
Meeting: UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 16th December 2014
12.15pm

Venue: Council Chamber

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| Present: | Mark Humphriss | Chair |
| | Ian Cheetham | Director of Human Resources |
| | Greg Dargue | Deputy Director of Estates |
| | Cathy Day | Head of University Health, Safety & Environment Service |
| | Malcolm Holley | Faculty of Science |
| | Brian Schofield | Head of Security Services |
| | Ron Stewart | Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation |
| | Julian Sulley | Faculty of Engineering & Design |
| | Rodney Vowler | Operations and Facilities Support Representative |
| | Lorna Woudberg | Facilities Manager, Accommodation and Hospitality |
| | Jo Carter | UNITE Representative |
| | Michael Carley | UCU Representative |
| | Ben Jessup | Students' Union Sport Officer |
| | Graham Mott | Technical and Experimental Representative |
| | Steve Nicholson | UNISON Representative |
| | Mareike Posner | Education and Research Representative |
| Apologies: | Paul Brooks | UNISON Representative |
| | Chris Roche | UCU Representative |
| In attendance: | Sue Stove | Secretary |

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669 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He noted that sadly the UCU Representative (MM) had recently died. The funeral would take place on Wednesday 17 December and there would be a memorial event in the New Year.

There was a minute's silence.

The Chair reported that the Management, Specialist and Administration representative had stood down from the Committee. Elections would be held in the New Year for this position and the other elected staff representatives whose terms of office would expire on 31 July 2015.

Apologies had been received from the UNISON Representative (PB) and the UCU Representative (CR)

670 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 September 2014 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings, subject to two minor amendments, and would be signed by the Chair.

671 MATTER ARISING:

Minute 654 – Membership

See above.

Minute 656 – Matters Arising: Hazardous Waste, Fundamental Review, May 2014

The Head of UHS&E reported that Estates had a new van for transporting waste in a compliant manner. Other outstanding issues highlighted in the report were in the process of being dealt with using other measures.

Minute 662 – Managed Gas Service, Fundamental Review and Business Case, September 2014

The Head of UHS&E reported that dates for the Working Group to visit other universities were still to be confirmed. The aim was to submit the proposal to the March meeting of the Committee. In the meantime, UHSE would consider fire risk as part of the fire risk assessment process and where necessary implement additional fire safety measures.

Head of UHS&E

Minute 663 – Working with Biological Materials Policy

The Head of UHS&E reported that the policy had been amended in line with comments made at the last meeting.

Minute 664 – UHSE Update: Fire Assembly Points

The Head of UHS&E reported that the revised version of the fire assembly points map had been submitted to IDPS for updating. Once amended it would be circulated and uploaded onto the website. The Deputy Director of Estates would then ensure that all campus signs were updated.

**Head of UHS&E /
Deputy Director
of Estates**

The Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation reported that a fire assembly point sign had been installed in the middle of the high jump area, which was inappropriate. The Deputy Director of Estates would investigate further.

**Deputy Director
of Estates**

672 GANTT CHART UPDATE

The Head of UHS&E highlighted that there was only one item which was 'under threat' and that was the asbestos management plan produced by Estates which she had asked to be re-written. Work to re-write the plan was still ongoing and consequently it was now running behind time. It was agreed that the Deputy Director of Estates would issue the old version of the asbestos management plan

**Deputy Director
of Estates**

ACTION

as an interim measure, as it may take a couple of months for the revised version to be completed.

The Head of UHS&E and the Deputy Director of Estates would discuss this further.

Head of UHS&E

The Head of UHS&E reported that work was continuing on PEEPS: UHSE had been giving presentations to faculties to promote PEEPs; information was available on the WIKI; and they were covered as part of fire safety training. The Head of UHS&E would liaise with the Fire Safety Adviser to ensure that promotion of PEEPS continued.

Head of UHS&E

The Committee noted the update.

