

ASTON UNIVERSITY

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on
Thursday, 3rd February 2011 in G8

Present	Mr G A Evans (Chair)	Ms D Lacey
	Mr A Charters	Mr S Ludlow
	Miss D S Cowan	Mr G Moulder
	Ms J Filby	Mr K Munday
	Mr J Finucane	Ms K Newman-Brown
	Dr M Green	Mr D Pennells
	Mr A Hawkesworth	Mr B Smith
	Mrs A Hegan	Dr N R Smith
	Mr K Hughes	Mrs K Taylor
	Mrs L Jackson	Mr A P Vickers
	Mr M Kirkman	Mr C Vidgeon

Apologies	Dr G A Drahun	Dr M Y L Nye
	Mrs K Glynn	Mrs K Pedwell
	Ms R Hunt	Mrs M Robins
	Dr A Hartley	Mr M Robinson
	Ms A Ingleby	Mr D White
	Mrs A M MacKinlay	

By Invitation Mrs K Parsons (in connection with item 11/16)

In Attendance Mr S Shah

MEMBERSHIP

- 11/01 Noted:
1. Angela Hegan was representing Halcyon Medical, on behalf of Dr Nye.
 2. Mike Kirkman was representing Sport & Recreation and Security, on behalf of Michele Robins and Ian Harrison respectively.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 25th NOVEMBER 2010

- 11/02 Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th November 2010 be accepted as a correct record.
- 11/03 Noted: That, with reference to the wording of Minute 10/145, and in response to a question from Keith Munday, the Chair confirmed that the matter of workplace bullying and harassment had not been 'downgraded' as a consequence of its being classified as a 'welfare' issue rather than as a 'health and safety' issue, and that it would continue to be afforded the appropriate level of concern and attention across the University.

Biological Safety Officer (10/140)

11/04 Resolved: That proposed Terms of Reference for the putative Biological Safety Sub-Committee would be brought to the next Committee meeting (on 14th April 2011).

[Action: K Hughes]

Training Records (10/142 and 10/147)

11/05 Noted:

1. That it was now possible for the Centre for Staff and Graduate Development's training database to communicate directly with the Human Resources Directorate's 'Trent' system, with a view to enabling the recording of attendance at training sessions by all staff.
2. That reports could be provided to Schools and Departments upon request, but that online access to the database would not be available to Schools and Departments directly.
3. That, notwithstanding these welcome improvements, the issue of recording centrally health and safety training provided to postgraduates remained unresolved.

Resolved: That Cliff Vidgeon would meet with Steve Ludlow and Chris Phillips to discuss the training record requirements of SEAS.

[Action: C Vidgeon, S Ludlow, C Phillips]

Fire Safety (10/143)

11/06 Noted: That the system for the induction of University staff was currently under review, and that Gareth Evans, Andrew Vickers and David White had been invited to attend a meeting with Ann Hartley in order to discuss the dissemination of appropriate safety information to new starters.

Health and Safety Audit Group Report (10/146)

11/07 Noted: That Alan Charters would check progress with Malcolm Tonks on research into the efficiencies, quality control and cost effectiveness of the University's PAT testing arrangements.

Resolved: That a report would consequently be brought to the next Committee meeting.

[Action: A Charters, M Tonks]

Constitution of the Health and Safety Committee (10/151)

11/08 Noted: That a suitable candidate for the position of a lay Council member to serve on the Committee had been identified and was in the final stages of being confirmed.

Resolved: To report formal confirmation of the eventual appointment at the next Committee meeting.

[Action: G Evans, A MacKinlay]

Risk Assessment Software (10/154)

- 11/09 Noted:
1. That the University would not be funding centrally the procurement of external risk assessment software at the present time, and that any School or Department wishing to purchase the software (which was web-based) would need to fund it 'locally'.
 2. That Jane Filby expressed an interest in using the software on behalf of ABS.
 3. That this matter was now concluded, and that it required no further action, on the part of the Committee.

Resolved: That Jane Filby should arrange to meet with Mike Robinson outside of Committee to discuss ABS's interest in using the software.

