

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

**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Advisory Group met on 3rd March 2004 and Councillors A Hansard and L M Simpson were present.
- 1.2 The Staff Side representatives in attendance were C Sneesby, A Chabot and C Douglas.
- 1.3 In the absence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Group, Councillor L M Simpson was elected Chairman for the duration of the meeting.
- 1.4 Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillor J W Davies.
- 1.5 The report of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 26th November 2003 was received and noted.

**2. INSURANCE CLAIM**

- 2.1 By way of a report by the Head of Financial Services, the Group were updated with an insurance claim against the District Council which had been settled since their previous meeting.
- 2.2 Having discussed the circumstances, the Group agreed that an annual summary of such claims in a similar format to the existing annual accident and incident report should be submitted to the Group.
- 2.3 It was hoped that such a report would help identify patterns and trends in claims that the Group would be able to address in the future.

**3. VIOLENCE AT WORK**

- 3.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Personnel Services outlining 15 incidences of 'Violence at Work' at the District Council in the previous year.
- 3.2 The Health and Safety Adviser acquainted the Group with the ongoing problem of a number of employees tolerating a certain level of verbal abuse whilst carrying out the duties of their job. These instances were traditionally accepted by the employee and therefore not reported through the correct channels.
- 3.3 A survey of verbal abuse had been carried out in May 2002, but this had achieved a disappointing return.
- 3.4 As the District Council has a duty to support their employees by way of monitoring violence at work, the Group noted that an electronic

reporting system had been piloted in the Council Tax and Benefits Sections during January and February 2004. It was hoped that the pilot would help to establish the levels of verbal abuse in those areas.

- 3.5 To conclude their discussions the Panel agreed that the report be noted and that the possibility of recording all telephone calls for a period of time for training purposes be investigated.
- 3.6 On a related subject, the Group received an update on a report being considered by Officers on the need for legal support for District Council employees who were assaulted by members of the public whilst carrying out their duties.
- 3.7 The Health and Safety Adviser also reported that a violent accident register would soon be in existence and available to employees of the Council to access in the respect of their job role only.

#### **4. AD-HOC SAFETY INSPECTION**

- 4.1 Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Administration regarding the observations and comments made by the Group during the ad-hoc safety inspection held on 11th December 2003.
- 4.2 The Health and Safety Adviser reported that as a result of the recommendations made during the inspection, torches had been purchased for the members of the Conservation Team and that the new lone worker system, 'Solo', would be trialled by the Team on its release.
- 4.3 Having understood that the members of the Conservation Team currently do not use the lone worker policy to its full extent, the Group expressed concern and requested that the existing procedure be introduced in that Section to support the safety of those employees immediately.

#### **5. DATE FOR FUTURE HEALTH AND SAFETY INSPECTION OF COUNCIL PREMISES**

- 5.1 The Group agreed the provisional dates of 21st or 28th April 2004 for the next ad-hoc safety inspection.

#### **6. ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORTS**

District Council Employees

- 6.1 The Group received and noted a report by the Head of Personnel Services detailing 33 accidents which had taken place since the last meeting of the Group.
- 6.2 Further to accident no. 1718 and the Group's previous comments, the Head of Operations reported that he had actively pursued press coverage for a number of accidents caused as a direct result of glass being placed in refuse sacks. He had however been advised that the story would have more impact if placed alongside the wheeled bin roll-out press coverage later in the year.

Leisure Centre Employees

6.3 The Group received a report by the Head of Community Services detailing accidents, which had been reported at the Leisure Centres since the last meeting of the Group.

6.4 In relation to accident No. 5617, Members expressed concern and requested that guidance should be issued to employees on how to assist customers trying to access their cars in an emergency.

## **7. TRAINING**

7.1 The Group were acquainted with a report by the Head of Personnel Services outlining training courses which had been held since their last meeting.

7.2 The Health and Safety Adviser reported that as of March 2004 the arrangements for asbestos training at District Council premises was required to be managed in-house.

7.3 The Group were acquainted with the manual handling training programme and a small number of repeat attendees following repetitive accidents. It was hoped that as a number of these accidents had taken place whilst employees collected refuse, the wheeled bin roll-out would minimise such accidents.

Councillor L M Simpson