

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, Friday, 20 February 2015. Minute of Meeting of the CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Graham Chairperson. City Council Representatives:- Councillors Cameron and Greig.

Trade Union Representatives:- Joe Craig (UNITE), Karen Davidson (UNISON), George Ferguson (UNISON), John Noble (UCATT), Steve Robb (UNITE), Sid Sandison (SSTA), Carole Thorpe (EIS) and Neil Watson (GMB) (as substitute for Mike Middleton).

Officers in attendance:- Angela Scott (Chief Executive), Ewan Sutherland (Director of Corporate Governance), Mary Agnew (Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager), Colin Leaver (Team Leader), Abigail Kelman (Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team), Euan Couperwhite (Head of Policy, Performance and Resources), Martin Allan (Business Manager), Bruce Findlater (Admin Officer), Michael Hearn (Directorate Support Manager), Andrew Jones (Service Manager (Assets / Finance)) (Education, Culture and Sport), Lesley Kirk (Directorate Support Manager), Carol Slessor (Team Manager), Mark Reilly (Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment) (for article 7) and Jacqui McKenzie (Customer Service Manager) (for article 5).

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

1. Prior to consideration of the matters before it, the Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude the press and public from the meeting for article 23 so as to avoid disclosure of exempt information of the class described in paragraph 14.

APOLOGIES

2. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mike Middleton, David Willis, and Kate Mackay.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 27 NOVEMBER 2014

3. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 27 November 2014.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute subject to the following amendment on page 7, last paragraph, first sentence to read 'Sid Sandison stated that within schools there were two forms to be completed following an incident, one was a unique form to the school to be completed for all types of incidents and the other was the Corporate Incident Reporting Form. He suggested that at the time of completing the first form, not all staff were

reminded to complete the Corporate Incident Reporting Form which may affect the number of incidents reported corporately.'

COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT

4. With reference to article 8 of the minute of meeting of 27 November 2014, the Committee had before it a statement of outstanding business prepared by the Clerk.

In relation to item 1 (School Security), the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager requested that the Service produce an action plan to ensure all aspects of security were being addressed whereupon, the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources stated that he would discuss the matter out with the meeting.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) subject to the decisions at articles 5 (Marischal College Incident) and 6 (Vehicle Fire at Fleet Services, to remove items 2 and 4 from the statement; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the statement of outstanding business.

MARISCHAL COLLEGE INCIDENT - UPDATE REPORT

5. With reference to article 7, resolution (ii) of the minute of its previous meeting of 27 November 2014 and article 6 of the minute of its meeting of 29 August 2014, the Committee had before it a report by the Customer Services Manager which provided an update on the actions taken in respect of each of the recommendations for improvement.

The report provided detailed information relating to each of the recommendations and the actions the Service had taken to address them. The report advised that additional health and safety measures had been planned and implemented within the Customer Service Centre which included (1) a Customer Service Centre Team Leader working group had been established to review health and safety considerations and to share knowledge on potential risks; (2) new members of staff in the Customer Service Team are provided with a comprehensive induction to health and safety arrangements; and (3) presentations to staff from Police Scotland Counter Terrorism Adviser had been arranged specifically focused on firearms and weapons attacks.

The Chairperson sought assurance that the improvements and training that had been put in place at the Customer Service Centre would be implemented across all of the Customer Access points, whereupon the Customer Service Manager advised that each of the Access points currently have their own procedures in place and that these would be reviewed and additional training provided.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report and the information provided.

TOWN HOUSE INJURY INVESTIGATION - REPORT BY HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM

6. The Committee had before it a report prepared by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team which provided details of an incident of assault to a member of staff on

Broad Street. The assailant was known to the employee through the course of their previous employment in the Customer Service Centre and there had been a history of near misses raised.

The report contained a list of recommendations to be taken into account for future incidents and advised that the findings would be shared across directorates. Following the incident various actions had been undertaken.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report and actions taken to date.

VEHICLE FIRE AT FLEET SERVICES - UPDATE

7. With reference to article 10 of the minute of its meeting of 27 November 2014, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure which provided an update on the progress made with implementing the recommendations for improvement.

