

**Minutes of the HSENI Senior Management Team (SMT) Meeting  
Tuesday 24 August 2010, Robens Room, Ladas Drive**

**In attendance J Keyes (Chair)**  
**D Breen**  
**K Toner**

**1. Apologies** Dr B Monson

**2. Minutes of last meeting** – The minutes of the last meeting held on 19 July 2010 which had been previously circulated were approved and adopted.

**3. Update on Agreed Action Points**

- The new fire alarm system has been successfully tested over a number of weeks.
- Early engagement with the NIAO will be factored into next year's external audit timetable.
- The planned DHR briefing will be held in September.
- Personal safety procedures at Longbridge House are under review.
- Board considered the draft fifth corporate plan at its meeting on 29 July.
- Single multi-site BCP to be considered at this meeting.

**4. Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare**

Mr Breen reported that HSENI had indicated a willingness to sign up to the NICS wide Cycle to Work Scheme.

Mr Keyes reported that he had issued a memo to all HSENI staff informing them of the outcome of the 2010 Stress Survey and the next steps. In addition Mr Keyes welcomed the opportunity to explore how HSENI approaches the communication of mental wellbeing by staff completing the questionnaire which forms part of the work towards a Masters dissertation by student Laura Harrison.

Mr Keyes also confirmed that HSENI was carrying out radon gas monitoring in all of its offices to determine baseline figures and that he would lead a health, safety and welfare inspection of Ladas Drive next month.

Mr Breen reported that no reportable incidents occurred in the period since the last report.

## **5. Audit, Risk Management and Finance**

Mr Keyes indicated that in keeping with good practice the ARMC members plan to meet with HSENI's internal auditors PwC ahead of the next ARMC meeting on 14 October 2010. This was an essential step that will help shape and give greater assurance to the audit process.

**Action: Organise a meeting between the members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and the internal auditors PwC. Mr Keyes**

Mr Keyes reported that he had received a positive response from the DETI Accounting Officer in respect of the Quarterly SIC: QE 30 June 2010.

Mr Keyes reminded the members of the committee that the Risk Register Review Group was due to meet on 9 September when it would be hoped a revised and updated risk register could be agreed. In anticipation of this meeting he urged all involved to make the necessary returns to Nikki Monson before the meeting.

**Action: Ensure all returns for the revised Risk Register are made ahead of the 9 September meeting. All**

Mr Keyes confirmed that HSENI had recently responded to a number of DFP requests concerning how best it might contribute to the NI Executive's Budget 2010 exercise which spans the 4 year period 2011/12 to 2014/15. He emphasised that at this stage it was unclear as to the actual level of budget reduction HSENI might have to bear and the impact of this on the organisation and its service delivery capability. This would likely become clearer over the coming months. He also indicated that he and the HSENI Deputy Chair would be meeting the Minister concerning future budgets on 22 September.

Mr Breen reported that both the DRC and Programme budgets were in line with the draw down expected at this point in the financial year.

## **6. HR**

Mr Breen reported that during June 8 staff were absent for a total of 47.7 days which equates to an absence rate of 1.8% and a cost of £5,828. The comparison absence rate for the NICS for June was 3.9% and for DETI 3.8%.

Mr Breen indicated that one warning has been issued during July and that a number of staff were being referred to the OHS.

Mr Keyes again sought assurance that these figures did not indicate any underlying absence management issues. Mr Breen confirmed that this was the case

Mr Breen reported that there were still 3 unfilled vacancies and the state of play for each was as follows:-

- (i) Workplace Health Nurse - four applications had been received.
- (ii) Compliance Officer will take up post on 6 September
- (iii) EO2 for CSU will take up post on 1 September

Mr Breen tabled for consideration and approval guidance on special leave. Mr Keyes welcomed the compilation of this guidance which draws heavily on DETI guidance. The SMT was content to approve the guidance and its issue to all staff.

Finally Mr Breen confirmed that a new staff entry system for Longbridge House would go live on 1 September. Entry will require the use of a swipe card.

