

# LOCAL AUTHORITIES HEALTH AND SAFETY FORUM (LA FORUM)

Minutes of the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting of the LA Forum held on Tuesday  
23 November 2004, Fortune Room, Rose Court, 2 Southwark Bridge, London  
SE1 9HS

<u>Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Apologies Received</u>
Robert Parkes (Chair) Steve Sumner	HSE EO (Employers Organisation)	John Cullen - HSE Hope Daley – UNISON
Doug Baguley Ian Lavery	IOSH Glasgow City Council	John Holden – IOSH Alistair Dodds - SoPD
John McClean	GMB	Jonathan Lloyd – Welsh Local Government Association
Allan Parry Joyce Edmond-Smith Nikki Hughes Philippa Mann (Mins. Secretary) Bill MacDonald Paul Beaumont Brian Trevette	TGWU HSC HSE HSE HSE HSE HSE HSE	

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Robert Parkes welcomed members to the meeting, in particular Doug Bagley deputising for John Holden, Bill MacDonald and Brian Trevette for item 4.

## 2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Business case for Wales – Carried over until next meeting as WLGA absent.  
ACTION: WLGA

2.2 SOLACE- Secretariat asked members to consider other opportunities for speaking events. Further consideration needs to be given to funding of such an event.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS/  
HSE SECRETARIAT

2.3 GSE Priority Programme – Members may wish to post GSE information previously circulated onto their own organisation's website.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS  
/HSE SECRETARIAT

2.4 Stocktake questionnaire – Work is still in progress. Some local authorities are already making use of the information within the questionnaire when conducting their audits.

ACTION: EO

2.5 Framework document – The Framework document is now available, and has been issued to Scottish Councils. A formal launch will be made in early spring.

ACTION: SOPD

2.6 Influencing Central Government – A draft paper was circulated including key messages for the Minister Jane Kennedy to send to her ODPM counterpart. In discussion members considered timing of the letter important and that the optimum time to comment would be after the pre-budget report (2/12/2004) and after the CPA consultation was launched (9/12/2004). Members were invited to consider the paper/letter and put forward suggestions.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS/  
SECRETARIAT

**[Secretary's note: Although deadline was not agreed I would be grateful for comments by 10 January 2005]**

2.7 Benchmarking Working Group – See agenda item 6.

2.8 Construction Initiatives – See agenda item 4.

2.9 Falls from Height – The report from the pilot study had previously been circulated to members. Next steps would include the HSE Falls team making direct contact with LEAs and independent schools. Members were invited to contact the Falls team if they wish to be involved, or contribute to the business case being developed for education.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS

2.10 Green Book – The Green Book was launched at the beginning of the year. The awaited supporting guidance will be taken forward after a meeting on 14 December. EO will report back to members at the next meeting.

ACTION: EO

2.11 Stress Management CD – Members contributed to the consultation process.

2.12 Newly Elected Members – There is still an outstanding action item on HSE to draft an article for LG First.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

2.13 Link to website – Action followed up by Secretariat.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

### **3. SECRETARIES REPORT**

3.1 Attention was drawn to the item on waste and recycling. An event was held in Wales on 8 November for clients and contractors, highlighting the issues in this

industry. It is hoped to hold similar events in England and Wales in the future.

#### **4. ASBESTOS IN SCHOOLS**

4.1 Bill MacDonald from HSE's Duty to Manage Asbestos Campaign provided members with details of the asbestos in schools programme. He sought members' views and support for the action he is proposing. A steering group has been set up to identify strategies to take the work forward and further, a working group will be established to liaise with stakeholders such as LAs, teaching and other unions, DfES, head teachers and independent schools. LA Forum members to contact Brian Trevette direct if they have interest in being involved in group's work.

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS

#### **5. SLIPS AND TRIPS**

5.1 Paul Beaumont from HSE's Slips and Trips Team gave a presentation on the slips and trips programme, which aims to reduce slips and trips by 10% by 2010. Slips and trips are the highest cause of all major injury accidents, and within LAs account for half of all accidents to members of the public. An assessment tool is available for downloading from the HSE website. Feedback from successful initiatives is requested (direct to Paul Beaumont).

ACTION: ALL MEMBERS

#### **6. PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME AND GOVERNMENT SETTING THE EXAMPLE (GSE)**

The Chair provided information on the latest position, including the Ministerial Task Force for Health, Safety and Productivity.

**[Secretary's note: The joint review by the Ministerial Task Force for Health, Safety and Productivity and the Cabinet Office on "Managing Sickness Absence in the Public Sector" can be seen at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/gse/sickness.pdf>]**

The EO reported that they are in dialogue with the ODPM in developing the strategy on managing sickness absence and had asked been asked to comment on "productive time".

Members felt that there were links between sickness absence and the CPA process, thus not only highlighting the importance of making the right representations to the Minister but also having effective dialogue with ODPM officials. Secretariat agreed to consider the best way forward.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

#### **7. BENCHMARKING WORKING GROUP**

Benchmarking Working Group – An update was given on the progress of the working group so far. Minutes of the last meeting will be circulated to members. The next meeting of the WG will be 15 December.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

## **8. MIGRANT WORKERS**

The Commission has called for a better understanding of the problems of the issue of migrant workers, and to establish whether there are special issues, other than language, that need to be addressed. Members are asked to consider whether LAs are able to provide HSE with specific information relating to migrant workers.

## **9. AOB**

9.1 Electrical Safety – New Regulations from the ODPM will come into effect on 1 January 2005. Permits will be required for new work. Full details can be found on ODPM and IEE websites – [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk) or [www.iee.org](http://www.iee.org)

9.2 Transport in Schools –A seminar is being run by HSE's Wales and West Division on 14 December when issues surrounding transport in schools will be discussed. If this event proves successful, there may be more across the country. This will be discussed further at a future meeting.

9.3 Statistical Highlights– Statistical highlights can be viewed on the HSE website.

9.4 Government North West – The EO was informed of Human Resources (HR) seminars run by Government Office North West. Concern was expressed that health and safety had no mention on the agenda. Members considered how health and safety could best be brought onto the ODPM agenda. Secretariat will consider how best to take this forward.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

## **10. NEXT MEETING**

16 March 2005 – 11.00AM, Rose Room