[Action: J Filby]

Health and Safety Responsibilities for Managers and Supervisors (10/155)

- 11/10 Noted: That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, conveyed thanks to Andrew Vickers for his work in preparing this document, which had now been formally adopted by the University Executive and circulated across the institution.

Accident and Incident Reports (10/158)

- 11/11 Resolved: That, as a result of a recent manual handling accident, additional guidance relating to the handling and storage of large deliveries would be developed and circulated to Heads of Department and Executive Deans.

[Action: D Cowan]

Reports from Schools and Departments (10/161)

- 11/12 Resolved: To remind staff, through *Aspects* and prior to the next Committee meeting, of the guidance in relation to emergency evacuation, including arrangements for evacuation of disabled persons.

[Action: D White]

Report From the Major Incident Investigation Team (MIIT) (10/162)

- 11/13 Noted:
1. That, as a result of the recent prosecution over the disturbance of an Asbestos Containing Material, the University had been fined a total of £6015, comprising £2000 for each Regulation breach, £2000 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

2. That, during the court hearing, held on 3rd December 2010, the University had been commended for its cooperation and assistance in the course of the Health and Safety Executive's investigation.
3. That the external security contractors were simultaneously prosecuted and fined a total of £2015.
4. That, in the course of a subsequent discussion regarding the letter sent individually to members of staff by the-then Chief Operating Officer in November 2009, it was pointed out that this was not necessarily the best method of future communication concerning the need to consult with the Estates and Capital Development Department prior to the undertaking of any works which might interfere with the fabric or the services of the building.

It was further noted that staff would continue to be made aware of this requirement by means of communications in *Aspects* and in the Safety Office Newsletter, as well as through the (now-standard) Estates and Capital Development email signatures.

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Guidance (10/163)

11/14 Resolved: That the final version of the revised DSE Policy would be brought to the next Committee meeting.

[Action: D Cowan]

Any Other Business (10/164)

11/15 Reported: That Alan Charters and his team would be taking steps to advise pedestrian traffic to avoid entering the campus from James Watt Queensway via Aston Street due to the ongoing demolition and subsequent construction work over the next two years. Instead, pedestrians would be encouraged to enter between Lakeside Residence and Stafford Tower, continue past the Lakeside Conference Centre and onto the new Boulevard. Appropriate signage would be erected, and staff and students advised in an appropriate manner.

[Action: A Charters]

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING

11/16 Received: 1. A guidance document and oral presentation from Kate Parsons on providing psychological, emotional and social support for those affected by a major incident.

Kate sought from the Committee confirmation that the guidance document had identified the correct key University services, and an agreement on the method of obtaining information now required to enable the document's implementation.

- Noted:
2. An oral report from Gareth Evans on the implementation of recommendations following the last Emergency Incident Manager (EIM) Training Session.
 1. That discussion arose on the suitability of 'places of safety or shelter'.
 2. David Pennells confirmed that Residence Services maintain a stock of emergency bedding for use in a major incident.
 3. That Kerstin Taylor recommended that meetings be arranged with key stakeholders to identify the practical support that they might be called upon to provide in the event of a major incident.
 4. Alan Hawkesworth confirmed that the Executive Operations Group (EOG) had recently approved a high-level Business Continuity Plan, and that, as a result of this, Schools and Departments would be asked to prepare plans for dealing with 'local' emergency situations such as temporary loss of power.
- Alan also confirmed that Information Systems Aston (ISA) was looking into off-site Business Continuity Arrangements.
5. That the Committee confirmed broad acceptance of the document.
- Resolved:
- 1, That Kate Parsons would contact the named services within the document and collate the emergency contact details of nominated individuals from Schools and relevant Support Departments.
[Action: K Parsons, HSC members]
 2. That further training would be provided to nominated individuals once their details had been collated.
[Action: K Parsons]

OUT OF HOURS WORKING GROUP

- 11/17 Received: A draft report prepared by the Working Group.
- Noted:
1. That the document had yet to be formally signed off by the Working Group. A final version would be brought to the next Committee meeting.
 2. That the current 'out of hours' ID Badge trial would be completed just prior to the next HSC meeting, and that the Committee would be given an opportunity to formulate recommendations to the Executive following the trial.
- Resolved:
1. That those HSC members wishing to comment on the draft report should submit their suggestions directly to Andrew Vickers.
[Action: HSC members]

2. That the final version of the report be brought to the next Committee meeting.

[Action: A Vickers]

NEW BUSINESS

11/18 Received: A provisional first draft of the 2010 Health and Safety Annual Report, which would be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 23rd March 2011.