## **7. Case and Project Work**

Mr Keyes referred to the recent tragic incident at Castlerock when two young men died as a result of carbon monoxide poisoning. He was particularly grateful for the leadership shown by Dermot Breen and Kevin Toner who oversaw the handling of HSENI's response and indicated his complete satisfaction with the manner in which HSENI staff had responded to this tragedy both in terms of the on the ground investigatory work and the manning of an emergency help-line. All involved had shown complete professionalism and commitment.

Mr Toner provided an updated table showing the current caseload of the Major Investigation Team (MIT). Out of the 31 cases 12 cases were currently being investigated, while the remainder were either with the PPSNI (11 cases) or in the court system (8 cases). In considering this report it was acknowledged that the Castlerock incident will demand unusually high manpower levels to deal with evidence collection and witness interviews. It was agreed that staff from other Groups would be drafted in to assist. Having reviewed the caseload with the Head of the MIT and notwithstanding the Castlerock case he was able to give an assurance that the current workload of MIT was manageable.

Mr Toner confirmed the visit by the Director of HSE Scotland Paul Stollard would take place on 27 September. Mr Keyes indicated that this would present an ideal opportunity to consider a range of issues of mutual interest. He asked that all members of the SMT make themselves available to meet with Dr Stollard.

**Action: Draw up agenda for meeting and share with Dr Stollard. Mr Toner**

Mr Toner mentioned a recent meeting with the DoE concerning planning guidance which suggests that applicants could approach HSENI with a view to obtaining an opinion on health and safety grounds as to the location of a farm dwelling. He indicated that further consideration was being given to this issue.

Mr Toner also reported that discussions were continuing with the Department of Justice as to the enforcement of legislation relating to the safe use and storage of industrial explosives. Another meeting is scheduled for October.

**8. Business Planning**

Mr Breen reported that the draft fifth corporate plan had been considered by the HSENI Board at its August meeting. He was now reviewing written comments submitted by Board Members.

The draft Health and Safety Strategy for Northern Ireland was now out for a 12 week public consultation. To supplement this meetings will be held with key stakeholders such as NILGA and possibly the NI Safety Group.

Mr Breen tabled a draft of the All Sites Business Continuity Plan. Mr Keyes welcomed this important development which recognises the interdependencies that exist between HSENI's three locations in Northern Ireland. He encouraged the fullest consideration by colleagues and the early finalisation of the document.

**Action: Seek comments on the draft All Sites BCP. Mr Breen**

**9. Performance Monitoring**

Mr Toner reported that as of 31 July there had been a total of 2032 inspections of which 404 were gas safety inspections. It was recognised that this was a reasonable outturn for the first four months of the year.

**10. Board Business**

Mr Keyes indicated that the next Board meeting would be held in Longbridge House on 21 October 2010 when the opportunity would be taken for the Board to meet the staff located there.

**11. A.O.B.**

**(i) Accreditation Scheme for Health and Safety Consultants**

Mr Keyes reported that the HSENI Chairman had attended the last meeting of the Administrative Council, which is chaired by Geoffrey Podger. The meeting took place on 16 August in London. Professor McKie was able to assure those present that HSENI welcomed a UK wide scheme.

**(ii) Lord Young Review**

Mr Keyes indicated that the outcome of the review of health and safety and the compensation culture by Lord Young would be announced on 7 September.

**(iii) Tripartite Meeting**

Mr Keyes confirmed that the next Tripartite Meeting with HSEGB and HSA would take place in Belfast on 8 October. Currently suggestions were being sought from all sides as to the shape of the agenda. Mr Keyes indicated that HSENI will be advocating items on the Lord Young Review and the Safety Consultants Accreditation Scheme.

**(iv) DETI Staff Brief**

Mr Keyes asked for any contributions to be forwarded to Danielle Duffy before the 3 September.

**(v) Birthday Honours**

Mr Keyes mentioned that advance notice had been received in respect of the Birthday Honours 2011 nominations.

**12. Date of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next SMT meeting would be on 14 September at 9.30am.