

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 10th March 2016 at Worksop Town Hall

Present:

Employer's Representatives:

Councillors D Challinor (Chair), C Entwistle, D Hare, D Potts, D R Pressley, M Richardson and M Storey.

Employee Safety Representatives:

K Circuit, P Rodgers and G Watson

Officers in attendance: S Bowler, J Hamilton and J Moran;
J Bowler and I Davies (Agenda Item No. 6(a) only).

(Meeting commenced at 1.35pm.)

(The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire Alarm/Evacuation Procedure. He also enquired as to whether any member of the public wished to film/record the meeting or any part thereof; however, there were no members of public present.)

23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from D Fretwell (Employee Safety Representative).

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

25. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2015

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 9th December 2015 be approved.

(The Chair thanked the Vice-Chair for chairing the meeting in his absence.)

26. MINUTES FOR ACTION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action be received.

(Councillor M T Gray joined the meeting at this point.)

27. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

In relation to Outstanding Minute No. 20 – Accident data from tenant organisations, the Safety and Resilience Manager advised that he has requested such data via the Property Manager from the tenants in Queen’s Buildings (DWP, Credit Union, etc.).

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be received.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

28. REPORT(S) OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

(a) Flooding Initiatives/Schemes and Resilience Plans

J Bowler, Facilities Manager, and I Davies, Engineer, gave a presentation on Flood Risk Management in Bassetlaw.

The Facilities Manager explained that the Flood Authority is Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) and the Highways Authority (NCC) has responsibility for highways drainage. As a partner, the District Council is duty bound to assist the Flood Authority. Other bodies include the Internal Drainage Boards – Trent Valley and the Isle of Axholme including the Rivers Idle and Ryton - and the water/sewerage companies. Nationally, there are 11 Regional Flood and Coastal Committees; a business case has been presented to the relevant Regional Committee to gain funding for floodworks.

The ‘Flood Risk Management in Bassetlaw’ Plan is a restricted document and details response/action to incidents/properties at risk of flooding, and the capital expenditure involved. An example of a typical day was discussed, i.e. 9th March 2015, which highlighted the various duties undertaken by these two officers.

Elected Members cited examples of incidents/problem areas and officers reported on action taken/to be taken by the Council.

The Facilities Manager reported that the Environment Agency (EA) is now passing over responsibility for water courses to the Internal Drainage Boards and District Councils wherever possible. The EA is only retaining responsibility for major rivers and it can be argued that the River Ryton is a “major” river, having had much work done to it during recent years. The EA is looking to reinforce the flood barriers on the River Ryton adjacent the Cricket Club. A lack of response from the EA is causing further problems for the Council.

The Engineer reported that The Canch in Worksop is now managed by the Canals and Rivers Trust, and current problems with The Canch were explained.

The Chair praised both J Bowler and I Davies for their excellent work in maintaining the water courses in Bassetlaw. They both also advise parish councils on such matters. He expressed concern about the lack of succession planning for both these officers. The Facilities Manager reported that he has been asked to prepare a business case for the appointment of an apprentice who could be trained up to ultimately take over flood risk management and other duties when both himself and I Davies retire. The relationship between this area of work and the planning process was discussed.

RESOLVED that:

1. The presentation on flood risk management in Bassetlaw be noted.
2. Thanks be recorded to both J Bowler and I Davies for their excellent work to date.

(b) Accident Report for the period 1st October to 31st December 2015

The Committee was presented with details of all reported injuries for the period October to December 2015 and a comparison with the same period in 2014 was given.

There was a total of 13 incidents reported, compared with 7 during the same period in 2014. There were no 'reportable injuries' during this reporting period, compared with one during the same period in 2014. 6 working days have been lost to date as a result of the incidents in the report period compared to 11 working days during the same period in 2014. Details were appended to the report.

The Safety Officer gave brief details to the Committee about an incident which had occurred the previous week concerning a refuse freighter. The incident was reported to the Health and Safety Executive, and both the driver and vehicle had been tested. The driver of the other vehicle involved is still in hospital.

Appended to the report were: a summary of reportable injuries; a summary of all accidents by injury type and accident cause; a summary of all accidents occurring within each Service; a long term comparison of quarterly accident statistics; and a comparison between the Council and the SHE User Group.

RESOLVED that:

1. The information regarding the number of accidents for the period October to December 2015 be noted.
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.
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.
4. Unit Managers ensure that any remedial works identified by the above investigations are implemented as soon as possible.

(c) 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; water quality monitoring; first aid procedures; training; Employee Protection Register; events – Safety Advisory Group; health and safety audits; emergency planning – flood planning and control of major accident hazards.

Further issues were raised by elected Members and Employee Safety Representatives, and the following were noted as requiring action:

- Charter Day at Retford is missing from the list of events and takes place on Council land.
- The possibility of Employee Safety inspections being re-introduced at both A1 Housing and BDC.

RESOLVED that:

1. Progress on the Health and Safety priorities be noted.
2. The areas of concern raised by the Employee Safety Representatives be followed up by the Safety & Resilience Manager/Safety Officer.

29. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and after considering the public interest test as set out by the officer in the body of the report, Members agreed that the following items of business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1, and therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item No. 7(a) – Queen’s Buildings - Security – Paragraph 1

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

30. REPORT(S) OF THE EMPLOYEE SAFETY REPRESENTATIVES

(a) Queen’s Buildings - Security

The Committee was informed of the health and safety concerns of staff with regard to the recent vandalism at Queen’s Buildings and potential flaws with security were highlighted. These issues had been raised with the Director of Corporate Resources who had given a very comprehensive response highlighting proposed and implemented actions, and these were listed at Paragraph 3.5 of the report.

These issues were discussed by the Committee, together with proposals for solutions. Employee Safety Representatives raised further areas of concern, and the following were noted as requiring action:

- An inspection of the rear doors to Queen’s Buildings highlighted problems which cannot be resolved. Replacement doors are needed.
- Access doors between the Town Hall and the adjacent offices no longer allow access by using staff swipe cards; this can result in staff being trapped between the two buildings. A new IT system is needed.

RESOLVED that:

1. The position and action being taken to prevent further acts of vandalism in Queen’s Buildings be noted.
2. The areas of concern raised by the Employee Safety Representatives be raised with the relevant service manager and, if necessary, reported to Management Team by the Safety & Resilience Manager/Safety Officer and followed up.

31. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

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

(Meeting closed at 3.05pm.)