

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
SAFETY COMMITTEE HELD IN THE  
CONFERENCE ROOM, BISHOP'S  
STORTFORD ON MONDAY  
24 APRIL 2006 AT 2.30 PM

PRESENT: Neal Hodgson (Chairman).  
Peter Dickinson, Mark Kingsland,  
Lorraine Medley, Graham Mully, Andrew Pulham,  
Steve Whinnett.

ALSO IN ATTANDANCE

Peter Mannings.

83 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Jenny Francis, Barbara Sylvia and Paul Thomas.

84 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2006 were agreed as a correct record, subject to the amendment of Minute 75 - Asbestos and Legionella Audit as follows:

Delete 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph 'Steve Whinnett advised that the Capital Bid was secured but that further consultancy work was needed before the funding would become available.'

Replace with – 'Steve Whinnett reported that work would commence when the funding was secured'

85 MATTERS ARISING

(A) Minute 73 (A) – 'Who's Who'

It was noted that this was being updated to reflect changes.

(B) Minute 73 (C) – Fire Drills

It was noted that a genuine evacuation had been undertaken at Buntingford, after the fumes from a lorry had activated the alarms.

(C) Minute 73 (D) – Bishop’s Stortford Reception Area

Peter Dickinson reported that he had met with David McRobbie and subsequently the issue of the security door being left open had been resolved.

(D) Minute 74 – Health and Safety Policy Review/Updates

Peter Dickinson advised that funding for IT-Based Risk Assessment Software Packages and Licenses had not been forthcoming. He further advised that the search for funding was ongoing and other service providers were being considered.

Peter Dickinson reported that Fire Drills at Hertford had taken place and that emergency signage at Buntingford would be in place by the end of June.

(E) Minute 75 – Asbestos and Legionella Audit

Steve Whinnet reported that as funding had become available from 1 April 2006, work on the Asbestos and Legionella Audit had begun.

86 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY REVIEW/UPDATES

Peter Dickinson reported that, following a meeting with Tina Nash, the Health and Safety Policy Review Policy had been a straightforward undertaking that had required some cosmetic changes.

Peter Dickinson proposed that the Health and Safety Policy be simplified to the Safety Policy, to avoid confusion and make safety the main focus of the policy. Peter Dickinson

## ACTION

reported that by streamlining the policy, it would be more comprehensive and be more in tune with Human Resources Policy Work and contain links with other policies.

Peter Dickinson gave an update on Risk Assessments, he advised that more work was needed and he was working on a toolkit to facilitate this work.

Peter Dickinson reported that fire drills at East Herts Council Offices had been conducted in the following times, 3 minutes 40 seconds at Wallfields, 2 minutes 40 seconds at Bishop's Stortford and 2 minutes at Buntingford Depot.

Neal Hodgson expressed concern over the delays to Risk Assessments, in the event the Health and Safety Executive conduct inspections.

Peter Dickinson advised those present that Risk Assessment was within the scope of management responsibility and he had been instructed to arrange Risk Assessment training and would be investigating the cost of this.

He further advised that directives had to be provided if Risk Assessments were to be made compulsory.

### 87 ASBESTOS AND LEGIONELLA AUDIT

Steve Whinnet reported that as funding had become available from 1 April 2006, work on the Asbestos and Legionella Audit had begun. It was noted that Steve Whinnet report back to the Health, Safety and Welfare Team when the work was completed.

### 88 NEW REGULATIONS

Peter Dickinson reported that new Fire Regulations had been put back to October and that Fire Certificates had been abolished. He advised the Committee that the onus now rested with building owners to police fire safety in

offices, with regular updates carried out with particular emphasis placed on vulnerable groups and the presence of dangerous materials.

Peter Dickinson reported that Noise Regulations had come into effect on 6 April 2006 and that he was in consultation with the Chiltern Health and Safety Concept in relation to the cost of Noise Regulation Risk Assessments. It was noted that Peter Dickinson would report back at the next meeting of the Safety Committee.

89 INSURANCE MATTERS

There were no insurance matters to report.

90 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

Peter Dickinson advised that there had been 4 accidents involving employees for the period 25 February 2006 to 21 April 2006.

Accidents logged at pools between 25 February 2006 and 21 April 2006 had now been received. 77 accidents at pools had been reported during this period.

Peter Dickinson expressed concern over the accident reporting process used by the Council's Pools. He reported that one reportable had occurred, for which an Ambulance had been called.

91 HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE TEAM MINUTES

Neal Hodgson reported that the issue of the Health, Safety and Welfare team was to be raised at the next CMT meeting, in an effort to increase the team's momentum. He advised the Committee that there was little formal communication and that Directors should nominate a representative from each directorate to attend the meetings. It was noted that Neal Hodgson would ascertain whether each directorate had a champion who could attend the meetings.

It was agreed that members of the Safety Committee should attend the Health, Safety and Welfare Team meetings, as there was commonality in the membership of the Safety Committee and Health, Safety and Welfare Team.

92 ITEMS FROM TRADE UNION

Lorraine Medley reported that there was a feeling amongst staff that the Council's policy on the movement of drinks was excessive in prohibiting the movement of open hot drinks.

Graham Mully advised the Committee that there was case law that had stated that open hot drinks should not be carried up or down stairs and it was down to managers to enforce this issue on Council premises.

Lorraine Medley proposed that Council staff should be advised of the existence of the above-mentioned Case Law surrounding the movement of hot drinks.

93 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Andrew Pulham reported of an incident at Buntingford Depot where by a pregnant member of staff had been conveyed to hospital, and concern had been raised over the absence of a sick bay in Council buildings.

Peter Dickinson reported that sick bays should be provided, but that this provision should be based on a reasonable assessment of need.

Steve Whinnet advised that the provision of a sick bay was not a specific requirement when the Causeway site was constructed.

It was noted that Neal Hodgson would ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare Team investigate the options for the provision of sick bays on Council Premises and raise the

## ACTION

issue with Gerald Balabanoff.

### 94 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would be held on Monday 10 July 2006, at 2.30 pm, in Room 28, Wallfields, Hertford.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm