

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**Minutes of the University Health and Safety Committee
held on 28 October 2010**

Present: Professor R Higgott (Chair), Mr E Ryan, Mr P Sweetman, Ms C Allender, Mr C Moody, Mr R Buckle, Ms C Ayres, Dr D Orrells, Ms L Burton, Ms S Matthews, Ms H Green, Ms P Collins, Mr A Bastable, Dr D Mitchell

In attendance: Dr I MacKirdy (Director of Health & Safety), Ms J Rawlinson (Assistant Secretary), Ms J Poole, Mr J Baldwin (Registrar), Dr R Eason

Apologies: Mr L Cartwright, Mr F Aitken, Ms K Hughes, Ms S Foy, Dr M Joy, Mr G Whitworth, Ms A Pulford, Ms C Quinney, Dr N Whybrow.

01/10-11 Terms of Reference and Membership

CONSIDERED:

The Terms of Reference and Membership for 2010/11 (paper UHSC 01/10-11).

REPORTED: by the Registrar

- a) That the new Chair of the Committee was Professor R Higgott.
- b) That Mr Nick Sanders had been co-opted onto the Committee for 2010/11 since the Nominations Committee had approved his re-appoint as a lay member of the Council from August 2011 to July 2014.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- c) That the Faculty of Arts Representative was Dr Dan Orrells.
- d) That the Student Representative was Mr George Whitworth.
- e) That the Representative from the Library was Ms Heather Green.
- f) That the second Representative for Unison was Mr P Sweetman

RESOLVED

That the Terms of Reference and Membership for 2010/11 be approved.

- 02/10-11 Minutes
- RESOLVED:
- That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2010 be approved.
- 03/10-11 Occupational Health Surveillance (minute UHSC 28/09-10 refers)
- CONSIDERED:
- A paper from Jane Poole, Senior Occupational Health Advisor, on the health surveillance questionnaires that would be used by Occupational Health when conducting Health Surveillance (paper UHSC 02/10-11 refers).
- REPORTED: (by Jane Poole)
- That the questionnaires had been reviewed and reduced to a minimum following feedback from the Committee Members and Trade Union colleagues,
- REPORTED: (by Colin Moody)
- That UCAT were unhappy that Doctor's details were being requested on the hearing questionnaire.
- REPORTED: (by Jane Poole)
- That the request for Doctor's details would be removed from the questionnaire.
- RESOLVED:
- That the Committee approved the use of the Health Surveillance Questionnaires taking account of the noted modifications.
- 04/10-11 Driving on Business (minute UHSC 18/09-10 refers)
- RECEIVED:
- An update from the Director of Health and Safety that guidance for driving on business was now available on the new University Health, Safety and Wellbeing website, which went live on 27 October 2010.
- 05/10-11 Health and Safety Strategy and Direction
- CONSIDERED:
- A verbal report from the Director of Health & Safety about the University's ongoing strategy and direction on health and safety and of key initiatives for 2010/11.
- REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That the Council in July 2010 approved the new University Health and Safety Policy Statement which set out the University's approach to health and safety and the focus on culture development.
- b) That there had been a lot of positive activity across Departments.
- c) That the focus for 2010/11 was:
 - i. Improvement of risk control strategies for the most significant risks;
 - ii. Provision of further guidance including critical risk assessment methodologies for noise, vibration, and substances hazardous to health;
 - iii. Helping key Departments establish improvement plans;
 - iv. Helping specific Departments such as the new Department of Life Sciences establish appropriate frameworks that will deliver the desired culture as set out in the Policy Statement; and
 - v. Development of case studies to promote good practice.

REPORTED: (by Mr P Sweetman, Unison Trade Union Representative)

- d) That there was a heavy reliance on email and the expectation of managers to cascade information from meetings.
- e) That awareness that health and safety was everyone's responsibility could be increased by greater use of health and safety information posters in premises.

REPORTED: (by Ms P Collins, Commercial Group)

- f) That the Commercial Group use a Core Brief communication process which includes a health and safety refresher topic each month.

REPORTED: (by Heather Green, Library)

- g) That signage and posters would not resolve all problems and that Departments would need to focus on hazard spotting to eliminate potential hazards.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Health and Safety Department would provide further advice and support to Departments and Area Health and Safety Committees on initiatives that could be instigated locally.
- b) That the Director of Health and Safety would review and take action to improve communication of issues and solutions between the University's network of health and safety committees.

06/10-11 Health, Safety and Well-being Website

CONSIDERED:

A paper from Claire Beament, Health and Safety Advisor, that provided information about the new website and that requested that the Committee endorse the new website as the University's Health and Safety Manual and endorse the withdrawal of Safety in the University (paper UHSC 03/10-11 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That the wording of the Smoking Policy had been simplified so that it reflected the current situation but that the Policy had not been changed.
- b) That Health & Safety Department welcomed feedback on the new website.
- c) That further development of the website was in progress

REPORTED: (by Eddie Ryan, Unite Trade Union Representative)

- d) That the University search engine did not find the wellbeing website or previous Committee papers.

