

**The Highland Council  
Central Safety Committee**

Minutes of Meeting of the Central Safety Committee held in Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Friday 7 February, 2014 at 12.15 p.m.

**Present**

**Employer's Representatives:**

Dr D Alston  
Mr H Morrison

Mr D Mackay

**Staff Side Representatives:**

Mr M Hayes, UNISON  
Mr A Wemyss, UNITE  
Mr A Cameron, GMB (substitute) (by video conference)

Mr C Cameron, UCATT  
Mr J Rosie, UNITE (observer) (by video conference)

**Officials in attendance:**

Mr J Batchelor, Head of Human Resources, Chief Executive's Service  
Ms G Falconer, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager, Chief Executive's Service  
Mr R Whyte, Regional Officer, UNITE  
Mr C Kemp, Area Roads & Community Works Manager, TEC Services  
Ms D Grant (by video conference), Caithness, Sutherland & Easter Ross Health & Safety Working Group.  
Mr W Munro, Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey Joint Health and Safety Working Group  
Mr A MacInnes, Administrative Assistant, Chief Executive's Service

**Mr A Wemyss in the Chair**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Mr D Fallows (other Council business) and Mr F Parr of the Employer's Side, Ms E Caithness, RCN and Mr D Griffiths, GMB of the Staff Side.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. Minutes of Last Meeting

There had been circulated for confirmation, Minutes of the last meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 12 December, 2013 the terms of which were **APPROVED**.

### 4. Minutes of Area Health and Safety Groups

There had been circulated for information, Minutes of Meeting of the Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch & Strathspey Joint Health and Safety Working Group held on 4 February, 2014.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** the minutes as circulated.

Arising from the minutes the following matter was raised:

Defibrillator – reference was made to the prospect of installing a defibrillator within the Town House. The Council was working on this as a corporate issue with the Scottish Ambulance Service who will recommend to the Council where defibrillators should be located.

### 5. Carr's Corner Depot Fort William

There was circulated Report No. CSC/1/14 by the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services which provided an update on the prioritisation of health and safety expenditure on Transport, Environmental & Community Services depots, making specific reference to the availability of funding for measures to improve the condition of the surface of the depot yard at Carr's Corner, Fort William.

It was advised that at the last meeting of the Sub-Committee it was agreed that the Director of Transport, Environmental and Community Services liaise with the Director of Finance in order to identify funding to enable the planned improvements to the Carr's Corner depot to be completed as a matter of urgency. It was reported that following these discussions no further funding had been identified. This has meant that it had not been possible to accelerate the programme of depot improvement works. The cost estimate for Carr's Corner and the prioritisation of the programme have therefore had to be re-visited. The result of the prioritisation was that works at the depot would be substantially undertaken during 2014/15, with the possibility of completion then if cleaning gantry risks could be safety managed in the interim.

The Staff Side while appreciating that this was a step in the right direction, sought assurance that the works would be undertaken during 2014/15. This was confirmed by the Area Roads and Community Works Manager. In this respect the timetable for the scheduling of these works was requested by the Staff Side.

In relation the wider issue of improvements to all depots, it was noted that a

report was to be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Consultation Group with a priority list for the maintenance of Transport, Environmental and Community Services depots.

Thereafter, the Committee:

- i **NOTED** the position regarding the revised prioritisation of expenditure on depot improvements in that the works at Carr's Corner depot were now programmed and would be completed in 2014/15; and
- ii **AGREED** that a timetable for the scheduling of these works would be submitted to the next meeting.

## 6. Engagement & Partnership Framework

There had been circulated Report No. CSC/2/14 by the Head of Human Resources which introduced a draft Engagement & Partnership Framework for consideration by the Committee.

At the meeting on 6 September, 2013 the Group noted the benefits of applying a partnership and engagement framework and agreed to establish a joint working group to define and develop such a framework. The current draft of the Framework was attached as an appendix to the report, and had been supported by the Joint Consultation Group at its meeting held on 7 February, 2013.

It was advised that there was an existing Health, Safety and Wellbeing Partnership agreement and this would continue. There was also a legal requirement to have a separate Central Safety Committee and this would continue also. Also the Council's Safety Representatives Partnership agreement was under review and would be submitted to the next meeting.

The Sub-Committee **NOTED** progress on the draft Engagement and Partnership Framework.

## 7. Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy (2014) and Performance Indicators

There was circulated Report No. CSC/3/14 by the Head of Human Resources advising that the 2011 Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy had been updated to reflect the Council's revised structure. The report described the changes and introduced new performance indicators for 2014/15.

The report provided a summary of the main changes to the Policy, which required the updating of references to the Chief Executive Service titles and job titles; more information on a positive safety culture led by Management, and the role of managers in creating this and each Service was to nominate a current Head of Service to act as Health and Safety Co-ordinator.

The policy also made reference to health and safety performance and how this

should be monitored and reported by Services. A number of new performance indicators were proposed for 2014/15 and would be reported at future Central Safety Committees and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Reports.

As part of the training with health and safety trade union representatives, five representatives were to graduate with a trade union health and safety diploma. An award ceremony was to be held on 2 April for them.

The Committee **AGREED**:-

i the revised Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy;

ii the proposed performance indicators; and

iii that the report is submitted to the Finance, Housing and Resources Committee.

## **8. Health and Safety Team: Update on Current Health and Safety Issues**

There had been circulated Report No. CSC/4/14 by the Head of Human Resources providing an update on several current health and safety issues and developments.

It was advised that there had been no issues raised by the health and safety executive since the last meeting. In relation to the update on the Council sampling programme for Radon, 19 Council properties (non housing) had been tested and results received with 4 with results above the action level. The Council was working with NHS Highland and Highland Life Highland who managed these properties for remediation works. Radon tests on schools were expected soon. 111 Council houses had been tested and 65 properties there was no action required; 43 some measures were required; 2 properties where pilot remedial works were undertaken and 1 result was awaited. 22 properties had failed for a second time to return test kits and the way forward for these properties was being considered.

It was also advised that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing team were now part of the liaison group for the office rationalisation project. This would include provision of information and advice to ensure compliance with health and safety workplace legislation and health and safety briefings for affected staff.

The Committee **NOTED** the updated information on health and safety issues and developments contained in the report.

## **9. Occupational Health Report**

There was circulated Report No. CSC/5/14 by the Head of Human Resources which provided an overview of the work undertaken by RS Occupational Health (RSOH) for the period October, 2013 – December, 2013.

The report provided a breakdown of the management referrals, occupational

health surveillance, Physiotherapy, Equalities monitoring and other activities undertaken in this period.

It was advised that all but one of the 87 management referrals had been closed out. Physiotherapy services had been well received by staff and there had been 145 appointments in this quarter. Concern was expressed regarding the number of cases that were mental health related. Work would be undertaken with Services to undertake stress risk assessments.

The Staff Side referred to a case where one of their members had to drive from Fort William to Inverness for physiotherapy, and as a result they did not want to do the physiotherapy anymore as the driving did not help their condition. It was advised that the Physiotherapy service did outlying clinics as well and the need to have more of these clinics would be raised with the Service.

The Committee **NOTED** the information contained in the report and that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager would raise with the Physiotherapy Service the need to have more outlying clinics.

The meeting ended at 12.45 p.m.

**Date of Next Meeting – Friday, 11 April, 2014 at 12.15p.m.**