

## **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

ABERDEEN, Friday, 22 May 2015. Minute of Meeting of the CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Graham Chairperson; and Mike Middleton, Vice Chairperson. City Council Representatives:- Councillors Dickson (as substitute for Councillor Cameron) and Finlayson.

Trade Union Representatives:- Karen Davidson (UNISON), Steve Robb (UNITE), Sid Sandison (SSTA), Carole Thorpe (EIS) and David Willis (GMB).

Officers in attendance:- Ciaran Monaghan (Head of Service) (Office of Chief Executive), Mary Agnew (Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager), Colin Leaver (Team Leader), Mark Askew (Health and Safety Adviser), Caroline Duguid (Health and Safety Adviser), Bruce Findlater (Admin Officer), Michael Hearn (Directorate Support Manager), Lesley Kirk (Directorate Support Manager), Kate Mackay (Business Manager), Angela Crawford (Team Leader), Les Mackie (Project Officer), Neil Yacamini (Project Manager) and Mark Reilly (Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment)(for article 6).

### **APOLOGIES**

1. Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Cameron, Donnelly and Greig; George Ferguson, Euan Couperwhite and Andrew Jones.

### **MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 20 FEBRUARY 2015**

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2015.

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

to approve the minute as an accurate record.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

3. With reference to articles 4, resolution (i) and 18, resolution (i), the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she had not received a copy of the improvement plan in relation to school security. The Project Officer for the Service advised that work had been undertaken to replace doors at some schools and the current systems in place across all schools were being reviewed. He further advised that in some schools, the grounds were used as public walkways and that these were being addressed.

The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager stated that the Improvement Plan was requested to provide detail of the holistic approach to School Security not the interim or onsite management arrangements and requested that a timeline be added to ensure that the improvement plan was completed and submitted to this Committee.

With reference to article 10, resolution (i), the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that she had requested the information however she had not received the percentage reduction figure for sickness absence from all the Directorates.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note that the Chairperson would discuss the improvement plan with the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources;
- (ii) to request the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources to provide a due date for when the improvement plan would be submitted to the Committee; and
- (iii) to otherwise note the information provided.

**COMMITTEE BUSINESS STATEMENT**

4. The Committee had before it a statement of outstanding business as prepared by the Clerk.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to remove item 1 (Vehicle Fire at Fleet Services); and
- (ii) to request the Service to provide a date for when the action plan would be submitted to the Committee.

**CONSTITUTION**

5. With reference to article 5 of the minute of meeting of the Local Government Employees Joint Consultative Committee of 26 January 2015, the Committee had before it a report by the Acting Director of Corporate Governance which presented the revised Constitution.

The report advised that the Local Government Employees Joint Consultative Committee had requested the Convener of Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee and Councillor Young discuss the views of that Committee as to whether Regional Trade Union Officials could attend the Corporate Health and Safety Committee and that outcome of those decisions was that they could attend and participate at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The report had appended the current constitution and the revised constitution to allow members to see where the changes had been made.

**The report recommended:**

That the Committee –

- (a) approve the amended Constitution for the Corporate Health and Safety Committee; and
- (b) note the content of the report.

The Clerk advised that there were two amendments to the revised constitution, those being: at 3.3 to change one of the job titles to Head of Human Resources and Customer Service; and the second at 6.4 (4) to change the entry to significant incidents.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to approve the amendments to the constitution as presented by the Clerk;
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**VEHICLE FIRE AT KITTYBREWSTER - UPDATE**

6. With reference to article 7 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2015, the Committee had before it a report by the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure which provided an update on the progress to date with implementing the actions as identified in previous reports.

The report advised that the following measures had been put in place: (1) a written procedure for hot works specifically for fleet services; (2) all employees involved in hot works had received the appropriate training; (3) all work had to be assessed before any hot works could commence; (4) where required a Hot Works Permit would be issued; (5) the work methods and equipment to be used must be agreed before the commencement of the works; (6) emergency measures must be checked and be in place, heat blankets and extinguishers, before hot works commenced; (7) all work had to be recorded including dates when the work was completed; and (8) an ongoing review and monitoring of the effectiveness of the procedures.

**The report recommended:**

That the Committee notes the actions taken and measures put in place in Fleet Services for Hot Works.

The Head of Public Infrastructure and Environment advised that a separate area on site had been identified for all hot works in order to prevent any accidents or incidents and that the guards to separate the area were on order.

