

APPROVED
CIRCULATED

HS(10/11)13
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UNIVERSITY COURT
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 13 October 2010
at 4.00pm in the Blackford Room, Craighouse Campus

- PRESENT:** Ms M Ali (Court)(Convenor); Mr J Goodlet (Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries); Mr M Mackay (UNISON); Mr G McCarra (Court); Mr R Mason (EIS/ULA); Ms M Philip (UNISON); Ms P Woodburn (Court); Mr R Wright (Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences).
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Ms L Addison (Occupational Health Advisor, Connaught plc); Ms M Easton (Deputy Director, Human Resources) (*vice* Mrs Cook); Mrs A Smith (Deputy Director, Property & Facilities Services) (*vice* Mr Hughes); Mr S Logie (Clerk to Court & Assistant Director, Corporate Affairs) (*vice* Dr Webber); Ms L Young (Head of Health & Safety); Mr J McDermott (Governance Officer)(Clerk).
- APOLOGIES:** Ms K Bylinska (President NSA)(Court); Mrs M Cook (Director, Human Resources); Professor M Darlison (Biological Safety Officer); Dr J Ensor (Business School); Mr P Hughes (Director, Property & Facilities Services); Dr M Sanderson (EIS/ULA); Professor Dame Joan Stringer DBE (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); Dr G Webber (University Safety Officer/University Secretary).

1. WELCOME

- 1.1 The Convenor welcomed all participants to the first meeting of the session, noting that this was her first meeting as Convenor. She recorded an appreciation of her predecessor, Dr Burley, and looked forward to a fruitful working relationship with the Committee. A particular welcome was given to those members and attendees who were present for the first time. The Convenor also welcomed those members whose designations had changed and others whose membership had continued from the previous year. The officers attending in place of others were also welcomed. The apologies were **noted**.
- 1.2 It was noted that the Constitution of the Committee had changed substantially since the last meeting and as a result some members had demitted office. An appreciation was therefore stated for the contribution made whilst in membership of the Committee of Professor Sloan, Mr Davidson and Professor Kubie.

**2. TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND CURRENT MEMBERSHIP
(HS(10/11)01)**

- 2.1 As normal at the first meeting of the session, the Committee received a note of its Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership. It was noted that the paper reflected the outcome of the Governance Review that had been approved by Court in June. It was reported that the Review had been largely content with the Terms of Reference, although some updating of the wording had been made. Interested

parties had been consulted as part of the process. The several changes made to the Constitution were **noted**.

3. ANNUAL CYCLE OF BUSINESS (HS(10/11)02)

- 3.1 The annual cycle of business was **approved** as a reasonable schedule of standing items that would put into effect the Terms of Reference. It was noted that Court had requested all of its committees to conduct an annual review of business at the final meeting of the Session. It was further noted that there was, of course, opportunity for members to bring other items to the Committee in the course of the year.
- 3.2 With reference to the Terms of Reference, it was **agreed** to provide the new members with details of the University's health & safety related policies and other suitable information. **Action: Clerk in liaison with H&S/HR teams.**

4. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2010 (HS(09/10)29)

- 4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were **approved** as an accurate record, subject to a change in terminology in paragraph 6.2 to replace 'Student Records' with 'Student Affairs Special Needs and Diversity Team'.

5. MATTERS ARISING

- 5.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes other than those items already on the agenda.

6. THE MANAGEMENT OF FIRST AID & REQUIREMENTS FOR HEALTH SURVEILLANCE (HS(10/11)03)

- 6.1 The Deputy Director of HR introduced the paper which had drawn on the needs analyses that had been conducted by the OHS provider. It was emphasised that the paper was for members to note and that members would not be asked to approve any of its recommendations, which were properly an Executive matter.
- 6.2 The paper reported an intention to cease making additional payments to first-aiders within the University. The UNISON representatives made clear their opposition to the removal of payments, suggesting that such a move might discourage persons from taking on the responsibility and result in the University having reduced cover. It was suggested that it would be useful to clarify the number of first aiders that was legally required to be provided. It was recognised that pay and conditions were not appropriate for this Committee to consider, but that it would be appropriate for the Committee to receive update reports on the provision of first-aiders on each of the University's campuses.
- 6.3 Informed by a contribution by the Occupational Health Advisor, it was agreed that the Committee should receive greater detail of the most recent needs analysis of the overall arrangements and facilities for first aid provision.

DECISIONS:

- 6.4 **To receive at the next meeting a further paper on the topic giving greater detail on the issue and addressing the concerns of members.**
- 6.5 **To receive update reports on the numbers of first aiders at each campus.**

7. ACCIDENT STATISTICS APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2010

a) Summary Statistics (HS(10/11)04)

7.1 The analysis of accident statistics during the latest reporting period was discussed and **noted**. It was welcomed that the figures continued to report such a low incidence as a percentage of population although it was **agreed** that the instances involving cleaning and catering staff would continue to be monitored in particular. The statistics suggested that these groups had a greater accident rate (4%) than others.

b) Serious Accidents / Hazardous Incidents/Fire Incidents (HS(10/11)05)

7.2 It was welcomed that in the reporting period there had been no serious accidents to students, staff or contractors. The sole hazardous incident was noted to be subject of a separate paper (HS(10/11)07).

