

# MINUTES

HSWC 141205/02

## University Health Safety and Welfare Committee

Unconfirmed non-confidential minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 at 10.00 in CG15/16 Gipsy Lane

Present:

|                         |           |  |
|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| Paul Large              | Chair     | Registrar  |
| Richard Beresford       |           | UCU Safety Representative                            |
| Karen Brockington       |           | Head of Administration and Support, HLS              |
| Steve Brown             |           | Facilities and Services Manager, Faculty of Business |
| Stephanie Croft         | Secretary | Health and Safety                                    |
| Alison Cross            |           | Director of Human Resources                          |
| Loraine Dyson           |           | Facilities and Services Manager, HLS                 |
| Catherine Fleming       |           | General Manager, Catering Services, EFM              |
| Ernest Grainger         |           | Quality Manager, Hospitality Services                |
| Gordon Langford         |           | Safety Officer, EFM                                  |
| Tim M <sup>c</sup> Gill |           | University Safety Officer                            |
| Elizabeth Mitchell      |           | Technical Services Manager, HLS                      |
| Christie Rainbird       |           | Occupational Health Advisor                          |
| Brian Rivers            |           | Facilities and Services Manager, HSS                 |
| Caroline Rushmer        |           | Head of Administration, OBIS                         |
| Colin Stocker           |           | Estate Director, EFM                                 |
| David Whittingham       |           | General Manager, Students' Union                     |

Apologies:

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Gillian Almond   | Commercial Director, EFM                      |
| Sebastian Blake  | Transport Solutions Manager, EFM              |
| Iain Sloan       | Admissions Team Leader, ASA                   |
| Charlie Williams | Head of Financial Services & Development, FLS |

### 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were accepted as an accurate record.

### 2. Terms of Reference and Membership of the Committee

2.1 The existing terms of reference were approved. Stephanie Croft will correct the membership list and confirm union representative membership. Terms of reference and membership to be confirmed by Executive Board.

**Action:** Stephanie Croft

### 3. Matters Arising

#### 3.1 Minute 4.1 Update on new fire alarm testing procedure

Gordon Langford reported that the fire alarm testing in JHBB is on-going (i.e. checking whether fire doors linked to the fire alarm system open and close when the fire alarm is activated). Initially there were some issues but these have now been rectified. Gordon Langford also stated that British Standard guidelines need to be adhered to throughout all campuses and not just JHBB, so that we can ensure that peripheral devices connected to the fire alarm systems are working in each individual building on every campus. This is in place at Headington Hill Campus, where it was discovered that two fire exits were not operating effectively and a door to a link route was not opening. This would not have been discovered had the

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buildings not been checked individually. Part of the process is to ensure good communication between each faculty/department to allow for smooth running of this process. Colin Stocker stated that the extra checks of fire alarms would have an impact on teaching areas whilst call points and exits were checked. The checking of individual fire escape routes within all buildings aims to be completed by January 2015.

**Action:** Gordon Langford

Alison Cross commented that when the alarms were activated on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at the Gipsy Lane Campus, there appeared to be some confusion about when to re-enter the building. Gordon Langford confirmed that fire alarms were only deactivated once it was safe to re-enter.

## 3.2 Minute 4.2 **Update on the Core system for health and safety**

Alison Cross reported that Phil Stuhldreer and Alan Hill met to discuss the need for an interface between the new Core system and eCIS. OBIS had agreed to provide an interface in time for go-live in March 2015.

## 3.3 Minute 4.3 **UMAL reports: update on policy review**

Tim McGill stated that the policies had been reviewed and updated.

## 3.4 Minute 4.4 **Availability of fire marshals and first aiders in the JHBB**

Tim McGill reported that the meeting to review fire marshal and first aid availability in the JHBB had been rearranged.

**Action:** Tim McGill and Christie Rainbird

## 3.5 Minute 4.5 **Review of stress management policy**

The University's Stress Policy was considered alongside the Occupational Health Report (minute 5 below). Further information about stress and the workforce would be collected as part of the forthcoming staff survey.

## 4. **Health and Safety Inspection Reports for Catering, ASA, Learning Resources and OBIS**

4.1 Tim McGill reported that the health and safety inspection of Catering had been exceptionally positive. The standard was consistent across all outlets, and therefore excellent throughout the whole University. The few reported maintenance issues still outstanding had been re-raised: and the floor repairs at Harcourt Hill are now complete. The kitchens at Wheatley have been visited by EFM but no work has been carried out. The kitchen is old and presents more of a hygiene issue than a health and safety one. There is an urgent need for the pipework to be repaired to comply with environmental health standards. Noting that this issue had been raised in May 2014, Colin Stocker agreed to chase this up.

**Action:** Colin Stocker

4.2 Tim McGill reported that the health and safety inspection for ASA was also very good. The department is mainly office-based, with all items stored sensibly with kick stools available.

4.3 Tim McGill reported that the health and safety inspection for OBIS was carried out with Bill Sturman present. A few maintenance issues were reported and PAT testing is required on all electrical equipment, which Caroline Rushmer would complete by January 2015.

**Action:** OBIS

4.4 Tim McGill reported that the Learning Resources health and safety inspection was successful: the maintenance team have been informed of a few minor issues.

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**Action:** EFM maintenance team

## 5. Annual Occupational Health Report

- 5.1 Christie Rainbird presented the Occupational Health Report for 2013-14. Sickness absence had slightly increased, but was still lower than the HE sector average and the CIPD figure for the economy as a whole. It was noted that EFM had the highest volume of staff absence but Colin Stocker pointed out that it was also the largest directorate. [NB. EFM has the highest percentage of working time lost, 4.16%, Appendix 3.]
- 5.2 Mental health referrals accounted for 50% of all referrals to Occupational Health. The average number of days lost due to stress and depression had increased since last year; and of the 37 employees referred for counselling, 28 had work-related concerns. ASA, Business and EFM had the highest levels of working days lost and that this seemed to coincide with a period of organisational change.
- 5.4 Alison Cross said that HR would work with those departments with the highest number of stress-related cases to explore the reasons behind this and to see what further support could be provided. She also suggested that it would be helpful if Occupational Health could alert HR if a cluster of such cases appeared to be emerging. Paul Large also asked HR to explore whether there was any evidence of the under-reporting of long-term sickness absences at Brookes, especially amongst academic staff, as suggested by the UCEA survey.

**Action:** Alison Cross

- 5.5 Christie Rainbird also reported that Occupational Health had been very active on health surveillance, especially in Health and Life Sciences.
- 5.6 It was agreed that it would be helpful if the faculty/directorate acronyms in the report could be clarified.

**Action:** Christie Rainbird

## 6. Annual Health and Safety Report

- 6.1 Tim McGill presented the annual safety report, which showed that Brookes continued to perform better than the sector average. The report shows good levels of reporting: the number of accidents had fallen, but the number of RIDDOR incidents had increased by two. The figures for slips, trips and falls were down, with reported injuries mainly involve bruising. Most accident and incident reports were from EFM. Despite being understaffed for part of the year, the programme of in-house health and safety courses had been maintained, with 794 training places filled. The programme of regular health and safety audits would be resumed in the spring.

**Action:** Tim McGill

## 7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 Brian Rivers reported that he had had a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) meeting with a student and their mother, who commented that the John Henry Brookes building was less accessible for disabled users than other universities, mainly because of the heavy doors. Paul Large stated that EFM were aware of this issue.

## 8. Date of next Meeting

Friday 5 December, 10.00a.m., GLC, Room CG15/16.