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DRAFT Minutes of the Schools Education Advisory Committee

**Minutes of the sixth meeting of the
Schools Education Advisory Committee
held on 18 February 2004**

<u>Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Apologies</u>	<u>Observers</u>
John Cullen (Chair)	HSE	Hylary Kingham	
Robert Parkes	"	Steve Sumner	
Lorraine Shepherd	"	Graham Stuart	
Janet Price	"	Nick McKemey	
Jonathan Lloyd	Welsh LGA		
Tony Bird	LGA		
Emma Truett	CES		
Eddie Knowles	FASNA		
Michael Lloyd	NAHT		
David Brierley	PAT		
Sharon Liburd	AoTL		
Louise Wilson	EIS		
John Mayes	NASUWT		
Sarah Lyons	NUT		
Susan Murray	TGWU		
Maria Carlton	NCPTA		
Matthew Tagney	DfES		
Claire Savage	HSENI		

1. WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

1.1 Members were welcomed to the sixth meeting of SEAC and apologies for non-attendees were made. Separate apologies were given for the absence of Tom Mellish and Mick Balfour.

The Chair welcomed Emma Truett from the Catholic Education Service who was replacing Sarah Billington.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

Agreed

3. ACTIONS FROM LAST MINUTES

2.2(1) Voice Care - DfES yet to feedback on how they address voice care and whether it is included in teacher training.

Action : DfES

With SEAC's help the VCN publication "More Care for your Voice" had sold 7.000 copies. The NUT had sent a leaflet to all schools promoting the VCN and had used them for a training course last

year. The ATL newsletter and HSE's education newsletter had run articles.

2.2.2 Physical Agents (Noise) Directive – DfES yet to feedback on how this Directive could be used to improve acoustic design in new educational establishments.

Action: DfES

Members were advised of <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/schoolbuildings/>, which contained DfES revised guidance on acoustics.

2.8 Safety Reps Charter - see Secretary's report

2.9 Backcare, All Wales Passport Scheme – This had originated in the NHS in Wales to reduce the need for repeat training when staff moved jobs. A passport scheme was devised to allow employees to carry their training with them. It could be adapted for L As with staff undergoing a recognised standard of training rather than repeat training following movement.

Action: Secretariat to circulate information on the scheme to members

3.2 Violence in the Education Sector Guidance – Review of the existing guidance is on hold in line with HSE's publications moratorium. Members expressed concern that violence was a problem that would not go away. They were advised that violence in the public sector was acknowledged by HSE and was being addressed by the Commissions Priority Programme – 'Government Setting an Example' (GSE). Employee side expressed the view that there was no reason why the publication should not be reviewed pending the end of the moratorium.

Action: John Mayes to send NASUWT research information to Secretariat

3.3 Occupational Health – Members were updated on the progress of the guidance and to the fact that it was also subject to the publications moratorium. However, as OH was a core workstream under the GSE PP Secretariat would be making a special case for exemption. As a fall back position, it could be published under the aegis of UCEA.

4.1 Open Meeting – See Secretary's report

6.2 Electronic Circulation of Papers – Chair informed members that this was now an established practice.

6.4 Lost Radioactive Sources – Members informed the Secretariat that they had cascaded information about radioactive sources and the CLEAPPS guidance to schools as requested.

4. SECRETARY'S REPORT: Items discussed

4.1 Safety Reps Charter

The Chair expressed his thanks to the Working Group for their hard work in developing this Charter.

Action: M Balfour to send final copy of Charter to the Secretariat for circulation to members

The Working Group had agreed the need to actively promote the role of safety representatives and the publication of this document provided such an opportunity. Since it was published on the HSE website, 9 months ago, it had had widespread acceptance, eg colleges in Scotland had signed up to it. Members were nonetheless keen for it to be published in hard copy and launched in a suitable manner. In view of the moratorium on publications members were asked to consider whether it could be published by an organisation other than HSE: HSE would support a formal launch but the arrangements would need to be made by the Working Group.

It was agreed that the LAF could be used to get the Charter to LA Chief Executives.

Action: Secretariat to put forward a special business case for exemption once the final draft had been received.

Action: Members to consider alternative means of publication

Action: to be raised at the LA Forum, March 2004

4.2 Education Projects – Education projects under the GSE PP needed to take account of activities in Scotland and Wales.

4.3 Stress

Members were informed about the work on stress in education, with emphasis on schools that was being taken forward as part of the Commission's Priority Programme. Exploratory work was going ahead with DfES, Teacher Support Network, the National Well-Being Programme and others to find out what action was currently being taken to address the issue and to identify what further work should be done.