REPORTED: (by Roger Buckle, Science Faculty)

- e) That the new website was a big improvement.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the Committee approved the wording of the Smoking Policy.
- b) That the Director of Health and Safety would liaise with the Communications Office in relation to the search engine and would consider adding a search field within the new Health, Safety and Wellbeing site.
- c) That the Assistant Secretary would liaise with the Governance team to ensure that previous Committee agendas and minutes were available on the University website.

RECOMMENDED:

- a) That the University Health and Safety Executive Committee approve the new website as the University's Health and Safety manual (of policies, procedures, instruction and guidance).
- b) That the University Health and Safety Executive Committee approve the removal of 'Safety in the University' and other out of date material on other sites.

07/10-11 Asbestos Management Policy

CONSIDERED:

The proposed Asbestos Management Policy (UHSC 03/10-11 (Revised) Appendix 1, attached).

RECOMMENDED:

That the University Health and Safety Executive Committee approve the Asbestos Management Policy (UHSC 03/10-11 (Revised) Appendix 1, attached).

08/10-11 Health and Safety Performance Update

CONSIDERED:

A paper from Claire Beament, Health and Safety Advisor, on incidents and performance since the last meeting (paper UHSC 04/10-11 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That there had been a downward trend in incidents reportable to the HSE, RIDDORs since January 2010.
- b) That since the paper had been produced there had been further incidents that were being investigated as potential RIDDORs, and that one of these involved bone fracture, i.e. a major injury.
- c) That the University was above the sector average for RIDDORs incurred by staff, but the University was below the sector norm for RIDDORs in the student population.
- d) That fire drills had been completed for residences to reinforce the evacuation procedures to students, and that a programme of fire drills in academic buildings would be carried out starting in January.
- e) That Security have seen a significant reduction in fire alarms since additional measures were introduced with the support of Warwick Accommodation.
- f) That the University had been prosecuted in relation to the machinery incident at Kirton.
- g) That the University Health and Safety Annual Report would be available at the next Committee meeting.

REPORTED: (by Roger Buckle, Science Faculty)

- h) That some incidents were due to lack of personal assessment of risks and that people needed to take greater care and accept responsibility for their own safety.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- i) That this reinforced the Committee's discussions over the last year about culture and the importance of individual responsibility.

RESOLVED:

That a review would be undertaken by the Students' Union into incident reporting in the Students' Union, given that there had been no reportable incidents in the previous year.

09/10-11 Health and Safety Joint Inspections (minute UHSC 12/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

A paper from Claire Beament, Health and Safety Advisor, on the programme of inspections that would be carried out by the Committee for 2010/11 (paper UHSC 05/10-11).

RESOLVED:

That the Committee were encouraged to respond to Claire Beament, and to identify the joint inspections that they would like to see for the forthcoming year.

10/10-11 Incident Reporting

RECEIVED:

An update from the Director of Health and Safety that Trade Union representatives had raised a concern that managers were attempting to stop staff from reporting incidents.

REPORTED (by the Director of Health and Safety)

That guidance on the new website addresses was clear in this area and that all individuals should be encouraged to report incidents and complete the incident reporting form.

11/10-11 Transitional and Future arrangements of Health and Safety in Life Sciences, Biological Sciences and WHRI

RECEIVED:

A request from Charlotte Allender, PROSPECT Trade Union Safety Representative, that the Committee should receive an update regarding the transitional and future arrangements for health and safety in Life Sciences, Biological Sciences and WHRI, and what the University had learnt from the process of establishing Life Sciences.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- a) That there had been continuity in terms of management accountability for health and safety.
- b) That existing front line arrangements for health and safety had remained and would remain in place at Gibbett Hill and Wellesbourne campus until specific changes were consulted upon and implemented.
- c) That a Campus Management Committee for the Wellesbourne site had been established with responsibility to resolve health and safety issues relating to the campus such as fire safety and first aid provision.
- d) That an Operations Transition Group which had responsibilities for health and safety had been established, included staff representatives, and issued a weekly briefing to staff.
- e) That Professor Dowson had accepted the role of Chair of the Health and Safety Committee for Life Sciences.

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- f) That the University was committed to learning from its experiences as evidenced by its publication of the Central Pulse Team Report 2010 that identified the themes of Leadership, Communication and Change Management as areas for targeted effort and specific action.

12/10-11

Dates of future meetings

REPORTED:

That future meetings of the Committee will be held on:

15 February 2011 at 14.00 Council Chamber, University House

19 May 2011 at 11.00, Council Chamber, University House