

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room One, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Friday 2nd March 2012 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillors H.J. Gilmour and G.O. Webster.

Unite:-

I. Barber, S. Sambrooks and T. Walker.

Officers:-

L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll) J. Moran (Shared Health and Safety Manager), W. Carter (Facilities Planning and Development Manager – Leisure Services) I. Greeves (Market Services Manager) (to minute no. 937h) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

Observers

J. Leah (Health and Safety Officer)

937a. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Bowmer, D. Mc.Gregor, and B.R. Murray-Carr and A. Lowery (UNISON).

937b. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster, seconded by S. Sambrooks
RESOLVED that Councillor H. Gilmour be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

Councillor H. Gilmour – in the Chair

SAFETY COMMITTEE

937c. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair consented to an issue regarding transfer of tools between personal and work vehicles at the depot being discussed.

937d. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

937e. MINUTES – 4TH NOVEMBER 2011

Moved by Councillor H. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G. O. Webster
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee held on 4th November 2011 be approved as a true record.

937f. AMENDMENT TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised Members of a review of the Safety Committee Terms of Reference included in the Council's Constitution, following the appointment of the Shared Health and Safety Manager.

Members were advised of amendments required to the report included in the agenda :

'Add to the terms of reference of the Safety Committee at point vii and xii on page 97 and renumber the final point:-'

(vii) To receive reports from the Health and Safety Officer and Bassetlaw's Health and Safety Manager in relation to the above (refers to point (vi))
(xii) to resolve any issues referred from the Joint Safety Management Forum.

Add in to 2(ii) Bassetlaw's Health and Safety Manager.

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster, seconded by S. Sambrooks
RECOMMENDED that the changes to the Safety Committee Terms of Reference be referred to Standards Committee.

(Head of Democratic Services)

SAFETY COMMITTEE

937g. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2011

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to update the Committee on sickness absence/occupational health statistics for the period October to December 2011.

The Committee was advised that there had been an increase to 2.42 days per full time equivalent (FTE) in the third quarter compared to 2.01 days per FTE for the comparative period last year. The year to date outturn was 6.44 days per FTE against a target of 6 days per FTE. Overall sickness absence was up largely due to an increase in long term sickness.

Only 1 outstanding occupational health referral remained who was expected to return to work in the near future.

Muscular skeletal sickness and absences as a result of stress had increased on the previous year's data for this quarter.

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster, seconded by I. Barber
RESOLVED that the report be received.

937h. GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

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

Health and Safety Service Review

The Shared Health and Safety Partnership had been in place since 1st February and the Health and Safety Officer for Bolsover would commence on 5th March 2012.

Animal Control

The Committee was advised that legal advice had been sought in respect of the amendment to the message relayed to customers when being asked to ensure dogs were kept under control when Council staff visited their homes.

Members had requested the amendment 'Failure to comply **will** ~~may~~ result in further action'. Legal advice was that this was considered inappropriate leaving the Council no room for discretion. The word 'may' would therefore remain in the message relayed to customers.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Workplace Inspection

Representatives from services with outstanding workplace inspections had been invited to attend the meeting.

Leisure Facilities – the Facilities Planning and Development Manager advised that one round of inspections had been missed. This was an oversight following the departure of the responsible member of staff. It was added that health and safety was taken seriously by the service and discussions would take place on arrangements to be put in place for future reporting.

Shirebrook Market Office – the Market Services Manager advised that the inspection had been carried out and the only outstanding issue was completion of the appropriate paperwork as this could not be downloaded from the intranet. The Market Services Manager was advised to obtain the forms from Human Resources.

The Market Services Manager left the meeting.

Training

An update on training undertaken was provided in the report.

Improvement Notice Action Plan (Vibration)

The Committee was advised that no further progress had been made on electronic vibration monitoring equipment for Street Services equipment but exposure levels continued to be monitored manually.

