

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**Minutes of the University Health and Safety Committee
held on 24 October 2011**

- Present: Professor S Croft (Chair), Mr F Aitken, Ms C Allender, Mr R Buckle, Ms L Burton, Ms P Collins, Mr M Gluhovic, Ms H Green, Dr M Joy, Ms L McCarthy, Mr C Moody, Mr E Ryan, Mr N Sanders, Mr C Sury, Mr P Sweetman
- Apologies: Mr A Bastable, Mr L Cartwright, Mrs S Foy, Ms S Matthews, Dr D Mitchell, Mrs A Pulford, Ms C Quinney
- In attendance: Mrs C Beament (item 09/11-12), Mrs E Brown, Dr I MacKirdy, Mr C Mayfield (item 09/11-12)

01/11-12 Welcome

The Chair introduced himself and welcomed Mr C Sury and Mr M. Gluhovic to the Committee.

02/11-12 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2011 be approved noting that clarification on Smoking Outside Buildings was considered under minute 05/11-12.

03/11-12. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That nominations for the Trade Union Representative for the University Health and Safety Executive Committee would be asked to withdraw while the Committee considered their nomination (minute 07/11-12 refers).

04/11-12 Terms of Reference and Membership of the Committee

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Secretary on the terms of reference and membership of the University Health and Safety Committee (paper UHSC 01/11-12, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

(a) That this was the senior formal Consultative Committee of the University on Health and Safety.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (b) That UNITE have two representatives on the Committee following the merger of Amicus and T&G Unions.
- (c) That the inclusion of a Health and Safety champion for WHRI had been removed following the decision by Senate to dissolve WHRI.
- (d) That the University's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy highlighted the importance of establishing a positive health and safety culture, the need for continuous improvement, and the role of Council, University Health and Safety Executive Committee, the Registrar and Heads of Department.
- (e) That six key themes were the basis of the University's health and safety action plan.
- (f) That staff and students were encouraged to raise issues locally in the first instance.
- (g) That since Health and Safety Advisers sat on local committees, common issues would be picked up.

RESOLVED:

- (h) That the Director of Health and Safety would produce a flowchart to summarise the University's health and safety structure and to provide staff and students with guidance about how and where issues should be raised.

05/11-12 Driving on Business (minute UHSC 04/10-11, refers)

REPORTED: (by Mr P Sweetman)

That in his view the University should record and monitor centrally the number of hours that staff were required to drive for work purposes.

RESOLVED:

That information on the monitoring of driving hours be presented by the Director of Health and Safety at the next meeting.

06/11-12 Smoking Outside Buildings (minute UHSC 35/10-11, refers)

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That Departments had scope locally to prohibit smoking to ensure that people do not have to pass through a smoking area to access a building.

(by Ms H Green)

- (b) That there was currently no signage to deter smoking on Library Bridge and the smoking waste bins were still on Library Bridge encouraging the continued use of the Bridge as a smoking area.

RESOLVED:

That the signage and waste bins on Library Bridge would be raised with the Estates Office.

07/11-12 Pulse Stressor Report for 2011 (minute 29/10-11, refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper from Dr I MacKirdy, Director of Health and Safety, summarising staff perceptions as expressed in the Staff Survey February 2011 in relation to workplace stressors (paper UHSC 02/11-12, refers).

REPORTED: (by Mr P Sweetman)

- (a) That it was his view that the response rate of 60% was disappointing
- (b) That the number of respondents who felt that reporting harassment and bullying helped resolve the situation had declined.

(by Ms L McCarthy)

- (c) That it was her view that the increase in the number of respondents reporting harassment and bullying by the line manager was linked to performance management of academic staff in preparation for the Research Excellence Framework.
- (d) That UCU had concerns about how conversations around performance were being conducted.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (e) That the analysis confirmed there were positive improvements over 2010 with respondents reporting significantly fewer outstanding cases of bullying and harassment suggesting faster resolution of situations.
- (f) That Heads of Department had received copies of the stressor reports.

