

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP TEAM

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 21st November 2017
@ 13:30 in room 2/04 Craiglockhart

Present: Dr G C Webber (University Secretary) (Convenor); Dr G Hutchison (Dean, School of Applied Science) (University Biological Officer); Ms J Dickson (School Support Manager, Business School); Mr W Duff (School Superintendent, School of Arts & Creative Industries); Dr M Rutter (Lecturer, School of Computing); Mr G Sinclair (Lecturer, SEBE); Ms K Stuart (Technical Manager, School of Applied Science); Dr M Sanderson (Lecturer, Business School) (EIS/ ULA); Mr B Fraser (Security Assistant) (UNISON); Ms H Macleod (Vice President Sports & Societies, ENSA); Ms K Dewar (Director, Human Resources & Development); Mr E Munro (Director, Property & Facilities Services); Ms E Young (Head of Health & Safety).

Apologies: Ms M O'Reilly (Lecturer, School of Health & Social Care); Dr N Cimini (Lecturer, SACI) (EIS/ ULA); Mr C Malcolm (Technician) UNISON); Professor A Nolan (Principal & Vice Chancellor); Mr N Ballantyne (Lay member, Court); Ms P Shorney (OH Assist)

In attendance: Mr S Hughes, (Health & Safety Advisor); Mr R Taylor (Fire Safety Advisor); Mr D Cloy (Assistant University Secretary); Ms G Ingram (Governance Officer) (Clerk).

1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

The Convenor welcomed members to the meeting and noted the apologies. A particular welcome was extended to Mr Duff who was attending his first Health & Safety Committee and to Mr Taylor, who would provide further information around the Bainfield Cladding incident later in the meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting held 5th April 2017

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

3. Terms of Reference, Constitution & Current Membership

The Committee **noted** its Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership.

4. Annual Cycle of Business

The annual cycle of business was **approved** as a reasonable schedule of standing items that would put into effect the Terms of Reference.

5. Matters Arising

- (a) *Discussion on relevant "home" for managers training on the Stress Policy and associated guidance to be concluded*- it was noted that this would be covered in item # 6 of the agenda;
- (b) *Communication plan to be developed to support the launch of the Stress Policy and associated guidance*- it was noted that this would be covered in item #6 of the agenda;
- (c) *Director of Property & Facilities to be invited to attend the Joint Schools' Safety Committee to discuss the development/ improvement of formal processes for project completion and hand-over*- the Director confirmed that he had been invited and had attended the committee as discussed. Members were advised that a number of simple actions had arisen and had been addressed as a result.

6. Stress Policy Update

Members were informed of the progress to date on the launch of the University's Management of Stress Policy. It was noted that various mechanisms and resources had been put in place to support the policy. These included:

- (i) Development of a Stress Management intranet page;
- (ii) Establishment of supporting guidance for managers and employees;
- (iii) Access to a managing stress awareness tool;
- (iv) Provision of stress workshops for staff and managers.

The actions taken were welcomed and endorsed by members and the report was **noted**.

7. Bainfield Cladding Report

The Director of Property & Facilities advised that a paper had not been provided for the committee as the University was engaging in litigation with the main contractor following the discovery of hazardous cladding found in the Bainfield accommodation earlier in the year. The University's legal advisers had therefore recommended that the update be limited to a verbal report.

The incident was summarised and members were informed of the remedial action taken. It was confirmed that the affected panels had been removed and replaced.

The Fire Safety Advisor provided members with an update on the Fire Service's involvement during the incident and explained that he had been chiefly responsible for liaising with them. It was clarified that the Service were satisfied with how the incident had been managed.

The Convenor expressed his thanks to all those involved in dealing with the incident and noted the positive outcome for the University.

8. Merchiston Chemical Incident

Members were informed of a chemical incident which took place at the Merchiston Campus last month. Two reactive chemicals had been found in close proximity of each other. Mixed together with water, the chemicals harboured the potential to be explosive.

A full and thorough investigation undertaken as a result of the discovery, during which time it was established that the Ammonium Persulphate had been transferred from the Sappi pilot plant in Teeside as no purchasing records had been found for the substance. It had also not been registered on the University's hazardous substance database.