- Noted:
1. That not all of the statistical data had been added to the Report at this stage.
 2. That, following approval of the 2009 Annual Report, the Council had expressed a desire to see statistics on cases involving bullying and harassment in future Annual Reports.
 3. That the Report would include analysis of School and Departmental Health and Safety Policies and Plans, as well as a review of the University's Health and Safety Policy.
 4. That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Darnette Cowan for her efforts in drafting the Report.

Resolved: 1. That HSC members should submit any comments on the first draft of the Annual Report directly to Darnette Cowan by the end of February.

[Action: HSC members]

2. That Keith Munday be asked to prepare a commentary on the University's management of health and safety during 2010, which should accompany the Annual Report in its presentation to the Council.

[Action: K Munday]

FIRE SAFETY

11/19 Received: A written report, prepared by the Fire Safety Adviser (FSA).

- Noted:
1. That, in the FSA's absence, Andrew Vickers highlighted from the report the current practice of purposely obstructing an escape route during a drill. This was intended to simulate what might occur during a genuine fire emergency, and to encourage occupants to seek alternative safe exits from the building.
 2. That a non-attendance list for the Fire Safety Awareness sessions had been circulated to all Executive Deans and Heads of Department, together with a final invitation to remove the names of any staff, who had already attended the training, from the list. In addition, the Executive had confirmed that sessional and part-time staff could now be excluded as their training would be delivered in an alternative manner.

3. That, following final verification of the list, a personal letter would be sent to individuals who had persistently failed to attend for the compulsory training.
4. Concern was raised that not all staff were aware of the location of fire assembly points.

Andrew Vickers confirmed that this information was made available in the form of a handout at each Fire Safety Awareness session, that details could also be downloaded from the Safety Office webpages, and that it was available on 'Fire Action' notices posted adjacent to final exits within each building.

5. Members representing Conference Aston and the Library raised concern that, during the last Main Building evacuation, their buildings saw an influx of evacuees seeking shelter and refreshments, rather than attending the assembly point in accordance with established procedures.

Andrew Vickers explained the need for evacuees to attend the assembly point, so that they could receive further instruction, including the 'all-clear' notification.

6. On behalf of Halcyon Medical, Angela Hegan confirmed that none of their eight Campus-based employees had undergone any formal Fire Safety Awareness training.

The Chair advised that Halcyon Medical employees would be welcome to attend future Fire Safety Awareness training sessions organised by the University.

- Resolved:
1. That, following future evacuations of the Main Building - planned or otherwise - findings from each evacuation should be communicated to staff and students via email.
[Action: D White]
 2. To discuss with the West Midlands Fire Service the possibility of including a map, highlighting the location of fire assembly points, within future Fire Safety Awareness sessions.
[Action: D White]
 3. That HSC members should reinforce to staff and students within their areas the need to attend the relevant assembly point during an evacuation and to refrain from entering adjacent buildings.
[Action: HSC members]
 4. Mike Kirkman would reinforce with the Security Team the need to give the 'all-clear' notification to evacuees at each assembly point following an evacuation.
[Action: M Kirkman]

5. That it would now be timely for the Executive Team to consider the frequency for attendance at refresher Fire Safety Awareness sessions.

[Action: A MacKinlay]

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

11/20 Received: A written report from the Assistant Safety Adviser (ASA).

- Noted:
1. That, due to the materials used, the surface of the new Boulevard would remain slippery during frosty and icy conditions, and that the Campus Services team would continue to grit the path where required.
 2. The Chair conveyed thanks to Mike Kirkman and his team for having maintained external pathways on the Campus during the recent heavy fall of snow.
 3. A correction on a near-miss incident regarding a toaster over-heating in Conference Aston.

Resolved: 1. To consider improving the method of distribution of grit around the Campus, and the use of external contractors for clearing car parks of snow and ice.

