

MEMBERS/TRADES UNIONS JOINT CONSULTATION AND SAFETY PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 22 February 2012, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30pm.

PRESENT:

Employers representatives: Councillors Barrott and Davies (Chairman).

Trades Unions' representatives: Mr Crump, Mr Foster and Mr Lynch.

Also present: Alan Richardson, Karen Warren and Amy Carnall.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Copping and Kirton, Mr Chapleo and Miss Gould.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

14. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2011 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

15. REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS BETWEEN JULY 2011 – END NOVEMBER 2011

The Panel considered a report from the Health and Safety Adviser which summarised accidents that had been reported between the start of July 2011 and the end of November 2011. These were accidents that had resulted in working time being lost.

The report also gave updates on further remedial actions taken with regards to an accident at Castle Farm Sports Centre in Kenilworth and the details of an accident at Warwick Response, Acorn Court.

The incident involving a staff member of Cultural Services at Castle Farm Recreation Centre occurred in July 2011 when a table tennis table fell towards the individual, landing on their foot resulting in a broken toe. The accident resulted in four working weeks lost and was report to the Health and Safety Executive as required by RIDDOR.

The report advised that the condition of all table tennis tables had been reviewed and any adjustments or repairs had been undertaken.

Other actions were also detailed including signs being attached to the tables recommending two person operation, competency training and check sheets had been introduced and a full audit and inventory of all the sports hall equipment was due to be completed.

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Alan Richardson introduced the report and advised that he had requested that Chris Charman from Cultural Services attend the meeting and update members on the issues stated above. However, he had been unable to attend. Mr Richardson, therefore, summarised the remedial actions that had been taken since the accident.

Mr Richardson then went on to explain the circumstances of the accident at Warwick Response, Acorn Court. This had involved a member of staff whose chair had collapsed whilst they were sitting on it and working at the computer. The employee fell backwards off their chair and suffered periods of absence from work due to shoulder and neck pain and dizziness. The accident resulted in 2 periods of absence from work.

Councillor Barrott raised concerns that the accident had not been reported immediately and had resulted in a delay of six weeks. Mr Richardson advised that this had been due to a combination of factors including staff leave. Councillor Barrott requested that the delay be investigated further by Mr Richardson as the lack of reporting was unacceptable. Mr Richardson agreed to look into this further and was disappointed that the manager involved had been unable to attend the meeting in person.

As a result of the accident, Service Area Managers were reminded of the importance of reporting accidents and a number of chairs at Acorn Court had been inspected and replaced. An intranet safety message was also posted reminding staff and managers of the necessity to regularly inspect office furniture.

Members required clarity on the issue of regular inspection checks and were advised that these were carried out as standard within each department. It was each Service Area's responsibility to complete the inspection but the reporting mechanism would alert the Senior Management Team if individuals were not completing the checks.

Having read the report, and heard from the officers present, the panel were satisfied with the content of the report.

RESOLVED that

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) further information be provided regarding the six week delay from the accident at Castle Farm occurring and it being reported.

16. LOCAL PAY AGREEMENT PROPOSAL

The Panel had been expecting to receive an update on the Local Pay Agreement proposal from the Chief Executive's office.

Tony Foster addressed the Panel on behalf of Unison and stated that the advice from the regional office was that the draft guidance had been sent.

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There was now a query as to whether the targets would be achievable and as a consequence, negotiations were ongoing.

The Panel were disappointed that neither the Chief Executive nor the Deputy Chief Executive were present to answer questions or to clarify the current situation.

Mr Foster advised that he had met with the Chief Executive a number of weeks ago and had discussed the possibility of a one off payment of 1% of salaries. Mr Foster reiterated the Trades Union's disappointment that there was not a representative present from the Corporate Management Team.

17. VOLUNTEER FOR PEOPLE STRATEGY STATEMENT GROUP

Following on from the last meeting, where the Human Resources Manager reported that the Council had a strategy which was updated annually, in consultation with the Unions, the People Strategy Statement 2011 had been presented to the Employment Committee and consequently adopted.

Karen Warren explained that she was looking for volunteers to sit on the People Strategy Statement Group. Their responsibilities would be to look at the action plan, question it and check what actions had arisen from it.

The Panel noted that the request for volunteers would be put to Group Leaders and information would be brought to the Panel for scrutiny and copied to Andy Crump.

18. WORKFORCE PLANNING DIAGNOSTIC PILOT

Members were informed at the previous meeting that Birmingham City Council had developed a diagnostic tool, had requested volunteers to run the pilot and Warwick District had consequently been accepted.

The Human Resources team had been involved in one meeting to date and had been training and working with Heads of Services to bring them up to speed with the pilot.

Following the Unions' interest in future involvement it had been hoped that a representative would have been able to attend the Panel to deliver a verbal update. However, the Human Resources Manager advised that Kieran Bodill would be in a position to deliver this information at the next Unison meeting.

(The meeting ended at 5.10pm)