

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the University Health and Safety Committee held on 15 February 2011

- Present: Professor R Higgott (Chair), Mr Nick Sanders, Mr E Ryan, Mr F Aitken, Ms C Allender, Mr L Cartwright, Mr G Whitworth, Mr R Buckle, Dr N Whybrow, Dr D Mitchell, Ms L Burton, Ms S Matthews, Ms C Quinney, Mr A Bastable
- Apologies: Ms S Foy, Mr P Sweetman, Dr Mike Joy, Ms Heather Green, Ms L McCarthy, Ms Carolyn Ayres, Mrs A Pulford, Ms P Collins
- In attendance: Dr I MacKirdy (Director of Health & Safety), Mrs E Brown (Assistant Secretary), Mr M Stacey (Head of Estate Services), Mrs C Beament (Health and Safety Adviser)

13/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 October 2010 be approved subject to amendments to reflect apologies received from Dr M Joy and Dr N Whybrow.

14/10-11 Terms of Reference and Membership (minute UHSC 01/10-11 refers)

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety (paper UHSC 01/10-11(Revised), refers) detailing the current members on the Committee.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

That the paper had been amended to read that Dr Nicolas Whybrow is the representative for the Faculty of Arts.

15/10-11 Health and Safety Strategy and Direction (minute UHSC 05/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

That the Health and Safety Department were in the process of populating a webpage with details of local Health & Safety Committees including contact details for the Chairs and Secretaries in order to improve communication.

16/10-11 Health, Safety and Well-being Website (minute UHSC 06/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That the Health and Safety Department had liaised with the Communications Office to ensure that the intranet search engine directed enquiries to the new Health, Safety and Wellbeing site.

- (b) That the Assistant Secretary had liaised with the Governance team to ensure that the Committee minutes for the year 2009/10 were available on the University website.

17/10-11 Health and Safety Performance Update (minute UHSC 08/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by Mr A Bastable)

- (a) That the Student Union continued to record all incidents and reported these to the Health & Safety Department.
- (b) That there have not been any incidents reportable to HSE.

18/10-11 National Perspective

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety on 'The Report and Recommendations of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Occupational Safety and Health on Health and safety and the Health and Safety Executive, What the spending cuts will mean' (paper UHSC 06/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That the HSE have the authority to recover costs from businesses that generate risks.
- (b) That the solution to this was to develop robust management processes relevant to hazards.

(by the Head of Estates Services)

- (c) That departments may wish to consider making financial provision in five year plans to address issues that could otherwise result in actions and cost recovery by the HSE.

19/10-11 HE Sector Perspective

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety on 'The UCEA Health and Safety Annual Report 2010 and the UCEA HE Sector-level Health, Safety and Well-being Plan 2011-2015 and Action Plan 2011' (paper UHSC 07/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That the statistics presented relate to 2009 and the year on year reduction in reportable incidents and the reduction in slips, trips and falls and manual handling accidents were positive.
- (b) That in line with HSE promotional activity in relation to slips, trips and falls, assessments on hazardous surfaces were conducted across the Commercial and Estates groups.

- (c) That the widening of UCEA's focus to encourage health and safety awareness in relation to students was positive.
- (d) That sickness absence systems had changed to ensure work-related accidents and sickness absence were recorded.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- (e) That the statistics were encouraging and that best practice should be taken from both inside and outside of the sector.

(by Mr E Ryan)

- (f) That given the range of buildings across the University, different hazard assessments were required.

(by Mr R Buckle)

- (g) That there were links between managing sickness absence and health and safety as underlying health issues, such as stress, could impact on health and safety awareness.

20/10-11 Annual Health and Safety Reviews, Report and Action Plan

(a) Incidents during 2010

RECEIVED:

A report from Ms. C Beament, Health and Safety Adviser, on incidents during 2010 (paper UHSC 08/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by Ms. C Beament)

- i. That the number of incidents reportable to HSE during the course of the year had reduced.
- ii. That two potentially serious incidents occurred since the last meeting involving class IV lasers and a gas leak at Gibbett Hill.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- iii. That it was positive to see improvements but it should be recognised that people were still at risk in the workplace as according to the statistics, 1 in 12 employees had accidents at work.

