

Meeting: UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 19 December 2017
12.15pm

Venue: Council Chamber

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| Present: | Mark Humphriss | Chair |
| | Richard Brooks | Director of Human Resources |
| | Mark Martin | Deputy Director of Estates |
| | Chris Young | Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services / Head of UHS&E Service |
| | Sophie Hamer | Assistant Facilities Manager, Sports Development & Recreation |
| | Malcolm Holley | Faculty of Science Management Representative |
| | Andrew Nash | Compliance Manager, Accommodation & Hospitality |
| | Brian Schofield | Head of Security Services |
| | Michael Carley | UCU Representative |
| | Steve Nicholson | UNISON Representative |
| | John Robbins | UNITE Representative |
| | Ian Evans | Operational and Facilities Support Representative |
| | Walter Guy | Technical and Experimental Representative |
| | Mareike Posner | Education and Research Representative |
| Apologies: | Julian Sulley | Faculty of Engineering & Design Management Representative |
| | Hartmut Logemann | UCU Representative |
| | James Paradise | UNISON Representative |
| | Chris Roche | Management, Specialist and Administration Representative |
| | Kimberley | Students' Union Officer (Activities) |
| | Pickett-Mcatakney | |
| In attendance: | Sue Stove | Secretary |
| | Paul Maggs | Health & Safety Adviser |
| | Keir Mobbs | UCU Representative (<i>for Hartmut Logemann</i>) |
| | Deborah Robarts | Scientific Safety Adviser |

ACTION

807 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 September 2017 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings and would be signed by the Chair.

808 MATTERS ARISING:

Minute 799 – Smoking Policy

The Head of UHSE reported that UHSE would work together with the Students' Union to develop options for promoting smoking cessation to students, particularly around exam time.

UHSE Update:

Minute 800 – UHSE Update:

Occupational Health Data

The Head of UHSE had spoken to the HR Business Partners regarding the spike in the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) figures for June 2017, but no specific cause had been identified. In future, when organisational changes were undertaken, the EAP would be advertised to staff.

Minute 801 – Fire Safety Update

The Head of UHSE confirmed that the use of Air B&B was now included in the Travel Safety Guidance tabled under a separate item (see below).

He had spoken to ahs regarding private lets. ahs had confirmed that, for any properties advertised on 'Studentpad', landlords were required to provide the relevant documentation / certificates (e.g. gas safety certificates / registration as a House of Multiple Occupation). In addition, ahs subscribed to various safety videos, including fire safety, and covered fire safety in its briefings to students who were seeking private accommodation. In the New Year, communications would be made available to students who were already in private accommodation and the Callmy App would be used to communicate with students.

Minute 802 – Polices / Health and Safety Standards:

Tower Scaffolds Standard

The Head of UHSE reported that the standard had been updated. It was pointed out that staff, including Heads of Department, should make arrangements for tower scaffolds through the Directors of Technical Services, who would take responsibility for the construction. If a member of staff or Head of Department dealt with it themselves they would, in doing so, be taking on the responsibility.

809 UHSE UPDATE (INCLUDING INCIDENTS AND AUDIT UPDATE)

Incident Data

There had not been any RIDDOR reportable accidents in the last quarter.

Earlier in December some of the large interlocking windows had fallen out of the Claverton Rooms onto the Parade. This was due to a combination of the high winds and the sills being rotten (rubber seals had perished allowing water ingress, causing the frames to become rotten below existing panes. As a result of this, the damage had not been visible and as such the defect would not have been identified by routine inspections). It was very fortunate that no one had been injured and the incident was being investigated. The Head of UHSE and Director of Estates attended site at the time of the incident and agreed closure of part of the Parade potentially affected by other windows of this type.

Estates had subsequently commissioned a survey of all windows in the Claverton Rooms and specific windows in Norwood and 2 East. The report recommended that all timber framed windows be replaced. Remedial work has been started to remove all "Profillit" windows and to weather-proof the building for the time being. Installation of replacement windows was scheduled for the summer of 2018.

