

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 2 JULY 2010

Councillors Present: Paul Bryant (Chairman), Adrian Edwards and Keith Lock (Vice-Chairman)

Also Present: David Bull (Compliance Officer), Ian Priestley (Assurance Manager - Finance), Linda Pye (Policy Officer)

Apologies for inability to attend the meeting: Councillor Quentin Webb

PART I

9. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11th May 2010 and 28th May 2010 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

10. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

11. Fire, Legionella and Asbestos Policy

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4) concerning policies and procedures for the management of asbestos, legionella and arson to support the role of the Responsible Person. The report set out three procedures which provided guidance on how the Council would manage the risks posed by arson, legionella and asbestos – the three biggest health and safety risks within Council buildings.

Ian Priestley reported that new management arrangements had been implemented based around the concept of a Responsible Person being nominated for each building. Any procedures in place would need to be easily accessible by the Responsible Persons and they would need to be kept under constant review by the Health and Safety Team. Monitoring on all aspects of health and safety, which included fire, asbestos and legionella, would be undertaken on a quarterly basis. Training was provided for the Responsible Persons and Competent Persons could also be appointed to assist the Responsible Person in their role. The policies which had been drafted were intended for lay people to understand and use. The reporting system allowed Responsible Persons to flag up any issues that they were unable to deal with.

Councillor Paul Bryant referred to the policy on asbestos and asked who would be responsible if there was a problem as the Responsible Person might not have had training. Ian responded that each case would need to be considered on its own merits and the circumstances which had arisen and he was therefore unable to provide a general answer.

Councillor Adrian Edwards felt that the policies were well drafted but had concerns in respect of contractors coming into Council buildings to undertake work. If there was nothing noted in the asbestos register did contractors assume that the building was free of asbestos? Ian stated that the contractor should assume that the building was not free of asbestos but he confirmed that all of the Council buildings had been surveyed for asbestos. The contractor should look at the asbestos register in the first instance and if that was clear they could proceed. The Council should be safe from prosecution provided the procedure was followed.

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Councillor Edwards referred to paragraph 3.2 in the Procedure for Asbestos Management and asked if the wording could be strengthened to ensure that schools adhered to the Council's policies. Ian responded that Foundation or Voluntary Aided Schools were not obliged to adopt Council policies as the governing body was the employer. Ian confirmed that he would liaise with Margaret Goldie and the Legal Department as to whether this paragraph needed to be strengthened.

Members noted that Property Services were only responsible for checking the main corporate buildings in respect of testing water temperatures and de-scaling shower heads. Responsible Persons were expected to undertake such tasks in other Council buildings and Corporate Board might want to consider giving technical duties such as those mentioned above to Property Services to undertake.

Ian Priestley confirmed that he would check whether Appendix 4 of the Asbestos Policy also referred to Voluntary Aided Schools.

Members queried whether there had been any cases of legionella in the district. Ian confirmed that no-one had become ill as a result of legionella but there had been cases where the bacteria had been found in the water. However, if there was any particular concern then a specialist would be brought in to check for legionella.

In respect of arson a template had been produced for Responsible Persons to adapt depending on the particular use of their building. The Fire Service would check to see if such a form was being used when they visited a property.

RESOLVED the Committee approved the policies and procedures.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting would be advised in due course.

(The meeting commenced at 2.10 pm and closed at 2.45 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature