

HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 2.00 pm 2nd Dec 2009

Venue FHG07, Fuller Building, Gipsy Lane

**Present:**

Mr P Large, Acting Registrar, Chair  
Mr T McGill, University Health and Safety Officer  
Mr G Bailey, Safety Officer, Property Services  
Ms C Rainbird, Occupational Health Advisor  
Mr S Clark, Head of Campus Services  
Mrs K Brockington, Health and Social Care  
Mr A Glass, School of Built Environment  
Mr B Martin, UNISON Safety Representative

Mr A Rowles, School of Technology  
Mrs E Mitchell, School of Life Sciences  
Ms C Gahan, Westminster Inst of Education  
Mrs C Morris, Business School  
Mrs J Salisbury, School of Social Sciences & Law  
Mrs R Perridge, School of Arts & Humanities  
Mrs S Finch, Corporate Affairs  
Mr G Langford, Assistant Safety Officer, Secretary

**ACTION**

**1. Membership and Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from

Mrs J Middleton, Westminster Inst of Education  
Mr S Simpkins, Deputy Director, Prop Services  
Mr R Beresford, UCU, Business School  
Dr T Bradshaw, School of Life Sciences  
Miss G Almond, Deputy Director, Hospitality Services  
Ms T Cox, Corporate Affairs

**2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

It was noted that the Appendix to the minutes, a report referring to Defibrillators, was missing the name of the author and the date of the report. It was confirmed that the report was written by Debbie Tepper, Occupational Health Advisor, and is dated 6<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Otherwise the minutes were agreed to be an accurate record.

## **ACTION 3. Matters Arising**

### **3.1 (3.1) Presentation of Snow and Ice Clearance Policy**

Geoff Bailey, Property Services Health and Safety Officer, reported that a policy which defines the responsibilities of various Estates and Facilities Management teams, namely, Campus Services, Property Services and Hospitality Services, in relation to the clearing of snow and ice from the University's sites, has been drawn up. It was reported that managers of all the relevant departments intend to meet during the following week to agree how the plan will be implemented. The policy sets out the hierarchy of routes to be cleared at each site and sets out procedures for the closure of routes or whole sites in the event the severe weather conditions. The committee asked that routes regularly used by persons with limited mobility be given high priority for clearance of snow and ice.

### **3.2 (3.3) Proposed update to Travelling and Working Overseas Safety Notice**

The Safety Notice OBUHSN-38, Travelling and Working Overseas, is in the process of being revised to ensure that all foreign travel is properly risk assessed, the health of those intending to travel is properly taken into account, and that details of staff overseas are readily accessible. This will be especially useful in situations such as civil unrest or severe weather conditions.

The goal is to have a centrally located database system for all foreign travel and in the interim, to have the information readily available in the relevant School or Directorate.

It was reported that the draft notice has been referred the Executive Board, in order to seek approval for University wide adoption of the procedures. The Board expressed concern that the revised Safety Notice had become very lengthy and appeared to be unnecessarily complex for low risk foreign travel, such attending a conference or seminar in the EU. Christie Rainbird, Senior Occupational Health Advisor and Tim McGill, University Safety Officer agreed to modify the document and its appendices to enable sections to be bypassed in the case of low risk destinations and activities.

### **3.3 (3.4) Progress of Stress Management Training for Managers**

It was confirmed that good progress is being made in delivering Stress Management training to the University's line managers. During the first quarter of 2010, those Schools and Directorates which have a low uptake in managers' training, namely Arts and Humanities, Corporate Affairs and Westminster are to be offered dedicated training sessions.

### **3.4 (3.5) Clarification of proposals for smoking shelters**

Stephen Clark, Head of Campus Services, confirmed that agreement has been made with the Students' Union that the area external to the Headington SU Bar may be used as a smoking area. It was unclear if there is an intention to install further smoking shelters elsewhere on the Headington Hill campus.

CR  
TMcG

**ACTION 3.5 (3.7) Progress in reduction of risk of falls from windows in halls of residence**

An assessment of all windows within the University's halls of residence has been carried out, to take into account the extent to which they can be opened, the height of the sills, the likelihood and consequence of a person falling from them.

A project is underway to reduce the risks of falls by making appropriate modifications to the windows. Windows at Paul Kent Hall and Warnford Hall will be dealt with during the Easter vacation. Windows at Wheatley are being dealt with by utilisation of the restrictors in the now defunct Tower Block windows.

**3.6 (4) Department of Hospitality, EFM, Audit Action Plan**

During the first half of 2009 the Safety Team carried out a HAZMAP health and safety audit of the Department of Hospitality, within the Directorate of Estates and Facilities Management.

