

Minutes of Safety Committee
Tuesday 27 July 2021, on Zoom

Present: Peter Dickinson (PD), Steve Whinnett (SW), Jennifer Francis (JF) (Unison), Ian Sharratt (IS), Chloe Hipwood-Norton (CHN), Tamara Jarvis (TJ), Geoff Hayden (GH) Dominique Kingsbury (DK),

1.0 Apologies: Simon O’Hear (SOH), Graham Mully (GM), Rowan Perrin (RP), Paul Thomas-Jones (PTJ), Kate Collins (KC)

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the 27 April 2021 meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

3.0 Matters Arising from the minutes

PD issued First Aid and CPR Covid guidance to all first aiders 26 May 2021.

4.0 Coronavirus Update

PD reported that covid secure measures are still in force in the office and are reviewed by Leadership Team.

5.0 Regulatory and Legislative Changes (Verbal Report)

No new or changes to regulations or legislation.

6.0 Health and Safety Inspections and Compliance

PD to discuss reinstating inspections with SW and GH to agree dates.

7.0 Capital Project Updates /Contractor Health & Safety Compliance

TJ provided an update on the current capital projects in progress;

7.1 Grange Paddocks

Work proceeding well on site with work due to be undertaken shortly on the removal of soil for the 3G pitch. GH advised that there will be an increase in construction traffic and that Archaeological teams are carrying out surveys so extra caution is advised if visiting the site.

Wilmott Dixon will ensure ongoing site safety with SLM to monitor with EHC.

No accidents reported on site or adjacent to the site of the build.

7.2 Hartham Pool

Issues identified with the screed under the floor tiles in the pool hall has generated a delay however to mitigate the lost time Cadman will finish the refurb of the pool changing room early to hand back to SLM for customer use. The reworked schedule will make up some of the time lost. Demolition work is due to commence August.

7.3 Hertford Theatre – Growth and Legacy

TJ advised that Decontaminate UK are on site and undertaking controlled asbestos removal. GH is monitoring for EHC

Decontaminate UK have sent through their risk assessments, method statements and action plan.

TJ further advised that selection of the contractor for the build work will take place in September 2021

IS raised a query concerning some of the services that function through the Theatre in regard to the sump pumps and the weir, TJ and SW both assured that these were in operation and that the Project Manager was liaising with the Estate and Asset Management Teams drainage expert.

PD will be included in the next phase when the contractor for the main works has been appointed.

Hertford Theatre completed a full decant prior to work commencing and have now relocated to Wallfields.

TJ advised the committee that there have been no on-site accidents or covid related incidents.

8.0 Northgate End

Proceeding with no reported on site accidents, incidents or covid related issues.

9.0 Contract Health and Safety Compliance

9.1 Parks, Open Spaces and Play Areas

IS provided an update on the current provision of the grounds maintenance contract.

There have been no accidents, incidents or near misses to report involving the contractor for parks, play areas and open spaces.

The tree inspection and survey contract is due to be retendered, the contract has expired but the current contractor has been maintaining inspections and all stock has been inspected.

IS advised committee that he has been liaising with local swimmers concerning the matter of Wild Water Swimming at Hartham, the activity is undertaken by experienced swimmers and Wild Water Swimming is seen as a benefit to mental and physical health and wellbeing. IS is keen to support the activity but wants to ensure that the Council has taken into account all the safety and insurance elements. IS has asked if there is any capacity to assist in finalising the project, PD happy to provide assistance and support but unable to take the lead on the project. Risk and Insurance have sought advice from Risk Management provider.

Action: PD to discuss with Risk and Insurance.

9.2 Shared Waste Service

C H-N advised the committee that the client monitoring team will be reinforcing its relationship with the waste services contractor Urbaser to improve communication.

C H-N and IS to arrange discussion with Urbaser and Glendale regarding the layout and use of the depot yard at Buntingford.

GH advised committee that following discussions at the Buntingford Depot User Group it was agreed that all visitors to the site or the offices must sign in at Urbasers office as part of

Urbasers remit to oversee the site and for fire safety management.

GH also advised that following some concerns regarding the cleaning he has addressed this with the cleaning contractor.

C H-N advised that the client team will be undertaking a more detailed approach to site inspections and monitoring.

