

Health, Safety and Welfare Committee

Terms of Reference

1. The Purpose of the Committee is to:

- Enable discussion between Members, management, trade union representatives and staff on health, safety and welfare issues and compliance with the law.
- Enable monitoring of health and safety systems at all locations including the Health and Safety Action Plan.
- Advise the Chief Executive, Senior Management and Members about health and safety issues as and when appropriate.
- Promote and reinforce a positive health, safety and welfare culture within the Councils.
- Promote co-operation between the Councils and their staff in identifying, developing and implementing measures to ensure their health, safety and wellbeing.
- Actively encourage and support staff participation in the management and implementation of health and safety within the Councils.

2. Terms of Reference

Members of the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee shall:

- Review the Councils health and safety systems, monitoring practices and accident figures and trends, and ensure a uniform approach to health and safety is implemented and maintained.
- Examine health and safety audit reports to ensure recommendations are implemented as far as reasonably practicable.
- Consider reports, correspondence or relevant issues from trade union safety representatives, members of staff, outside agencies and enforcing authorities.
- Receive information on changes in legislation relevant to health and safety issues and ensure they are implemented.
- Demonstrate and promote suitable health, safety and welfare behaviours in the work place at all times.
- Support and promote the development, introduction and monitoring of safe working practices and safe systems of work.
- Promote suitable health, safety and welfare communication and publicity in the work place.
- Attend meetings of the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee in connection with any of the above functions.
- Regard attendance at the Health, Safety and Welfare Committee as part of their normal work.
- Assess the impact of any new health & safety legislation on the organisation.
- Ensure a twice yearly summary of Committee activity is included in the Member Newsletter.
- Review the Terms of Reference, health & safety policies and documents annually. This will not replace the need to update documents in line with legislation.

3. Membership

The Committee will consist of:

- Chair – Director
- Vice Chair
- Councillors from both authorities (one each)
- Safety Liaison Officers – to be confirmed by the Heads of Service
- Union representatives
- Health and Safety Adviser
- Representative of Human Resources
- Other specialists on an adhoc basis

4. Organisation of the Committee

The Health, Safety and Welfare Committee will ensure that:

- The Committee is used to review service systems and not as a forum to report operational issues that should be dealt with locally by managers.
- Meeting dates are published well in advance where ★staff★ can see them. Meetings should not be cancelled or postponed except in exceptional circumstances when the rearranged date should be announced as soon as possible.
- All members contribute to the forming of the agenda and to table items for special consideration where relevant.
- If a member of the group is unable to attend a meeting, the member concerned should nominate a named substitute where possible.
- If union representatives are unable to attend or field a substitute the Committee will still take place.
- Responsibility for meeting arrangements and facilitation, as well as taking, recording & distributing minutes lies with the Committee Secretary.
- Minutes are circulated to all invited members of the Committee and made available for all staff to view within seven days of the meeting.
- An agenda and draft previous minutes are sent to all invited members seven days prior to the committee including all papers.
- Meetings are held bi-monthly. Special meetings will be called in certain circumstances.
- Members do not suffer any loss of pay through attendance at meetings of the committee or at other agreed activities undertaken by, or on behalf of, the committee.
- Committee members are provided with the necessary facilities and assistance that they may reasonably require to carry out their functions.
- Officers responsible for the delivery of health and safety across the organisations maintain a corporate library of health and safety information and guidance which will be available to all employees of the Council.
- Suitable training, as identified by the Health and Safety Adviser, is provided to Committee members to enable them to carry out their functions in an efficient manner. Attendance at such training courses/seminars will be provided without loss of pay.

5. Safety Liaison Officer

The SLO will be allowed reasonable time necessary to fulfil their functions and to attend all committee meetings.

The role of the SLO

They should be fully aware of standards and progress of health and safety issues within their Directorate. They will be a 'contact point' for Senior Officers, Health and Safety Advisers and staff.

They should discuss and highlight health and safety issues with their managers with support from the Health & Safety Advisers if needed.

They will develop a working relationship with the relevant Director for their area and report on a regular basis to the Directorate Management Team to ensure that safety issues are continuously raised on the Directorate agenda.

They will act as a line of communication to all staff within their Directorate to discuss health and safety matters.

They are required to attend suitable training courses and maintain their knowledge of health and safety.

★ Please note the word 'staff' is used to cover all members of the workforce including contractors and temporary resources.