



Meeting: UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Date and Time: Tuesday 9 March 2021
13.15

Venue: MS Teams

Present:	Richard Brooks	Chair / Director of Human Resources
	Chris Young	Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services
	Sophie Hamer	Sports Operations Manager
	Stephen Godber	Director of Estates Operations
	Malcolm Holley	Faculty of Science Management Representative
	Andrew Nash	ISO & Compliance Manager, Accommodation & Hospitality
	Mike Porter	Head of Security Services
	Julian Sulley	Faculty of Engineering & Design Management Representative
	Michael Carley	UCU Representative
	Steve Nicholson	UNISON Representative
	Brigit Nunes Simoes	Technical & Experimental Representative
	Rodrigues	
	Melanie Torrance	Management, Specialist & Administration Representative
Apologies:	Stuart Bennett	UCU Representative
	James Paradise	UNISON Representative
	Simon Hockenhull	UNITE Representative
	Tom Sawko	Students' Union Officer (Sports)
In attendance:	Sue Stove Schofield	Secretary
	Heather Girling	Staff Health & Wellbeing Manager (<i>for agenda item 7</i>)

ACTION

935 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

The apologies were noted.

936 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 15 December 2020 were approved as a correct record of the proceedings.

937 MATTERS ARISING

Minute 930 – SHEW Update:

Notable Accidents and Incidents

The Director of Estates Operations confirmed he had been advised that all porter cleaners who needed them were provided with puncture proof gloves. He added that the University had a waste compactor on campus so there should be no requirement for manual compacting of waste bags.

Workstation Assessments

The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services had worked with the ISO & Compliance Manager to ensure that the specific equipment ordered for a member of staff with back problems was procured and delivered. They had also discussed how delays in the procurement process could be avoided in future.

The Chair added that such matters could be escalated to him if necessary and he would raise them with the Director of Finance.

Employee Assistance Programme

The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services reported that he had investigated the possibility of providing EAP sessions on campus when more staff returned on site and pointed out that further financial support would be required to implement this. The Chair noted that the possibility of providing sessions on campus could be reviewed again in future as appropriate. In the meantime, EAP sessions would continue to be delivered online rather than in person.

938 SHEW UPDATE (INCLUDING INCIDENTS AND AUDIT UPDATE)

Accidents and Incidents

RIDDOR Reportable Accidents and Incidents

There had been two RIDDOR reportable accidents since the last report.

Firstly, a member of staff in ahs was injured whilst manoeuvring a trolley which hit a door frame. No action was recommended.

Secondly, a student in the Department of Mechanical Engineering had been injured whilst using a Stanley Knife, seemingly in a rush. The injured party was given first aid then taken to hospital for treatment.

Significant Non-RIDDOR Accidents

Fall on Stairs

A member of Security Services had lost their footing and tripped over their own feet. No faults were found on the stairs where the fall occurred. However, other areas of the stairs were in poor condition and repairs had been made.

Road Traffic Collision

A University vehicle driven by a member of staff had driven into the roadside barriers in the underdeck (adjacent to 8 West). It was possible that driving out of

the dark underdeck into daylight could have contributed to the collision, but the cause of the accident was still being investigated. In the meantime, changes had been made to the barriers and the road markings were being reviewed.

Significant Fire Incidents

There had been a small kitchen fire in Solsbury Court. It seems that a tea towel had been left on a hob that was off but was still hot. This was discovered by Security on a routine patrol and they extinguished the fire.

WFH Computer Workstation Assessments

SHEW had dealt with over 1300 workstation assessment during the last year. There were some outstanding issues. Initially assessments were being dealt with over MS Teams. However, for particularly complex cases the plan was to ask employees to attend site so they could have an in-person (but socially distanced) assessment. In some cases, it may be necessary to engage a specialist ergonomist to visit campus to assist.

Fire Safety

Fire Risk Assessments

Several fire risk assessments have been completed since December and a catch-up programme was underway to ensure the programme was back on track by the end of March.