Estates had reviewed the buildings on campus with similar windows. It was noted that although there were new buildings on campus, such as 4 East South, with interlocking glazing, the frames for these were not wooden and as such would not rot in the same way if the seals were to perish.

The Education and Research Representative asked for further details on the incident where students had accessed scaffolding. The Head of UHSE explained that the refurbishment works at Wolfson-Westwood had overrun, resulting in the scaffolding being left in situ at the start of term. A number of students had accessed the scaffold. UHSE and ahs carried out a joint assessment at the time and a number of recommendations were made to make access to scaffolds more difficult. In addition, Security Services had increased the number of patrols, whilst the scaffolding remained in place. Subsequently, there were no further reports of unauthorised access.

Fire Statistics

There had been two kitchen fire incidents, both of which were extinguished by students.

The Fire Risk Assessment programme was on track.

Occupational Health Data

In common with previous months, there was a wide spread of reasons for management referrals with no one reason causing particular concern. However, it was noted that this Quarter, two referrals had been made for employees who had disclosed alcohol misuse concerns.

There had been a spike in the number of employees presenting for the EAP during August 2017. This may have been related to organisational changes. One difficulty in exploring these figures more deeply was that attendees were promised full confidentiality and it was therefore difficult to get specific details around the reasons why such a spike might be occurring. The Head of UHSE had asked that the EAP advised him of any areas of concern or emerging trends.

Health & Safety Audit Programme

The audit programme was now back on track. A number of the low risk departments were not carrying out all required risk assessments. As part of the audit follow up, UHSE has provided guidance on requirements to these departments. Similarly, a small number of departments have been identified as not carrying out sufficient office inspections. The Health & Safety Adviser reiterated that model risk assessment and inspection templates were available for departments to adopt or amend as appropriate.

The Health & Safety Adviser kept a check list for audits of high and low risk depts. Where results of audits were less than 100% he would recommend appropriate actions and then follow up to check that they had been implemented and the issue(s) had been addressed.

Although workstation assessments were included in the audit, he did not check the amount of space individuals had at their workstations. The Head of UHSE pointed out that a review of workstation assessments was being undertaken and this would give UHSE greater visibility of any issues.

The 2017-18 iteration of the KPI self-assessment exercise was currently in progress. Data should be collected in January 2018 with a report being submitted to this Committee in March 2018.

The Committee noted the report.

810 FIRE SAFETY UPDATE

The Head of UHSE explained that Paper 10 provided an update on progress and the key findings following the report presented at the September meeting of this Committee.

Fire Safety Policy and Management Systems

The Fire Safety Review Group was satisfied that management arrangements generally met the standards required, albeit they were not perfect and the process had identified some areas for improvement.

The Fire Safety Adviser had inspected Nominated Properties and reviewed the Fire Risk Assessments (FRAs). He was satisfied that the FRAs were of a good standard. UHSE and ahs have agreed a two-yearly review of Nominated Properties.

The Head of UHSE advised that Estates had commissioned a check by its external project managers of the cladding systems used on recently constructed buildings. This had indicated that the cladding on the University's buildings was not of the type used on the Grenfell Tower.

Fire Safety Training

The review included a check of the range of fire safety training and support provided across the University. As a result of these checks, it had been agreed that:

- the mandatory fire training package would be reviewed and updated as appropriate
- a refresher training package would be developed
- the provision of fire wardens would be reviewed to ensure there were no gaps
- fire extinguisher training would be undertaken in-house
- students living in residences would receive appropriate fire safety training through a number of different routes throughout the academic year

The Faculty of Science Management Representative raised a question regarding Class D fire safety training (e.g. for the Departments of Chemistry and Pharmacy & Pharmacology and regarding flammable metals). The Head of UHSE confirmed that if a particular risk was identified within a department appropriate training would

Head of UHSE

be provided and Class D fire extinguishers were available. This matter would be followed up as part of the departmental DSEAR reviews.

Fire Safety Information for Students Letting from Private Landlords

The Fire Safety Review Group was satisfied that properties included on 'Studentpad' were subject to appropriate safety checks and were being managed well.