Members were advised of the actions which had been taken as a result of the incident which were not limited to:

- (i) Ensuring good laboratory housekeeping procedures are in place;
- (ii) Ensuring safe storage of chemicals in workshops, stockrooms and laboratories;
- (iii) Restricting access to cleaning staff (as identified by risk assessment);
- (iv) Ensuring all purchasing, storage and disposal of hazardous substances as per University guidance.

Members discussed the influence of technicians and agreed that increased diligence around the implementation of key policies relating to hazardous chemicals was required. It was agreed that technical staff in Schools should have the relevant authority to control the activities undertaken in laboratory areas. It was further agreed that Deans should ensure that technical staff received the necessary and appropriate support to undertake this responsibility.

It was also suggested that further work was required in order to improve the control and distribution of chemicals within the University.

ACTION: Schools to provide greater clarity around authority levels within control environments/ laboratories. **LY/ Deans**

ACTION: Identify whether further work is necessary to enhance existing policies relating to the movement and distribution of hazardous chemicals on campus.

LY/ EM

The Convenor noted his thanks to all those involved with the incident and extended a specific note of gratitude to the individuals named in the report, commending their actions and quick thinking.

The report was **noted**.

9. Occupational Health Service Report

The Director of Human Resources & Development spoke to the paper. While members were advised that there was generally no cause for concern with the contents of the report, a number of aspects were nevertheless highlighted.

These included *inter alia*

- (i) The total number of management referrals had increased by 4% compared to the same period last year;
- (ii) PFS had the highest number of referrals;
- (iii) 31% of all cases were considered to be work related;
- (iv) The University's Mental Health percentages (41%) were considered to have worsened in comparison to the same period in the previous year and were considerably worse than the sector average (33%).

Members were advised that a number of support mechanisms had been put in place to assist both staff and managers when dealing with instances of stress. These included the provision of specialist training courses run by the University's newly appointed occupational health provider (OH Assist). Members were informed that these courses had proved to be popular and were often oversubscribed.

The Occupational Health Service report was **noted**.

10. Health Surveillance Policy

The Health Surveillance Policy was **noted** by members.

11. SEBE Heavy Structures Lab

Members were advised of a recent H&S audit which had taken place within the School's heavy structures lab. A number of machines had been replaced and improved dust extraction processes had been put in place.

The update was **noted**.

12. Accident Statistics March to August 2017

(a) Summary Statistics

The summary of accident statistics during the last reporting period was **noted**.

(b) Serious Accidents/ Hazardous Incidents/ Fire Incidents

It was **noted** that there had been two hazardous incidents during the reporting period. One incident involved a faulty overhead power cube. A full investigation was carried out by Property & Facilities and the power cube was tested prior to reinstatement

The other incident took place within the Lindsay Stewart Lecture theatre at Sighthill; the large projector screen unravelled from the ceiling roller fixing, fortunately missing the person using the lecture theatre at the time. A full investigation was carried out by the Health & Safety team and a temporary screen had been put in place until a replacement was installed.

The report was duly **noted**.

13. Emergency Evacuation Reports March to September 2017

(a) Scheduled

It was noted that numerous evacuations had taken place, the details of which were included in the paper. Evacuations from the main campus buildings had improved and were broadly satisfactory, with the exception of an evacuation which took place at 42 Colinton Road. In this case, a defective fire exit to the rear carpark was identified and reported.

Members noted that a significant number of evacuations from student residences were considered to be unsatisfactory. It was clarified that in these cases, the residents had taken longer to evacuate the building. It was noted that members of the Health & Safety team continued to provide information, education and training to staff, students and visitors on evacuation procedures as necessary.

(b) Unscheduled

The details of unscheduled evacuations during the reporting period were received and noted.

Thereafter, the committee **noted** the report.

14. Health & Safety Notices Summary April to September 2017

Members were advised that five Health & Safety notices had been issued during the reporting period and that remedial action had been taken to rectify these, to the satisfaction of the Health & Safety team.

15. Valediction

On behalf of Mr Bannatyne (who was unable to attend the meeting) the Clerk read out a short valediction to the Convenor. It was noted that the Convenor's vast knowledge, experience and understanding about all things health & safety related would be profoundly missed.

Members wholeheartedly endorsed these sentiments and expressed their own gratitude to the Convenor for his immense and significant contributions both to the Committee and the wider University.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th April 2018.