

SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Safety Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Chamber Suite 2, The Arc, Clowne on Monday 10th November 2014 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor D. McGregor in the Chair

Councillors H.J. Gilmour, K.F. Walker and G. O. Webster.

UNITE:-

No Representatives present.

UNISON:-

J. Clayton and J. Woods.

Officers:-

P. Wilmot (Human Resources Manager), M. Spotswood (Health and Safety Advisor) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

0503. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor B.R. Murray Carr and A. Grundy (Assistant Director HR and Payroll).

0504. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

0505. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

0506. MINUTES – 18TH AUGUST 2014

Moved by Councillor G.O. Webster and seconded by Councillor K.F. Walker

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Safety Committee meeting held on 18th August 2014 be approved as a true record.

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0507. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS JULY 2014 TO SEPTEMBER 2014

The Committee considered a report of the Joint Assistant Director – Human Resources in relation to sickness absence/occupational health statistics for the quarter period July 2014 to September 2014.

The sickness absence outturn figure for the second quarter was 2.48 days per Full Time Employee (FTE) against a target set of 2.12 days. The outturn figure for the same quarter in 2013 was 2.50 days per FTE.

A breakdown of the figures by department and by long term/short term sickness absence was attached to the report for Members information.

The outcome of occupational health referrals for the second quarter of 2014 with comparisons for 2013 was as follows;

	July to September 2013	July to September 2014
Rehabilitated	8	10
Continuing	2	7
Ill Health	1	0

The top three causes of sickness absence for the second quarter period were;

	July to September 2013 Days Lost	July to September 2014 Days Lost
Musc/Skeletal	219.5	275
Stress/Depression	154.5	144
Back/Neck	117.5	118
Total Days Lost	491.5	537

A Unison Member noted a sharp increase in days lost for muscular / skeletal and queried if there was a specific reason for this. The Human Resources Manager replied that although there were differing reasons why employees were off sick in relation to muscular / skeletal issues, it mainly affected operatives due to the differing physically demanding types of roles they carried out, for example, moving boilers. Human Resources would be monitoring the situation.

A short discussion took place regarding manual handling training for employees.

The Health and Safety Officer advised the meeting that the requirement for manual handling training to be carried out was on a 3 yearly basis and training for office based staff had been organised to take place in the New Year. Manual handling

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training would also be part of the induction process for new starters from next year. For physical operatives, a 'toolbox' talk would now be carried out on a yearly basis.

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

RESOLVED that the report be received.

0508. HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Committee considered a report of the Health and Safety Officer which provided an update on Health and Safety Performance since the last meeting.

Actions from previous meeting

A query had been raised at the last meeting as to who was responsible for carrying out health and safety inspections in respect of those buildings owned by the Council but rented out to businesses, for example, Sherwood Lodge* and Oxcroft Lane Depot. Members were advised that Property and Estates had since written out to each occupier twice requesting confirmation of the following;

- that a fire risk assessment had been completed for the premise,
- procedures were in place to ensure all statutory required inspections and servicing were undertaken,
- procedures were in place to ensure the safe evacuation of building occupants in the event of a fire,
- that appropriate fire awareness/fire marshal training had been carried out to building occupiers.

Verbal confirmation had been received from the occupants but the Health and Safety Officer was pushing for confirmation from them in writing. If the occupiers did not carry out fire safety checks any legal issues arising would be with the Fire Authority and not the Council.

Concerns had also been raised at the last meeting regarding the lack of a reliable 'out of hours' fire safety evacuation procedure at the Arc in relation to staff and Members working late. Procedures for the Riverside Depot had now been finalised and would be used as a template to develop procedures for the Arc.

The Chair requested the Health and Safety Officer to collate information on the number of staff working late and the departments affected.

Environmental Conditions at the Arc

The Governance Officer advised the meeting that the report in relation to environmental conditions at the Arc was currently unavailable and explained the reasons why. The Health and Safety Officer added that a more comprehensive report would be presented to the next meeting of Safety Committee.

*Sherwood Lodge was now in the ownership of Morrison's.

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The Chair raised concern regarding the unavailability of the report and that no representatives from Property and Estates were in attendance at the meeting to answer any questions the Committee may have.