Fire Safety Maintenance Checks

Fire alarm testing and maintenance have been reviewed for non-residential and residential properties. No further recommendations were made by the Fire Safety Review Group regarding this matter.

Cause and Effect Devices

A survey of all fire alarm systems had identified every device (Cause and Effect devices) linked in to individual alarm systems. Checking of the majority of these devices was through the fire drill process. However, the review had concluded that records of actual checks were not complete. A plan would be developed to test associated devices to bring all records up-to-date.

Fire Doors

There were approximately 10,000 fire doors across the University. The fire risk assessment process informed Estates of any serious defects (i.e. defective doors that posed a significant risk to life safety). The fire risk assessment process has also identified a number of doors where improvements were required in order to ensure these would limit any potential property damage in the event of a fire. A programme of inspection commenced in early 2017. This should be completed by the end of April 2018. On completion, a risk-based work programme for upgrading / improving existing doors would be developed.

Emergency Procedures / Information

Information about Utilities

Estates were in the process of collating key information (e.g. about utilities) which would be required by the Fire and Rescue Services.

Building, Processes and Operational Hazards

The hazardous materials database which was established in 2013 had not been updated since early 2014. Therefore steps would be taken to ensure this was brought up to date as a matter of priority.

Action Plan and Monitoring

The draft action plan attached to Paper 10 would be finalised when the Head of UHSE had confirmation of the relevant dates.

Head of UHSE

It was noted that there was a need to improve governance and oversight and this would be done by using the Health & Safety Committee to improve visibility of what was being done. Therefore, in future, regular reports on fire safety would be provided to this Committee.

The Committee noted the report.

811 MENTAL HEALTH ACTION PLAN

The Head of UHSE provided some overall context in terms of stress and mental health cases at the University. Stress and mental health made up a significant portion of all sickness absence reported at the University. However, the overall trend over the last three years was that the numbers of 'days lost' had significantly decreased year-on-year for both mental health and stress absences. It was noted, though, that in that same period, the actual numbers of stress and mental health related cases had increased. When the increase in overall staff numbers was taken into account, this increase equated to a further three cases per 1000 employees in the last financial year. At the same time, the average length of absence per case had almost halved over the last three years.

In November 2017, "*Thriving at Work: the Stevenson / Farmer review of mental health and employers*" was published. It identified six core standards and four enhanced standards which employers should implement to support employees with mental health issues.

The Head of UHSE had used the core and enhanced standards to review the support provided by the University. Overall the University's provision came out well, but an action plan with milestones and timeframes would be developed to address areas for improvement. Current considerations included:

- further support for Mental Health First Aiders (MHFAs) – UHSE was investigating ways of improving materials and support for MHFAs, e.g. setting up a 'Communities of Practice' resource to ensure that we were deriving as much value as possible from this training provision
- stress management policy and procedures – these had been reviewed and the stress management process was being actively used to support individuals identifying that they are experiencing or feel at risk of poor mental health or stress
- staff drop-in sessions – setting up drop-in services for staff (similar to those being provided by Student Services for students) to cover the gap between the services provided by Occupational Health and the EAP. This may then enable UHSE to gain useful feedback and data
- induction process – this could be improved to encourage disclosure throughout the pre-employment and induction processes. In addition, USHE would be updating its online resources, including those on mental health
- longer term support for staff – UHSE would investigate ways of providing longer term support for members of staff beyond the EAP (short term) and whilst waiting for access to NHS services, e.g. providing something similar to the online cognitive therapy service used by Student Services

The UCU representative (MC) raised an issue with regards to Core Standard number 6 - *Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing by understanding data, talking to employees and understanding risk factors*. It was asked if this would be linked to the monitoring of workloads and if not, why not. The Head of UHSE explained that workloads were monitored by academic departments rather than centrally by UHSE. In part, this was because the departments, not UHSE, were better placed to determine what was reasonable by way of workload for any given member of staff.

The UCU Representative (MC) suggested that more could be done around this issue especially given events earlier in 2017. The Director of Human Resources explained that the investigations into the event cited had been carried out, but that the reports were not yet finalised. If, as a result, there were any recommendations on processes then these would be woven into the mental health action plan.