(b) Annual Report for 2010 from the Commercial Group

RECEIVED:

A report from Mr G Day, Food, Health and Safety Officer, on developments in the Commercial Group (paper UHSC 09/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- i. That the report was submitted to the Directors in the Commercial Group and actions and areas for further improvement identified.
- ii. That a behavioural safety programme was being progressed.

(by Mr E Ryan)

- iii. That it was important for staff as well as Directors to be engaged with health and safety matters.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- iv. That good practice in comparable sectors should be used as a benchmark and that injuries should be expressed as per 1000 at risk.

(c) Annual Health and Safety Report and Action Plan

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Health and Safety on health and safety performance during 2010 with an Action Plan for 2011 (paper UHSC 10/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- i. That the report illustrated the progress made and the reduction in reportable injuries.
- ii. That a key element was controlling risks and that the greatest hazards were in the most significant compliance areas.
- iii. That there should be a focus on streamlined processes and consistency across the University.
- iv. That a forum included Health and Safety Advisors and the six Technical Managers in the Science departments had been established.
- v. That local departmental Health and Safety Committees and front line Health and Safety Champions were vital.
- vi. That the new website and communication tools were essential in the sharing of good practice.
- vii. That there was a focus on contingency planning for emergencies and that the concept of local response groups was being progressed and training programmes developed.
- viii. That the Fire Safety Adviser had been appointed and would start in March 2011.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- ix. That the action plan was sensibly organised with clear priorities however, there was a need to balance changing systems and replacing SITU against work already undertaken such as HASMAP reviews.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee endorsed the Annual Health and Safety Report and Action Plan.

RECOMMENDED:

That the University Health and Safety Executive Committee endorse the Annual Health and Safety Report and Action Plan and recommend it to the Council.

21/10-11 University Genetic Modification and Biosafety Committee

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety proposing the establishment of a University Genetic Modification and Biosafety Committee (paper UHSC 11/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That other universities had adopted this approach and the proposal was supported by the Heads of the key departments.

(by Mr E Ryan)

- (b) That the Committee would be looking at a wide range of topics and consideration should be given to how matters raised by staff in Departments could be fed through to the Committee.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- (c) That this seemed a sensible approach and that representatives of research staff and postgraduate research students should be included on the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee endorsed the proposal that the University establish a University Genetic Modification and Biosafety Committee as a Sub-Committee of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee in order that all research and work related to humans, animals and plants involving biological agents or genetic modification be subject to oversight by a single technical committee for the University, subject to the enhancement of the Committee members.

RECOMMENDED:

That the University Health and Safety Executive Committee approve the proposal.

22/10-11

Joint Inspections

RECEIVED:

A report from Ms C Beament, Health and Safety Adviser, on the findings of two inspections carried out by members of the Committee in January 2011 (paper UHSC 12/10-11, refers).

REPORTED: (by Mr E Ryan)

- (a) That water and first aiders were not available at the smaller sports pavilions.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (b) That guidance for those using these facilities should be provided.

(by Ms C Allendar)

- (c) That the findings of the inspection did not highlight any critical issues at the Wellesbourne site.

23/10-11

Proposed Amendment to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR)

RECEIVED:

A verbal report from the Director of Health and Safety on an HSE Consultation regarding proposed amendments to RIDDOR.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That the HSE had issued a Consultation, CD233, on the amendment to Regulation 3(2) of the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) as proposed by Lord Young in his report "Common Sense, Common Safety".
- (b) That if the proposal is adopted, the period of incapacitation after which an injury to a person at work must be reported to the HSE will change from over 3 to over 7 days.
- (c) That UCEA had issued UCEA Update 11:020 on HSE Consultation Document CD233.
- (d) That UCEA were collating a sector wide response for the HE sector with responses required by 22 April 2011.
- (e) That Committee members will be consulted on the proposed response by the University and provided with access to the Consultation document.

(by the Chair)

- (f) That given the timescales, the documents should be review electronically and feedback forwarded to the Director of Health and Safety.

(by Mr E Ryan)

- (g) That changes to HSE reporting requirements could make comparison more difficult.

24/10-11 Dates of future meetings

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That the date of the next meeting is 19 May 2011 at 11:00 am, Council Chamber, University House.