

APPROVED
CIRCULATED

HS(10/11)23
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UNIVERSITY COURT
HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 2 February 2011
at 4.00pm in Room 7.B.14, Sighthill 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); Dr M Sanderson (EIS/ULA); Dr G Webber (University Safety Officer/University Secretary); Mr R Wright (Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences).

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms L Addison (Occupational Health Advisor, Santia plc); Mrs M Cook (Director, Human Resources); Mr P Hughes (Director, Property & Facilities Services); Ms L Young (Head of Health & Safety); Mr J McDermott (Governance Officer)(Clerk).

APOLOGIES: Ms K Bylinska (President NSA)(Court); Professor M Darlison (Biological Safety Officer); Dr J Ensor (Business School); Ms M Philip (UNISON); Professor Dame Joan Stringer DBE (Principal & Vice-Chancellor); Ms P Woodburn (Court).

1. WELCOME

1.1 The Convenor welcomed all participants to the meeting. The apologies were **noted**.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2010 (HS(10/11)13)

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were **approved** as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

a) Sighthill Health & Safety Information (minute 7(b)) (HS(10/11)14)

3.1 The Committee was informed of the information that had been provided to staff and students who had moved to the newly re-opened Sighthill Campus. The information had been disseminated on both the staff intranet and the student portal. The Committee also noted the other safety activities, such as fire risks assessments, that had been undertaken. It was reported that an evacuation of the campus was scheduled to take place within the fortnight. The report was **noted** and welcomed.

b) Health and Safety Policy for High Risk Research Areas (minute 9.4) (HS(10/11)15)

3.2 A paper addressing the concerns raised at the previous meeting was received. It was noted that existing policies were already applicable to research activities, along with all other aspects of the University's operations. However, in the light of the case discussed at the previous meeting, the Executive had undertaken to review the procedures associated with these policies, especially as they related to research activities. To inform this review, the Committee was asked to comment on a series of principles outlined in the paper. The intention was stated to ensure that

proportionate assessments would take place at appropriate stages of activity so that research could be conducted safely but without unnecessary bureaucracy. The responsibilities of each of the Institute Directors with regard to Health and Safety had been clarified as being equivalent to those of a Head of School and this was being emphasised by the Executive. In particular, Institute Directors were now required to submit annual health and safety reports.

3.3 In discussion it was noted that a detailed dialogue was taking place with academic staff in the Faculty most involved in 'high risk' research activity. It was noted that a combination of firm executive direction and the provision of suitable training should help to avoid any recurrence of the poor behaviour previously brought to the attention of the Committee. It was further noted that monitoring and enforcement activity would continue and that this would include spot-checks on the Research Institutes.

3.4 The Committee **noted** and welcomed the information and expressed its reassurance at the approach being taken.

c) Fire Risk Assessment (minute 12)

3.5 The Head of Health & Safety and Director of Property & Facilities Services explained to the Committee the bolstered procedures that were now in place for staff making external bookings for teaching and other facilities. The Committee **noted** the information and expressed its reassurance.

4. ACCIDENT STATISTICS: 6 SEPTEMBER 2010 TO 9 JANUARY 2011

a) Summary Statistics (HS(10/11)16)

4.1 The analysis of accident statistics during the latest reporting period was discussed and **noted**. It was noted that the main issue in the period had been slips and trips. There was, accordingly, an awareness campaign underway to seek to reduce this.

b) Serious Accidents / Hazardous Incidents/Fire Incidents (HS(10/11)17)

4.2 It was noted that there had been one serious accident involving a member of staff. Following the full investigation that had been undertaken, it had been assessed that no remedial action would be required.

4.3 The three hazardous incidents in the reporting period were noted, as was the remedial action that was underway in one case. An investigation was still underway in one case. It was noted that in the third case, no remedial action was required.

4.4 There had been two fire incidents in the reporting period, both in kitchens in student residences. It was noted that a full investigation had been conducted in each case and that steps would continue to be taken to seek the embedding of a safety culture among student residents.

4.5 The report was **noted**.

5. EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS: 6 SEPTEMBER 2010 TO 9 JANUARY 2011

a) Scheduled (HS(10/11)18)

5.1 The analysis of scheduled emergency evacuations during the latest reporting period was received and **noted**. It was further noted that appropriate action had been taken where any difficulties had been encountered.

b) **Unscheduled**

(HS(10/11)19)

- 5.2 The details of unscheduled evacuations during the period was received and **noted**. It was again noted that steps would continue to be taken to maintain awareness across the University, with particular emphasis continuing to be focussed on the student residences.

6. **HEALTH AND SAFETY NOTICES SUMMARY**

(HS(10/11)20)

- 6.1 The Committee **noted** and welcomed the report that no Health and Safety Notices had been issued in the reporting period. It was reported that vigilance would continue as would the on-going process to improve safety practices.
- 6.2 The Committee received the information requested at the previous meeting of the contractors that had been removed from the list of approved contractors. It was welcomed that there had been only one instance of this and the Committee took reassurance that this was not a major problem.

**7. **THE MANAGEMENT OF FIRST AID & REQUIREMENTS FOR HEALTH
SURVEILLANCE****

(HS(10/11)03)

- 7.1 The Director of HR gave the Committee an update report on the topic. It was noted that discussions with the trade unions were still on-going and that it was intended for a more comprehensive paper to be put to the next meeting. It was reported that the University currently had 72 First-Aiders, of whom 12 were security staff. This number was noted to be in excess of that required under the Health & Safety Executive guidance. Dialogue was underway to seek to ensure an appropriate spread across the University and to take account of staff availability. The availability of security staff at different campuses was also subject of some scrutiny. It was noted that the intention to cease making additional payments to first-aiders had been withdrawn.

DECISION:

- 7.2 **To receive at the next meeting a further paper on the topic.**

8. **EGRESS FROM SIGHTHILL CAR PARK**

(HS(10/11)22)

- 8.1 The UNISON Health & Safety representative spoke to the paper that had been added late to the agenda. He explained the concerns over traffic safely leaving the Sighthill Campus. The Director of Facilities and Property Services informed the meeting that liaison was underway with the City Council to seek a solution, both in the short and long terms. It was noted that the roadway immediately outside the campus was a public thoroughfare and thus some formal procedures were required to be followed.
- 8.2 The Committee welcomed the reassurance that the matter was underway and **agreed** that an update report would be given to the next meeting.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- 9.1 Wednesday 11 May 2011 at 4.00 pm in Room 7.B.14, Sighthill (a change of venue)
It was noted that the October meeting would be held on the Merchiston Campus.