

## **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

ABERDEEN, Friday, 29 August 2014. Minute of Meeting of the CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE. Present:- Mike Middleton (GMB), Chairperson; and, Councillor Graham, Vice Chairperson. City Council Representatives:- Councillors Cameron, Finlayson and Greig.

Trade Union Representatives:- Joe Craig (UNITE), Karen Davidson (UNISON), John Noble (UCATT), Carole Thorpe (EIS), David Willis (GMB) and Tom White (SSTA).

Officers in attendance:- Angela Scott (Chief Executive), Ciaran Monaghan (Head of Service) (Office of Chief Executive), Mary Agnew (Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager), Colin Lever (Team Leader), Bruce Findlater (Admin Officer), Carol Fraser (Team Manager), Michael Hearn (Directorate Support Manager), Lesley Kirk (Directorate Support Manager), Kate Mackay (Business Manager), Andrew Moat (Health and Safety Adviser). For item 5 - Gaynor Clarke (Planning and Development Officer), Susan Devlin (Head of Children's Services), Shona Manson (Children's Services Manager) and Paul Toseland (Team Manager). For items 6, 7 and 8 - Hugh Murdoch (Head of Asset Management and Operations) and Emma Watt (Senior City Development Executive).

### **APOLOGIES**

1. Apologies were intimated on behalf of Councillor Donnelly, Ewan Sutherland, Andrew Jones and George Ferguson.

### **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 23 May 2014.

#### **The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the minute as a correct record.

### **COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT**

3. With reference to article 4 of the minute of its previous meeting of 23 May 2014, the Committee had before it a statement of outstanding business prepared by the Clerk.

In relation to item 2 (Occupational Health Provider Reports), Councillor Finlayson stated that the reports referred to were severely overdue and requested an update on the position. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the two latest reports had been included on the agenda and that the contract with the provider was being managed via monthly meetings and that service credits were being issued to the provider. The service credits were for failure against the KPI's and charged at the rate

of 1% below the KPI equalled a £80 credit and they were currently set at 100% for provision of reports and 95% for provision of appointment.

In relation to item 3 (Employee Reward Scheme), the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she had met with Councillor Finlayson to discuss the proposals and indicated that she would be discussing the criteria with the Star Awards organisers to see if the Health and Safety Employee Award Scheme could be incorporated into the current Star Awards.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to remove items 2 (Occupational Health Provider Reports) and 3 (Employee Reward Scheme);
- (ii) to note the information provided regarding the Occupational Health Reports; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the business statement.

**SOCIAL CARE AND WELLBEING REPORT**

4. The Committee had before it the annual health and safety report for the Social Care and Wellbeing Service for the period 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014 which included a Director's statement and the Service Health and Safety Action Plan.

The report advised that (1) on 1 August 2013, the Service transferred 713 members of staff from the Older People and Rehabilitation service to the Local Authority Trading Company, Bon Accord Care and that those staff involved in Older People that remain in the Service are Older People Care Management, Wellbeing Team and the Over 50's events team; (2) the Service currently employed 1086 staff across four delivery areas; (3) the Service held regular health and safety meetings which were attended by Senior Management, senior officers with a remit for health and safety and Trade Union officials; (4) the Service were in the process of reviewing the Business Continuity Plans for each team and establishment; and (5) all residential workers received Strategies for Crisis Intervention and Prevention Training and violence and aggression training.

The report contained the following statistical information:-

**Older People and Rehabilitation**

- there were 5 accidents, none of which were reportable
- there were 3 incidents
- the number of days lost on average per employee due to illness was 18

**Adult Services**

- there were 22 accidents, none of which were reportable
- slips, trips and falls attributed to the highest cause of accident
- there was a reduction in the number of lifting and handling accidents from the previous year which could be attributed to the transfer of staff from Older People Services
- there were 48 incidents which was a reduction from the previous year
- violence attributed to the highest cause of incident which included anti-social behaviour, disruptive behaviour, threatening behaviour, threatened with a weapon and menacing behaviour
- the number of days lost on average per employee due to illness was 16

