

Draft Minutes of the Joint Safety Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 8 August 2007 at the Council Offices, Monkton Park, Chippenham

Councillors Present: D.B. Allen and I.J. Henderson

Officers Present: S. Bowcock (Operations Manager), M. Doran (Environmental Health Team Leader), S. Drewett (Health and Safety Officer), M. Todd (Senior Policy and Democratic Services Officer) and C. Togher (Human Resources Advisor).

Staff: B. Summerhayes (UNISON)

HS1. Election of Chairman

Resolved that Councillor D. Allen be elected as Chairman.

HS2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Hartless, N. Daniels (Building Control Team Leader) and P. Taylor (UNISON).

HS3. Minutes

Consideration was given to the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Safety Committee held on 7 March 2007.

Resolved that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Safety Committee held on 7 March 2007 be approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Minute No. HS21 – in the first line of the second paragraph insert “Jarvis” before the word “staff”.

HS4. Chairman’s Announcements

There were no Chairman’s announcements.

HS5. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

HS6. Analysis of Accident Statistics and Related Matters

Consideration was given to Report No. 6 (circulated with the Agenda) advising the Committee on the annual accident statistics for the period 1 January 2007 to 31 July 2007.

The following issues were discussed:

- There had been a 36% decrease in reported accidents during this period.
- There had been a 90% decrease in reported accidents related to lifting, turning and handling. This was due to an extensive training programme provided by



specialists in the waste industry. Both the refuse collection and street cleansing teams had received the training.

- If any further accidents occurred the trainers would investigate these and provide further training if necessary.
- It was confirmed that the Customer Caution Register would be implemented by the end of August.
- There was some concern about incidents in the reception area of Monkton Park and Members stressed the need for security officers to retain a visible presence. Officers also agreed to investigate whether panic buttons could be provided for all reception desks and not just those dealing with cash.

Resolved:

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That staff at the Depot be congratulated on the excellent improvement in Health and Safety.

HS7. Update on Cleansing and Amenities – Health and Safety Working Group

Mr S. Bowcock reported on the following matters:

- There had been an increase in reports of staff encountering drug paraphernalia in the course of their duties. One sweeper driver had recently been struck by a needle which had required hospital attendance. A new tool had now been designed and manufactured which meant that this type of incident should not happen again and all staff had now been trained in drug awareness. A report had been sent to the HSE.
- One of the work gangs had recently been trained on the collection of asbestos.
- Staff had also received training in the operation of machinery.
- As required by statute, fire evaluation and assessments had taken place at the Depot.
- Members noted that the cleansing and amenities team had also assisted with preparation for the recent flooding in the District. This had been successful and no complaints had been received.
- Members were pleased to see the good progress being made at the Depot and welcomed the recent training programmes which had greatly reduced the amount of accidents and sickness absence.

HS8. Update on Smoke Free vehicles

Mr S Drewett gave the following update on smoke free vehicles:

- The legislation stated that a vehicle used for paid or voluntary work by more than one person must be smoke-free. However, the regulations also stated that a vehicle was exempt from these regulations if it was used for work but was primarily used for private purposes by a person who owned it or had a right to use it which was not restricted to a particular journey.

- If an essential/casual user owned their vehicle then it was not required to be smoke-free. Similarly if the vehicle was a leased vehicle and private mileage exceeded business mileage, that vehicle would be deemed to be used primarily for private purposes and was not required to be smoke-free, providing the vehicle was used primarily by one person (the lessee). All vehicles were required to be smoke-free when carrying passengers on Council business only. There was no requirement to place “no smoking” signs in these vehicles.
- Pool vehicles and Council owned vehicles were required to be smoke-free. This included Parking Attendants’ vehicles, Animal Control Officers’ vehicles, Refuse vehicles and all other vehicles owned by the Council. These vehicles must display “no smoking” signs.
- Members noted that this policy could be reviewed if necessary.

HS9. Delivery Vehicles

Concern was expressed about the safety implications of delivery vehicles blocking the pathway at Monkton Park. This also meant that the view of both pedestrians and drivers was blocked. These vehicles should go to the rear of the building to make their deliveries and staff should make this clear when placing deliveries. It was noted that these vehicles could receive a parking fine if they were caught parking in this way.

Resolved that a letter be sent to Jarvis asking them to enforce the parking restrictions on delivery vehicles. They should also be asked to undertake a risk assessment and to send this to Mr S. Drewett as a matter of urgency.

HS10. Council Parking Attendants

Mr S. Drewett reported that he and Mr C. Major (Senior Parking Officer) had met with the Police to discuss the apparent lack of Police support for Council Parking Attendants when reporting verbal and physical assaults which had occurred while undertaking their lawful duties.

The meeting had been very positive. A liaison officer had been allocated to NWDC and all future incidences would be investigated. The advice that had been given was that if a parking attendant was subjected to verbal or physical abuse and they feared for their safety then they should dial 999. This would ensure an immediate response. In addition, any complaints made must be under Section 5 of the Public Order Act. This will then be logged as a crime and not as an incident. The Council could make a complaint on behalf of an individual staff member with their consent and feedback would be given to both parties.

All the reported incidents had now been investigated, some offenders had been visited by police officers and one arrest warrant had been issued.

A meeting had already taken place between the liaison officer and certain Council staff. The liaison officer had also attended a monthly team meeting of the Parking Attendants and regular meetings would be held between the Police and the Council. All incidents would now be reported directly to the liaison officer.

Members were pleased to hear that the Parking Attendants were positive about the action that had taken place. The Committee asked to be kept informed as to whether staff retention had improved as a result.

HS11. Monkton Park Office Environment

It was agreed that officers should find out whether Jarvis staff had now received further training regarding temperature control within the Monkton Park offices. Members asked for feedback on this matter to the next meeting.

The meeting commenced at 3.00 pm and finished at 3.50pm.