673 PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Head of UHS&E pointed out that the number of accidents reportable under RIDDOR had significantly diminished due to the changes in legislation which meant there had been only two since the last meeting of the Committee.

There had been one notable accident, in October, which was not reportable under RIDDOR.

The Head of UHS&E reported that the fire risk assessment programme and audit schedule were both on target.

She added that an audit toolkit was now available on the WIKI. It included information about the audit process, the standards required and the audit process.

The Committee noted the update.

674 LEGAL HIGHS

The Chair introduced Paper 19 and invited the Committee to offer a view on what should be the University's stance on legal highs.

The Head of UHS&E pointed out that Nitrous Oxide was easy to obtain from websites such as Amazon and the issue was about legal highs generally, not just Nitrous Oxide.

The Head of Security Services informed the Committee that since the report had been produced there had been another four incidents involving Nitrous Oxide / legal highs. The Operations and Facilities Support Representative added that in some of these cases post room staff had intervened, so he suggested that they would need to be consulted and advised as to how to deal with such deliveries. The Deputy Director of Estates confirmed that post was monitored so guidance would be useful, particularly as students sometimes became abusive towards post room staff.

In response to a question from the UCU Representative (MC), the Head of UHS&E confirmed that the University did not currently ban legal highs. The UCU Representative (MC) was concerned that items and substances which were not banned were being confiscated. The Chair pointed out that students were required to comply with the University's health and safety policies, even though they did not specifically refer to legal highs. Therefore legal highs could be confiscated in the interests of health and safety, but students would not necessarily be disciplined. The Head of Security Services added that in cases where students were involved with drugs, these may be treated as a disciplinary matter or reported to the police

depending on the nature of the incident.

A question was raised as to whether or not a student could make a legal challenge against the University if it banned substances which were not illegal. The Chair pointed out that the University could develop its own policy about such matters if it considered that there was a potential health and safety risk and was not restricted only to relevant legislation regarding the use of substances.

Concerns were raised about the protection of students' privacy and civil liabilities, as well as meeting health and safety requirements, to ensure that boundaries were not overstepped - particularly when handling post which was not necessarily of danger to other people.

The Facilities Manager, Accommodation and Hospitality pointed out that staff in the post room did not un-wrap parcels and they did not necessarily need to do so as often legal highs were recognisable from the packaging. If they identified such items, staff would seek advice. She welcomed this intervention.

Prior to this meeting, the Chair had consulted the Head of Student Services, who had pointed out three risks associated with Nitrous Oxide: side effects such as anxiety and paranoia; the potential for accidental deaths; and intentional death, using Nitrous Oxide to ensure death was as pain free as possible. (There had been a case of the last at the University of York earlier this year).

The UNISON Representative asked for clarification on any restrictions relating to people who sold or passed on legal highs. The Chair responded that if they were banned by the University this would include anyone who sold or passed them on to others to use.

The Head of UHS&E explained that it was not possible to provide a clear definition and exhaustive list of legal highs and anyway these would change and be updated as the situation evolved. She added that there were, however, government websites which provided relevant information.

The Students' Union Sport Officer was of the view that legal highs should be banned. He pointed out that this was his opinion, but he was confident that all the Officers would support this view.

The Committee was supportive of a regulation change to ban all legal highs being put to Senate.

Chair

675 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR (KPI) GUIDANCE

The Head of UHS&E informed the Committee that the KPI table had been updated to reflect feedback received and to include guidance which was visible through tracked changes. She also summarised the process for the end of year return which Heads of Department would need to complete.

The Chair pointed out that as the KPIs would be a new requirement for Departments, this would need to be submitted to the Executive Committee for approval before they could be rolled out and implemented.

The proposed changes were agreed and the updated KPIs were recommended to the Executive Committee for implementation.

Head of UHS&E

676 POLICIES

The Head of UHS&E introduced Paper 21. There were now over forty policies and Paper 21 provided an update on the policies and an overview of the policy structure. In addition a policy review site had been set up on the WIKI so that policies could be reviewed and commented on before being revised.