Fire Drills

Security Services have been undertaking fire drills in residential buildings. Drills in non-residential buildings would be undertaken soon. SHEW would liaise with heads of department and Technical Directors to ensure that teaching, (including lab-based teaching) and research activities were disrupted as little as possible.

Fire Safety Training

The launch of the new online training module in January had been delayed due to copyright issues. These had now been resolved and the module would be launched in the next couple of weeks.

Fire Safety Adviser

The University has had a vacancy for a Fire Safety Adviser (0.4 FTE) since early 2020. The position was now being advertised and it was expected that recruitment would be completed by early June.

Health and Wellbeing

Occupational Health

The number of pre-employment questionnaires was down by a third compared to what would normally be expected at this point in the year. However, the number of referrals to Occupational Health had not reduced. It may be that this was due to an increase in COVID-19 related issues, but it was likely that the impact of the COVID-

19 vaccination programme would be reflected in referral figures over the coming months.

The University was still waiting for guidance as to whether people who were Clinically Vulnerable or Clinically Exceptionally Vulnerable and who had had their first vaccination, should continue to work from home.

Employee Assistance Programme

The overall number of people using the service had not increased, but more people were asking for additional sessions. Users are also accessing session more frequently than had previously been the case so both the frequency and intensity of use had increased. All requests for additional sessions were reviewed by the counsellors who determined if there was a good clinical reason for continuing the sessions. It seemed that there was much greater anxiety about COVID-19 at home and work. Also, there had been a worrying increase in the number of people presenting with suicidal thoughts and others reporting domestic abuse issues. All requests for additional sessions have been approved.

The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services emphasized that EAP was anonymous. SHEW did not receive the identity of anyone requesting extended support, but it did receive information on underlying reasons for the requests.

The Committee noted the report.

939 POLICY REVIEWS

The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services explained that the usual policy review process had been delayed due to COVID-19. The following policies had now been reviewed by SHEW and only required minor, cosmetic changes.

1. Radon in the Workplace Safety Standard

No changes were proposed.

The University was required to undertake onsite monitoring and was due to repeat the required monitoring this year.

2. Ionising Radiation Safety Standard

No changes were proposed.

3. Hazardous Substances Safety Policy

No changes were proposed.

4. First Aid Policy

No changes were proposed to the policy. However, an additional appendix had been added to reflect the latest guidance from the National Resuscitation Council regarding the provision of Pulmonary Cardiac Resuscitation in light of COVID-19. The guidance recommended chest compression rather than mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. This reflected the guidance which Security Services and the University's first aiders were already following.

SHEW was in the process of distributing 'grab bags' to all first aiders. The bags would contain items such as gloves, appropriate face coverings, eye protection, disposable aprons and hand sanitiser.

5. New and Expectant Mothers Safety Standard

The proposed changes were in relation to the additional risk that COVID-19 may pose to those who were pregnant with underlying health conditions at any point in gestation. Such people would be classed as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and would be advised to shield and work from home, or not work at all. In addition, there may be an increased risk after the 28th week of pregnancy and the advice would again be to work from home or not at all.

SHEW had advised that line managers speak to HR advisers about how workloads could be managed or reallocated for staff who were pregnant. SHEW would also be updating the online risk assessments.

The UCU Representative requested that the Risk Assessment Guidance (Appendix 1 of the Standard) be passed on to heads of department as well as line managers. The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services confirmed that requirements would be made clear to heads of department.

The Technical & Experimental Representative asked for advice regarding working arrangements for a new member of staff who was pregnant and would be joining the University from another country. The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services explained that whether they needed to work from home would depend on if they had an underlying health condition and what stage of gestation they were at.

6. Health and Safety Training Standard

No changes were proposed to the standard.

However, the HASMPA audit programme required departments and teams to keep records of health and safety training. As the current Standard did not cover this, it was proposed to add an appendix to the Standard to provide guidance to managers on how to meet this requirement.

7. Violence at Work Policy

No changes were proposed.

8. Children and Young People Safety Standard

No changes were proposed.

