

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the University Health & Safety Committee held on Thursday 14 May 2009

Present: Prof M Whitby (Chair); Mr N Sanders; Mr F Aitken; Mr R Buckle;
Mr G Day; Mr J Dempsey; Mrs L McCarthy; Mrs C Quinney; Mr
J Burrows; Mr L Cartwright; Mr K Stokes; Mr M Stacey; Ms S
Foy

In Attendance: Dr I MacKirdy; Ms J Strong; Ms M Barwick

Apologies: Ms K Drakeley; Ms J Gardner; Ms Andrea Pulford;
Mr A Bastable; Mr E Ryan; Ms L Burton; Dr M Joy;
Mr T Marshall; Mr P Hand; Mr E Birch; Mrs E Brown; Mr S
Bedders; Mrs K Hughes;

24/08-09 Minutes

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2009 be approved.
- (b) That a copy of the minutes be placed on the restricted access area of the Governance website.

25/08-09 Matters arising from the minutes

- (a) Terms of Reference of UHSC (minute 15/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That the University Health & Safety Executive Committee, at its meeting on 16th February 2009, endorsed the changes to the Terms of Reference for the University Health and Safety Committee.

26/08-09 Chair's Business

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That Swine flu was being monitored by a team led by the Deputy Registrar and including the Director of Health & Safety and that staff and students are being kept informed via Insite.

27/08-09 Feedback from the University Health and Safety Executive Committee

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Health & Safety, regarding discussions at the meeting on 16 February 2009 of the University Health & Safety Executive Committee and including the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2008 and the Health and Safety Strategy and Action Plan for 2009/10: (paper 18/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health & Safety)

- a) That in November 2008 inspectors from the Health and Safety Executive met with the Director of HR and Commercial Services, the Director of Health & Safety and the Registrar and were satisfied with the University's progress in the management of work-related stress and with the proposed change to the use of the Pulse survey as the method of gathering information on work related stressors.
- b) That the incidence of reportable accidents at Warwick was higher than the norm for the sector.
- c) That the University's Health and Safety Plan for 2009/10 sets substantive improvement objectives and involves strengthening the health and safety team.

28/08-09 Health and Safety Performance

RECEIVED:

Reports from the Senior Health and Safety Adviser analysing health and safety incidents and trends in 2009 including statistics not previously reported to this Committee that provide a broader picture of general health and safety on campus: papers 19/08-09 and 20/08-09.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health & Safety)

- a) That in the first few months of 2009 there was a reduction in reportable incidents against 2008 statistics.
- b) That there have been 234 work-related incidents reported and an additional 139 non work related accidents reported on campus since the start of 2009.
- c) That the Directors of Commercial Services are meeting monthly to discuss health and safety issues and to address the number of reportable incidents within Commercial Services.
- d) That sickness absence data will also be reported on at future Health and Safety Committees.

(by the Head of Estate Services)

- e) That in order to prevent accidents in relation to road and path maintenance, Estates will continue to conduct surveys to identify faults and that there continues to be an annual survey of all lights on campus.
- f) That promotion of reporting of faults in roads and paths is important since such faults will develop between surveys.

(by Mr N Sanders)

- g) That the statistics illustrate that manual handling remains an issue, and that those involved in manual handling incidents could be used as 'personal witnesses' to share their experience to aid learning and improve staff engagement.

29/08-09 Stress Management Initiative (minute 18/08-09 refers)

RECEIVED:

A revised draft policy (paper 21/08-09) on the Management of Stress and Work – related Stressors from the Director of Health & Safety.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health & Safety)

- a) That since the last Committee meeting the Director of Health & Safety has consulted widely with each of the Trades Unions and other key stakeholders and that feedback from this consultation has been incorporated into the revised policy.
- b) That references to 'persons at particular risk of stress' have been removed but that Occupational Health procedures will be drafted to deal with this group.
- c) That reviews including the PULSE survey will help to identify trends in work related stressors and therefore allow 'hot spot' areas to be targeted.
- d) That the PULSE 2009 Action Group, of which the Director of Health & Safety is a member, is reviewing the issues identified by the survey and identifying relevant actions for the University .

(by Trades Union representatives)

- e) That the Trades Unions were comfortable with the process of consultation and the incorporation of their feedback.

- f) That Trades Union safety representatives were concerned that external pressures on the University will create a more pressurised environment for staff.
- g) That new policies should be reviewed after a period of time to check that they are having the necessary impact.

(by Mr F Aitken, TGW representative)

- h) That in his opinion prolonged absence from work, particularly in relation to the management of bullying and harassment cases, can impact on the work related stress of others.

(by Mrs S Foy, UNISON representative)

- i) That in her opinion support mechanisms and processes are not yet working in every case.

30/08-09 Driving on Business

RECEIVED:

A request by UNISON for clarification on the policy regarding the condition of vehicles and assignment and planning of tasks involving driving, noting in particular

- a) That UNISON representatives were of the opinion that there was a need to review current policies.
- b) That UNISON representatives were concerned in relation to the length of time an individual could be required to drive without a break and the risks associated with fatigue for those driving.
- c) That it was the opinion of UNISON representatives that the information on the web in relation to the reporting of road / traffic related incidents is insufficient.
- d) That UNISON representatives submitted a number of recommended changes at the meeting.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health & Safety)

- a) That there was existing policy, guidance and information in SITU.
- b) That the changes submitted by UNISON representatives were helpful.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Health & Safety will investigate and incorporate this matter within the University's Health & Safety Plan for 2009/10.

31/08-09

Joint Inspections

RECEIVED:

A request from UNISON representatives that a schedule of joint inspections involving the Health & Safety Department and representatives from each of the Trades Unions be instigated, noting

- a) That a collaborative approach will help build a positive profile of health and safety across the University.
- b) That the knowledge of Trades Union safety representatives of changing practices will be useful.
- c) That these inspections must not be seen as removing from local managers their responsibility to ensure their area is inspected regularly.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health & Safety)

That he supported the concept of joint inspections led by a Health & Safety Advisor and involving representatives from each of the Trades Unions.

RESOLVED:

That the Health & Safety Department will arrange a meeting with Trades Union safety representatives in order to organise these inspections.