

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room One, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 1000 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

A. Lowery – Chair (Unison)

### Members:-

Councillors P.M. Bowmer, H.J. Gilmour, D. McGregor, B.R. Murray-Carr and G.O. Webster.

### Unison:-

J. Hendy.

### Officers:-

L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

### **569. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from S. Sambrooks and T. Walker (Unite).

### **570. URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items of business previously notified to the Chair, however consent was given to a request to discuss the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Concerns were raised by Members that the CAN Rangers had been observed without high visibility clothing whilst working outdoors. It was added that line managers had been contacted to request that this be enforced. The Committee's views were sought on the use of PPE.

The Chair advised that that there was currently no blanket policy on use of PPE and this was largely the responsibility of individual line managers' to ensure appropriate PPE was used for particular tasks. It was added that use of PPE had

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been embedded in Street Services and all employees were aware that wearing high visibility clothing was expected at all times. The Chair considered that a blanket rule on the use of PPE for all outside work regardless of the task being undertaken was the most appropriate policy, a view which Members of the Safety Committee fully endorsed.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll agreed to consider the PPE Policy and bring this to Safety Committee for further comment.

### **571. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

### **572. MINUTES – 25<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2011**

Moved by Councillor P.M. Bowmer, seconded by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr  
**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> July 2011 be approved as a true record, subject to amendment of minute no. 246 to correctly reflect vibration measuring procedures in place.

Minute No. 246 - General Health and Safety Report  
Improvement Notice Action Plan (Vibration)

The Chair clarified a misunderstanding on the previous minutes. The meeting was advised that similar vibration measuring procedures were in place for Housing Repairs and Street Services however there was currently no equipment available to measure the accumulative vibration levels in either service.

Health and Safety Audit - Benchmarking

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that additional benchmarking via the APSE Performance Network had not yet been pursued. However comparable data with the East Midlands Councils had been sought as an interim measure and included in reports to the Safety Committee.

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### **573. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS – APRIL TO JUNE 2011**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise the Safety Committee of sickness absence and occupational health statistics for the period April to June 2011. The outturn for the quarter was 1.63 days per full time equivalent (FTE) which was in line with the previous year and an improvement on the target of 2 days per FTE.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the departmental breakdown included in the report.

Members raised concerns in respect of the high levels of sickness absence recorded for the apprentices. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll responded that this issue had been recognised and the Council's sickness absence procedure was being applied. Actions to address the issue currently being considered were a review of the sickness absence procedures to be applied to apprentices and a more intensive period of induction for the 2012 intake. Regular discussions also took place with the Apprenticeship Steering Group to address the attendance issue which was consistently monitored.

The Chair provided Members with further background on issues specific to the apprentices scheme.

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

### **574. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2011**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise the Safety Committee of sickness absence and occupational health statistics for the period July to September 2011.

Performance had reduced significantly to 2.39 days per FTE compared with 1.97 days per FTE the previous year. Again sickness absence figures were high for the apprentices and incidences within Street Services had also increased. Appropriate Directors and Heads of Service had been requested to discuss the report and consider appropriate action to be taken.

The Committee was advised that it was encouraging that absence due to stress was reducing in Bolsover which was against the national trend.

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

### **575. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to update the Safety Committee on various health and safety issues.

#### **Health and Safety Review**

A report would be presented to Strategic Alliance Management Team in November in respect of the shared service for Health and Safety. The proposals included a shared Health and Safety Manager to undertake cross authority strategic work and the appointment of an operational Health and Safety Officer, with reduced responsibility to the previous post holder, to be on site at Bolsover and responsible for any day to day health and safety issues.

#### **Animal Control**

A revised CRM script reminding tenants to keep animals under control whilst Council workers were present in their homes was provided for information. Members requested that the script be revised to state ' Failure to comply **will** ~~may~~ result in further action' and to put measures in place to ensure that tenants were routinely questioned if there was an animal present at the property.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll agreed to contact the Head of Customer Service and Performance and Legal Services for clarity on whether these changes could be implemented.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

#### **HSE Inspection of Waste Services**

A copy of the HSE letter was provided for the Committee's information.

The Chair advised that the recycling contractor had confirmed their agreement to adopt a monitoring regime that was compliant with the HSE's requirements. Representatives from Street Services had also been invited to attend the contractors' operational meetings as observers. These new arrangements would be advised to the HSE by letter and a further HSE inspection would take place in February 2012.

#### **Policy Reviews**

The Committee was advised of amendments to the Legionella Policy.

The new Drugs and Alcohol policy was attached to the agenda for the Committee's consideration.

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### **Legionella – Group Dwellings**

An update had been provided by the Head of Housing on work carried out to group dwellings. The Committee requested a table of completed and proposed works to be provided which the Head of Human Resources and Payroll agreed to pursue.

### **Sherwood Lodge**

No serious issues had arisen from the Fire Risk Assessment carried out by the Police. An update would be provided to the next Safety Committee.

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

**RESOLVED** that (1) various updates in the report be noted;

(2) The Legionella Policy and the Drugs and Alcohol Policy be approved and the policies updated and placed on the Council's internal website.

(Head of Human Resources Payroll)

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

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster, seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

**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 item of business on the grounds that it may 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.

### **577. ACCIDENT AND STRESS – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2011 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to inform the Safety Committee of the Accident and Stress statistics for the period July to September 2011.

The Committee's attention was drawn to information contained within the report showing comparable data in respect of lost time accidents for East Midlands Councils and Bolsover. This indicated that Bolsover District Council's lost time accidents were considerably lower than the average of the East Midlands Councils. The Chair added that as Bolsover had clearly made significant

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progress reducing reportable accidents this should reinforce the message that use of Personal Protective Equipment was important.

Attention was drawn to the detailed breakdown of accidents provided in the agenda. The meeting was advised that all staff reporting manual handling accidents had received further training.

Further to questions, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll agreed to seek clarity on the reporting of vehicular accidents occurring between an employee's work and home address.

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr **RESOLVED** that the report be received.

The meeting concluded at 1125 hours.