

# West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel

Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

**West Suffolk**  
working together

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **West Suffolk Joint Health and Safety Panel** held on **Monday 22 February 2016** at **4.00 pm** in the **Council Chamber**, Forest Heath District Council Offices, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, IP28 7EY

Present: **Councillors**

**Chairman** Frank Warby  
**Vice Chairman** Nigel Dulieu

Forest Heath District  
Council

Chris Barker  
Rona Burt  
Peter Ridgwell

St Edmundsbury  
Borough Council

Patrick Chung  
Bob Cockle

Officers

Phil Clifford  
David Cowley  
Tony Edwards  
Paul Goodspeed

39. **Apologies for Absence**

There were no apologies received.

40. **Substitutes**

There were no substitutes declared.

41. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015, were accepted by the Committee as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

42. **Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Health and Safety Group held 13 January 2016**

The Joint Panel received and **noted** Report No: HSP/JT/16/001, which incorporated the minutes of the Joint Health and Safety Group meeting held on 13 January 2016.

#### 43. **Health and Safety Policy - Amendments**

The Joint Panel considered Report HSP/JT/16/002 which contained amendments to the Health and Safety Policy. Current legislation required the organisation to have a health and safety policy, which was reviewed periodically for suitability. There was also a legal duty for employees to co-operate with their employer so far as was necessary to enable the employer to comply with his duties under the legislation, which included the compliance of the policy. This was also further extended to volunteers, contractors and visitors.

The amendments related to parts of Issue 3 of the Health and Safety Policy and were indicated in the appendices to the report as follows:

- (i) Amendment 011 – Health and Safety Policy (Front Cover)
- (ii) Amendment 012 – Machinery Plant Tools (Instruction 12)
- (iii) Amendment 013 – Stress Management (Instruction 18)
- (iv) Amendment 014 – Driving at Work (Instruction 23)

The Joint Panel considered the report and the Health and Safety Manager responded to questions raised by the Panel.

#### **RESOLVED:**

That the amendments to Issue 3 of the Joint Health and Safety Policy, as contained in Appendices A to D of Report HSP/JT/16/002, be approved.

#### 44. **Health and Safety Offences, Corporate Manslaughter and Food Safety and Hygiene Offences - Definitive Guidelines**

The Panel received and **noted** Report No: HSP/JT/16/003, which provided a summary of definitive guidance which had come into force on 1 February 2016 (Appendix A).

The summary provided information on the new sentencing guidance which applied to health and safety offences committed by organisations and individuals, as well as corporate manslaughter and food safety and hygiene offences.

The Sentencing Council's intention was to increase the level of fines for serious offences, particularly for larger companies, whilst reserving prison sentences for very serious offenses.

A tougher line was being taken for breaches of health and safety law, high fines not just against organisations, but also individuals where it was being suggested that imprisonment would become more frequent.

The Health and Safety Manager advised that a new nine step approach had been introduced which the courts should follow when calculating sentences.

45. **Accidents/Incidents involving Employees and Members of the Public from 1 April 2015 to 31 December 2015 : Summary**

*[Councillor Patrick Chung arrived at 4.20pm during the consideration of this item].*

The Joint Panel received and **noted** Report No. HSP/JT/16/004, which provided statistics relating to accidents/incidents involving employees and members of the public from 1 April 2015 to 31 December 2015 for both Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

The Health and Safety Manager drew relevant issues to the attention of the Joint Panel, including providing details on the type and location of accidents/incidents experienced by employees and members of the public during the reporting period.

The update also included comparative data for the two previous financial years. There were no significant trends or marked variations indicated by this comparative information.

The Health and Safety Manager reported on the safety improvements which had been made to the Parkway multi storey car park in Bury St Edmunds.

The Joint Panel considered the report and asked a number of questions in relation to "violence at work/verbal abuse against staff" to which comprehensive responses were provided.

46. **Drugs and Alcohol**

The Health and Safety Manager verbally reported that the Council had supported the national drink drive campaign over the Christmas period. Sixteen random tests were taken, all of which were negative.

The Panel was pleased to **note** the contents of the verbal report.

47. **Christmas Fayre**

The Health and Safety Manager debriefed the Joint Panel on the Christmas Fayre event held between 26 and 29 November 2015.

The Fayre attracted an estimated 112,000 visitors over the three-half days. Over 300 stallholders were spread over different venues around the town, including Angel Hill; Abbey Gardens; Athenaeum; Apex; Hatter Street; Cathedral; Moyse's Hall; Charter Square and the Cornhill/Butter Market.

The Fayre was a well-planned event with an organising group made up of all areas of the community, chaired by the Market Development Officer who was the Event Manager.

The event was monitored throughout by the CCTV and zone leaders, who noted crowd behaviours and potential issues that might lead to a potential crowd problem.

The Health and Safety Manager then provided a summary of the events held in each of the zones, including zone leaders/stewards; car parks; park and ride; police support; security; infrastructure; power failure; trip hazards; traffic management plan and first aid (St John's Ambulance).

The Panel **noted** the contents of the verbal report.

#### 48. **Health and Safety News**

The Health and Safety Manager gave verbal update reports as follows:

- (1) The Health and Safety Executive had published its new five year strategy, which covered:
  - i) Promoting broader ownership of workplace health and safety;
  - ii) Highlighting and tackling the burden of work –related ill-health;
  - iii) Supporting small firms;
  - iv) Enabling productivity through proportionate risk management;
  - v) Anticipating and tackling the challenges of new technology and ways of working; and
  - vi) Sharing the benefits of Great Britain's approach.
- (2) Updated health and safety guidance for "Involving your Workplace in Health and Safety" and "Personal Protective Equipment at Work" were released in December 2015.
- (3) Ipswich based Portmans had been fined £9,000 plus costs, following an incident in April 2013 when a worker sustained life changing injuries when a two tonne crate fell on them during a container unloading operation. The worker would be unable to work for at least three years.

#### 49. **Dates of future meetings**

The Joint Panel **approved** the following meeting dates, times and venues:

Monday 20 June 2016 at 2.00pm at West Suffolk House;  
Monday 17 October 2016 at 4.00pm at West Stow; and  
Monday 27 February 2017 at 4.00pm at Forest Heath DC Offices.

#### 50. **Dynamic Lockdown**

The Joint Panel received Report No. HSP/JT/16/005 Exempt, which proposed dynamic lockdown procedures for the Council's main building. A dynamic lockdown was the ability to quickly restrict access and egress to buildings/sites (or parts of) through physical measures in a response to a threat either external or internal. The aim of the dynamic lockdown was to prevent people moving into danger areas and preventing or frustrating the attacker(s) accessing a site (or part of). It had been recognised that due to

the nature of the buildings and sites that it might not be possible to physically achieve a complete lockdown.

The Panel considered the report and **noted** the lockdown procedures for the main premises (West Suffolk House; Forest Heath District Council; Haverhill House and The Apex) as contained in Appendices A to D attached to Report No. HSP/JT/16/05.

The Meeting concluded at 4.55 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

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