9. Policy Review Timetable

SHEW had produced an updated schedule of policy and standard reviews to identify the priorities. Those which needed immediate attention included the University's overarching Health and Safety Policy and Policy Statement, also the Asbestos Management Policy, the Control of Legionella Policy and the Management of Contractors Policy. Reviews of these policies had been delayed

due to changes in staffing and uncertainty about arrangements. However, the intention was to bring the revised policies to the June meeting of this Committee.

The overarching Fire Safety Policy was also due for review, but it was expected that there may be significant changes to legislation over the coming months as a result of the ongoing enquiries into the Grenfell tower fire. So, the policy would be reviewed in due course in line with any legislative changes. In the meantime, the current policy reflected current legislative requirements.

The Committee noted the report.

940 WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

The Staff Health & Wellbeing Manager joined the meeting

As agreed at the Extraordinary meeting of this Committee in the Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services had asked the Staff Health & Wellbeing Manager to attend this meeting to update all Committee members on wellbeing activities.

The Staff Health & Wellbeing Manager shared a presentation on Safety, Health and Employee wellbeing, which focussed on three areas: Promote; Prevent; and Support.

Promote

- Engaging with MIND / GoldmanSachs partnership
- Wellbeing champion network
- Wellbeing champion support and training
- Training and development
- Bespoke programmes
- Online resources and engagement sessions

Prevent

- Wellbeing action plans
- Workplace wellbeing wheel

Support

- 121 conversations
- EAP
- Signposting (e.g. the new wellbeing topic web page)

The Chair thanked the Staff Health & Wellbeing Manager for her presentation.

The Staff Health & Wellbeing Manager left the meeting.

941 CORONAVIRUS

The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services gave a verbal update.

Teaching

SHEW had undertaken a top to bottom check of every teaching space, in preparation for the resumption of practical teaching. The intention was that SHEW would do the same for all teaching spaces ahead of any wider return to In Person

Teaching (IPT) activities and it was expected this would take place over the next few weeks.

There had been a lot of changes to government guidance over the last 4-5 days, so all standard risk assessments were being reviewed and revised. They would include clearer guidance on the transmission of small droplets, ventilation and face coverings. It was emphasized that the current guidance was still to stay local and for people to work at home where this can be done effectively.

Research

With the exception of clinical trials, human participation research is not permitted under the current guidance (largely due to the Stay at Home requirements on non-workers). The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services thought this may change from 12 April, but further guidance was awaited.

Travel

The University was still offering tests to people who would be travelling abroad and also Test to Release tests (taken on day 5 or later after arrival in the UK). Additional tests for those returning from abroad (on day two and day eight after arrival in the UK) formed part of the government managed scheme and these have to be booked and paid for in advance of travel to the UK. If this regime is in place when overseas business travel resumes then fees should be claimed through expenses.

The UNISON Representative pointed out that there were already quite a lot of students back on campus and asked what the guidance was for them travelling to and from home for the Easter holidays. The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services explained that students would be allowed to travel home for Easter (and back again) between 8th March and 29th April but would be limited to one journey home and one journey back to university. It would be recommended that, as at Christmas, they undertook LFT before travelling from either destination. This guidance applied to England, but students could travel within the United Kingdom. International students would also be allowed to travel abroad under the same caveats, but it was recommended that they did not do so.

Vaccination

The Deputy Director Safety & Wellbeing Services did not expect that COVID-19 vaccination was likely to be made mandatory for workers and it remained to be seen whether vaccination passports would be introduced.

The Faculty of Science Management Representative suggested that the University could make vaccination mandatory for staff and possibly for students too. He pointed out that the University had spent huge sums of money in an effort to be COVID-secure and many staff had student facing roles, so it was important for people to take measure to protect others, not just themselves. The Chair pointed out that the University would need to monitor how the situation evolved across the country and across the HE sector.

The Committee noted the update.

There was none.

943 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next routine Committee meeting would take place on Tuesday, 8 June 2021.

The meeting concluded at 14.05

Chair: Richard Brooks