

JOINT CENTRAL HEALTH & SAFETY FORUM

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 3 July 2002

Present:	Richard Woodroffe (RW)	Chair
	Steve Perry (SP)	ESD
	Ian Duckett (ID)	ELD/NAYCEO
	Sue Bond (SB)	UNISON
	Janet Dapson (JD)	UNISON
	Michelle Slade (MS)	UNISON
	Paul Collyer (PC)	Health & Safety Manager
	Judy Neville (JN)	Insurance and Risk Manager
	Win Huggett (WH)	Occupational Health
	Kevin Oliver (KO)	Safety Advisor
	Richard Walder (RSW)	Safety Advisor
	Sue Evans (SE)	Minutes Secretary

1. **Apologies and introductions**

Apologies were received from Delphine Burgess (UNISON), Tricia Glover (SS) and Keith Sheppard (ELD).

RW (Chair) opened the meeting with a brief history and background of this new forum. He added that the Council had a fresh impetus to health and safety and fully endorsed the importance of proper consultation between management and staff representatives. He hoped that everyone would feel able to participate and contribute to the system.

2. **Constitution**

The proposed Constitution was unanimously adopted and it was agreed to post the Minutes on the intranet as well as report them through to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and regulatory committee.

3. **Current levels of health and safety standards**

PC explained that the extensive internal health and safety audit carried out earlier this year had set out to assess the Council's management performance and assess its ability to meet national targets set out by the Government.

A departmental report has been provided to each Chief Officer and a summary report had been presented to a recent Corporate Management Team meeting.

PC highlighted the main issues from the CMT report and explained the action plan that he had proposed to address them.

From this action plan it had already been decided at CMT that both the Chief Executive and the Director of Corporate Services would be “Champions” for health and safety at director level and to members. The Chief Executive had also agreed to approach the Leader of the Council to be a “Champion” for elected members. These roles would help promote the health and safety message and provide renewed impetus in further transforming the culture within the Council.

Another part of the action plan refers to setting up a process which would enable each Chief Officer to produce an annual departmental report of performance against set indicators.

To be able to do this and to support CMT generally, the action plan also calls for renewed effort to enhance the information collected by the Council in respect of accidents and staff absence due to work-related ill-health.

MS and JD expressed their specific concerns about employee well-being issues and MS endorsed the point about the importance of having sound statistical data about staff absence due to work-related ill-health.

PC emphasised that he wanted the Forum to influence the development of the action plan and that Agenda Item 4 was specifically for this purpose.

4. **Open discussion**

Forum members were invited to share their views on what health and safety issues the Council should be prioritising in its action plan.

JD said that violent and aggressive incidents (particularly Social Services staff and Teaching Assistants) were far too common. She thought that there is a vast gap between training and policy which needs to be addressed.

SP highlighted the potential risks associated with partnership working. In particular the tension of dual responsibilities, clear communication and shared workplaces had to be addressed.

Members were invited to consider more fully the range of issues to be addressed and to report their views to PC.

5. **Incident Reporting system**

PC reported that upto 95% of the corporate incident and investigation report forms that are submitted are incorrectly completed. Apart from gaps in the information provided, many investigations are undertaken by the ‘victim’ rather than by a line manager. This meant that contributory factors and remedial measures were not always identified as thoroughly as they should be. Anecdotal evidence suggested that many incidents are not reported at all.

The Forum was asked to explore why this was the case and what could be done to address it.

There was general agreement that the reporting system was a problem.

The following points were made:

- JN thought that the format is too complicated and needs to be simplified to maybe just one side of A4.
- MS suggested reminding all staff of the incident reporting system.
- SP suggested introducing a simple system to allow 'victims' to record an incident and which would then trigger a fuller investigation to be married up.
- RW suggested monitoring entries in Accident Books against incident forms received.
- There was general debate about the possibility of electronic means of reporting.

PC will explore possibilities.

6. **Departmental/Union reports**

SP distributed details of the asbestos management system for the information of all members and to ensure that all recognised trade union ha the benefit of the information.

7. **Any other business**

None.

8. **Dates of next meetings**

13 January 2003	09.30am	Willow Room, CDC
07 July 2003	09.30am	Willow Room, CDC