### **Children's Services**

- a new residential unit, Marchburn Children's Home, was opened in December 2013 which has had an impact on the number of reported accidents and incidents
- there were 13 accidents, none of which were reportable
- there were 71 incidents which was a significant increase from the previous year (20)
- violence attributed to the highest cause of incident which included anti-social behaviour, disruptive behaviour, threatening behaviour, threatened with a weapon and menacing behaviour
- incidents reported at Marchburn had been investigated jointly with the Health and Safety Team and the Residential Service Manager with the outcome resulting in a health and safety management action plan being developed to address health and safety outcomes for workers in Looked After Children in Residential services
- the number of days lost on average per employee due to illness was 15

### **Business Management**

- there was one accident involving a fall from height
- there were no incidents reported which was a reduction from the previous year (3)
- the number of days lost on average per employee due to illness was 8

### **Service Wide**

- at the time of submitting the report 19 out of 57 establishments had failed to return their workplace inspection documentation, an action plan to address the issue had been prepared
- the scores relating to the individual elements of the health and safety matrix were: 100% for First Aid and Accidents/Incidents; 67% for Emergency Precautions, Housekeeping and Cleaning, Environment, Slip and Trip Hazards, Machinery, Plant and Equipment and Welfare; and 65% for Risk Assessment
- the overall score for compliance for the directorate was 69.71%
- a number of issues were identified which the directorate were addressing
- 657 employees attended health and safety related training
- the average number of absences over 28 days was 100 compared to 241 from the previous year (mainly attributed to the transfer of staff to Bon Accord Care)
- the main reason for the number of absences related to respiratory difficulties and gastrointestinal problems however whilst comparing those to the number of days lost by sickness reasons, psychological reasons are the greatest cause for absence.

Councillor Cameron referred to the negative press coverage of incidents at Marchburn Children's Home and sought clarification on the current position, whereupon the Head of Children's Services advised that Marchburn Children's Home was a new residential unit and that the children required support to deal with a variety of issues they may have. The home had presented challenges, some of which related to the home and its residents being targeted by members of the community. She further advised that there was an action plan in place to deal with all of the issues that had been presented. She also gave assurance that all staff had received training to deal with Crisis Intervention

and that ongoing support and training was available for staff to ensure that they had the necessary skills and confidence to deal with any situation that may arise.

Councillor Graham requested a copy of the investigation report and action plan relating to Marchburn Children's Home, whereupon the Service advised that these would be issued.

The Chief Executive sought clarification over whether the Committee were aware of the increasing trend of incidents and on the low health and safety matrix returns, whereupon the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the incidents are reported via YourHR on a quarterly basis and should be discussed at the Service Health and Safety Committee and the Service Manager advised that since the report had been issued all but one of the workplace inspections had been completed. The Chief Executive requested that this Committee be provided with all of the incident information to enable them to identify any trends and possible improvements.

**The report recommended:**

that the Committee note the content of the report.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the investigation report and associated action plan relating to Marchburn Children's Home would be issued to Councillor Graham;
- (ii) to request that for future Health and Safety Quarterly Reports that all incident information is presented to identify trends and possible improvements;
- (iii) to request the Service to improve the timeframes for completion of workplace inspections to ensure that they are completed within the required period; and
- (iv) to otherwise note the content of the report.

**FIRE AT KITTYBREWSTER**

5. The Committee had circulated a report by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager which provided information relating to a vehicle which caught fire in the Fleet Workshop during a welding repair job. The incident occurred when a vehicle waiting to be repaired was hit by another vehicle resulting in a damaged lock on the rear of the vehicle which required to be welded. The welding work introduced an ignition source and combustible materials contained in the back of the vehicle caught fire.

**The report recommended that the Service:**

- (a) develop and implement a permit to work system for hot work;
- (b) review current working procedures and risk assessments to assess whether they were suitable and sufficient;
- (c) provide updated information, instruction and training to employees who complete such tasks and implement a regime of periodic refresher arrangements;
- (d) assess whether current supervision and monitoring of hot work is appropriate and ensure effective arrangements are implemented;
- (e) reviews the procedure regarding how a vehicle is presented to Fleet Services for repair which should include consideration of cleaning residual materials on the vehicle and the need to empty the vehicle waste; and
- (f) communicate and implement the above recommendations across the organisation.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to endorse the recommendations made to the Service for improvement;
- (i) to note that the Head of Asset Management and Operations would provide a report to the next meeting of this Committee providing an update on the implementation of the recommendations;
- (iii) to otherwise note the content of the report.

