

The Highland Council
Central Safety Committee

Minutes of Meeting of the Central Safety Committee held in Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 4 November, 2016 at 12 noon.

Present:

Employer's Representatives:

Mr B Fernie
Mr A MacKinnon
Mrs M Smith
Mr F Parr

Staff Side Representatives:

Mr A Wemyss, UNITE
Mr D Griffiths, GMB
Mr M Murphy, UCATT

In attendance:

Mr S Walsh, Head of People and Transformation, Corporate Development Service
Ms G Falconer, Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager, Corporate Development Service
Mr S Duncan, Property Risk Management Officer, Development & Infrastructure Service
Ms D Grant, Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross Health & Safety Working Group (by telephone conference)
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Corporate Development Service

Mr A MacKinnon in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Dr D Alston of the Employer's Side, Mr M Hayes of the Staff Side and Mr W Munro, Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey Operational Area Health and Safety Working Group.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

There had been circulated Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 12 August, 2016, the terms of which were **APPROVED**.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. Minutes of Area Health and Safety Groups

There had been circulated, for information, the Minutes of the:-

- i. Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Joint Health and Safety Working Group held on 5 October, 2016;
- ii. Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross Health and Safety Working Group held on 1 September, 2016; and
- iii. Ross, Skye and Lochaber Health and Safety Group held on 1 September, 2016.

The Committee **NOTED** the Minutes.

6. Development and Infrastructure Service Annual Health and Safety Report

There was circulated Report No. CSC/14/16 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which outlined the Development and Infrastructure Service's performance in relation to Health and Safety during 2015/16.

The report covered the following areas:- Service Health and Safety Consultation; Risk Identification and Management; Accidents and Incidents; Health and Safety training; Policy and Guidance; Health and Safety Achievements and a Health and Safety Action Plan.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

7. Update on Inverness Royal Academy Gas Installation

There was circulated Report No. CSC/15/16 by the Director of Development and Infrastructure which provided an overview on the status of progress to address non-compliance found in the gas installation at the new Inverness Royal Academy.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- It was queried if the gas installation contractor for Inverness Royal Academy had been involved in any other gas related works on Highland Council properties. It was confirmed that the contractor had been involved in the early stages of the Wick Campus project, but then were replaced by another contractor. It was advised that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) were undertaking their own review of the Wick Campus project. It was confirmed that Officials were checking to see what other Council projects this contractor had been involved in.
- It was queried if other gas contractors working on Council properties had been informed of the problems relating to the gas installation works at Inverness Royal Academy, to ensure that they were not using similar wrong methods of gas installation. It was advised that given the legal position, this issue had not been made widely known to other contractors. However, both HSE and GasSafe, the industry regulating body were carrying out their own investigations. The Council had strengthened its own resource of competency on gas installation works to be able to challenge contractors on works done.
- In terms of ensuring that contractors that worked on Council gas works were competent, it was advised that GasSafe, was the industry regulating body, and

was responsible for ensuring the competency, skills, knowledge and experience of contractors and engineers. The Council did check that contractors and engineers had the required competency to carry out works on its properties prior to appointment, but in the case of Inverness Royal Academy, hub North Scotland Limited were the client and were responsible for appointing the gas installation contractor.

- In terms of the HSE Improvement Notice, Hub North had been required to supply the Council with a plan of gas remedial works by 31 October, 2016 and it was confirmed that an overall plan had been received, but this had been challenged by the Council. HSE were also not content with the plan received and it was understood that Hub North would be allowed an extension to the deadline to resubmit a revised plan for remedial works.
- It was noted that portable Bunsen burners had been purchased to ensure that science teams could deliver the range of experiments that pupils were required to undertake. It was confirmed that there were separate storage areas for the Bunsen burners gas canisters. Further information on the number of canisters and storage facilities for them would be supplied to the Committee.
- It was noted that hub North Scotland Limited had also delivered Noss Primary School, Wick and it was advised that this had been subject to flooding due to a burst water pipe and thankfully no one had been injured as a result. This had been investigated by the Council. In addition, there were inconsistencies in the certification of the electrical work in Inverness Royal Academy and therefore the commissioning process for contractors was being examined in greater detail.

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the status of progress to address non-compliance found in the gas installation at the new Inverness Royal Academy.

8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team: Update on Current Health, Safety and Wellbeing Issues

There was circulated Report No. CSC/16/16 by the Head of People and Transformation which provided an update on current health and safety issues and developments in relation to Health and Safety Executive issues; Health and Safety management system updates and other relevant issues.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- a copy of the Scottish Health and Safety Communities in Scotland would be sent to Committee members;
- in relation to the Insurance Motor Fleet Policy, it was queried how often drivers of fleet vehicles must complete an Insurance Declaration Form relating to past and pending driving offences. It was advised that they required to complete the form annually, but the frequency for completion may change due to the Glasgow Bin Lorry incident. Grey Fleet Drivers also had to complete the form annually. Currently it was up to the Line Manager to check that the form was completed, but it was currently being investigated whether this work could be contracted to an external organisation or have this information recorded through ResourceLink.
- In relation to an issue concerning hired cars and lone working, if an employee was reported missing, the Police would require to know the colour, make and

registration of the vehicle that the employee was driving. This information was not always available to colleagues if an employee was hiring a car. It was advised that risk assessments should be updated and instructions to staff that when they hire a car, they inform a colleague of the details of the hire car they have received. This message would be reinforced when the new Management of Occupational Road Risk Policy was publicised on the Corporate communication for staff "In Brief".

Thereafter, the Committee **NOTED** the updated information on health, safety and wellbeing issues and developments contained in the report.

9. Occupational Health Report

There was circulated Report No. CSC/17/16 by the Head of People & Transformation which provided an overview of the work undertaken by RS Occupational Health for the period July to September, 2016.

A total of 151 management referrals were seen by RSOH in this period. This was a decrease in the number of referrals from the previous quarter. The main issues that staff were presenting with were anxiety, depression, stress, etc; or musculoskeletal problems. These were also the main issues for referral in the previous periods.

It was reported that RSOH were bought by Iqarus Intelligent Health Solutions on 1 October, 2016. There had been some issues on service delivery which were addressed at a contract meeting on 11 October, 2016. The service would continue to be monitored. It was queried if this would have any impact on employee self referrals to occupational health and it was advised that there should be no impact.

For this period there had been 21 employees who did not attend (DNA) occupational health appointments, a reduction on previous quarters. It was advised that employees would in future be sent a text message to remind them about occupational health appointments and it was hoped that this would reduce the number of DNAs.

It had been emphasised to Trade Union Safety Representatives that when they undertook workplace inspections they were not just concentrating on premises defects but should also look at employees working environment to identify any stress factors.

The Committee **NOTED** the information contained in the report.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 p.m.