The Chair pointed out that the workload data model was not currently designed to be appropriate for stress management purposes.

He added that workloads were an issue that we should be aware of and staff should feel free to raise this with their managers, who in turn were responsible for addressing any issues. It was the responsibility of every manager to ensure that they had the resources required to undertake workloads or reduce the output required. The University would not wish staff to be leaving because they felt they were being overworked and exit interviews provided a means of monitoring this.

The Committee noted the report.

812 POLICIES / HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS

Where appropriate policies were reviewed and discussed together with the related standards and guidance as one item.

Travel Safety Guidance

The Head of UHSE explained that following discussions at the last meeting of this Committee the revised guidance aimed to address a range of potential issues and specific issues relation to travellers with protected characteristics. This included queries regarding the use of Air B&B and travel to countries where the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has advised against doing so.

It was noted that separate task related guidance and risk assessments were available, e.g. for field work.

The Committee agreed the guidance.

Drone Operations Standard

The Health & Safety Adviser explained that, as requested at the last meeting of this Committee, the standard had been revised. It now covered all University departments, included staff and students and applied to academic and recreational operation of drones.

Guidance on direct control and the line of sight had been strengthened. So even if the drone was automated there would still be a requirements for there to be a pilot who could intervene if necessary.

Authorisation for the use of drones would be required from Estates or Sports Development and Recreation as these departments controlled the open spaces on campus.

Academic departments would be required to complete a risk assessment and external contractors would need to provide their own operational safety case.

Section A1 (page 5) – *Permission to fly was sought and obtained (if applicable)*. This would be amended to make it more explicit as to who should be contacted for permission to fly (e.g. job title).

Head of UHSE

Section B (page 6) – *Standard to meet for operations of Small Unmanned Aircraft performed in house (i.e. not Aerial Work)*. The definition would be amended to include both research and teaching activities.

Head of UHSE

The use of drones for filming and the protection of privacy was not strictly a health and safety issue, but the relevant guidance (Air Navigation Order 2016, Article 95) was referred to on page 7 of the standard and in the risk assessment.

Any University policy or standard relating to the operation of drones would not necessarily apply to the police, but they would nonetheless have to comply with air navigation guidance.

It was noted that all intended drone flights should be logged with Security Services. The Head of Security Services pointed out that there was no reference on the risk assessment to bird strikes. He was aware of an incident at an event where a drone was 'taken out' by a bird strike and came down near a crowd. This situation would obviously be difficult to control, but was a potential risk.

UHSE would liaise with relevant academic departments to update them on the standard.

Head of UHSE

The Committee agreed the standard.

Unattended Experiments Standard

The Scientific Safety Adviser explained that the aim of Paper 14 was to specify minimum required standards and ensure consistency based on current practices in relation to unattended experiments. The standard included an operational form and risk assessment guidance.

It was pointed out that it was the responsibility of the person conducting experiments to ensure that all the necessary information (including shut down procedures) was made available to all technical staff. Information would be provided and fed back through departmental health and safety committees.

The Committee agreed the standard.

Safe Use of Cryogenic Liquids Standard

The purpose of the Paper 15 was to ensure minimum standards, consistent information and a hierarchy of control processes. The standard included generic risk assessment guidance. It also reinforced the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) requirements (from an inspection in 2015) that filling activities should only be carried out in suitable locations.

It was suggested that the standard be extended to cover cryogenic materials, not just cryogenic liquids. The Scientific Safety Adviser agreed to update the standard.

Scientific Safety Adviser

The Scientific Safety Adviser would review the risk assessment (page 7) and clarify whether the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) referred to should be goggles (for smaller volumes) and / or face masks (for larger volumes).

Scientific Safety Adviser

The Committee agreed the standard, subject to the amendments proposed above.

813 SCIENTIFIC SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE, MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2017

The Scientific Safety Adviser raised the following points on behalf of the Sub-Committee:

Action 10055 Purchase of laser pointers

Concerns had been raised at the Sub-Committee about the purchase of laser pointers, particularly from the internet, which were of a class and power which could potentially cause harm and many of which were labelled incorrectly (e.g. being labelled as less powerful than they actually were).