The Students' Union Sport Officer asked for clarification of the different policy levels. The Head of UHS&E explained they were as follows:

- Level 1 – strategic
- Level 2 – strategic, but more themed
- Level 3 – operational.

The Head of UHS&E confirmed that all policies included the relevant level in the top left hand corner.

The Committee noted the report.

Reviewed Policies:

Paper 22 - Health & Safety Policy (Statement of Intent)

The Head of UHS&E explained that this was a Level 1 policy. It had been reviewed to ensure that it was still relevant and no significant changes were required.

The Chair added that the policy would be submitted to the Executive Committee and then Council for approval, after which it would be signed by the new Chair of Council and the Vice-Chancellor.

The Operations and Facilities Support Representative raised a question regarding an Investors in People audit of Security Services and the resulting recommendations and action list which included policies. The Head of Security Services pointed out that it had been an audit of the department not the University. Any issues would be dealt with within the department and there would be a meeting with the assessor to review the action plan in January. The Head of UHS&E added that the University's policies applied to all departments and that it was not up to individual departments to introduce their own policies.

The policy was noted.

Paper 23 - Ionising Radiation Policy

The Head of UHS&E pointed out that some very minor changes had been made to the wording, but the meaning had not changed.

There was a discussion about the following point which appeared under the Legislation heading:

- 'All such planned exposure for research purposes must be scrutinised and agreed by a relevant ethics committee'.

It was agreed that the Head of UHS&E would clarify the legal requirement and reword this point as appropriate to ensure it reflected current practice.

Head of UHS&E

The Head of UHS&E confirmed that, where relevant, all departments had a Radiation Protection Supervisor in place.

The policy was agreed subject to the amendments discussed. [*The Head of UHS&E later confirmed that the wording of the above bullet was correct*].

Paper 24 - Health & Wellbeing Policy

The Head of UHS&E highlighted the amendments which had been made, two of which were to encourage the use of PEEPS.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 25 - Health & Safety Monitoring Policy

The Head of UHS&E explained that there was now much more focus on monitoring and tracking actions in the Policy overall and a new bullet point had been added at the bottom of page 2 to emphasise this.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 26 - Hazardous Waste Management Policy

There were no changes.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 27 - Asbestos Management Policy

There were no changes other than the addition of a link to the asbestos management plan.

The Operations and Facilities Support Representative asked if the building work being undertaken on 1 West was compliant with the asbestos management plan. The Head of UHS&E confirmed that, as far as she was aware, it was and was being monitored by the Asbestos and Compliance Manager for Estates.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 28 - Accident & Incident Investigation Policy

The Head of UHS&E reported that the focus of the policy was on monitoring and tracking actions.

The Operations and Facilities Support Representative raised a question about the possibility of other people having access to investigation reports. The Chair pointed out that the forms would be available to the individual concerned, their line manager and UHSE, but they were not likely to be made available under FOI because they often contained personal and sensitive data. Any requests made under FOI would be reviewed by the legal office and every request would be dealt with on its own merits.

The Faculty of Science representative was concerned that anyone who could access Safeguard could potentially have access to investigation reports for anyone else in the same department. The Head of UHS&E explained that in order to avoid such a situation Safeguard had deliberately been set up with restricted access so that confidentiality would not be breached. She was currently reviewing Safeguard to make relevant improvements, including the production of report analysis and access.

In response to a question from the Operations and Facilities Support Representative, the Head of UHS&E confirmed that there was no set time limit for the retention of incident forms and investigation reports. However, adult civil claims could be made for up to three years after an incident or three years after the age of 18 for incidents involving children. The Head of UHS&E felt it prudent therefore to keep all reports for a minimum of three years and those involving children should be retained until they reached the age of 21.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 29 - Display Screen Equipment Policy

The Head of UHS&E advised that some minor changes had been made and some points had been added in relation to the use of laptops; to encourage individuals to take responsibility; and to clarify the role of the Computer Services Assistive Technologist. She added that it was the responsibility of employees to self-assess their workstations. Departmental Assessors would assist line managers in addressing any minor problems.

She also pointed out that the policy applied equally to those working at home and anyone who worked from home on a regular basis should conduct and keep copies of a workstation assessment.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 30 - Lone Working Policy

The Head of UHS&E pointed out that the sections relating to line managers and heads of departments had been changed.

The Deputy Director of Estates noted that lone working was in fact a very complex issue. The Head of UHS&E added that in high risk departments there were buddy systems in place to prevent lone working. She would forward a link about lone working to Committee members and explained further information was being developed.

Head of UHS&E

The Operations and Facilities Support Representative asked if the policy applied to students. The Head of UHS&E advised that the policy and legislation related to employees and was unlikely to apply to students, but UHSE were looking to address some issues in relation to students. She explained that health and safety legislation included postgraduate research students, but not undergraduates. This was discussed and it was agreed that the policy would be amended to include specific reference to students.

Head of UHS&E

The Head of UHS&E added that work was ongoing to address issues where there was 24 hour access to buildings.

The Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation asked if there was a

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separate lone working policy for contractors. The Head of UHS&E explained that the primary legal responsibility for contractors was with their employer and the residual risk was the responsibility of the University. She added that Estates had a rigorous system in place for managing contractors. It had been audited by UHSE and the results had been good. The Deputy Director of Estates would circulate information on the process used by Estates.

**Deputy Director
of Estates**

The Head of UHS&E stated that ideally all contractors would be registered through Estates. The Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation commented that some contractors might not be prepared to go through such a rigorous process. It was agreed that the Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation would liaise with the Head of UHS&E regarding arrangements for contractors working in the STV.

**Facilities
Manager, Sports
Development &
Recreation**

The Head of UHS&E and the Head of Security Services would discuss the process for dealing with contractors who arrived on campus without prior notification having been given to Security Services.

Head of UHS&E

The Head of UHS&E would circulate the draft policies relating to construction for comment before submitting them to the March meeting of the Committee.

Head of UHS&E

The policy was agreed subject to the amendments discussed.

Paper 31 - Stress Management Policy

The Head of UHS&E advised that the statement about the role of the University had been clarified and some minor amendments had been made.

The Operations and Facilities Support Representative commented that it was difficult to find information about counselling on the website. Also, the Faculty of Science representative pointed out that the search function on the home page of the website did not search the WIKI. So where information existed on the WIKI, it could be difficult to find. The Head of UHS&E would look into this and check that information on counselling was still available on the main website. [*Since the meeting the Head of UHS&E has confirmed that the word counselling did bring up the right page from the search facility*].

Head of UHS&E

The UNISON Representative asked if it was correct that there had been an increase in the number of employees suffering from stress and if so, were they being supported by UHSE. The Head of UHS&E confirmed that this was true for some specific areas and that staff from these areas together with their line managers were already being supported by UHSE.

The policy was agreed.

Paper 32 - First Aid Policy

The Head of UHS&E highlighted the changes which had been made. She also emphasised that it was important that employees did not administer first aid for which they had not been trained.

The policy was agreed.

677 TRAINING UPDATE

The Head of UHS&E informed the Committee that a report on training had been submitted to the Committee in March and it referred to a gap analysis which had identified a need to further develop health and safety training.

Head of UHS&E

A Health and Safety training site was set up on Moodle. The first online training module was 'Fire Safety Awareness' which was mandatory for all staff. This was rolled out with the 'Invacuation' training module. She added that there were now only approximately four hundred people who had still not completed the 'Fire Safety Awareness' training.

The aim of having an online training site was to reach as wide an audience as possible. The site had now been re-structured with themed training pages and each theme contained a number of training modules.