**MARISCHAL COLLEGE INCIDENT**

6. The Committee had circulated a report by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager which provided a summary of an incident that occurred at Marischal College on 23 July 2014 whereby a member of the public drew a knife and instructed staff to call the police.

**The report recommended that the Service:**

- (a) draft a procedure on actions required of employees during and post serious incidents including how to alert Management to any vehicle parked directly outside Marischal College and how to effectively 'lock down' the required parts of the building during any incident;
- (b) review current Risk Assessments and provide related information, instruction and training;
- (c) review how and who QMatic alerts should be sent during incidents in the Filter Reception area to minimise numbers converging on the area;
- (d) implement a regime of regular refresher training/toolbox talks on the use of QMatic which would help embed its use if incidents occur;
- (e) ensure that there is a regime to ensure that all service user-facing employees are trained on how to de-escalate incidents which should include the refresher training; and
- (f) review building security arrangements throughout the organisation.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the recommendations were based on the critical incident report; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the content of the report

**HYDROGEN BUS PROJECT UPDATE**

7. With reference to article 12, resolution (iii) of the minute of its meeting of 23 May 2014, the Committee had before it a paper prepared by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager which provided an update on the Hydrogen Bus Project.

The paper provided information relating to the interim refuelling depot which included risk assessments, health and safety, training and concerns raised relating to the site and operation of the depot. The paper also contained details relating to the permanent aspect of the project. A copy of the Hydrogen Project Communication Plan was included for information.

John Noble raised concerns relating to the Communication Plan and that staff had still not received site specific information on the project. Emma Watt advised that there were representatives on site who should be channelling the information to staff. The

Chief Executive requested that officers discuss the concerns raised with management to ensure that communication is issued to all staff.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager would discuss the issues raised relating to the communication plan with Management for the Project; and
- (ii) to note that the Hydrogen Bus Project would be included as a standing item on future agendas, with site representatives and management for the project being invited to attend for that item.

**SCHOOL SECURITY UPDATE**

8. With reference to article 7 of the minute of its meeting of 23 May 2014, the Committee had before it a report by the Lead Officer for school security which provided an update on the ongoing work by the Education, Culture and Sport Service to review school security procedures within Aberdeen City Schools.

The report advised that the school security guidelines as presented to the previous meeting and to the School Security Group had now been finalised and has been used to construct a questionnaire aimed at identifying and prioritising work needed to improve security across the school estate. The questionnaire focused on each category of security and required each school to confirm whether the expected security measures were in place and if not to carry out a risk assessment to record the level of risk associated with that area of security. The results from the questionnaire will allow the Service to identify the schools in need of improvement and to prioritise the work required along with the costings for the work. A copy of the questionnaire was appended to the report.

Councillor Finlayson enquired as to whether there was a system in place to test the security measures within schools, whereupon the Directorate Support Manager advised that this could be looked at as part of the overall programme for improvement.

Councillor Graham enquired as to what happened to the Condition Survey undertaken previously, whereupon the Directorate Support Manager advised that this will form part of the overall improvement plan for security within the school estate.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to note the information contained in the report.

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME REPORT**

9. The Committee had before it a report prepared by Time for Talking on behalf of the Council which provided the figures for the usage of the Employee Assistance Service for the period 1 April to 30 June 2014.

The report advised that there had been 24 referrals during the period, of which 17 related to personal issues and 5 related to work related issues. There had been 57 face to face counselling sessions and 13 telephone counselling sessions.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to note the report and the information provided.

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REPORT**

10. The Committee had before it (1) the occupational health and safety report for 1 April to 30 June 2014; (2) the occupational health and safety report for 1 January to 31 March 2014; and (3) Physiotherapy Service reports from 1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014. The reports provided the following statistical information relating to the occupational health service:

**April to June 2014**

- 280 appointments were delivered comprising:
  - 34 medicals, 2 LGV, 1 Drug and Alcohol screening and 31 for taxi drivers
  - 149 referrals
  - 30 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome Assessments, 21 Tier 3 and 9 Tier 4
  - 7 Audiometry Assessments
  - 60 Physiotherapy Sessions
- 43 New Employment Questionnaires had been completed
- There were 4 cases of did not attend and a further 3 cancelled with the responsible Service being backcharged for the non attendance
- 34 Hep B vaccinations were delivered
- Psychological (44) and Musculoskeletal (44) were the highest diagnosis categories

**The Committee resolved:-**

to note the content of the report.

**CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT - APRIL TO JUNE 2014 - REPORT BY ACTING DIRECTOR FOR CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

11. With reference to article 10 of the minute of its meeting of 23 May, 2014, the Committee had before it a report by the Acting Director of Corporate Governance which provided details of the number and types of accidents, incidents and occurrences during the period 1 April to 30 June 2014.

The report provided statistical information broken down into the following categories:

**Accidents/Incidents, Accident Rates and Sickness Absence**

- 35 employees accidents were reported of which 6 were reportable to the enforcing authority
- 79 accidents to third parties were reported of which 5 were reportable to the enforcing authority
- The accident rate for the period was 0.67 accidents per 1,000 employees
- 83 incidents were reported by employees
- The corporate sickness absence rate for the period was 11.20 working days lost per employee

### **Enforcement Interventions (Health and Safety Executive and Scottish Fire and Rescue)**

- The HSE contacted the Council regarding unsafe dismantling of scaffold on Union Terrace by contractors. With the Council's and HSE involvement the scaffolding was removed in a safe manner
- There were no interventions from the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

### **Health and Safety Training**

- 512 delegates attended health and safety training over the period in questions
- There were 18 late cancellations or no shows at health and safety training which resulted in £1641 being back charged to the Services.

### **Fire Risk Assessment**

- 11 fire risk assessments were completed during the period

### **The report recommended:**

that the Committee refer the report to the Corporate Management Team –

- (a) to discuss and encourage review of statistics by Heads of Service with Services specific detail discussed at Senior Management Teams;
- (b) to support actions to reduce accidents and work related ill health in line with health and safety targets; and
- (c) to disseminate and take action on the health and safety information in this report.

In relation to Incident Information, the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised the statistics would be broken down into directorates for future reports.

In relation to accidents to third parties, the Chief Executive requested that details of the accidents be provided in future reports as this would be helpful to identify interventions required to prevent accidents occurring in the future.

In relation to Sickness Absence, the Chief Executive stated that further interventions were required to reduce sickness absence across the Council as the figures presented had remained at a constant level over the previous year.

Councillor Graham sought additional information relating to the Manual Handling Passport Scheme, whereupon the Health and Safety Manager advised that the scheme would allow the training to transfer with the employee within local authorities or the NHS. She further advised that she would issue a website link to the Committee which would provide additional information about the scheme.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that incident information would be provided per directorate for future reports;
- (ii) to instruct the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager to include details of third party accidents in future reports;
- (iii) to request directorates and the health and safety team to identify additional interventions to reduce sickness absence across the organisation;
- (iv) to note that a website link providing additional information on the Manual Handling Passport Scheme would be issued to the Committee; and
- (v) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY ACTION PLAN**

**12.** With reference to article 12 of the minute of its meeting of 23 May 2014, the Committee had before it for information the latest position statement of the Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan, prepared by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager.

The Chief Executive requested that for future reports the action plan be presented in the form of an improvement plan which would provide evidence against each action to show the improvement measured.

Councillor Graham enquired as to when the Corporate Health and Safety Policy would be presented to Committee, whereupon the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that it would be discussed by the Corporate Management Team on 25 September and then issued for consultation thereafter.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to request the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager to replace the action plan with an improvement plan; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the action plan.

## **FUTURE REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS - VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING MANAGER AND THE CLERK**

**13.** The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the reporting structure for the Committee would change from the next meeting to incorporate elements of the Health and Safety Management System including Controls, Co-operation, Communication and Competence. She further advised that the system had been developed to test organisations compliance with legislative requirements.

The Clerk advised that the Committee would now be reporting to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee and that there was a need to have a clear reporting route to ensure that the parent committee had assurance that health and safety matters were being dealt with.

### **The Committee resolved:-**

to note the information provided.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - FRIDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 10AM**

**14.** The Committee noted that their next meeting was scheduled for 28 November 2014 at 10am.

- **MIKE MIDDLETON, Chairperson.**