The report advised that (1) 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 and the welding work introduced an ignition source and combustible materials contained in the back of the vehicle caught fire; (2) on 3rd October 2014, the Office of the Traffic Commissioner notified the Council that there would be a public enquiry into the Council's Goods Vehicle Operators Licence which had been called following the Commissioner's concerns on perceived lack of progress with addressing concerns identified in an investigation on the 14 January 2014; (3) due to the concerns, Fleet Services have been placed under special measures and a full evaluation of health and safety compliance within the service was being undertaken in conjunction with the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team; and (4) in relation to Hot Works procedures, the Service were working with officers to implement robust health and safety procedures for hot working.

The report contained details of the work undertaken to date and those still to be implemented.

Councillor Cameron enquired as to why Hot Works Permits weren't in place across the Council, wherein the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment advised that Building Services had a Permit to work and this was being reviewed to roll it out across the Council. The Team Leader advised that there was a procedure in place within Fleet Services however it had not been followed at the time of the accident and that this was being reviewed to ensure what was in place was sufficient.

George Ferguson enquired as to whether training had been identified for staff wherein the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment advised that a programme of training for all staff was being developed and would be implemented.

The Chairperson enquired as to whether he could attend the workshop at Kittybrewster so that he could meet the staff and see for himself the operations, wherein the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment advised that he would arrange a meeting.

The report recommended:

That the Committee –

- (a) note the progress on implementing the actions; and
- (b) instructs the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment to report back to the next Committee with a further update on the implementation of the revised procedure for Hot Works in Fleet Services.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment would arrange for the Chairperson to visit the workshop to meet staff and to see the work area; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

8. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that (1) a report was being submitted to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee on 26 February 2015 which was to present the Health and Safety Assurance Plan and the provide information on the assurance system to test the effectiveness of the organisations health and safety arrangements; and (2) that it was proposed that Health and Safety audits be carried out, the scope of which would be agreed with the Service and that recommendations for improvements would be issued with a timeline for completion.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information provided.

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2014

9. With reference to article 11 of the minute of its meeting of 29 August 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 July to September 2014.

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

Accidents, Incidents, Accident Rates and Sickness Absence

- 46 accidents to employees were reported of which 12 were reportable to the enforcing authority
- 61 accidents to third parties were reported of which 6 were reportable to the enforcing authority
- the accident rate for the period was 1.13
- 123 incidents were reported during the period with the highest attributed to threatening or menacing behaviour (47)
- there were 13701 calendar days lost for all sickness, 212 for industrial injury and 18 for mental wellbeing
- the corporate sickness absence rate was 11.20 working days lost per employee

Health and Safety Training and Cancellations

- 202 employees attended health and safety training
- 302 employees completed elearning health and safety courses
- there were 21 late cancellations or no shows which resulted in a total of £2457.20 being back charged to Services

Fire Risk Assessments

- 19 fire risk assessments were carried out
- a range of both positive and negative findings were reported to the premises responsible person and related directorate so that remedial action could be progressed and monitored via Service Management Committees

Health and Safety Policies and Guidance

- The Corporate Health and Safety Policy and Smoke Free at Work Policy have been reported to the Corporate Management Team and engagement with directorates had commenced.

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 Service specific detail being discussed at Service Management Committees;
- (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 the report.

The Chairperson requested an update in relation to the remedial action from the employee reportable accidents, wherein the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she would liaise with colleagues and provide a response at the next meeting.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that a response relating to the remedial actions from employee reportable accidents would be provided at the next meeting; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2014

10. With reference to the previous article, 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 October to December 2014.

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

Accidents, Incidents, Accident Rates and Sickness Absence

- 68 accidents to employees were reported of which none were reportable to the enforcing authority
- 118 accidents to third parties were reported of which 2 were reportable to the enforcing authority
- the accident rate for the period was 0
- 107 incidents were reported during the period with the highest attributed to threatening or menacing behaviour (41)
- there were 17742 calendar days lost for all sickness, 191.5 for industrial injury and 107 for mental wellbeing
- the corporate sickness absence rate was 11.30 working days lost per employee

Occupational Health and Wellbeing Events

- 6 to 10 October - EU-OSHA Healthy Workplaces Manage Stress which was to promote stress management techniques and create a greater awareness of mental wellbeing in the workplace
- Various dates in October – Free Employee Flu Vaccinations which was offered to prevent or minimise flu related absences to eligible staff
- 3 November to 21 November – Free Employee Health Checks which was offered to all staff and are a good indicator of general employee health as well as a way of providing a health intervention and information for employees who may be at risk
- The Council maintained the Healthy Working Lives bronze award

Health and Safety Training and Cancellations

- 654 employees attended health and safety training
- 231 employees completed elearning health and safety courses
- There were 60 late cancellations or no shows which resulted in a total of £2731 being back charged to Services

Fire Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Audits

- 33 fire risk assessments were carried out
- a range of both positive and negative findings were reported to the premises responsible person and related directorate so that remedial action could be progressed and monitored via Service Management Committees
- 11 audits relating to 'control' were carried out
- a range of both positive and negative findings were identified

Health and Safety Policies and Guidance

- the Corporate Health and Safety Policy will be submitted to the next meeting of the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee for approval

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 Service specific detail being discussed at Service Management Committees;
- (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 the report.

Sid Sandison enquired as to where the security breach occurred, wherein the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she would provide the details to the Committee.

John Noble advised that the test at the end of the Construction Skills Certification Scheme had not been completed by the majority of attendees and requested an update, wherein the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that it was up to the Service to organise and that there were a few reasons why there has been a delay.

The Chief Executive sought clarification over the figures provided relating to sickness absence and stated that there appeared to be no improvement over the last 12 month period. She further requested information on how the Council compared to the industry average for sickness absence. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the figures were provided to her from colleagues so she would seek clarification from them and would request the comparison figures. Sid Sandison stated that the

absence figures included part time staff with the absence recorded as full time and also weekends were included so this may account for the high absence figures.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager would provide clarity in relation to the absence figures and would provide a comparison to the industry average for sickness absence; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REPORT - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2014

11. With reference to article 10 of the minute of its meeting of 29 August 2014, the Committee had before it a report prepared by Serco which outlined the activities of the Occupational Health Service for the period 1 July to 30 September 2014.

The report provided the following statistical information:

- 307 appointments had been delivered which included: 31 Audiometry Assessments, 56 Physiotherapy sessions, 19 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome Assessments were carried out 17 at tier 3 and 2 at tier 4, 100 medicals comprising 2 Light Goods Vehicles, 41 School Crossing Patrollers and 57 Taxi Drivers and 101 referrals had been received
- 43 New Employee Questionnaires were completed
- There were 3 cases of 'Did Not Attend'
- 8 Hep B Vaccinations were carried out
- The highest diagnosis categories from the referrals were musculoskeletal (30) of which 4 were work related and Psychological (26) of which 18 were work related
- Of the 101 referrals, 38 were deemed fit for work and 29 were deemed fit with restrictions

The Committee resolved:-

to note the content of the report.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REPORT - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2014

12. With reference to the previous article, the Committee had before it a report prepared by Serco which outlined the activities of the Occupational Health Service for the period 1 October to 31 December 2014.

The report provided the following statistical information:

- 330 appointments had been delivered which included: 68 Physiotherapy sessions, 3 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome Assessments were carried out 2 at tier 3 and 1 at tier 4, 101 medicals comprising 9 Light Goods Vehicles and 92 Taxi Drivers and 158 referrals had been received
- 83 New Employee Questionnaires were completed
- There were 6 cases of 'Did Not Attend' and 13 cancelled appointments
- 13 Hep B Vaccinations were carried out
- The highest diagnosis categories from the referrals were musculoskeletal (57) of which 4 were work related and Psychological (39) of which 24 were work related
- Of the 158 referrals, 61 were deemed fit for work, 39 were deemed fit with restrictions and 34 were deemed temporarily unfit

The Chief Executive sought clarification relating to the number of employees off long term sick (81) and how many of those were deemed fit to work and had returned or if there was a plan for those employees to return to work. The Chairperson sought clarification on employees that had returned to work on different duties. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she would liaise with Serco to gain the information.

Sid Sandison sought clarification relating to the Psychological figures and how the Council were performing against other Local Authorities and the industry average. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that Serco didn't currently provide benchmarking figures and that she would ask for these for future reports.

The Team Leader for the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team advised that Services had plans in place to assist people back to work and systems in place to manage this and that the Service look at the suitability of lighter duties for each employee.