There was therefore a need to communicate the risks of purchasing off the internet and how to use them safely. This had been done via the recent edition of the health and safety newsletter and briefings to departmental health and safety committees.

It was suggested that the Scientific Safety Adviser liaised with the ITP shop on campus as they sold laser pointers.

**Scientific Safety
Adviser**

The Department of Physics had agreed to test laser pointers if requested.

Action 10056 Fire Risk Assessments

The Sub-Committee had agreed that emergency contact information (particularly for the benefit of the emergency services) should be posted on all laboratory doors and that this recommendation be brought to this Committee for consideration.

The Scientific Safety Adviser had been gathering information from GW4 colleagues and would be following this up.

The Faculty of Science Management Representative would be concerned about any of the emergency services making a decision based on information on a door. Instead, they should liaise with the relevant staff to find out what was going on in a building. The Head of UHSE pointed out that Security Services would be the first responders, so any information on doors would be used by them. Also this linked to the hazardous materials database and there was a risk that the Fire & Rescue Service may not even go into a potentially benign environment if all the relevant information required was not available and up-to-date.

The Scientific Safety Adviser would discuss this matter further with the Faculty of Science Management Representative, the Faculty of Engineering & Design Management Representative and the Head of Security Services.

**Scientific Safety
Adviser**

The Committee noted the minutes.

814 UPDATE ON SENTENCING GUIDELINES FOR HEALTH & SAFETY OFFENCES

The Head of UHSE explained that, following the introduction of the new sentencing guidance in February 2016, there had been a profound shift in the penalties for health and safety offences.

The aim was to achieve consistency of sentencing and ensure that it was more proportionate to the offence. The guidelines would apply to staff at all levels across organisations, not just senior management. The guidelines would come into force in November 2018 and would be applied to all cases heard after this date. So potentially any offences committed now would fall within the new sentencing regime.

The Committee noted the report.

815 UPDATE ON HEALTH PROMOTION EVENTS / EVENT CALENDAR 2018

The Head of UHSE had reflected on the health promotion events run over the last year, some of which had been supported by the Students' Union and Trades Unions. The events had largely been successful and there had been a good take up.

The draft calendar of events for 2018 was discussed. It focussed on stress and mental health issues: the aim was to run more events involving mental health professionals and a Time for Change café.

The Committee noted the report and the calendar.

816 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

The UCU Representative (MC) – sought clarification from the Chair of this Committee regarding recent correspondence requesting access to workload monitoring data under the Safety Committees and Safety Representatives Regulations 1977. The UCU representative stated that health and safety representatives had a right to see health and safety information and that the University was in contravention of the regulations by denying access to this data.

The Chair explained that the information he had provided in writing had come from the University's Legal Office. The advice given was that the Trades Union representatives were only entitled to have access to information that the University was legally required to keep. The University did not have to provide access to other information.

The UCU representative questioned the wording in the response which to him indicated that the University was not "allowed" to provide this information. The UCU representative stated his view that the workload monitoring data was a means of managing stress relating to workload and therefore should be available for the Unions to inspect and in any case there was nothing that prohibited the University from providing this data. The Chair advised that the University's Senior Legal Adviser had offered to meet with the UCU Representative to discuss his response further. The Chair advised that he would request that the Senior Legal Adviser provided the UCU representative with a further response to clearly set out the University's position. The UCU Representative requested that this be provided in writing. The Chair confirmed he welcomed the work undertaken by the safety representatives and would ensure the information was provided to the UCU Representative.

Chair

Driving at Work Safety Policy and Work-Related Driving Safety Standard

The Faculty of Science Management Representative reported that he was not happy with the response he had received from the Legal Office in relation to the issue he had raised about the amount of data requested from drivers of vehicles. He considered it was above and beyond what was reasonably required and raised concerns about the safe storage of such information, particularly as it was being held on paper. The Chair agreed to follow this up and request a further response from the Legal Office.

Chair

817 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, 13 March 2018

The meeting concluded at 2.00pm

Chair: