

NAPIER UNIVERSITY

UNIVERSITY COURT

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 23 May 2007
at 4.00pm in Room 209, Sighthill Campus**

PRESENT: Dr L Burley (Convener), Dr Harry Beswick (Biological Safety Officer), Dr C Donnelly (Health, Life and Social Sciences), Mr J Goodlet (AMICUS), Professor J Kubie (Principal's Representative) (Items 1 - 5), Mr M Mackay (UNISON), Ms M Philip (UNISON), Dr M Sanderson (EIS/ULA), Mr A Simm (NSA), Mr H Wollman (University Court).

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms J Amour (Secretariat), Mr M Blair (Human Resources), Mr T A Brown (Facilities Services), Dr T Cattermole (Occupational Health), Mr P Hughes (Facilities Services), Mrs M Julier (Clerk), Ms J Tennant (Occupational Health), Ms L Young (Safety Adviser).

APOLOGIES: Mrs A Crawford (University Court), Mr D Davidson (Principal's Representative), Mr B Earl (NSA), Dr J Ensor (Principal's Representative), Dr T Fernandes (University Court), Prof. M Prowse, (Health, Life and Social Sciences), Ms A Varey (EIS/ULA), Dr G Webber (University Safety Officer).

1. WELCOME

The Convener welcomed to the Committee Dr M Sanderson who was replacing Ms A Varey as the EIS/ULA Representative and Dr H Beswick who was replacing Professor C Bryce as the Biological Safety Officer for the duration of Professor Bryce's secondment. The apologies received were noted.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 14 FEBRUARY 2007 (HS/07/08)

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2007 were approved subject to the following addition to item 5b Unscheduled Fire Evacuations (HS/06/21) – "The relocation of sensors away from the showers in Student Residences to be investigated by the Fire Officer once in post".

3. MATTERS ARISING

a) Stress Implementation Group/Health Promotion Group

The Director of Human Resources advised that he and his team were looking at putting in place the necessary actions to strengthen the Health Promotion Group to enable it to continue the work of the Stress Implementation Group. Assurance was provided that close contact would be maintained with the Health and Safety Committee. Some concern was expressed in relation to the Health Promotion Group taking this work

forward within its current remit and membership, which was not representative of the whole university; further discussion took place under Items 4 and 5.

4. **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE 2006/07 (HS/07/09)**

The Convener introduced the Annual Report and highlighted that the University had once again been re-accredited with the SHAW Gold and ROSPA Gold Awards. Additionally two of the internally run Health and Safety Courses were now accredited by IOSH.

Discussion took place around the report and it was noted that the level of occupational health services the University provides, in comparison to others in the sector, is above average.

In connection with Item 3 – Stress Implementation Group/Health Promotion Group, the Committee was advised that a review of the membership and remit of the Health Promotion Group will be carried out. UNISON requested sight of the remit of this group.

DECISIONS

- **The Committee approved the report for submission to the University Court.**
- **A copy of the remit of the Health Promotion Group to be provided to UNISON.**

5. **MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS IMPLEMENTATION GROUP FINAL REPORT (HS/07/10)**

The final report of the Managing Work-Related Stress Implementation Group was presented. The convener of the implementation group highlighted once again that the University does not have a major problem with stress and is comparable with other universities. However there are some areas for improvement as recommended in this paper. Although it was recommended that the Health Promotion Group (HPG) take forward the co-ordinating role, it was recognised that the Group itself was not an executive body and could not progress the recommendations contained within the final report which required action by senior management. It was recognised that it would be difficult for the HPG as currently constituted to progress the work-related stress matters, but both the membership and remit of the Group would be reviewed in order for this to be possible. It was also acknowledged to be important that the Health & Safety Committee received periodic progress updates from the HPG.

It was agreed that the Director of Human Resources should take the final report to CMT and that an update from CMT on the planned actions should be provided at the next meeting. The Convener would also find an opportunity to draw the attention of senior members of the Executive to the recommended areas for management action.

DECISIONS

- **Director of Human Resources to take the final report to CMT.**
- **Health and Safety Committee Convener to draw the attention of senior members of the Executive to the report.**
- **An update from CMT to be provided at the next meeting.**

6. ACCIDENT STATISTICS

a) Summary Statistics (HS/07/11)

A paper detailing the analysis of accident statistics during the period 8 January 2007 to 8 April 2007 was discussed and noted.

The number of reported accidents had decreased compared with the last reporting period; the majority of accidents were apportioned to “hot/cold contact”. Discussion followed and the Committee were advised that these accidents were mainly due to lids coming off hot drink cups; this is being investigated by the Health and Safety Team.

b) Serious Accidents / Hazardous Incidents (HS/07/12)

A paper summarising the serious accidents and hazardous incidents occurring during the period 8 January 2007 to 8 April 2007 was discussed and noted.

There were no serious accidents involving students, staff or contractors/visitors. One hazardous incident was reported which involved a ceiling collapse at Canaan Lane.

Two potential fire risks were also noted, a full investigation and report was carried out.

DECISION

- **The Committee noted the Accident Statistics.**

7. EMERGENCY EVACUATION REPORTS

a) Scheduled (HS/07/13)

The scheduled evacuations during the period 8 January 2007 to 8 April 2007 were received and noted. All faults were reported to Facilities Services for action. It was noted that additional Fire Wardens and Senior Fire Co-ordinators are required in several areas.

b) Unscheduled (HS/07/14)

A paper detailing unscheduled evacuations from University property during the period 8 January 2007 to 8 April 2007 was received and noted. The Committee were advised that the number of unscheduled evacuations at Riego Street had reduced significantly since the last reporting period.

DECISION

- **The Committee noted the Emergency Evacuation Reports.**

8. FIRE POLICY (HS/07/15)

The new fire legislation requires the University to have a Fire Safety Policy and Management Plan in place. The Committee noted the policy.

DECISION

- **The Committee noted the Fire Safety Policy and Management Plan.**

9. ZERO TOLERANCE TO AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE (HS/07/16)

A paper was presented outlining union concerns regarding an increase in aggressive and at times abusive behaviour towards staff who deal directly with students. UNISON proposed a poster campaign to highlight zero tolerance to this type of behaviour to which they would donate £1,000.

Members were concerned to hear about the allegations of aggression and abuse currently under investigation, but commented that there was little evidence to support the conclusion of a worrying increase in levels of this behaviour. It was also commented that staff behaviour toward students was occasionally the subject of complaints and that any approach to this sensitive topic needed to be even-handed.

Concerns were raised about whether a poster campaign would be the most effective way of tackling such a problem, and that displaying this type of poster may convey a negative effect and could create a poor impression of the University especially to visitors. Whilst the Committee agreed that it was important to deal with any aggression and violence they felt that existing procedures and the Bullying and Harassment Policy were sufficient to address this.

The NSA expressed support for action against students behaving inappropriately but cautioned against escalating the issue out of proportion.

It was agreed not to take any further action and to decline the UNISON offer at this time.

UNISON stated that they would investigate if others in the Higher Education Sector display posters regarding zero tolerance.

DECISION

- **No further action necessary at this time.**

10. FIRST AID REVIEW

An oral update was provided on the First Aid Review that was currently being carried out across the University by the Occupational Health Service. It had been anticipated that the full report would be available at this meeting however due to a low return of forms this had not been possible. A full report would be available at the next meeting of the Health and Safety Committee.

DECISION

- **The completed First Aid Review Report to be provided at the October Health and Safety Committee Meeting.**

11. **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

All 4pm:

Wednesday 24 October 2007

Thursday 21 February 2008

Wednesday 21 May 2008

Venues to be confirmed.

The meeting closed at 5.05 pm.