Members wished to know more about HSE's enforcement activity in relation to stress and requested HSE keep them up to date with what was going on in this field.

Action: Secretariat to make policy colleagues made aware of members concerns and to keep members up to date with developments.

4.4 SEN Guidance

Members were advised this guidance was currently with the DRC where consideration was being given to balancing the rights of users with those of the service providers in the context of the Human Rights Act.

Members would be consulted on the next stage of this guidance.

4.6 Falls from Heights (FFH)

Members requested more detail on areas on non-compliance identified during the FFH inspection campaign and how the new FFH materials would be evaluated. Members heard that the NUT has produced its own specific guidance on slips and trips and falls from height.

Action: Secretariat to send information on the above to members

5 REVIEW OF IAC's

5.1 The Chair informed members that no consensus on the future of HIFEAC had been reached at their meeting on 20 January 2004.

5.2 The Chair explained that the Commission had called for a review of IACs in the context of the new emerging strategies for delivering health and safety improvements. A HIFEAC/SEAC Working Group, set up to consider this, had met in July 2003. A paper had been circulated which detailed the considerations of the WG, in the context of the strategic developments that had taken place after the meeting, and which impacted on the future of SEAC, eg the GSE PP. Members had had the opportunity to comment and a table reflecting both members and HSE's views had been circulated prior to the meeting.

5.3 The Chair explained that against the background of the new approaches SEAC needed to consider critically whether it was able to deliver the Commission's programme. When it was constituted it had acknowledged it was not able to bring together the key decision-making stakeholders in the education world, hence it would not be possible to deliver targets as required by the Commission. Also, HSE Secretariat was tasked with utilizing its resources most cost-effectively and finding the best means of delivering the targets. Having considered this carefully it was proposed that the Local Authority Forum (LAF), which is a strategic

body, should provide the strategic oversight for schools education (specific education related work done via ad hoc working groups rather than through a standing committee such as SEAC). In addition, HSE was prepared to help “pump-prime” suitable arrangements in the independent school sector

In discussion, members had some concerns about how the SEAC agenda could pass to the LAF. It was pointed out that the LAF is in fact already successfully taking forward the education agenda, eg, the FFH work was done through the LAF

- 5.4 Members representing other stakeholders, eg consumers and independent schools were concerned about how their interests would be represented on the Forum. The Chair explained that there was a need to look critically at the role HSE played in consumer safety issues – it is the case that, as part of the Commissions new Strategy, HSE will move away from intervening in those areas of public safety that are better regulated by other means.
- 5.5 As well as pump-priming new arrangements in the independent and voluntary aided sector if they wished to create their own forum. it would also be HSE’s intention to work with education organisations in their own right.
[Secretary’s note: HSE and LAF members are already working with the Independent Bursars Association on issues of asbestos and slips and trips.]
- 5.6 Employee representatives reiterated they wished for a strategic role in health and safety in education. They had a tried and tested route into the education world and could get messages to individual schools. There were common issues that affected all schools and they saw the danger of fragmentation and a loss of their ability to influence if these proposals went ahead. HSE should also be mindful of losing the two-way communication essential for a ‘bottom-up’ approach to health and safety. For these reasons they expressed their preference for one overarching Education Advisory Committee.
- 5.7 Having listened carefully to the views expressed, the Chair explained that he was charged with initiating the review and advising HSE’s Management Board (MB) and the Deputy Director General (DDG) of HSE, of the outcome. This was a difficult task, given the conflicting views. He had to take account both of what members said and what he felt would best meet HSC/E’s strategic needs. The Chair advised that he would be making the recommendation to HSE’s DDG/MB that SEAC and HIFEAC should not be reconstituted in October 2004, but that other arrangements should be pursued. The draft document setting this

out would be copied to members for comment. Members requested a time limit of 6 weeks for consultation. HSE's DDG/MB would make a decision on the future of the IACs and members would have the opportunity to respond to this either directly with the DDG or through the Commission.

Action: Secretariat to draft paper outlining the review and Chair's recommendation to the DDG/MB. Draft paper to be circulated to members for their comments.

6.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 It was requested that thanks for the work the Secretariat had done for SEAC be recorded in the minutes.

7.0 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

7.1 A date was not set.

The meeting closed at 15.00 hours