

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SAFETY COMMITTEE HELD IN ROOM
28, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
FRIDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2007 AT 2.30
PM

PRESENT: Simon Drinkwater (Chairman).
Peter Dickinson, Sue Gray, Mark Kingsland,
Barbara Sylvia.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE

Peter Mannings.

24 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Helen Farrell, Jenny Francis, Andrew Pulham, Paul Thomas and Steve Whinnett.

MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

(A) Minute 14 (B) – Fire Risk Assessments

Peter Dickinson reported that fire risk assessments had been completed, subject to a number of factual amendments.

(B) Minute 22 (A) – Office Chairs

The Committee was advised that there had been no further reports in respect of issues with Office Chairs.

25 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY REVIEW/UPDATES

Peter Dickinson stated that a majority of Health and Safety Policies were back on the intranet. He advised that the Smoke Free Workplace Policy 2007, Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy 2007, Managing Violence and Aggression Policy 2007 and the Managing the Criminal

ACTION

Record Bureau Process Policy had all been approved at Full Council and would soon be uploaded to the intranet.

Peter Dickinson advised that feedback had been received from two Heads of Service in respect of risk assessments but no further progress had been made.

It was noted that risk assessments should be lead by Heads of Service. Peter Dickinson commented that risk assessments could be rolled out but should be explained to Heads of Service on a consultation basis.

The Committee was advised that it would be appropriate for Heads of Service to appoint senior officers in each service area to assist with risk assessments. It was noted that Heads of Service retained the responsibility for signing off risk assessments.

Peter Dickinson commented that the risk assessment toolkit had been modified to ensure it was user friendly. It was noted that he was the contact for queries regarding risk assessments.

Mark Kingsland reported that completed risk assessments would assist with keeping insurance costs down. Simon Drinkwater undertook to raise risk assessments at CMT, HUG and at his departmental team meeting. SD

In respect of fire drills, the Committee was advised that the Council was looking for a new training provider and for more volunteers to be trained as fire marshals. Peter Dickinson undertook to assist in encouraging all site users at Buntingford Depot to participate in a training course on fire marshalling. PD

Barbara Sylvia expressed concern that East Herts Council staff working from Buntingford Depot had been unaware of how to turn off the depot fire alarms. Simon Drinkwater undertook to contact Steve Whinnett ascertain the information in respect of deactivation of the fire alarm at SD

Buntingford Depot.

Barbara Sylvia advised that another fire marshal was required at Buntingford Depot to cover in the event of staff sickness. Peter Dickinson reminded the Committee that the role of fire marshals was to ensure floor clearance and report to the role call marshal.

Barbara Sylvia expressed concern that staff had been aware of the most recent fire drill at Buntingford Depot. Peter Dickinson advised that the relevant line manager had been informed and appropriate action had been taken. Barbara Sylvia undertook to assume the role of role call marshal at Buntingford Depot.

BS

Peter Dickinson undertook to e-mail all staff in respect of arranging training in the use of Evac Chairs. The Committee was advised that he had spoken to Steve Wilson in respect of regular training for Daniel Burden in respect of fire drills.

PD

Peter Dickinson reported that training in respect of fire drills would focus in particular on people movement. He advised that Denis Eagle and MRS would be designating staff as first aiders and fire marshals for Buntingford Depot.

Peter Dickinson emphasised that Barbara Sylvia would not be responsible first aid provision for MRS and Denis Eagle staff at Buntingford Depot.

26 NEW REGULATIONS, IF ANY

None.

27 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Committee was advised that fire risk assessments had all been completed.

28 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

Peter Dickinson advised that there had been 4 minor accidents involving Officer for the period 1 July 2007 – 14 September 2007. He stated that there had been 1 accident in Internal Services, 1 accident in Neighbourhood Services and 2 accidents in Customer and Community Services.

Peter Dickinson reported that there had also been an accident involving an ex Councillor relating to raised section of the Wallfields staff car park that had resulted in a severe facial injury. He advised that the lighting had now been repaired.

Mark Kingsland undertook to raise the issue of accident reporting with the operator of the Council's pools. MK

29 HEALTH SAFETY AND WELFARE TEAM

Peter Dickinson reported that Peter Searle had volunteered to chair the Health Safety and Welfare Team, he advised that Peter Searle had been sent the terms of reference but no progress had been made. Simon Drinkwater undertook to raise the issue with Peter Searle. SD

30 ITEMS FROM TRADE UNION

Sue Gray reported that a soap machine had been provided in the staff kitchen at Bishop's Stortford but had not yet been filled. She undertook to check this and update Peter Dickinson. Peter Dickinson undertook to raise this with the Bishop's Stortford caretaker. SG/PD

Peter Dickinson undertook to raise the issue with the appropriate line manager if soap was still not being provided. PD

Sue Gray reported that the issue of the strong room had

been resolved.

31 BUNTINGFORD DEPOT

Barbara Sylvia advised of a breach of security via the rear door at Buntingford Depot. It was noted that MRS were responsible for this area of security.

The Committee was advised that Alasdair McWilliams had advised that Philip Hamberger was aware of problems relating to air conditioning noise at Buntingford Depot. Barbara Sylvia advised that blinds were not in place at Buntingford Depot.

Peter Dickinson expressed concerns in respect of potential long-term problems of work related ill health resulting from staff using Buntingford Depot as office space.

Simon Drinkwater undertook to highlight all the concerns raised in respect of Buntingford Depot with Steve Whinnett. SD

Peter Dickinson undertook to investigate the issue of noise monitoring at Buntingford Depot. PD

32 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

33 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 12 November 2007, Meeting Room, Buntingford at a time to be arranged.

The meeting closed at 3.40 pm