

HEALTH SAFETY & WELFARE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held at 10.00 20th October 2011

Venue CG15-16, Gipsy Lane

Present:

Mr P Large, Registrar, Chair
Miss G Almond, Deputy Director, Hosp Services
Mr G Bailey, Safety Officer, EFM.
Mr T Bolton, Finance & Legal Services
Mrs K Brockington, Health and Life Sciences
Mrs L Dyson, Health and Life Sciences
Miss C Fleming, Catering Services
Mr M Holder, UNISON Safety Representative
Mr J Jolliffe, Faculty of Business
Mr P Mason, President of Students' Union

Ms E Mitchell, Health and Life Sciences
Ms C Rainbird, Occupational Health Advisor
Mr B Rivers, Humanities & Social Sciences
Mr S Simpkins, Deputy Director, Property Services
Mr I Sloan, Directorate of ASA
Mr T McGill, University Health and Safety Officer
Ms H Waters, Sustainability Manager
Mr D Whittingham, SU General Manager
Mr G Langford, Assistant Safety Officer, Secretary

ACTION

1. Membership and Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from

Mr B Price, Director of Human Resources
Mr S Hogg, UNISON Safety Representative
Mr M Hisbent, Faculty of Business

2. Committee Membership and Terms of Reference

As this was the first meeting since the reorganisation to a faculty structure, there were several new members who were welcomed to the committee.

It was agreed that Amanda Ashworth-Plant, Head of Campus Operations, be the deputy committee member for Steve Simpkins, Deputy Director, Property Services. It was agreed that a proposal to invite a representative from the Staff or Student Disability Services be held in abeyance due to the relatively large size of the committee.

It was agreed that a review the Terms of Reference of this committee will be an agenda item for the next meeting as the current terms had, inadvertently, not been distributed prior to this meeting.

ACTION 3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd June 2011

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 (3.3)

Launch of Travel Safety Notice, paper and electronic versions.

It was confirmed that the revised Travelling and Working Overseas Safety Notice, OBUHSN 38 is now available on line, paper versions are due to be distributed to manual holders.

An article giving details of the revisions will be published in On Stream, following a briefing which will be given to Faculty administrators.

4.2 (3.5) Concerns regarding rescues from stair lifts

Steve Simpkins, Deputy Director, Property Services confirmed that, following the installation of an uninterruptible power supply (a battery pack) to the stair lift in Wheatley Library, investigations have taken place with regard to similar devices located at the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, Marston Road. Of the five chair lifts in place, three have been identified as of higher priority in order to facilitate an escape in an emergency. Given the age of these lifts and the lack of space for a battery pack it may be more prudent to replace them rather than modify them. Steve confirmed that the intention is to have a solution in place within this financial year and agreed to draw up an action plan.

SS

4.3 (4) Review of H&S arrangements in new Faculties

Tim McGill, University Health and Safety Officer, confirmed that he has a meeting scheduled for the following week with the Faculties' Heads of Administration to discuss and understand the management processes within the Faculties since the recent reorganisation.

TMcG

4.4 (6) Smoking Shelter at Gipsy Lane

Steve Simpkins, Deputy Director, Property Services confirmed that a smoking shelter has been installed between Gibbs and Fuller Buildings and is being well used. Michael Holder, UNISON Safety Representative commented that he was aware that some people still continue to smoke close to buildings.

SS

It was recognised that an appropriate campaign needs to be put in place to make smokers aware of this shelter. Steve Simpkins agreed to seek the support of the Space to Think team in this matter.

4.5 (8) Fire exit door, PG Lounge, Clive Booth Student Village

At the last meeting it was noted that external doors in the PG Lounge, Clive Booth Student Village, could not be considered as emergency exits due to their unorthodox design, requiring a two handed operation to open them.

On a temporary basis, they have been replaced with conventional wooden doors. The intention is to install, in the coming weeks, bespoke glass and steel doors, which suit the building design. These doors will have a compliant, conventional single handed, opening operation.

4.6 (10) Key features, revised Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork

Bob Price, Director of Human Resources, prepared a note on the Universities Safety and Health Association's revised guidance on field work, which was distributed to committee members prior to the meeting. It was concluded that no significant gaps or deficiencies are present in the University's policies for fieldwork. However it was recommended that a task group, consisting of representatives of the faculties together with the University's Health and Safety and Occupational Health Advisors meet to identify any further development of the University's Safety Notices for fieldwork and overseas travel.

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5 Health and Safety Audit

Prior to the meeting the committee were circulated with a report of an audit conducted by KPMG on Health and Safety Governance, Leadership and Management within the University.

Paul Large, Registrar, explained that the University engage KPMG to carry out audits within the University. Audit reports are reviewed by the Senior Management Team and the University Audit Committee. For this audit, KPMG awarded a level of medium and made a number of recommendations. An action plan has been drawn up, which includes reinstating departmental health and safety audits, which were suspended during the recent period of reorganisation. KPMG will carry out a review, within twelve months, to determine the progress of the action plan.

6 Annual Health and Safety Report.

Tim McGill, University Health and Safety Officer, gave a summary of the Annual Health and Safety Report, which was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting. Tim noted that the on-going demolition and construction work across many locations had kept the team of two very well occupied.