The Head of UHS&E asked that the Employee Induction package be made mandatory for all new starters to complete within their first two weeks. (It would take about 20-30 minutes to complete). She also asked if the Committee thought that the induction guidance and checklist were suitable.

She explained that these were intended for employees of the University and not for people visiting from other institutions as part of collaborative working.

The Head of UHS&E pointed out that the colours and style of the training modules had been chosen to cater for those with learning difficulties and they had been checked and tested by people with learning disabilities. Also the modules could be printed if required.

It was agreed that the Head of UHS&E would circulate the Employee module to Committee members to review. They would then decide at the next meeting if they wished to make it mandatory.

Head of UHS&E

The Head of UHS&E would also review the induction guidance.

Head of UHS&E

The Students' Union Sport Officer asked if the Invacuation module was available for students and where it could be found. The Chair confirmed that there had been a link on the students' website and that it was included within the first year undergraduate induction.

The Faculty of Science representative commented that the chaser email on 'Fire Safety Awareness' training sent out in December to departments had not been accurate and had subsequently caused some debate among staff who had already completed the training. The Head of UHS&E explained that it had been difficult to get accurate information which is why the email had been sent. Some Departmental Heads had been extremely helpful in flushing out the facts which had helped UHSE to update their lists.

The Committee noted the report.

678 STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR LINE MANAGERS

The Head of UHS&E explained that stress management training for line managers would be available on the line managers section of Health and Safety training site on Moodle.

She added that it was important for line managers to be mindful of health and safety

issues at their regular meetings with staff.

The Committee noted the report.

679 DISPOSAL OF REDUNDANT UNIVERSITY FURNITURE

The Operations and Facilities Support Representative said that when buildings were refurbished, furniture which was still in a useable condition was being destroyed. He asked for clarification as to what could be sold, recycled or donated to charity and what the restrictions were.

The Head of UHS&E confirmed that in respect of furniture such as desks there was no specific health and safety reason as to why it could not be passed on to a second or third person for re-use because a simple visual check could be undertaken. There were however tighter restrictions on electronic equipment and chairs.

The Deputy Director of Estates pointed out that a large number of desks were recycled, but Estates did not have a warehouse facility for storing old furniture. If they wished, staff could take furniture which was no longer required and if it was not taken after a reasonable length of time it could be offered to charities. He added that it would be helpful if charities were able to come and collect furniture as this was expensive to do. He would follow this up with the Waste and Recycling Manager.

**Deputy Director
of Estates**

The Committee noted the update.

680 TIME TO CHANGE CAMPAIGN

The Head of UHS&E gave an update on the Time to Change Campaign.

The Students' Union Sport Officer pointed out the Students' Union would be running a number of mental health campaigns throughout the rest of the year.

The Head of UHS&E requested that the video released by the student media group, Campus TV, be made available.

**Students' Union
Sport Officer**

The Committee noted the update.

681 INVACUATION

The Chair reported that the response to the invacuation exercise was not as good as he had hoped and there would be a separate meeting to review the exercise in detail.

He asked Committee members if they had any suggestions on improving resilience. The following points were made:

- The evacuation worked very well. 5 West was evacuated, with everyone going to the back of the building, but they did not then know where to go when the invacuation alarm sounded.
- Students in lecture theatres did not know where to go.
- Students in the library did not know what to do and became frustrated.

- Some students had suggested that it would be useful to have a voice alarm.
- Students were being allowed off buses onto campus, even though the alarm could be heard.
- Some alarms did not make the correct sound. (The Head of Security Services was looking into this and liaising with Estates).
- The alarm was not really loud enough on the East side of campus.
- Not many students looked at the home page, so they would have missed the information about the exercise. Use of social media or an email to all students might have helped raise awareness. (Information on evacuation and invacuation was included in inductions for new students).

Committee members were asked to let the Chair know if they had any other comments.

All

The Committee noted the update.

682 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

683 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 17 March 2015.

The meeting concluded at 2.15pm

Chair: