

**The Highland Council
Joint Consultation Group's Central Safety Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Consultation Group's Central Safety Committee held in Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday, 6 March, 2009 at 12.25 p.m.

Present

Employer's Representatives:

Mrs C A Wilson

Mr M Rattray

Mrs J Urquhart (substitute)

Mr J Ford

Mr A Henderson

Staff Side Representatives:

Mr G Reynolds (GMB)

Mr T McCarthy, UNITE

Mr S Burroughs, UNISON

Mr G MacDonald, UCATT

Officials in attendance:

Ms M Morris, Assistant Chief Executive

Mr A Williams, Health and Safety Manager, Chief Executive's Service

Mr B Cameron, Corporate Manager (Ross, Skye and Lochaber), Chief Executive's Service

Mr M Halley, Fire Safety Management Officer, Housing and Property Service

Dr N Lindsay, Representative of Sutherland & Easter Ross Area Health & Safety Working Group

Mr J Sneddon, Representative of Lochaber Health and Safety Working Group

Mr N Wallace, Service Health & Safety Manager, Transport, Environmental & Community Services

Mr C Stein, GMB (observer)

Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

Mr G Reynolds in the Chair

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr J Finnie from the Employer's Side, Mr A Wemyss from the Staff Side and Mr I Burnett from the City of Inverness Health and Safety Group.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

There had been circulated for confirmation the Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 12 December, 2008 - the terms of which were **AGREED.**

Arising from the minutes the following matters were raised:-

Health and Safety Review – it was **NOTED** that it was now intended to submit a report on the Health and Safety Review to Resources Committee on 15 April, 2009.

Drummuie Council Offices – Draught Proofing of Windows – it was **NOTED** that a draught proofing contractor had now been appointed and was due to commence work on 10 March, 2009.

Fort William Service Point, Lochaber House – it was **NOTED** that plans had been finalised for works to the Fort William Service Point located in Lochaber House and tenders for the work had been invited. All staff affected had been consulted on the works to be undertaken, and it was anticipated that the works would commence in early course.

3. Minutes of Area Health and Safety Groups

There had been circulated for information the following Minutes of Area Health and Safety Groups:-

- i Lochaber Health and Safety Working Group – 26 November, 2008,
- ii Nairn & Badenoch & Strathspey Joint Health & Safety Working Group – 29 January, 2009;
- iii City of Inverness Health and Safety Working Group - 14 January, 2009;
- iv Eilean A' Cheo Ward Health and Safety Meeting – 18 November, 2008;
- v Sutherland & Easter Ross Area Health and Safety Consultation Group – 12 February, 2009;
- vi Ross and Cromarty Working Group – 3 December, 2008 and 11 February, 2009; and
- vii Caithness Health and Safety Working Group - 27 January, 2009.

The Committee **NOTED** the terms of the minutes.

Arising from the minutes the following matters were raised:

- i Lochaber Health & Safety Working Group – “Hired Cars” – it was **NOTED** that the Corporate Procurement Unit was currently negotiating a contract for car hire with car hire contractors outwith the Moray Firth Area.
- ii Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey Joint Health and Safety Working Group – 29 January, 2009 – Barron House, Nairn – it was **NOTED** that the proposal to lock the front door to Barron House, Nairn and allowing staff access via the back door only, had not been discussed with the Fire Safety Management Officer. The Fire Safety Management Officer undertook to contact the appropriate

person regarding this matter.

- iii City of Inverness Health & Safety Working Group – 14 January, 2009 – Lone Working/Town House Reception – it was **NOTED** that a risk assessment on Lone Working at the Town House Reception, Inverness had been carried out by the Health and Safety team.
- iv Sutherland & Easter Ross Area Health & Safety Consultation Group – 12 February, 2009 – It was **AGREED** that a presentation on the new Intranet HAPS website 'Health, Safety and Property Management: A Guide for Managers' should be given to the Committee at the next meeting.
- v Ross and Cromarty Health & Safety Working Group – 3 December, 2008 – 'Driving Risk' – it was advised that staff had been encouraged to raise with the Road Risk Policy Working Group any issues relating to reducing work related road risk.

It was **NOTED** that one particular issue being referred to the Working Group related to hire cars being delivered direct to home addresses either last thing at night or very early in the morning when there was no opportunity to check for damage.

4. **Update on Current Health and Safety Issues**

There had been circulated Report No. CSC/1/09 dated 23 February, 2009 by the Assistant Chief Executive providing an update on several current health and safety issues and developments.

During a summary of the report information was provided on:-

- i Policy – a copy of a draft version of the proposed policy on Reducing Work Related Driving Risk together with a draft driver's handbook for fleet vehicles had been posted on the Health and Safety Intranet site. Consultation on the draft proposals had been extended until the next meeting of the Working Group (set up to develop the policy) on 11 March, 2009.

It was noted that guidance on Moving and Handling people had now been posted on the Health and Safety website. Also, the Council's accident report form and the guidance relating to accident reporting was currently being revised.

- ii Moving and Handling – it was advised that the post of Moving and Handling Co-ordinator had been filled on a six month secondment from 16 February, 2009. The post would be re-advertised in June, 2009.

- iii Violent Incident Database – the proposed introduction of this system would ensure that Services share information on such incidents. This would allow front line staff access to information which would assist in work planning and ensure that appropriate risk control measures were in place before visits or meetings etc.

It had now been agreed that this system should be procured via the established Digital Highland Programme Board route. IS Client and Fujitsu were currently determining options for system design and the preferred option would be presented to the Digital Highland Programme Board for approval. A further update on progress with the Violent Incident Database system would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

- iv Health and Safety Training – in particular it was advised that fire extinguisher training was due to commence with a pilot course on 20 March, 2009. Following evaluation of the pilot course, it was proposed to roll out the training to all Services.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i **NOTED** the updated information on health and safety issues and developments contained in the report; and
- ii **NOTED** that an update on progress with the Violent Incident Database system would be submitted to the next meeting.

5. **The Highland Council – Annual Health and Safety Report 2007-2008**

There had been circulated Report No. CSC/2/09 by the Assistant Chief Executive which outlined the Highland Council's Health and Safety performance for the period 1 April, 2007 to 31 March, 2008 and included statistical information relating to accidents and incidents reported to the Council's Health and Safety team during that period.

It was advised that there had been a significant reduction in employee accidents compared with previous year's statistics. In this respect, these improved statistics reflected the important role played by Trade Union Safety Representatives in health and safety in the organisation, and the Council's investment in training these representatives was well justified.

It was suggested that enforcement action taken by the Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service should be reflected in future reports.

Following consideration, the Committee:

- i **NOTED** the contents of the Annual Health and Safety Report and details of accident statistics for the period 1 April, 2007 to 31 March, 2008; and
- ii **AGREED** that any enforcement action taken by the Highlands and Islands Fire and Rescue Service should be recorded in future

Annual Health and Safety reports.

6. Transport, Environmental and Community Services Operational Health & Safety Initiatives

There had been circulated Report No. CSC/3/09 dated 13 February, 2009 by the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services which provided information on current and ongoing operational health and safety initiatives within Transport, Environmental and Community Services (TECS).

It was advised that TECS Health and Safety Policy included the commitment to take part in new initiatives to reduce the likelihood of accidents, work related ill health and other avoidable losses and to improve health and safety performance. These actions were based on consideration of a Risk Profile based on a wide range of high risk activities compounded by environmental factors including extremes of weather.

The report detailed key Health and Safety Executive themes which were an integral part of TECS Health and Safety Policy and also provided information about the Highlands and Islands Construction Safety Forum.

The Committee **NOTED** the current and ongoing operational health and safety initiatives within TEC Services.

The meeting ended at 1.00 p.m.