

Minutes of Safety Committee
Wednesday 07th May 2025
Meeting Room 1.15 / Microsoft Teams

Present: EHDC Peter Dickinson (PD), Jackie Bruce (JB), John Earley (JE), Dominique Kingsbury (DK), Emily Tickridge (ET), Paul Thomas-Jones (P T-J), Ezra O'Neill (E O'N),

Present: High Oak Business Centre Emily Pomroy (EP)

Apologies: Ian Sharratt (IS), Rowan Perrin (RP), Chloe Hipwood-Norton (C H-N), Jeanette Lowden (JL), Ben Wood (BW), Geoff Hayden (GH), Laura Lightfoot (LL), Steve Sargent (SS)

Introductions / Announcements:

(PD) Welcomed Emily Pomroy from High Oak Business Centre and invited the Committee to introduce themselves.

1.0 Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 05th February 2025 were agreed as an accurate record.

Action: No action required.

2.0 Matters Arising from the minutes.

6.3 Parking Services

(DK) / (E O'N) reported that modifications at Northgate End have been made and that there haven't been any recent episodes of anti-social behaviour.

Action: No action required.

3.0 Regulatory and Legislative Changes

There have been no regulatory or legislative changes.

Several changes are expected in October 2025

Action: Brief next Safety Committee on the introduction of the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyr's Law)

4.0 High Oak

(EP) explained High Oaks operating model to the rest of the Committee and that the move into old Wallfields has been successful with expected IT snagging issues.

(PD) asked (EP) to advise users of Old Wallfields to direct smokers to the designated smoking area.

(EP) asked how responses are made from the Facilities Management Helpdesk.

High Oak will provide first aid supplies and materials. (EP) informed the Committee that users of old Wallfields are given an induction and information pack explaining evacuation procedures, routes and assembly points.

Committee have requested details of the terms of the lease to understand what access has been agreed with High Oak and what they cannot access.

Action: (PD) to re-send request for safety information to High Oak, enquire about details of the lease and speak to FM Helpdesk.

4.0 Accidents, Incidents and Near Misses

There was 1 non-reportable, minor accident reported between 08th February and 02nd May 2025, this was not related to any system or procedural failure and no further action was required.

6 Incidents were reported in this period relating to feeling unwell due to poor air quality in the ground floor office space occupied by Planning and Housing and Health with high CO2 levels being recorded.

Action: (GH) to update Committee on ventilation work progress

5.0 Health and Safety Inspections and Contract Compliance

5.1 Shared Waste Service – Buntingford Depot

Due to the new shared waste service contract commencing on the 01st May the Contract Managers were unable to attend.

Veolia are now the sole occupant on site with Glendale and APCOA relocating to new premises.

(PD) advised that (GH) will be arranging a deep clean of the tipping hall as part of the dilapidation handover to Veolia.

Action: No action to be taken.

5.2 Parks, Open Spaces and Play Areas

(IS) and (RP) unable to attend. No update.

Glendale have now occupied Amwell End site.

Action: No action required.

6.0 Parking Services

(DK) presented a sample of car park inspection reports undertaken by (E O’N) highlighting repair, maintenance and street cleansing items, some of which are outstanding actions to be undertaken.

(DK) expressed concerns that the Parking Team are not receiving updates on the status of these repair items from Property Services or Facilities Management and questioned if the inspections are being read.

(DK) emphasised the need to have repairs undertaken in a timely manner and the consequences of not carrying out repairs could lead to liability claims, reputational damage escalated through social media and financial damages.

(PD) and (E O’N) are working on improving the inspection process.

The process currently follows the following stages:

- Parking carries out inspections, recording faults, defect, damage etc. Unsafe areas are identified using barriers, cones and barrier tape.
- Reports are circulated to Property, Operations, Insurance, Health and Safety and others.
- If it is identified that the cause for the fault or defect is a tree root causing surface displacement what is the next step?
 - The Operations Team and Property Team should attend the site to obtain advice on the best approach to rectify the fault, defect etc.
 - If any action to remove the root is likely to cause harm or damage to the tree an action plan and costs needs to be drawn up, especially if the cost of carrying out repair work exceeds the budget available to Property.

(DK) advised that the top level of Gascoyne Way, Multi-Storey car park has a degrading surface and water ingress that affects the lower levels, long term this could lead to structural integrity issues and an unsightly appearance.

(DK) suggests having a structural integrity survey carried out.

(DK) has also advised that Kibes Lane needs resurfacing

(E O’N) Reported that the testing of the fire alarm system at Northgate End is now undertaken and scheduled, having spoken to the contractor monitoring the site he has been informed that the fire control panel equipment is faulty and not the correct equipment for the car park. When the alarm panel shows as out of service any fault disables the system.

(E O’N) Reported that water ingress from the commercial premises above Jackson Square car park has eroded the fireproof paint on the support columns

(DK) also raised concerns regarding the level of cleanliness in the car park and does not feel that the Council are getting a good level of service.