9.3 APCOA

DK advised committee that APCOA are currently experiencing recruitment and retention issues but are continuing to maintain the service provision. There were no health and safety concerns or matters to note.

10 Property – Premises Maintenance and Repairs

SW advised committee that there were no property related issues and that property compliance checks were all up to date.

PD reported that the Premises Information Boxes for Buntingford and Rectory Hall are now on line.

Documents are in the process of being produced for Wallfields and Hillcrest.

11 Facilities Management

GH reported that the Council Chamber at Wallfields has been reinstated for full use. PD advised that the Risk Assessment had been updated to reflect current guidelines and this has been sent to the Head of Finance to brief Leadership Team.

Under current guidelines, H&S Officer has advised that the guidelines still emphasise opening windows and face coverings for larger gatherings if these are to proceed.

IS – Queried acceptable temperature as the autumn / winter months approach. PD advised that this would need to be reviewed in accordance with covid guidelines.

GH – Has been asked by the Housing Team to consider installing a panic button in the office at Rectory Hall.

Committee discussed the pros and cons and viability and value of installing a panic button.

Points raised and to be discussed with Housing were;

- Lone workers are issued with the portable microguard device and on activating the SOS feature the Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) can listen in and if needed can contact the emergency services directly bypassing the call operators to call for help.
- The panic button would link to the security company who would need to verify the situation before placing a call for the emergency services.
- The Council have a paid for contract with a Lone Worker service, installing a panic button would incur a separate cost with the security company.
- Meetings and interviews with high risk residents must never be conducted alone and this should be reflected in Housings Risk Assessments and working procedures.

- Repeat false alarms will result in police response being withdrawn, accidental lone worker activation will simply close the call and the service will not be affected.
- The device is discreet and portable and can be carried whereas the panic button would be fixed to one location and rendered ineffective if assistance is required at any other location.

Action: PD to contact Housing to discuss.

12 List of Issues

12.1 UNISON

JF advised committee that UNISON had received a number of expressions of concern from members about returning to the offices as covid restrictions are eased or lifted.

JF also explained that the branch secretary has reassured employees that covid measures are in place at Wallfields and remain robust and that UNISON are confident that safety is paramount.

PD thanked JF for advising the committee and also affirmed that steps remain in place. PD also reminded committee that the Councils blended working project is still ongoing and under review by Leadership Team. Desk booking is still in operation and levels of sanitiser and hard surface wipes are being monitored in addition to the provision of Lateral Flow Testing kits.

JF also advised that there are some employees not adhering to the one way system in place.

Committee also keen to emphasise that despite restrictions being lifted and eased Covid remains and can still affect those with serious health issues and or compromised immunity.

Action: PD to investigate concern raised by UNISON.

12.2 Management

Nothing to report.

13 Q1 Health & Safety Report

(Being developed)

14.0 Work and Non Work related accidents

PD confirmed the following:

May

7 minor non reportable accidents reported across the 5 swimming pool and gyms. 6 in respect to users and 1 SLM employee. None as a result of any procedural or equipment related failure.

No accidents reported in respect to EHC employees or members of the public

June

5 minor non reportable accidents reported across the 5 swimming pool and gyms all users of the facilities. None attributable to a failure of process or equipment.

1 non reportable accident involving a minor (IP under the age of 18) at Hartham Wild Play. Cause investigated by Operations and RoSPA all equipment pre-inspected by RoSPA and RPII prior to opening and all equipment checked and compliant with industry safety standards. RA (Operations) has submitted a full response to IP's parents. H&S Officer satisfied that due diligence has been undertaken and the accident fully investigated.

July

1 non reportable accident involving an employee as a result of human error.

15.0 Lone Worker Contract

PD updated committee and advised that the tender has now opened and being co-ordinated by Procurement for Housing using their framework.

The framework has 4 suppliers and we have received 4 expressions of interest.

Stakeholders have been invited to participate in evaluating and scoring the returns.

The planned go live date for the contract is anticipate to be 06th September 2021.

16.0 Learning and Development

PD advised that training has been arranged for new first aiders in October and a one day emergency first aid course has also been scheduled for the Housing Options, Homeless Team.

17.0 Date of Next Meeting

TBC