**The Committee resolved:-**

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

**COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Director of Communities, Housing and Infrastructure which presented the annual health and safety report for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. The report also appended data for the former Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service for the period 1 January to 31 March 2014.

The report contained the following statistics:

- there were 125 accidents recorded, of which 27 were reportable (24 to employees and 3 to third parties)
- slips and trips was the most common reason
- of the non reportable accidents, 80 were for employees and 18 for third parties
- the majority of accidents both reportable and non reportable related to the Environmental Service
- there were 118 incidents reported with the highest being against threatening or menacing behaviour(3) and other (38)
- the scores for the individual elements of the health and safety matrix for the Service were: 100% for Emergency Precautions in Place, Housekeeping and

Cleaning, Environment, First Aid, Slips, trips and hazards, Machinery Plant and Equipment, Welfare and Accidents an Incidents Reporting and 94% for Risk Assessment

- 1315 employees attended health and safety training
- In relation to absence management, the former Housing and Environment Service were showing figures above the target of 10 days per employee throughout the period however had improvements between April and November
- In relation to absence management, the former Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service had figures of 8.7 days in April however increased throughout the period to a peak of 11.7 days lost in January 2015
- For the year 2014 (data for the full period April to March was not complete) the main factors behind absences were musculoskeletal 38% (front line) and 28% (office based), psychological 11% (front line) and 21% (office based), respiratory 11% for both front line and office based staff and gastrointestinal 10% (front line) and 15% (office based)

The report advised that the Service were in the process of developing a health and safety improvement plan which would incorporate annual targets and metrics to gauge progress against the targets.

Appendix 1 to the report contained the following statistics for the former Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Service for January to March 2014:

- 9 accidents were reported
- 4 incidents were reported
- The sickness absence for the period was 10.3 days lost per employee for January and February and 10.1 for March

**The report recommended:**

that the Committee note the content of the report.

The Directorate Support Manager advised that accidents and incidents are discussed at the service health and safety committee as well as Senior Management Team Meetings to monitor and identify improvements.

Councillor Finlayson sought information on whether there were particular service areas affected by threatening and menacing behaviour and verbal abuse, wherein the Directorate Support Manager advised that staff working in the front line were most affected and that training was provided to those staff.

Councillor Finlayson further sought clarification if the musculoskeletal absence figures related to work related or personal reasons, wherein the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the reports from Occupational Health show they are mainly personal and the Directorate Support Manager advised that the information they receive and record comes from the fit notes issued from GP's which wouldn't state whether work related or personal related.

The Chairperson enquired as to how staff were notified of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy, wherein the Directorate Support Manager advised that the information is available on the zone and hard copies were available for staff.

**The Committee resolved:-**

- (i) to note the additional information provided; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendation contained in the report

## **OFFICE OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Executive which presented the annual health and safety report for the period 1 January to 31 December 2014.

The report advised that (1) the Service comprised of 15 staff who were all office based; (2) new staff received health and safety briefings as part of their induction and have access to training if required; (3) there had been no accidents or incidents during the period; (4) health and safety matters are discussed at team meetings and management meetings when appropriate; and (5) a revised health and safety improvement plan would be prepared to reflect the change to the service and incoming members of staff.

### **The report recommended:**

that the Committee note the content of the report.

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

to approve the recommendation contained in the report.

## **CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT - JANUARY TO MARCH 2015**

9. With reference to article 10 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2015, the Committee had before it a report by the Acting Director of Corporate Governance which presented details of the number and types of accidents, incidents and occurrences during the period January to March 2015.

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

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

- 62 accidents to employees were reported of which 8 were reportable to the enforcing authority
- 112 accidents to third parties were reported of which none were reportable to the enforcing authority
- the accident (reportable) rate for the period was 0.91
- 99 incidents were reported during the period with the highest attributed to threatening or menacing behaviour (27) and then verbal abuse (26)
- there were 258.5 days lost for industrial injury and 126 days lost for mental wellbeing
- the corporate sickness absence rate was 9.6 working days lost per employee

### **Occupational Health and Wellbeing Events**

- the Occupational Health Contract has been mutually terminated as of 30 April 2015 and alternative arrangements were in place with NHS Grampian until a new provider has been appointed
- a list of health, safety and wellbeing events was appended to the report

### **Enforcement Interventions – Health and Safety Executive (HSE)**

- HSE contacted the health, safety and wellbeing team relating to concerns raised by a tenant over access to her property at Cairncry Court, men working overhead and the front door being blocked due to asbestos removal. The investigation found that all appropriate actions were being carried out safely and

by licensed contractors and that alternative access and egress was available and that all tenants had been advised in writing prior to the work commencing.