7.3 There had been three fire incidents in the reporting period, all in student residences in the final weeks of Trimester 2. It was noted that a full investigation had been conducted in each case and actions taken accordingly. Student residents would continue to be made aware of their responsibilities. It was further noted that there were on-going steps to embed a safety culture among staff and students, with the forthcoming move to Sighthill affording a particular opportunity to provide reminders, especially in the new environment.

7.4 The report was **noted**.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICES SUMMARY (HS(10/11)06)

8.1 It was reported that in the reporting period there had been six Health and Safety Notices issued. Two of the notices related to the issues reported in paper (HS(10/11)07) and four related to the control of contractors. The context was given that the period April to September is traditionally the busiest for contractors being on campus, with a total of 3,341 'contractor days' being recorded over this period.

8.2 Reassurance was given that procedures were in place to ensure the management of contractors. This includes the proper induction of contractors and training being given to the members of University staff who act as Contract Administrators. It was noted that should contractors give cause for concern, they are removed from the list of approved contractors. In discussion, some further instances of unsafe behaviour were raised and it was noted that any member of staff observing such instances should report them through the appropriate routes at the earliest opportunity.

8.3 The report was **noted** and it was requested that a note of those contractors that had been removed from the approved list would be submitted to the next meeting.
Action: Property & Facilities.

9. HAZARDOUS INCIDENT: CENTRE FOR TIMBER ENGINEERING (HS(10/11)07)

9.1 The Committee received the paper which described: the hazardous incident; the circumstances in which the incident came to light; the outcome of the subsequent investigation; a further instance of unsafe behaviour in the academic area concerned; and the recommendations and actions that had been carried out to remedy the situation and to prevent a recurrence. The seriousness of the

hazardous incident was noted, and concern was expressed in particular regarding the implications for Environmental Protection, COSHH regulations and fire safety. It was questioned whether there was a suitably robust safety culture in the area and whether there was an appropriately proactive management approach.

- 9.2 In discussion, the structure of accountability for research institutes was described and it was noted that each Institute Director reported to a Dean of Faculty. It was reported that discussions had taken place in the faculty concerned and that there was recognition of the need to enhance awareness of H&S matters in some specific areas. It was noted that spot checks and audits were being considered and that all staff in the area concerned would attend suitable training in the near future. It was further noted that following discussions with the Head of Health & Safety, a more holistic approach for high risk projects had now been agreed by the relevant Dean.
- 9.3 The remedial action was welcomed by the Committee and further reassurance was sought with regard to the prevention of future instances in areas undertaking high risk activities. It was requested that a suitable policy be developed, the implementation of which would usefully be bolstered by suitable learning materials.

DECISION:

- 9.4 The Head of Health & Safety, in collaboration with the Director of Property & Facilities and colleagues in the Faculties, to develop a policy on High Risk Research Areas prior to the next meeting.**

10. EMERGENCY EVACUATION REPORTS APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2010

- a) Scheduled (HS(10/11)08)**

10.1 The analysis of scheduled emergency evacuations during the latest reporting period was received and **noted**.

- b) Unscheduled (HS(10/11)09)**

10.4 The details of unscheduled evacuations during the period was received and **noted**. It was also noted that steps would continue to be taken to maintain awareness across the University.

11. JOINT COMMUNITY STUDENT AWARENESS (HS(10/11)10)

11.1 The Committee **noted** the on-going awareness initiatives that sought to encourage safe and responsible behaviour among students in residential accommodation. The initiatives were commended.

12. MORNINGSIDE UNITED CHURCH (HS(10/11)11) & (HS(10/11)12)

12.1 The Committee considered the papers that related to the provision of fire safety systems and equipment in a facility that had been rented on a short-term basis to house teaching activity. The UNISON Safety Representative reported concern that the lack of provision in the facility had been brought to the attention of the University's Fire Officer very close to the date of occupation. This resulted in a short timescale for conducting a fire risk assessment and for making the necessary provision. The attendant cost was also reported. The Deputy Director of Property & Facilities Services gave a response in which it was reported that before any

students or staff had made use of the facility, suitable steps had been taken to ensure that no-one would be at risk. The duty of care had therefore been met.

12.2 The Committee recognised that whilst the primary use of the facility, that of a place of worship, did not require a fire system; the change of use to a teaching facility meant that a full fire risk assessment should have been conducted at an early stage. The Committee requested reassurance that:

- the policies already in place to govern fire risk assessments properly covered the scenario of taking on new accommodation (if necessary the policy to be revised to ensure that it is fit for purpose); and
- the Executive would ensure that proper procedures would be followed in any future external hires of accommodation.

12.3 It was stated that lessons had been learned from the episode and that full risk assessments would be undertaken for any future similar instances, with the Property & Facilities team working in tandem with the Health & Safety team.

DECISION:

12.4 The Head of Health & Safety and Director of Property & Facilities to provide the reassurance requested above.

13. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

13.1 Wednesday 02 February 2011 at 4.00 pm in the Blackford Room, Craighouse
Wednesday 11 May 2011 at 4.00 pm in the Castle Room, Craighouse