(by Ms E Brown)

- (g) That University policies defined the procedures that must be followed when managing performance issues and the processes for reporting any concerns if procedures were not being followed.

08/11-12 Trade Union Representative for University Health and Safety Executive Committee

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (a) That the Nominations Committee of the Council had introduced as policy that internal appointments to Council Committees should be reviewed every 3 years, noting that appointments were renewable.

- (b) That membership of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee included “a Trade Union representative nominated by the University Health and Safety Committee and appointed by the Council”.
- (c) That formal thanks to Sandra Foy be recorded for holding this important role since 2007.
- (d) That the Committee was required to nominate to the Council a Trade Union representative to serve on the University Health and Safety Executive Committee .
- (e) That the person nominated should have the support of all staff representatives on the Committee
- (f) That the Branch Secretaries of the Trade Unions had nominated Ms Lara McCarthy.

(by Trade Union Safety Representatives)

- (g) That their view was that the process of appointment should be that the Committee should only have the power to endorse but not to reject the Trade Union nomination.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (h) That the nomination process was specified in the Terms of Reference of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee as approved by the Council since 2007.
- (i) That any proposal to amend the nomination procedure for future years would need to be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee prior to consideration by the University Health and Safety Executive Committee.

RESOLVED:

(Ms L McCarthy withdrew while the Committee considered her nomination)

That the nomination of Ms L McCarthy to act as the Trade Union representative on University Health and Safety Executive Committee was unanimously supported by the Committee.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Council)

That Ms L McCarthy be appointed to act as the Trade Union representative nominated by the University Health and Safety Committee on University Health and Safety Executive Committee.

09/11-12

Incidents

CONSIDERED:

A paper from Claire Beament, Health and Safety Adviser, and Chris Mayfield, Fire Safety Adviser, providing an update on serious incidents and fires (paper UHSC 04/11-12, refers).

REPORTED: (by Mrs C Beament)

- (a) That the 12 month rolling RIDDOR total was still reducing and there was a strong focus on the close out of incidents.

(by Mr C Mayfield)

- (b) That the University was working in partnership with West Midlands and Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service providing information and key messages to students on fire safety.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- (c) That it was pleasing to see the numbers continue to fall but there were still too many manual handling and slip, trip and fall incidents and it was important to learn from these incidents and change behaviour accordingly.

RESOLVED:

That staff and students should be reminded not to block evacuation routes by chaining bicycles to railings and Security instructed to take action such as putting notices on bikes that block exit routes.

10/11-12

Promoting recognition of good health and safety performance

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety proposing a scheme to provide the Committee with the opportunity to receive presentations direct from groups of staff and to encourage recognition of good health and safety performance (paper UHSC 03/11-12, refers).

REPORTED: (by Mr N Sanders)

- (a) That such a scheme was positive and should look at the impact, culture and behaviour generated from health and safety initiatives as opposed to process and forms.

(by Ms C Allender)

- (b) That the possibility of rewarding staff who were recognised should be considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee supported the proposal, encouraging the Director of Health and Safety to develop a detailed proposal for approval by the University.

11/11-12 Website/SITU Update

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Health and Safety that 9 of the 24 Parts of SITU had been withdrawn and replaced with guidance on the website (paper UHSC 05/11-12, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

(a) That Part 5b on lasers had also been withdrawn.

(by Mr E Ryan)

(b) That the website was now easier to navigate from a user perspective.

12/11-12 Machinery Inspection Reports

RECEIVED:

A paper from Julie Brannon, Health and Safety Adviser, on the results of formal machinery inspections (paper UHSC 06/11-12, refers).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

That this methodology demonstrated good inspection practice and the speedy resolution of issues by managers, supervisors and staff was delivering improvements on machinery safety that were commendable.

13/11-12 Dates of future meetings

That future meetings of the Committee would be held on:

7 February 2012, 13:30 Council Chamber, University House

17 May 2012, 11:00 Council Chamber, University House.