

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
SAFETY COMMITTEE HELD IN ROOM
27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2008 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Simon Drinkwater (Chairman).
Peter Dickinson, Jenny Francis, Sue Gray, Mark
Kingsland, Graham Mully, Louise Overington,
Martin Shrosbree, Kevin Steptoe, Paul Thomas,
Bryan Thomsett.

ALSO IN ATTANDANCE

Peter Mannings.

52 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Helen
Farrell, Cliff Cardoza, Martyn Dutfield, Andrew Pulham,
Barbara Sylvia and Steve Whinnett.

53 MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

(A) Minute 48 – Health Safety and Welfare Team

Simon Drinkwater stated that the Health, Safety and
Welfare Team had been invited to the meeting as
the Team had not met for some time.

Graham Mully expressed concern in respect of a
potential conflict of interest with UNISON
representatives being present during discussions
about insurance claims.

The Safety Committee and Health, Safety and
Welfare Team agreed that representatives of
UNISON could vacate the meeting
room prior to any discussion about these issues.

54 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY REVIEW/UPDATES

Peter Dickinson reported that e-mails had been sent to all Heads of Service in respect of reinstating the role of Safety Liaison Officers (SLOs), to act as liaison between Heads of Service and Unison.

Peter Dickinson advised that once appointed, SLOs would attend risk assessment meetings to represent Heads of Service to ensure that actions resulting from risk assessments were implemented and reviewed.

It was noted that a meeting would take place in April with DSE assessors and SLOs to agree the role and function of SLOs. Peter Dickinson emphasised the importance of having evidence that risk assessment actions had been progressed. He reported that specific issues could then be reported to Heads and Service and subsequently, the Safety Committee.

Simon Drinkwater asked whether the Council had enough SLOs. Peter Dickinson advised that he was awaiting feedback from Benefits and Democratic and Legal Support Services on this matter. He stated that completed risk assessments had been made available on the intranet.

Peter Dickinson emphasised the importance of a corporate standard for risk assessments. He commented that generic and task specific risk assessments were equally important. He cited the example of a job specific risk assessment for a work experience placement.

Peter Dickinson stated that trained DSE assessors could identify needs following risk assessments. He commented that Officers must be encouraged to check their work stations and that DSE assessors should meet with new officers and accommodate existing officers' needs.

In respect of fire drills, the Committee was advised that

these would be reinstated at all the Council's Office. He advised that new fire safety guidance was available and this would be displayed in all Council Offices. He commented that in the event there was no Fire Marshall, Officers should ensure they were aware of at least two exit points from the building.

Martin Shrosbree commented that if a Fire Marshall was absent, floor clearance forms should be made available at a designated point on each floor. Peter Dickinson undertook to ensure that these would be made available. He reiterated that the role of the Fire Marshall should only be basic floor clearance.

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55 NEW REGULATIONS, IF ANY

Paul Thomas cited an instance where a company had been found liable for an employee suicide. He reported that the House of Lords had initially dismissed the case but had subsequently ruled that the company was liable.

55 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS

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

56 ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

Peter Dickinson advised that there had been no accidents involving Officers for the period 25 January to 25 March 2008.

57 ITEMS FROM TRADE UNION

Sue Gray reported that the soap dispenser was missing from the staff kitchen at the Causeway Office, Bishop's Stortford. Martin Shrosbree suggested raising the issue with the Bishop's Stortford caretaker.

ACTION

58 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 12 May 2008, in the Meeting Room, Buntingford at 2.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 2.30 pm

BSWP\Nps\Safety\25 March 2008\Minutes 25 March 2008