Equipment used by Street Services was individually labelled to indicate safe exposure times. However the Unite representatives confirmed that equipment used by Housing Repairs staff was not. Monitoring sheets were completed daily by Housing Repairs staff which indicated that very few pieces of equipment generated anywhere near the safe lower limit of vibration exposure.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that APSE advice was that if records were in place to indicate such low level exposure, there was no requirement for daily monitoring to be in place. It was suggested that the Depot Health and Safety Group consider this to reduce the administrative burden on staff. Unite representatives indicated that this would be a welcome move by operatives and managers.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

HSE Inspection of Waste Services

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll updated the Committee on the HSE inspection of Waste Services from information provided by the Street Services Manager.

The HSE had advised that following their visit to the Council Depot and H W Martins, the Council's recycling contractors, they were satisfied with the arrangements in place. A number of issues that H W Martins were required to progress were outlined in the report. These included driver health checks, first aid cover and daily checks of lifting equipment.

The HSE did not intend to revisit Bolsover Council but would monitor progress on the issues raised with H W Martins.

Policy Reviews

Accident Reporting and Investigation Policy and Procedure

The Committee's attention was drawn to an accident reporting flowchart included in the agenda.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that an electronic Health and Safety monitoring system would be introduced over the next 12 months which would negate the need to keep paper copies of Accident Reports and Risk Assessments. This would also include an automatic reminder to Managers for any actions required.

In response to questions regarding the definition of 'as soon as possible' for reporting accidents, the Head of Human Resources advised that ideally this would be within 5 working days. It was added that Managers could input accident information into the reporting system if all the relevant information was available.

Working Time Policy

This had been reviewed due to changes in working practices.

Electricity at Work Policy

At the July meeting of the Safety Committee amendments had been proposed to the Electricity at Work Policy. Some ambiguities had arisen over the definitions 'live working' and 'live testing'. Unite representatives requested that the wording of the policy recognise that Housing Repairs staff do undertake work on live electricity systems for the purposes only of 'live testing'. Following discussion

SAFETY COMMITTEE

between Unite representatives and the Head of Human Resources and Payroll it was agreed to amend the wording of the Electricity at Work Policy to:

7.9 Under no circumstances will any work be carried out on live equipment or systems by Council employees other than for the purposes of live testing which is covered under the provisions of paragraph 8.

NB. Paragraph 8 refers to Paragraph 8 of the Electricity at Work Policy.

Legionella – Valley View, Shirebrook, Parkfields, Woburn House, Jubilee Court

The Head of Housing had provided an update on Legionella Works to the Council's group dwellings.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

At the previous meeting of the Safety Committee it had been suggested that a blanket rule on the use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) be applied to all Council staff working outside. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll had discussed this with Heads of Service, who had raised concerns that this was not appropriate in all cases. The Committee was advised that the Council's policy on high visibility clothing made it clear that its use should be based on a risk assessment of the individual circumstances rather than a blanket policy. Extended Management Team had been advised to issue reminders to Managers of the requirement to carry out these risk assessments.

Moved by Councillor H. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G. O. Webster
RESOLVED that (1) the various updates in the report be noted;

(2) The Accident Reporting/Investigation Policy and Procedure, the Working Time Policy and the Electricity at Work Policy (as amended) be approved by Safety Committee and the policies updated and placed on ERIC.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

SAFETY COMMITTEE

937i. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor H. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G.O. Webster
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.

937j. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2011 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll provided the Committee with an update on Accident and Stress statistics for the period October to December 2011.

The most significant change had been an increase in days lost through stress related illness, however only 50% of these cases were work related. The Committee was advised that stress risk assessments for each job role were carried out as a preventative measure and counselling services were in place for employees requiring this service.

A breakdown of accidents was provided in the agenda for the Committee's information.

Moved by Councillor H. Gilmour, seconded by Councillor G.O. Webster
RESOLVED that the report be received.

PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS

937k. URGENT ITEM – TRANSFER OF TOOLS BETWEEN VEHICLES AT DEPOT

Unite representatives raised concerns over a recent direction given to staff to park their personal vehicles in the lower car park at the depot which necessitated the manual transfer of tools between this car park and the car park where works vehicles were stored. It was added that this was some distance away and could present health and safety issues.

SAFETY COMMITTEE

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that these concerns should be raised with the Director of Neighbourhoods in the first instance and taken to the Depot Health and Safety group for further discussion if a satisfactory resolution could not be agreed with the Director.

The meeting concluded at 1054 hours.