planning for the commencement of the new collection schedule would start in the early part of 2010 to coincide with the opening of Derbyshire County Council's in-vessel composter.

The sickness absence procedure had identified that further work on risk assessments was required in respect of the bulky refuse collection service. This had been included in the improvement plan and an update would be brought to a future meeting.

The Street Services Manager provided an explanation on the procedures and legislation in respect of the collection of white goods.

### **958. EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2007 – HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES**

At the Safety Committee in June 2007 Members had considered a report on the outcome of the employee survey 2006 and a number of areas were highlighted for concern and further monitoring. For the employee survey 2007 the areas of concern were in relation to Regeneration and Grounds Maintenance.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised the meeting that the results from the new survey for 2007 were quite positive overall in respect to safety issues, with 87% of respondents reporting that they felt that their line manager or supervisor dealt with health and safety issues well. A full breakdown by department was attached to the report for information.

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The meeting was advised that there had been a low overall response rate from Grounds Maintenance and Regeneration which resulted in disproportionate percentages. It was explained that where only two members of staff had responded to the survey a 50% satisfaction rate related to just one person. This matter had been discussed by Senior Management and it had been agreed to report future surveys by numbers rather than as percentages to give a truer reflection. Low response rates had been referred to the relevant Heads of Service for consideration and would continue to be monitored.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised the meeting that, in addition to the actions outlined in the report, the IIP Working Group had circulated a Behavioural Partnership document which set out appropriate behaviours for both employees and management, which would be distributed shortly.

In response to questions from Members the Head of Human Resources and Payroll confirmed that detailed feedback on the Employee Survey was provided to staff through team meetings. It was commented that it would be appropriate to review the format of the Employee Survey to make the questions more targeted and relevant to particular roles which may encourage increased participation.

Moved by Councillor J.A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor.  
**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

### **959. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton.

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

### **960. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report advising that the majority of accidents related to manual handling which had increased compared to the same quarter last year. The number of reportable accidents had also increased on last year.

In response to questions from Members, the Health and Safety Officer confirmed that the majority of extreme sports injuries involved minors, however this was as a result of the high proportion of young people taking part in these activities.

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The Health and Safety Officer added that the majority of manual handling incidents were in respect of waste handling which was not unexpected but further review of risk assessments would be undertaken to try to identify possible improvements.

It was further added that Bolsover District Council was 50% below the Government sector national average for sickness absence arising from accidents.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

### **961. MANUAL HANDLING POLICY AND GUIDANCE EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Health and Safety Officer advised that the Manual Handling Policy had been reviewed to provide a more effective policy which clearly laid out responsibilities for all Council staff. The policy also provided guidance for controlling risks and risk assessment and would be supported by a training programme for manual handling assessors and operatives.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton.

**RECOMMENDED** that the manual handling policy be agreed and recommended to Council for approval.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll/Council)

### **962. FIRE SAFETY POLICY EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report which included a new policy to comply with revised fire legislation and co-ordinate existing procedures. It was added that the main emphasis was on pro-active management of fire risk and outlined responsibilities for all levels of employees.

Most fire risk assessments would be carried out by consultants other than low profile areas which would be done in house. There was also greater emphasis on improved record keeping.

Members raised concerns that a number of items identified by the consultants as a result of the last review were still outstanding particularly with regard to group dwellings. Members were advised that the Business Risk Group were monitoring outstanding issues and funding was now in place.

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It was agreed that a letter be sent from the Committee to the Chair of the Business Risk Group expressing concerns over the outstanding issues. It was added that time restraints and funding would not be considered valid reasons for not addressing matters of fire safety.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton.

**RESOLVED** that a letter be sent on behalf of the Committee to the Chair of the Business Risk Group expressing concerns over the matters outstanding from the last fire risk assessment, particularly with regard to group dwellings.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Fire Safety Policy be agreed and recommended to Council for approval.

(Democratic Services/Head of Human Resources and Payroll/Council)

### **963. WORKING AT HEIGHTS POLICY EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report and policy which covered the Council's enhanced responsibilities under the Working at Heights Regulations 2005 and to reduce the risk of related accidents.

The policy outlined responsibilities for all employees throughout the Council and provided guidance on use of ladders, stepladders, platforms, scaffolding and recreational activities.

The draft risk assessment policy had been considered by Heads of Service and the final version was to be circulated by the Health and Safety Officer.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Working at Heights Policy be agreed and recommended to Council for approval.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll/Council)

The meeting concluded at 1125 hours.