- HSE contacted the health, safety and wellbeing team in relation to unsuitable welfare facilities at Smithfield Court during refurbishment works. The investigation found that welfare facilities were available and legally compliant however further provisions were made available

### **Health and Safety Training and Cancellations**

- 543 employees attended health and safety training
- There were 30 late cancellations or no shows which resulted in a total of £3128 being back charged to Services
- There had been 177 feedback responses out of 317 received

### **Fire Risk Assessments and Health and Safety Audits**

- 47 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 has been approved and disseminated to staff via the health and safety coordinators and is available on the zone

### **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.

Councillor Finlayson sought clarification over the higher number of accidents to third parties, whereupon the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the figure included accidents to school pupils and that this would be reported separately in the future. She further advised that sports injuries had been recorded under the other category which would be checked for future reports.

The Chairperson sought clarification in relation to one of the reportable accidents and why filling the pothole was not part of the remedial actions, whereupon the Directorate Support Manager advised that he would discuss with colleagues and provide a response.

Sid Sandison raised the issue of health, safety and wellbeing information being available on the zone including events however the majority of teachers can't access the zone. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that he information should be disseminated to all staff via the health and safety coordinators in each service.

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

- (i) to note that a response in relation to why the pothole was not filled as part of the remedial action would be provided to the Committee; and
- (ii) to otherwise approve the recommendations contained in the report.

## **OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH REPORT - JANUARY TO MARCH 2015**

**10.** With reference to article 12 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2015, the Committee had before it a report prepared by Serco which outlined the activities of the Occupational Health Service for the period 1 January to 31 March 2015.

The report provided the following statistical information:

- 359 appointments had been delivered which included: 126 Medicals, 149 Referrals, 7 Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS) Assessments, 14 Audiometry Assessments and 63 Physiotherapy Sessions
- 67 new employee questionnaires were completed
- There were 7 cases of 'Did Not Attend' and 6 cancelled appointments
- 12 Hep B vaccinations were carried out
- The highest diagnosis categories from the referrals were psychological (42) of which 16 were work related and musculoskeletal (40) of which 6 were work related
- Of the 149 referrals, 49 were deemed fit for work, 49 were deemed fit for work with restrictions, 43 were deemed unfit to work and 8 were deemed temporarily unfit

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

to note the content of the report.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME REPORT - JANUARY TO MARCH 2015**

**11.** With reference to article 14 of the minute of its previous meeting of 20 February 2015, 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 January to 31 March 2015.

The report advised that there had been 29 referrals during the period, of which 20 related to personal issues and 9 related to work related issues. There had been 48 face to face counselling sessions and 18 telephone counselling sessions.

Councillor Finlayson sought clarification as to the split between male and female staff and whether this was a normal trend. Mike Middleton enquired as to whether the figures could be defined into part time and full time employees as this may have an effect on the figures.

The Team Leader for the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team advised that 70% of the Council's workforce were female which would account for the higher utilisation.

Sid Sandison requested that additional publicity material is circulated so that staff was aware of the Service. The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that there was a communication plan, wallet cards had been issued and the service were promoted at corporate induction sessions.

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

to note the content of the report.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**12.** The Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager advised that the Corporate Health and Safety Improvement Plan was currently out with the Services and would be presented to the Corporate Management Team and then to this Committee.

**The Committee resolved:-**  
to note the information.

## **ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS**

**13.** At this point in the proceedings, the Chairperson opened the meeting for any other competent business whereupon, Councillor Finlayson raised an issue with the security entry in Marischal College mainly relating to people getting stuck or the sliding panel closing on them. The Team Leader for Health, Safety and Wellbeing team advised that there was a 20 second delay in the doors closing and that if more than one person needed through then the reception staff could open the door at the far right.

**The Committee resolved:-**  
to note the information.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 28 AUGUST 2015**

**14.** The Committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Friday 28 August 2015.

- **COUNCILLOR GORDON GRAHAM, Chairperson**