

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Monday, 5th October 2009 at 1400 hours.

PRESENT:-

R. Farnsworth - Chairman

Members:-

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

Unison:-

W. Hatton, R. Frisby and J. Woods.

Unite:-

C. Dodsworth and S. Sambrooks.

Officers:-

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

353. APOLOGY

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. McGregor.

354. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

355. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

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356. MINUTES – 8TH JULY 2009

Moved by Councillor K.F. Walker, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on 8th July 2009 be approved as a true record.

Minute No. 126 – Sickness Absence/Occupational Health Statistics 2008/09

Members' raised questions with regard to the incidences of swine flu. The Health and Safety Officer tabled a document detailing the number of cases and working days lost to date. These had declined in recent weeks but were expected to increase again as the winter months approached. Regular bulletins giving staff up to date advice were provided. It was noted that normal sickness absence triggers had been re-instated for cases of swine flu. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that this decision had been taken as a result of a meeting with Gold Command, however the situation was being regularly monitored.

Minute No. 128 – Update on Fire Risk Assessment Reviews

In response to Members' questions, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll agreed to contact the Property and Estates Manager to request an update on the presentation of the Fire Risk Assessment Reviews to Senior Management Team.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

357. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS 2008/09

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members of sickness absence and occupational health statistics for the period April to June 2009. Sickness absence had risen significantly against the same period last year from 1.81 days per full time equivalent to 2.14 days but was still almost within the 2.13 days target. There had also been an increase in long term sickness absence for the period July to September compared to 2008 with 18 new cases beginning in the current quarter. Half of these had now been rehabilitated and neither quarter had shown any identifiable trends. Members requested that the report include categories of long term sickness absence which the Head of Human Resources and Payroll agreed to provide.

In response to Members' questions, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that confidential counselling sessions were provided by an external organisation and were usually helpful in assisting employees' return to work.

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A breakdown of short and long term sickness absence by department was provided for further information.

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

358. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report to provide Members with an update on corporate Health and Safety issues.

Members raised questions with regard to the sites monitored for Legionella by the Authority. The Health and Safety Officer confirmed that all commercial sites and group dwellings were monitored.

Depot safety inspections had now been concluded and the first part of the report was currently being considered by Directors. Depot managers had arranged for training in respect of manual refuelling of petrol equipment.

In response to questions, the Health and Safety Officer advised that the appointment of a responsible officer for asbestos management was still under consideration. This was likely to be a senior manager with some technical knowledge of asbestos management. Unions would be consulted on the asbestos management policy via the committee process.

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor K.F. Walker
RESOLVED that the report be received.

359. STRESS AT WORK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report and draft stress at work management policy for Members' consideration.

The document replaced the previous policy and provided more clearly defined tools for identifying and managing stress. Members' attention was drawn to the control measures included in the policy. Heads of Service had been fully consulted and had agreed that each post could be assessed within one year of the agreement of the policy by Council.

Questions were raised with regard to risk assessments for the Community Safety Partnership which had been discussed by PPMG4. The Head of Human

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Resources and Payroll agreed to contact the Performance and Quality Manager for clarification.

Moved by Councillor K.F. Walker, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RECOMMENDED that the Stress at Work Management Policy be referred to Council for adoption.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll/Democratic Services)

360. 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.

361. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report to advise Members of accident and stress statistics for the period April to June 2009 with comparative prior year figures.

In response to questions the Health and Safety Officer advised that 60% of the stress related illness reported in the current quarter was work related.

Members considered the detailed breakdown of accidents by department included in the agenda.

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

The meeting concluded at 1437 hours.