It was reported that the department have drawn up an action plan and have made very good progress in addressing the issues which have been identified and will report back to the Safety Team during 2010.

**3.7 (6) Draft H&S Policy for Placement Students**

At the last meeting details were given of the revised version of the UCEA (Universities & Colleges Employers Association) Health and Safety Guidance for the placement of Higher Education students, which is now far more risk based, no longer making it a requirement to inspect low risk workplaces, such as typical offices within the UK, but rather to carry out actions appropriate to the perceived level of risk.

**TMcG**

Tim McGill, University Safety Officer, confirmed that he is in the process of drafting a Safety Notice for placement students. In its preparation, he agree to consult with appropriate members of Schools. It is intended that a draft version will be available for evaluation at the next committee meeting.

**3.8 (8) Breakdown of home workers by School and Directorate**

Following a request at the last meeting for details of the distribution of home workers throughout the University, Tim McGill confirmed that, since that last meeting, of the 35 applications, the breakdown was as follows,

Arts and Humanities	8
Association for Learning Technology	2
Students' Union	3
Careers	1
Business School	21

## **ACTION**

### **3.9 (8) Fire Marshal and Evac Chair Operator Database**

It was confirmed that a request has been made to Computer Services for a directory to be set up, similar to the one that exists for first aiders, to indicate the names and location of the University's fire marshals and Evac Chair operators. Permission to set up these directories needs to be granted by the forthcoming Information Process System Strategy meeting. It is anticipated that the directories will be available during the first quarter of 2010.

## **4 Fire Drills, October 2009**

Prior to the meeting, a report of the fire drills which were carried out during October 2009 was circulated to the committee. It was noted that on the whole the evacuation times were satisfactory, however there were instances where persons remained in buildings despite the sounding of the alarms. It was confirmed that these persons have been disciplined.

During the drills, instances were found where there was difficulty in opening fire exit doors, as a result of which a process of annual planned maintenance for emergency exit doors has been set up, together with more frequent checks to ensure their operability.

Barry Martin, UNISON Safety Representative, gave details that were reported to him of an alarm activation in Wheatley Library and the refectory in which food was still being served and identifiable fire marshals were not present. Tim McGill confirmed that he has instructed the refectory manager that when an alarm sounds, serving of food must cease, diners must be instructed to leave the premises and once empty, and provided it is safe to do so, the area may be locked up for security reasons. Tim explained the area in which the alarm sounded is unlikely to have fire marshals as the only persons regularly working in that area are library staff (who do carry out evacuation procedures) and catering staff.

Tim McGill gave details of the poor response to fire alarms which were recently activated at Gipsy Lane. Although these were false alarms, an unacceptably long period of time passed before the cause of activation was established and the alarm switched off. This event occurred when, due to a combination of sickness and holiday, there was an absence from the site of experienced campus management staff. Stephen Clark, Head of Campus Services, confirmed that this situation has been addressed by a revision of the alarm response procedures, staff training and testing of the procedures.

## **5 Any Other Business**

### **CR**

5.1 Barry Martin, UNISON Safety Representative reminded the committee that in a previous meeting it had been agreed that, if they felt it necessary, first aiders may utilise a taxi, at the university's expense, to take a person to hospital. However the vast majority of first aiders were unaware of this. Christie Rainbird, Senior Occupational Health Advisor, agreed to inform the University's first aiders.

**ACTION** 5.2 Claire Morris, Business School, reported that fellow first aiders within her school felt rather isolated and uninformed, for example not being aware of the location of the rest rooms. Christie Rainbird confirmed that it is intended in the coming months to invite first aiders to networking meetings in which there will be an opportunity to meet colleagues and refresh their training.

**CR**

Christie confirmed that there are intentions to upgrade all rest rooms and to improve the methods for finding a first aider.

**5.3** Andy Glass, School of Built Environment, expressed concerns that had been reported to him about thefts that have recently taken place on campus. His colleagues request he bring to the committee a proposal that staff and students be required to wear and display their University ID. Stephen Clark, Head of Campus Services expressed an opinion that the wearing of ID would not prevent persons from entering premises. Stephen informed the committee that the University has agreed to fully fund two Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to be utilised at Gypsy Lane as a visible uniformed presence and as required monitor student behaviour around Divinity Road/Cowley area. It is felt that the presence of PCSOs will have a positive impact on the incidence of crime on university premises. It is anticipated that these will be in place by Easter 2010.

## **6 Date of next meeting**

*Further meetings will be arranged during March 2010 and June 2010*