Committee agreed that this issue needs to be escalated.

Actions: Agreed that an action plan needs to be produced to identify solutions after specialist advice has been sought.

Communication between Parking, Property and Parks and Open Spaces need to be improved so issues are not overlooked, all decisions must be recorded, especially if a decision is taken to withdraw an area or take no action.

Committee recommends having a process flow chart to identify who deals with what aspect of car park repairs and maintenance.

Committee recommends that due to funding elements it may be useful for the Heads of Service responsible for the car parks and finance to convene a meeting with the relevant officers to discuss funding for large scale works. This would include the officers from Parking, Property, Operations, Health and Safety and Section 106 funding officer.

(DK) to report any issues concerning cleaning to the Shared Waste Service Contract Manager.

(E O'N) to discuss with Jackson Square Management and the Councils Estate and Asset Management Team on the responsibilities for the fabric and structure of Jackson Square car park.

7.0 Capital Project updates/EHC Contracts - Health & Safety Compliance and Management

Swimming Pools and Gyms – Sport and Leisure Management (SLM)

(ET) Reported that contracts are now in the process of being terminated in respect to Leventhorpe and Fanshawe Pools with Ward Freman to follow.

No safety concerns or issues raised.

Action: None

BEAM Hertford

(LL) sent the following:

- We are now underway with a Venue Security RA – part of compliance with the new Martyn’s Law – Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025.
 - Meeting with Peter & Steve to review next steps.
- Fire Service have attended for two team training sessions to support FOH/tech/volunteers with existing knowledge.
 - Gerda box has been updated with revised contact details and site plans.
- Any accident reports have been sent to Peter – no major injuries.

Action: None

Old River Lane, Bishop’s Stortford

(BW) – Nothing to report.

Glendale – Grounds Maintenance

Action: No action required.

Contract Compliance

Action:

8.0 Property – Premise’s Maintenance and Repairs

(JE)

Action: (GH) / (JE) to arrange for adjustment to be carried out. CO2 levels will be monitored and if levels are not reducing it may be necessary to retrofit the passive air vents.

(GH) Advised that the following will be undertaken.
Install 3 x inline extractor fans and 6 lengths of worm ducting that will connect to the vents either end of the corridor that will extract fresh air and recirculate into the office area.

Quote received for work and in the process of appointing contractor to undertake.

9.0 Facilities Management

Furniture and equipment from the Rivers Suite has been relocated to the second floor, East wing.

Old files and plans have been brought over from Buntingford Depot for checking and disposal.

There are plans to reinstate the IT training room, East wing, second floor as a meeting room once it has been cleared and cleaned.

There are two new meeting rooms available on the first floor, west wing.

Action:

10.0 List of Issues

10.1 Employee side (UNISON)

Action: None

10.2. Management side

(PD) advised Committee that the Access Audit of Wallfields was carried out

Action: Update Committee on progress.

(PD) advised Committee that the new inspection forms are ready for testing, and he will be speaking to respective teams to arrange for the forms to be tested. He has spoken to the Parking Team initially and will be helping to test the forms.

(PD) updated Committee on the completion of the first stage of Mental Health First Aid training and plans to embed a re-launch of the mental health support at East Herts.

One of the issues is the provision of a 'safe space' in which colleagues can discuss any mental health concerns with a mental health first aider, it is therefore essential to accommodate this provision when looking at how we manage and utilise space at Wallfields.

11.0 Health and Safety Training

PD has been asked to consider options for arranging training for managers on the process of preparing and implementing Risk Assessments.

Action: Update Committee on progress.

12.0 AOB

(DK) Raised a matter concerning an Ice Cream Van operating at Hartham – He expressed concern that the vehicle idles continually expelling fumes and this is not a good advert for the Councils environmental agenda. (DK) believes this was an arrangement managed by Operations Parks and Open Spaces Team.

Action: As an Operational matter, Committee has referred to (IS) for attention. (IS) to provide feedback.

(DK) advised the Committee that APCOA have requested if it is possible to have additional space for one of their officers to carry out administrative tasks. They asked if it is possible to have additional space in reception exclusively for their use. Committee advised (DK) that Customer Services are unlikely to agree due to restricted space, Committee advised (DK) that interview room 2 in lower reception could be used by APCOA when not in use. (GH) may have alternative suggestions.

Action: (PD) to discuss with Customer Services / (GH) to comment.

(PD) advised Committee that the Access Audit of Wallfields has taken place and the report from the assessor received. The report included Old Wallfields building and a separate report produced for High Oak which has been sent to them.

The rest of the report is being reviewed by the HR Strategic Lead and the Health and Safety Adviser.

Action: The report will be submitted to Leadership Team for consideration and will then be shared with Safety Committee.

Meeting ended: 12.00pm

Date of Next Meeting: 06 August 2025

Time: 10.00am

Location:

Meeting Room 1.15

Microsoft Teams:

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Meeting ID: 396 937 865 237 4

Passcode: Sw3g7TL3