

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at the Town Hall, Retford, on Thursday, 20th June 2013

Present:

Councillor D Challinor (Chair)

Employer's Representatives:

Councillors A Battey, B A Bowles, G A N Oxby, J B Rickells and M Storey.

Employee Safety Representatives:

K Circuit, A Dainty, J Rose and P Thompson.

Officers in attendance: J Hamilton, S Meakin and J Moran.

ACTION BY

(Meeting commenced at 2.35pm.)

(The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire/Evacuation Procedure.)

1. NOMINATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that A Dainty be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Health and Safety Committee for the ensuing year.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor C Entwistle and employee safety representative G Watson.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

At Agenda Item No. 8 – Any Other Business, Councillor G A N Oxby declared a non-pecuniary interest as the location of the subject matter had been visited by the Council's Planning Committee, of which he is a member, during a recent site visit; he left the meeting.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16TH APRIL 2013

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2013 be approved.

5. MINUTES FOR ACTION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action be received.

6. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

There were no Outstanding Minutes.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

7. REPORT(S) OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

(a) Accident Report for the period 1st January to 31st March 2013

The Committee was presented with details of all reported injuries for the period January to March 2013 and a comparison with the same period in 2012 was given.

There was a total of 17 injuries reported, compared with 11 during the same period in 2012. There were four 'over 7 day' reportable injuries during this reporting period, compared with four during the same period in 2012. 76 working days were lost as a result of the accidents in the report period compared to 103 working days during the same period in 2012. Details were appended to the report.

Members were advised that the main cause of injuries during the period were in relation to slips and falls. This was partly due to snow and ice conditions during the winter months.

Appended to the report were: a summary of all accidents by injury type and accident cause; a summary of all accidents occurring within each Service; a comparison of accident incidence rates with other District and Borough Councils within the East Midlands Region. It was noted the Authority has a significantly higher figure (25%) than the East Midlands Region average, although not all East Midlands local authorities contribute to the figures.

A quarterly accident statistics comparison between April 2010 and March 2013 was also appended to the report, and it was also noted that the Authority now has a three-year average of 11.25, compared to a the previous three-year average of 2.5.

The Principal Safety Officer reported that the Safety Unit is working with the affected Service areas to ensure that more robust procedures are in place. Elected Members added that, as employees are encouraged to report accidents, albeit minor ones, this will help improve procedures and practices to help reduce occurrences. It was also felt that, maybe, employees' minds are not on their jobs due to Government cuts which will have an impact, particularly on public sector workers; however, why should only this Authority have a significantly higher number of accidents? The Principal Safety Officer added that checks would be made to ensure policies, procedures and risk assessments are in place, and that personal protective equipment is available and being used. Training for manual handling may need to be increased.

RESOLVED that:

1. The information regarding the number of accidents for the period January to March 2013 be received.
2. Unit Managers ensure that they continually provide their employees with the necessary information, training, instruction and supervision to enable them to carry out their job safely, in order to eliminate further accidents.
Unit Managers/Principal Safety Officer
3. Unit Managers continue to investigate the cause(s) of all accidents arising from work activities in their areas of responsibilities in line with Council Policy.
Unit Managers/Principal Safety Officer
4. Unit Managers ensure that any remedial works identified by the above investigations are implemented as soon as possible.
Unit Managers/Principal Safety Officer
5. The findings on the higher than average accident figures be reported back to the next meeting of the Health and Safety Committee.

Principal Safety Officer

(b) Progress Report on Health, Safety and Emergency Planning Priorities

The Committee was informed of the progress made within the agreed priorities of the Health and Safety and Emergency Planning Programmes, specifically: fire risk assessments; asbestos; legionella; first aid procedures; Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR); training; lone worker devices; and emergency planning i.e. business continuity.

With regard to lone worker devices, as a result of the unsatisfactory trial by Environmental Health and Planning officers, other lone worker solutions are being explored with various organisations. It was noted that the solution available from Tunstall did not meet this Authority's lone-working officers' needs.

RESOLVED that:

1. Progress on the Health and Safety priorities be noted.
2. The Committee be informed of the outcome of any changes regarding the review of the Business Continuity Management Plans, in light of the Authority's new insurers.

Principal Safety Officer

(c) Shared Health and Safety Service Progress Report

The Committee was informed of the current situation in respect of the shared Health and Safety Service arrangement currently in place between Bassetlaw, Bolsover and Mansfield District Councils.

As the Authority has provided a Shared Health and Safety Manager to Bolsover and Mansfield District Councils since February 2012, the foundations for a full Health and Safety Service are already in place. The drivers for further development of the existing shared service have been identified as:

- Increased resilience;
- Increased synergy;
- Shared skills and expertise; and

- Improved efficiency in both cashable and non-cashable savings.

A communications plan is currently being drafted which will be used as the basis of consultation with officers from all three authorities. This Authority will be the lead authority/host of the shared service, and, if agreed, officers from the other two authorities will be transferred to Bassetlaw under TUPE Regulations. It was noted that A1 Housing (Bassetlaw) Ltd has no will to join this shared service.

RESOLVED that the progress on the Health and Safety shared service be noted.

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

None.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

(a) Public Health Concerns

The Chair raised the issue of some practices which had been witnessed during a recent site visit by the Planning Committee that may be detrimental to the health of employees and any residents and/or members of the public who may be in the vicinity of the site in question.

(Councillor Oxby declared a non-pecuniary interest, and Councillors G A N Oxby and M Storey left the meeting at this point.)

RESOLVED that the concerns for public health be reported to the relevant agencies.

Principal Safety Officer

As there was no further business to be discussed, the Chair closed the meeting after thanking everyone for their attendance.

(Meeting closed at 3.25pm.)