

**SAFETY ADVISORY GROUP
(Report of the Advisory Group)**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Advisory Group met on 14th June 2006 and Councillors J W Davies, A Hansard and K Reynolds were present.
- 1.2 Also in attendance were P Corley, J Craig, P Duerden, Mrs C Rowland and.
- 1.3 The Staff Side representatives in attendance were K Lawson, Mrs G Smith and C Sneesby.
- 1.4 Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor L M Simpson and Mrs T Davidson.

2 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

- 2.1 Councillor K Reynolds was elected Chairman of the Group.
- 2.2 The report of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 1st March 2006 was received and noted.

3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

- 4.1 K Lawson was elected Vice-Chairman of the Group.

5. ACCIDENT REPORTS

District Council Employees

- 5.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Personnel Services giving details of 22 accidents and one incident involving employees along with 4 accidents involving non-employees, which had taken place since the previous meeting.
- 5.2 The Group were shown a photograph of the location of the incident No. 1933, where an employee had slipped into a ditch whilst inspecting a grill. The Operations Division representative and the Health and Safety Adviser clarified the policy and procedures for employees undertaking activities of this sort.
- 5.3 The Chairman expressed concern that one of the two physical assaults on employees noted in the report, had resulted in only a caution when the offence appeared fairly serious. The Operations

Division representative confirmed that this issue had been taken up by the Head of Operations who was of the same opinion. The Chairman asked to be kept informed about this matter.

- 5.4 Members were advised that even though both of the physical assault accidents involved employees from the Operations Division, the nature of the work undertaken within the Division unfortunately exposed employees to these sorts of risks; the procedure for response and support to this type of incident was considered appropriate and a pattern with regard to the causes or frequency of physical assault accidents had not been identified.
- 5.5 The Health and Safety Adviser explained the District Council policy and procedure for reporting of verbal abuse.
- 5.6 The Group expressed concern regarding the two incidences of bins falling when attached to the refuse vehicle. The Health and Safety Adviser agreed that a recommendation to the risk assessment and safe working practices for this activity had been made previously by her, to require workers to either take a step back from the bin once it has been attached, or to stand to the side of the vehicle. Subject to agreement with Operations Division, the need for this precautionary action would be emphasised in future “tool box talks” and training activities.
- 5.7 With regard to concerns raised by the Chairman, the Group suggested that those accidents arising in the Operations Division should include a more thorough narrative in the “action taken” column, which in addition to highlighting the need for employees to take care of their own health and safety should include the circumstances of the accident and any preventative measures already in place. The Health and Safety Adviser suggested that once a worker has experienced an accident or incident where a reminder of their own health and safety responsibilities was the outcome, they would be required to attend a “tool box talk” to reinforce this.

Leisure Centre Employees

- 5.8 The Group also received a report by the Leisure Centres’ Health and Safety Co-ordinator containing details of accidents which had been reported at the leisure centres since the last meeting of the Group.

6. FIRE DRILL – 17TH MARCH 2006

- 6.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Personnel Services giving details of the twice yearly fire drills held in Pathfinder House and Castle Hill House on the 17th March 2006.
- 6.2 The Health and Safety Adviser discussed some of the issues raised as a result of the drill and assured Members that these have been investigated and acted upon.
- 6.3 The Health and Safety Adviser confirmed that any contractors working for the District Council would be required to comply with the

Council's fire protection and prevention procedures as part of their contract.

7. REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER

- 7.1 The Group received a report regarding the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order submitted by the Head of Personnel Services.
- 7.2 The Health and Safety Adviser explained that this Order represents a considerable change to current practice and will require the identification of one "Responsible Person" from the District Council supported by the Health and Safety Adviser in an overseeing or auditing role and a list of identified "Competent Persons" to support the "Responsible Person".
- 7.3 The Chairman questioned the selection of the identified "Competent Persons". In response the Health and Safety Adviser informed the Group that only one individual from the "Competent Persons" required additional suitable Health and Safety training in order to be able to perform this function and the Health and Safety Adviser would be tasked with identifying and monitoring the training needs of "Competent Persons" to ensure these were supported.
- 7.4 The Group were content to endorse the recommendations made in the report submitted.

8. HEALTH & SAFETY TRAINING REVIEW

- 8.1 The Group were acquainted by means of a report by the Head of Personnel Services outlining health and safety training courses which had been held since the previous meeting of the Group.
- 8.2 The Health and Safety Adviser confirmed that the training required for the identified "Competent Person" discussed under the Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order (above) would be added to this list. The Group were pleased to note this report on this understanding.

9. SAFETY INSPECTIONS

- 9.1 Arrangements for future inspections of the Council's premises have been agreed and arranged as follows –
- ◆ ad-hoc safety inspection 4th July 2006 – 9.15am – 12 noon;
 - ◆ annual safety inspection – 23rd November 2006 – 9.15am onwards.
- 9.2 In response to a question from the Chairman, the Health and Safety Adviser explained the benefits to the District Council of the safety inspections and other members noted the positive impact these inspections have on their own understanding of the District Council and their Health and Safety awareness.
- 9.2 The Chairman requested future dates for ad-hoc safety inspections be proposed at the next meeting.

K Reynolds
Chairman of the Advisory Group