

**Minutes of Safety Committee**  
**Wednesday 07<sup>th</sup> August 2024,**  
**Meeting Room Mimram / Microsoft Teams**

**Present:** Peter Dickinson (PD), Jackie Bruce (JB), Steven Linnett (SL), Paul Thomas-Jones (P T-J), Chloe Hipwood-Norton (C H-N), John Earley (JE), Dominique Kingsbury (DK),

**Apologies:** Benjamin Wood (BW), Ian Sharratt (IS), Jeanette Lowden (JL), Emily Tickridge (ET), Rowan Perrin (RP), Geoff Hayden (GH)

**1.0 Minutes of the last meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 08<sup>th</sup> May 2024 were agreed as an accurate record. Date recorded incorrectly as 07<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

**Action:** (PD) to update Minutes to reflect the correct date of the meeting.

**2.0 Matters Arising from the minutes.**

There were none.

**Action:** None

**3.0 Office Housekeeping update – Transformation**

(SL) reiterated the importance of maintaining a clear desk policy and that random inspections will take place. Initially a reminder will be issued after which any items left on the desk will be removed.

The power assisted door mechanism installed on the ground floor remains unresolved. At present this remains a high risk and must be resolved, UNISON expressed concerns and will escalate.

(PTJ) reported that the door lock to the EH lab is automatically locking, requiring a key to release the door. (SL) to inspect with (PD).

(PTJ) raised the ongoing concerns of ventilation on the ground floor, east offices. Options have been looked into including using air conditioning units salvaged from Charringtons House or redeploying the air conditioning unit currently located in the old Planning print room. Both options would require extensive engineering work requiring the decant of the offices. (SL) has requested (GH) to explore options for installing expel air units in each corner of the office.

(PTJ) reported that colleagues are complaining about the reduction of natural light due to considerable growth of the shrubs and trees on the area outside, due to the design of the building this wing sits lower down and is therefore overshadowed.

**Action:** (GH) to arrange for work to be carried out as soon as possible to resolve the issue of the door closer.

**Action:** (GH) to provide feedback on findings.

**Action:** (JE) to check if Property have a key to the door or replace with an alternative lock.

**Action:** (PD) to contact (RP) Operations to request an assessment of the planting and the options for managing the area.

Phase 2 will be dependent on who takes occupancy of the second floor east.

UNISON requested that (GH) allows for space to accommodate the need to have a room in which to hold confidential talks as required.

Options are being considered in regard to a desk booking system, this would help to manage numbers and desk availability and would also give options to protect any adapted desks, with proposals to allow High Oak access to Wallfields Staff car park it would also be useful for managing space efficiently and effectively.

(PD) updated Committee on the installation of new lockable notice boards in the ground floor office area that will have details of the fire safety and first aid arrangements.

**Action:** None

#### **4.0 Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses**

There were 3 non reportable, minor accidents reported, 2 in May 2024, 1 in June 2024. None were related to any system or procedural failure.

**Action:** None

#### **5.0 Regulatory and Legislative changes (Verbal report)**

There have been no regulatory or legislative changes.

**Action:** None

#### **6.0 Health and Safety Inspections and Contract Compliance**

##### **6.1 Shared Waste Service – Buntingford Depot**

Repair work has been completed to the drainage gully of door 1...doors 2, 3 and 4 to be done when operating times permit.

Survey work is to be undertaken in respect to new electricity supply for vehicle wash, Property overseeing.

C H-N reported that a small electrical fire involving a toaster occurred in the first-floor kitchen at Buntingford. An investigation has been carried out to determine the cause which indicates the fire wasn't an electrical fault but a bread item being caught in the slot. It has been visually determined that there is no visible heat or

smoke detector present, the Fire contractor will be asked to visit to ascertain if the detectors are in place or have been secreted above the ceiling tiles.

H&S Officer and Property Services Manager to carry out site inspection with C H-N.

C H-N also reported the consistently poor performance of the cleaning on site.

C H-N advised committee that a new contractor for the shared waste service has been selected and she will be liaising with the new provider prior to the new contract commencement date.

Once the new contractor is on site and Glendale and APCOA have been relocated, lines of responsible for the site will need to be clarified and established before final settlement.

**Action:**

(JE), (GH) to update Committee.