A Unison representative noted that it had been almost two years since issues regarding high temperatures in the cash desk area at the Arc had been reported. The Health and Safety Officer replied that mobile air conditioning units had been considered and for the cash desk area but these were noisy and made the air dry.

A short discussion took place.

The Chair requested that representatives from Property and Estates attend the next Safety Committee meeting to answer any questions the Committee may have especially with regard to the environmental issues previously raised.

Employee Protection Register

A further 2 names had been added to the Register since the last meeting and this brought the total number of names on the Register to 26. No names had been removed from the Register since the last meeting.

A discussion took place regarding the measures to be put in place if employees and Members were visiting a particular property in an official capacity.

A Member also referred to individuals who were habitual aggressors with contact centre staff. The Health and Safety Officer advised that contact centre staff could complete a violent incident form in line with the normal violence at work procedures.

Health and Safety Action Plan Update

A table in the report provided the specific actions which were due for completion during the April to June quarter and also scheduled actions for completion during the July to September quarter.

The process of entering operational risk assessments onto the SHE system had taken longer than originally anticipated due to a significant number of assessments requiring review. It was envisaged that this would be completed by the end of November.

The process of entering method statements onto the system was also incomplete due to a number of activities which did not have a method statement in place for them, therefore, these needed to be developed. In order to achieve this and ensure supervisors were given appropriate training and support to be able to actively participate in this exercise it was intended that this would form part of the SHE System training to be delivered during November and December.

Work Place Inspections

A Member queried arrangements for workplace inspections when a number of staff from the second floor of the Arc would be moving down to the first floor of the Arc in

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January 2015. The Health and Safety Officer replied that an inspection was due in December and this would still take place; in the new year, staff would be given a month to settle into their new area unless a large number of complaints were received, then an inspection would then be carried out sooner.

Staff Training

- Fire Awareness Training

Fire Wardens would receive the Fire Awareness training first and then the rest of staff.

- Employee Protection Register

This was in abeyance whilst ICT carried out some work.

Near Miss/Learning Events

There had been no near miss/learning events reported during this period.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor H.J. Gilmour
RESOLVED that (1) the report be received,

(2) representatives from Property and Estates be requested to attend the next meeting of Safety Committee to answer any questions regarding issues raised in relation to environmental conditions at the Arc.

(Health and Safety Advisor)

0509. ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS AT THE ARC

As reported above at Minute 0508.

0510. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor H.J. Gilmour

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 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.

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0511. ACCIDENT AND STRESS STATISTICS – JULY 2014 TO SEPTEMBER 2014

The Committee considered a report of the Health and Safety Advisor in relation to accident and stress management performance for the period July 2014 to September 2014.

A breakdown of accident by type was provided in a table and graph format as well as by employee and public accident.

The main causes of employee accidents were slips, trips and falls (50%) and manual handling (17%). Other significant causes were strikes against fixed object, violence/physical contact and contact with moving objects.

The main causes of public accidents were slips, trips and falls (35%), sporting activities (18%), strikes against fixed object (17%) and violence/physical contact (18%). All accidents were reportable including were contractors were working on behalf of the Council.

Lost time accidents in the quarter were comparable with those for the same period last year; however, there had been a drop of 66% in RIDDOR reportable accidents for the period.

Days lost due to accidents had fallen by 166% from 207 days down to 78 days.

Employee accidents were at a similar level to the same period last year whilst public accidents had significantly risen by 61%, however, this appeared to be a result of better reporting of accidents particularly in relation to the 'extreme wheels' activity.

There were three main operational areas where the majority of accidents occurred and these were Street Scene, Housing and public accidents within Leisure. The figures in Street Scene and Leisure had slightly risen from last year whilst the Housing figure had slightly fallen.

The main route cause of employee accidents was a lack of risk perception which accounted for 67% of accidents. Other causes included individual physical capabilities (9%), individual poor housekeeping (8%), Organisational lack of training (8%) and third party influence (8%).

There were three main route cause of public accidents being; a lack of risk perception (45%), individual behaviour capabilities (33%) and breach of rules (22%).

A short discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by K.F. Walker
RESOLVED that the report be received.

The meeting concluded at 1110 hours.