

MEMBERS/TRADES UNIONS JOINT CONSULTATION AND SAFETY PANEL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 5 December 2012, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30pm.

PRESENT:

Employers representatives: Councillors Barrott, Copping and Davies (Chairman).

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

Also present: Peter Dixon (Civic and Committee Services Officer) and Alan Richardson (Health and Safety Advisor).

Apologies for absence were received from Rob Chapleo, Chris Elliott, Councillor Kirton and Karen Warren.

7. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

8. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2012 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

4. ACCIDENT REPORT (ACCIDENTS FROM START OF AUGUST 2012 – END OF OCTOBER 2012)

The Panel considered a report from the Health and Safety Adviser which summarised accidents that had been reported between the start of August 2012 and the end of October 2012. These were accidents that had resulted in working time being lost.

The Health and Safety Advisor informed the Panel that there had been only one incident within the specified period. Prior to going into further detail, he gave an update on actions taken following an incident which had been reported to the last meeting of the Panel and which had involved a chair which had collapsed at a Planning Committee meeting in July. The Committee Services Officer declared that he had been the person who had been involved in the incident. The Health and Safety Advisor reported that all the chairs of the type involved in the incident had been subjected to a structural test and had been removed from service because a number of them had been found to be unsound. Tests indicated inconsistency of supporting welds which gradually led to failure. The manufacturer had confirmed that in future chairs would be checked more closely for inconsistent welds.

The Health and Safety Advisor also reported that a safety inspection program for all individual Council chairs, carried out by a chair specialist, was nearing completion. Once the program had been completed, the

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Health and Safety Advisor would be supplied with full details of the inspection results, to include the date of each chair's inspection, the condition of each chair and whether repair or replacement was required.

The Panel felt that checking every Council chair was an onerous task for one person and agreed that, in future, each business unit should be responsible for inspecting its own chairs, with the assistance of a template detailing what to look for, and should then inform the Health and Safety Advisor of the results. The Health and Safety Advisor agreed to draw up a template in consultation with the chair specialist undertaking the current inspection program.

With regard to the one reported incident between 1 August and 31 October, the Health and Safety Advisor advised the Panel that the incident had occurred on 6 September and involved a staff member who stepped out of the way of a mobility scooter and whose right foot then came into contact with a small imperfection in the pavement between Jubilee House and Kenilworth Library. The officer heard a click under the arch of his foot and then experienced pain in that area and in his right hip. Immediately after the incident, the officer could not walk due to the pain he experienced and rested on a low wall nearby. He attempted to carry on working in Jubilee House that day but went home, applied ice and took anti-inflammatory and pain killing medication. He visited his GP the next day and had an x-ray, the results of which did not show any fractures. He returned to work on 13 September.

In a separate incident the same officer was walking through St Peters Car Park on 20 September when his foot clicked again and he experienced the same pain he had suffered following the first incident. He was then absent for five shifts, but had since returned to work with no further related absences.

The Health and Safety Adviser had met with the injured employee and visited the location of the incident. The imperfection in the pavement was found not to be one that would normally be identified as needing repair. The depth of the imperfection was approximately 1 centimetre deep and a few centimetres long. The officer confirmed that he had been wearing WDC issued footwear with good grip and ankle support, and that the weather had been dry. There were no witnesses to the incident apart from the rider of the mobility scooter who had not been identified.

The Health and Safety Adviser had advised Warwickshire County Council of the incident and of the current condition of the pavement, for their consideration. He responded to the Panel's questions in relation to the incident and confirmed that the officer had not suffered any further problems since returning to work.

Having read the report, the Panel was satisfied with the content of the report.

RESOLVED that

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- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) in future each business unit head be responsible for carrying out and reporting the results of regular safety inspections of all Council chairs, in accordance with guidelines to be provided by the Health and Safety Advisor.

(The meeting ended at 4.50 pm)