**6.2 Parks, Open Spaces and Play Areas**

(RP) was unable to attend but submitted the following:

- Glendale are currently going through a contract manager change, the Contract Manager has resigned and there are two applicants who have both made it to the second round of interviews so we await the decision this will happen by mid-September ultimately.
- There have been no near misses or safety concerns at the yard or on site, forwarded to me this 1/4 so all is well.
- My only concern for them is the move from the yard to another as this still hasn't been resolved. Glendale requires at least 3 months to make the move.
- All S106 projects including both castle parks are on hold until further notice.
- SL raised an issue over overgrowing shrubbery with RP who arranged for the overgrown laurel tree at the far end of old Wallfields to be pruned.
- There is an issue of weed growth that requires attention.

**Action:** (JB) to seek clarification on the situation regarding S106 issues.

### **6.3 Parking Services**

(DK) asked what funding is available for resurfacing work at Gascoyne Way MSCP. (JE) advised Committee that a concrete based paint is being applied and that ongoing monitoring will take place on the condition of the MSCP.

DK has spoken to APCOA in regard to proposals to relocate them to Wallfields. APCOA to provide GH with requirements and specifications.

DK informed committee that a new Service Development Officer has been appointed bringing a wealth of knowledge and professional skill to the role. DK will be inspecting all car parks with the new officer to familiarise them to the district.

DK reported that he will be liaising with Glendale with regard to grounds maintenance at Northgate End.

**Action:** D K to liaise with APCOA on requirements and specifications.

**Action:** None

### **7.0 Capital Project updates/contractor Health & Safety Compliance**

#### Hartham Swimming Pool and Gym

No report(s) received.

**Action:** None

#### Hertford Theatre Growth and Legacy Project

- Work is ongoing to resolve minor snagging issues.
- Section 38 signed in July 2024
- Security arrangements are now in place.
- Training – Theatre management developing staff/volunteer training sessions completed

- H&S procedures, normal operating procedures, emergency action plans etc have been developed using documents already in place that can be modified and updated to reflect the change in size and use of the facility. (PD) will continue to support the Theatre team.

**Action:** None

Old River Lane, Bishop's Stortford

(BW) unable to join meeting due to IT issues.

Consideration needs to be given to the management of future events e.g., licensing, Health and Safety, Insurance, and resources to manage and oversee events, resources for upkeep, maintenance, and repair.

## **8.0 Property – Premise's Maintenance and Repairs**

(PD) reported that work is ongoing to rectify the issue of raised block paving in Wallfields staff parking bay D.

**Action:** (GH) / (JE) to update Committee at next meeting.

## **9.0 Facilities Management**

No issues in respect to Facilities Management.

**Action:** None

## **10.0 List of Issues**

### **10.1 Employee side (UNISON)**

(JB) informed Committee that UNISON has concerns on the application of the Equalities Act and decisions on the future of accessible meeting rooms at Wallfields. UNISON and The Health and Safety Officer raised the question of requesting an external accessibility audit of Wallfields.

UNISON also expressed concern that issues raised and noted at Safety Committee remain unresolved. Committee also noted that the minutes of Safety Committee are not submitted to Leadership Team.

**Action:** The Chair of Safety Committee and UNISON will draft a joint email to the Chief Executive highlighting issues that remain unresolved

### **10.2. Management side**

Nothing to report.

**Action:** None

### **11.0 Health and Safety Training**

PD will be arranging Evacuation Chair 'Train the Trainer'.

A proposal has been submitted to ask for volunteers to be trained as DSE and Workstation Assessor Champions, each team would have a dedicated support assessor who would be supported by the H&S Officer.

**Action:**

PD to source options for DSE and Workstation Assessor training and will provide an update at next committee meeting.

### **12.0 AOB**

#### Health and Safety Organisational Roles and Responsibilities

(PD) invited Committee to acquaint themselves with the Organisational Roles and Responsibilities section of the Safety Policy.

(PD) advised committee that due to unauthorised use of first aid supplies a coded lock has been fitted to the first aid room door, the code is known to the first aiders and the Facilities Management Team. A sign has been put on the door with the contact details of first aiders.

The Reflection Room is available on the ground floor so there is no loss of staff quiet space.

(JB) has been in contact with IT regarding MS Team issues and access to apps. (SL) has sent a detailed email to (SM) in IT and has been supporting the H&S Officer develop new inspection forms and processes using MS Forms.

The WiFi issue affecting the offices of two Heads of Service has now been resolved.

The washing machines from the Theatre will be reused and installed at the Councils Hostel to replace old machines.

**Meeting ended: 15.03pm**

**Date of Next Meeting: 06 November 2024**

**Time: 10.00am**

**Location: Mimram Room, Rivers Suite**

**Teams:** Microsoft Teams meeting  
**Join on your computer, mobile app or room device.**