Joe Craig advised that sometimes the report from Serco conflicted with the report from the employees Doctor and that this should be investigated. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she would discuss the individual cases directly with Joe out with the meeting.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she had requested Serco to provide feedback responses in future reports so that the Committee could monitor the service being provided.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager to liaise with Serco to gain additional information on whether there was a plan in place to get the 81 employees currently off on long term sick back to work;
- (ii) to request the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager to liaise with Serco to gain additional information on how many employees had returned to work on lighter duties;
- (iii) to note that feedback responses had been requested for future reports; and
- (iv) to otherwise note the content of the report.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME REPORT - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2014

13. With reference to article 9 of the minute of its meeting of 29 August 2014, the Committee had before it a report prepared by Time for Talking which presented the utilisation of the Employee Assistance Programme for the period 1 July to 30 September 2014.

The report advised that there had been 22 referrals during the period, of which 17 related to personal issues and 5 related to work issues. There had been 59 face to face counselling sessions, 19 telephone counselling sessions and 1 counselling session still to be arranged due to client commitments.

The Committee noted that the format of the report was not ideal as it split between pages and the information was not easy to read. The Clerk advised that she would try to amend the layout for future reports.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request the Clerk to present the report in a different format for future meetings to make it easier to follow and understand; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the content of the report.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE REPORT - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2014

14. With reference to the previous article, the Committee had before it a report prepared by Time for Talking which presented the utilisation of the Employee Assistance Programme for the period 1 October to 31 December 2014.

The report advised that there had been 21 referrals during the period, of which 13 related to personal issues and 8 related to work issues. There had been 52 face to face counselling sessions, 21 telephone counselling sessions and 1 requesting information or advice.

Sid Sandison asked if there was any evidence that the service was beneficial to the employee wherein the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she receives the feedback during her quarterly meetings with Time for Talking and that the feedback from those who had provided it was positive. She further advised that it was important to receive all feedback so that if there was anything negative that it could be addressed.

The Chief Executive requested that the feedback information be included in future reports.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request Time for Talking to provide the feedback responses in future reports; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the report.

HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

15. With reference to article 13 of the minute of its previous meeting of 28 November 2014, the Committee had before it the Corporate Health and Safety Improvement Plan for 2014-2016 prepared by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager which outlined each of the improvement themes and associated tasks, measurements and responsible person for each of the improvements.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager specifically drew attention to items 3 and 4 which outlined the percentages for reducing the number of incidents and absences in the workplace.

The Chief Executive requested that the Improvement Plan be amended to contain more detail on what interventions would be put in place to meet the aim and the targets set. She also sought clarification on how each of the improvement areas would be monitored.

The Team Leader for the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team advised that the Corporate Plan was fed down to each Service and their improvement plans would contain the additional detail. The Chief Executive stated that the Improvement Plan had to be discussed with each Service to ensure that the targets and actions were not

unrealistic. She further requested that the Improvement Plan be discussed by the Corporate Management Team to ensure the targets and actions were acceptable and manageable.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to instruct the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager to submit the Improvement Plan to the Corporate Management Team for discussion and approval; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the Improvement Plan.

DIRECTORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLANS

16. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that once agreement had been reached on the format and content of the Corporate Health and Safety Improvement Plan and this had been issued to Services to be included in their individual Improvement Plans, that at each Committee meeting, the Service Improvement Plans would be presented so that the Committee could monitor the improvements that had been identified.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the information provided.

FUTURE MEETING ARRANGEMENTS AND SERVICE REPORTING TIMETABLE 2015

17. The Committee had before it the dates and service reporting timetable prepared by the Clerk. The Clerk advised that there were some changes to the one issued in the papers and that this would be amended and issued to all Services.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the reporting timetable.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

In accordance with the decision taken at article 1 of this minute, the following item of business was considered with the press and public excluded.

SCHOOL SECURITY

18. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Education and Children's Services which (1) presented an update on progress in developing a programme of security improvements for schools in Aberdeen City; and (2) presented a draft programme of works to be undertaken over the next five years.

The report recommended:

that the Committee note the contents of the report.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager commended the Service of the amount of work that had been undertaken to date and requested that an action plan be

implemented to capture all aspects of health, safety and wellbeing for each of the schools.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to request the Service to complete an action plan to capture all information relating to school security so that all aspects of health, safety and wellbeing were being addressed; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the contents of the report.

- **GORDON GRAHAM, Chairperson.**