There had been a fall in both the total number of accidents and the number of accidents reportable through RIDDOR, the latter is at a lower level than the target set by the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).

A question was raised by Michael Holder, UNISON, regarding absence due to accidents. Although the number of three or more days lost had fallen from fourteen to eight, the number of accidents resulting in absences of less than three days had risen significantly from thirteen to thirty six. Tim McGill agreed to investigate if there were any trends or commonality for these absences.

TMcG

ACTION

Much time has also been spent on carrying out and reviewing fire risk assessments of the University's buildings. A question was raised regarding the fire alarm system at Kennett House, a suite of offices, located above shops in Headington. The University staff working at this location have some uncertainty of how the fire alarm system interacts with the shops below. Tim McGill agreed to carry out a review.

TMcG

The Safety Team had carried out sixty two training sessions providing training a total of 684 training places.

7 Occupational Health Annual Report

Christie Rainbird, Occupational Health Advisor, gave a summary of the Annual Health and Safety Report, which was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

Christie summarised the progress of the recommendations raised in the previous report. The Travelling and Working Overseas Safety Notice has been revised and approved. Provision has been made for the Medical Centre to, when necessary, provide vaccinations to those working overseas, and to maintenance and similar staff who may be at risk from infection.

Training of first aiders has been brought in house and a process of annual reviews has been set up.

Mental health illness account for the greatest number of referrals to Occupational Health, with the main issues being work pressures and staff conflicts. In order to reduce costs, the number of meetings with an external counsellor has been limited to five. Wherever possible the aim is for those people with such issue to remain at work whilst their recovery is taking place.

The University's level of sickness absence rate of 2.4% is slightly lower than the average of 2.8% for the education sector. The majority of absences are short term. It was noted that there are fewer management referrals to Occupational Health than might be expected given the number and duration of absences.

Currently health surveillance checks, such as hearing assessments, are on hold, while risk assessments for employees are reviewed to determine those who are in need of these evaluations.

The department's targets for the coming year include building the links with HR Business Partners and the new Faculties, continuing the development of the first aid service, especially with the development of Gipsy Lane in mind, and to reinstate the health surveillance programme once risk assessments have been completed.

ACTION 8 General Emergency Evacuation Plans

Gordon Langford, Assistant Safety Officer, gave a summary of the proposals for General Emergency Evacuation Plans (GEEPs), which was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

The University already has in place a system of Person Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs), for regular users of the University who identify that they may have problems escaping from a building unaided. GEEPs are need in order to ensure that processes are in place for occasional visitors to the University or to those with PEEPs who may be entering unfamiliar buildings. The focus is on wheelchair users or others unable to use steps, who are most at risk if they are at higher levels in a building and are unable to use a lift when the fire alarm sounds. The proposal is to install signs at the entrance to and inside lifts to give instruction of what they need to do should an alarm sound. Generally this would be to follow the signs (yet to be installed) to a refuge point to await rescue, or, if available, follow a horizontal evacuation route. The estimated cost of such signage is £2000.

An Evac Chair capable of being driven upstairs is needed for the Richard Hamilton Building, currently the only building in which teaching occurs in a basement, the cost of which is c.£800.

Currently the majority of the refuge points within buildings do not have a means of communication to call for help. As a temporary solution, prior to the installation of fixed communications, an appropriate phone number will be displayed for a person to call for assistance using their mobile phone.

With these measures in place a revision of evacuation training will need to be given to fire marshals and Campus Services staff.

The committee agreed that these proposals should be put in place.

TMcG

It was noted that the University have appointed consultants Holmes Wood to carry out an audit of current wayfinding methodology and proposals for the new builds at Gipsy Lane. Tim McGill and Gordon Langford have arranged to meet with the consultants to discuss these evacuation route signage proposals.

9 Safety Inspection of the Bath office of The Institute of Public Care

Gordon Langford, Assistant Safety Officer, gave a summary of the inspection of the Bath office of The Institute of Public Care, a report for which was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

The premises, a three storey office block, were found to be in good order and generally well managed from a health and safety point of view. Of concern was the tendency to wedge open fire doors in the building. Assurances have been given that a management process is now in place to ensure these doors are kept closed.

The committee noted the positive outcome of the inspection.

10 Safety Inspection of Dept. of Mech. Engineering and Mathematical Sciences

Tim McGill, University Safety Officer, gave a summary of the safety inspection of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, a report for which was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

Tim reported that the facilities were found to be in good order, clean and tidy and well managed in terms of health and safety.

The committee noted the positive outcome of the inspection.

11 Any Other Business

Michael Holder, UNISON Safety Representative, expressed concerns regarding the stress placed on some staff as a result of the recent reorganisation within the University. Christie Rainbird, Occupational Health Advisor stated that processes are in place to support staff affected in this way and that the forthcoming staff survey will include questions related to stress issues.

Dates of next meetings

The following time, date and venue for meetings in this academic year are as follows;-

10.00	Wed 7 th	December 2011	CG15-16 Gipsy Lane
10.00	Wed 22 nd	February 2012	CG15-16 Gipsy Lane
10.00	Wed 6 th	June 2012	CG15-16 Gipsy Lane