

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Wednesday 8th July 2009 at 1400 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillors J.A. Clifton, B.R. Murray-Carr and K.F. Walker

Unison:-

R. Farnsworth, W. Hatton and R. Frisby.

Unite:-

C. Dodsworth.

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll), T. Robinson (Property and Estates Manager), D. Bonsor (Housing Needs Manager) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

119. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.M. Bowmer and D. McGregor and S. Sambrooks (Unite).

120. ELECTION OF CHAIR

Moved by W. Hatton (Unison), seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that R. Farnsworth (Unison) be elected as Chair for the ensuing year.

R. Farnsworth - Chair

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121. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Moved by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton
RESOLVED that Councillor K.F. Walker be appointed as Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

122. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

It was requested that the following matters be considered as Urgent Items of Business.

Workplace Inspection – Oxcroft Lane Depot

Members raised concerns that the old depot could prove an allure to children and requested that an inspection take place by the Health & Safety Officer as soon as possible.

Workplace Inspection - Riverside Depot

Members requested that a Workplace Inspection be carried out at the Riverside Depot as soon as possible. Members were advised that the new depot had been added to the Inspection Schedule and this would be carried out in due course.

Awareness of Fire Evacuation Procedures – Riverside Depot

Concerns were raised that staff at the new depot had not been made aware of fire evacuation procedures. The Unite representative agreed to contact the Health and Safety Officer and the Depot and Resources Manager to discuss any areas of concern.

123. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

124. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton
RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference for the Safety Committee be agreed.

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125. MINUTES – 27TH APRIL 2009

Moved by Councillor J.A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting held on 27th April 2009 be approved as a true record.

126. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS 2008/09

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the Annual Report for 2008/09 in respect of sickness absence and occupational health statistics for Members' consideration.

The outturn for sickness absence for 2008/09 was 8.43 days against a target of 9 days. Occupational Health referrals had increased against the previous year from 43 to 49.

Members' attention was drawn to a detailed breakdown of absences resulting from musculo-skeletal and neck and back problems. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll gave an explanation of how these were recorded and asked Members to note that a number of the musculo-skeletal absences were due to scheduled operations and were not attributable to accidents.

Moved by Councillor J. Clifton, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the report be received.

The Chief Executive Officer commented that reported incidences of swine flu were increasing and that Members should be aware that the Authority was likely to be affected by this to some degree in the near future. The Chief Executive would attend a meeting with other Derbyshire Authorities on 9th July to discuss the possible impact of a flu pandemic and business continuity planning. In response to Members' questions, the Chief Executive Officer confirmed that guidance on symptoms and action to be taken would be issued to staff in due course.

127. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to update Members on current and ongoing Health and Safety matters.

It was confirmed that new fire safety procedures had been introduced at group dwellings and all tenants had been made fully aware.

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Responses had been received from relevant Heads of Service who had confirmed that First Aid boxes in vehicles were inspected daily and signed off as complete or replenished satisfactorily.

Members were advised that investigations were still ongoing with regard to the cause of a fire at the depot north on 2nd June. It was agreed that a letter be sent from the Safety Committee thanking those members of staff whose prompt action had averted a major incident.

Discussion took place with regard to the Council's no smoking policy which stated that smoking whilst on Council premises, in Council vehicles and during working hours was prohibited. It was raised that some confusion existed with peripatetic staff with regard to the policy on smoking whilst at work. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll reiterated the existing no smoking policy and agreed to ensure that this was again communicated to staff.

Moved by Councillor J.A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor K.F. Walker

RESOLVED that (1) the report be accepted;

(2) a letter be sent from the Safety Committee to Members of depot staff involved in averting a major fire incident;

(3) the Health & Safety Officer to communicate the Council's no smoking policy to staff.

(Health & Safety Officer)

128. UPDATE ON FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEWS

The Property and Estates Manager presented the report and tabled a further document detailing Priority 1 and 2 Fire Risk Assessment Schedules. These provided an update on risks identified by recent reviews. Significant progress had been made and only a few items remained outstanding.

Members asked various questions with regard to the status of the risks identified to which the Property and Estates Manager responded.

The Chief Executive Officer requested that an update to the report be provided by the Property and Estates Manager to be considered by Senior Management Team on 16th July 2009.

Moved by Councillor J.A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

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129. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor J. A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor K.F. Walker

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 it involves 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.

130. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members on accident and stress statistics for the period January to March 2009, with comparative figures for the previous year.

The January to March quarter had shown higher rates of accidents than the comparable period in 2008 but remained similar when averaged across the year. The main reason for accidents remained as slips, trips and falls.

A full breakdown of accidents and days lost as a result was included with the report for Members' further information.

Moved by Councillor J. A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the report be received.

The meeting concluded at 1452 hours.