

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Tuesday 9th February 2010 at 1400 hours.

PRESENT:-

R. Farnsworth - Chairman

Members:-

Councillors P.M Bowmer, J.A. Clifton, D. McGregor (to Minute No. 722), B.R. Murray-Carr and K.F. Walker.

Unison:-

R. Frisby and J. Hendy.

Unite:-

C. Dodsworth and S. Sambrooks.

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll), T. Walker (Health and Safety Officer), T. Robinson (Property and Estates Manager), A. Lowery (Street Services Manager) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

713. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies received.

714. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

715. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

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716. MINUTES – 5TH OCTOBER 2009

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on 5th October 2009 be approved as a true record.

717. SICKNESS ABSENCE – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2009

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members of sickness absence and Occupational Health referrals between July and September 2009.

There had been a sharp increase in long term sickness absence during the period which had resulted in an outturn of 2.65 days per full time employee against the target of 2.13 days.

Members' attention was drawn to the Occupational Health referrals, the reasons for long term sickness absence and the breakdown of long and short term sickness absence by department.

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

718. SICKNESS ABSENCE – OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009

The Head of Human Resources presented the report to advise Members of sickness absence and Occupational Health referrals for the period October to December 2009.

The outturn had improved significantly from the previous period at 1.76 days per full time equivalent compared to the target of 2.13 days per full time equivalent.

The target for 2009/10 was 8.5 days with the outturn for the nine month period to the end of December currently standing at 6.56 days, bringing the target for the year back on track. This was as a result of a reduction in the number of long term sickness cases during this period.

Members were advised that 4 staff with Occupational Health referrals had been rehabilitated back to work with only 1 outstanding and due to return to work shortly.

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

R. Frisby (Unison) joined the meeting during the following minute.

719. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report to advise Members on the current status of a number of health and safety matters.

Revised fire procedures had been introduced at Sherwood Lodge and further fire warden training would be carried out for new employees. Induction training had been rearranged for 2 weeks time.

Outstanding safety inspection reports had been received from Housing and Leisure Services.

In response to Members' questions the Health and Safety Officer confirmed that the responsible officer had been identified in the asbestos policy. It was added that the new asbestos database would be useful to draw together departmental information to assist in the management of Council properties containing asbestos.

The Street Services Manager advised that refuse operatives had recently undertaken manual handling training that was more job specific. This had been well received by the workforce and some very positive feedback had been provided. It was intended to arrange similar bespoke training for Grounds Maintenance Operatives.

The Chief Executive Officer raised questions with regard to the outstanding Health and Safety Audits. The Health and Safety Officer responded that these had identified some unexpected issues that required attention and a structured timetable would be drawn up. Training and Risk Assessments had been completed.

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

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720. UPDATE ON FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Property and Estates Manager introduced the report to advise Members of the progress on Fire Risk Assessments.

In 2009, the Council had again employed consultants to review Fire Risk Assessments and identify any items not implemented since the last assessment. At the Safety Committee held on 27th April 2009 it had been agreed that Heads of Service be given a deadline of 30th June 2009 to action any outstanding priority 1 and 2 items identified by the review.

A summary of the current situation was provided in the report for Members' information. All priority 1 and 2 risks had been rectified with the exception of the installation of smoke detectors in common lobbies to blocks of flats to which Members raised concerns. This had been identified in the Consultants' report, however following discussion with the Housing Needs Manager, the Consultants had confirmed that smoke alarms were not a requirement but their interpretation of the recommendations. The recommendation was to be reviewed and the outcome provided to the Housing Needs Manager. Clarification was still awaited and the Property and Estates Manager agreed to chase a response from the Housing Needs Manager by formal letter. Members discussed the issue at length and were minded to agree that smoke alarms should be provided in lobby areas. It was requested that the matter be pursued with some urgency.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that (1) the report be noted;

(2) that the issue of smoke alarms in small lobbies of multiple dwellings be pursued with urgency.

(Property and Estates Manager/Housing Needs Manager)

721. STREET SERVICES

The Street Services Manager presented the report in respect of health and safety issues at the Riverside depot which had been provided at the request of an appeal hearing panel held on 13th October 2009.

The report provided details of:

- documented health and safety training including accident and ill health, work equipment, hazardous substances, workplace safety, fire prevention and first aid.
- communication on health and safety matters including the Health and Safety Policy.

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- Risk Assessments (in particular in relation to COSHH)
- ensuring adherence by employees to safe systems of work.

A Member in attendance at the appeal hearing on the 13th October had raised a number of issues in respect of the report. The Chief Executive Officer acknowledged the comments adding that there were a number of useful points raised particularly with regard to timescales, however some were corporate issues that were outside of the Safety Committee's remit. It was suggested that these matters be considered at a more appropriate forum.

Members confirmed that the Street Services Managers' report had answered issues raised at the appeal hearing and the expectations and assurances with regard to outcomes had been addressed. It was added that other Members had made some valid points with regard to timescales being implemented with some urgency, which should be reflected in the recommendations.

The Street Services Manger added that it was intended to develop an action plan and report progress to future meetings of the Safety Committee.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr **RESOLVED** that (1) the report be noted;

(2) Street Services develops and implements an action plan with some urgency and reports progress to the next meeting of the Safety Committee.

Councillor McGregor left the meeting at this point.

722. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT POLICY, PLAN AND GUIDANCE

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report and policy which replaced the existing document adopted in 2004 which no longer met the current legislation, guidance or best practice.

The report set out the Council's duties and responsibilities under the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2006 (CAR 2006) and the Hazardous Waste Regulations 2005.

Members were advised that the Head of Regeneration was the Duty Holder for the Council and was charged with ensuring the Authority carried out its responsibilities.

Extensive training had already taken place to assist employees fulfil their roles.

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Further to questions from Members the Health and Safety Officer advised that asbestos was managed rather than removed from buildings. It was added that provided the material was monitored to ensure it remained in good condition, it presented no problems.

A full copy of the policy and guidance was included in the agenda for Members' consideration.

Moved by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor K.F. Walker
RECOMMENDED that the Asbestos Management Policy and Asbestos Management Plan and Procedure be referred to Council for adoption.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll/Council)

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

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

724. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2009

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report to advise Members of Accident and Stress Statistics for the quarter July to September 2009.

An analysis of accidents by type was included in the report for information. The main reasons being manual handling and slips, trips and falls.

Members were asked to note that vehicle accidents now included any which occurred to and from the workplace involving those operatives who were now able to take their work vehicles home.

A detailed breakdown of all accidents was included for information.

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

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725. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2009

The Health and Safety Officer presented the report to advise Members of the Accident and Stress Statistics for the quarter October to December 2009.

An analysis of accidents by type was included in the report for information.

There had been a reduction in accidents since the last quarter with working days lost down by 50%.

Stress statistics for both the October to December and July to September quarters was higher than the comparable quarters in 2008, however 75-80% was unrelated to work.

A detailed breakdown of all accidents was included for information.

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

The meeting closed at 1458 hours.