[Action: M Kirkman]

2. To return the relevant near-miss incident report to Kerstin Taylor for correction.

[Action: D Cowan, K Taylor]

RADIOLOGICAL SAFETY

- 11/21 Received:
1. A written report, prepared by the Site Radiation Officer (SRO), summarising progress to date on action taken in respect of radiological issues outstanding.
 2. A report from the Environment Agency concerning a radiological compliance inspection, which had been undertaken by the EA on 6th January 2011.

- Noted:
1. That a new action-summary of radiological issues would be produced for HSC in April, following the recent Radiological Safety Sub-Committee meeting.
 2. That the Radiological Safety Sub-Committee Minutes would also be circulated for the next Committee meeting.
 3. That, overall, the Environment Agency Inspector was satisfied with the University's arrangements, although two minor issues of non-compliance had been identified.

Resolved: That, following a meeting with the Executive Dean of LHS, an action-plan would be drafted for submission in response to the Environment Agency's report.

[Action: K Hughes]

EXTERNAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE AND NEW/UPDATED LEGISLATION

- 11/22 Noted:
1. That a consultation process was underway in relation to the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations (RIDDOR), and that, following this, the Regulations were likely to be updated.
 2. That the Committee would be advised of any consequential RIDDOR changes, once known, at a subsequent meeting.

REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS

- 11/23 Received: A document containing a summary of significant safety issues identified in minutes of School and Departmental Health and Safety Committee or Group meetings.
- Noted:
1. That the report into a recent 'out of hours' fire drill within the Library identified the need for additional trained personnel to ensure the safe evacuation of occupants.
 2. That this raised a number of issues, including the University's duty of care to its occupants at all times when buildings are in operation.
- Resolved: That a summary of legal and practical issues with respect to provision of Fire Warden cover within the Library 'out of hours' would be prepared for consideration by the Executive.
- [Action: N Smith, A Vickers, D White]

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 11/24 Noted: That the next meeting would take place on Thursday, 14th April 2011 at 10:00am in the Council Room.

ACTION SUMMARY

Topic	Minute	Resolutions	Actions
Biological Safety Officer (10/140)	11/04	That the Terms of Reference for the Biological Safety Sub-Committee would be brought to the next Committee meeting.	K Hughes
Training Records (10/142)	11/05	That Cliff Vidgeon would meet with Steve Ludlow and Chris Phillips to discuss the training record requirements of SEAS, with particular reference to postgraduates.	C Vidgeon, S Ludlow, C Phillips
Health and Safety Audit Group Report (10/146)	11/07	That Alan Charters would check progress with Malcolm Tonks on research into the efficiencies, quality control and cost effectiveness of the University's PAT testing arrangements, and that a report would be brought to the next Committee meeting.	A Charters, M Tonks
Constitution of Health and Safety Committee (10/151)	11/08	To report confirmation of a lay Council member's appointment to HSC at the next Committee meeting.	G Evans, A MacKinlay
Risk Assessment Software (10/154)	11/09	That Jane Filby should arrange to meet with Mike Robinson outside of Committee to discuss ABS's interest in using the software.	J Filby
Accident and Incident Reports (10/158)	11/11	That as a result of a recent manual handling accident, additional guidance relating to the handling and storage of large deliveries would be developed and circulated to Heads of Department and Executive Deans.	D Cowan
Reports from Schools and Departments (10/161)	11/12	To remind staff, through <i>Aspects</i> and prior to the next meeting, of the guidance in relation to emergency evacuation, including arrangements for evacuation of disabled persons.	D White
Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Guidance (10/163)	11/14	That the final version of the revised DSE Policy would be brought to the next Committee meeting.	D Cowan
Any Other Business (10/164)	11/15	That Alan Charters and his team would be taking steps to advise pedestrian traffic to avoid entering the campus from James Watt Queensway via Aston Street due to the ongoing demolition and subsequent construction work over the next two years. Instead, pedestrians would be encouraged to enter between Lakeside Residence and Stafford Tower, continue past Lakeside Conference Centre and onto the new Boulevard. Appropriate signage would be erected, and staff and students advised in an appropriate manner.	A Charters
Emergency Management Planning	11/16	That Kate Parsons would contact the named services within the document and collate the emergency contact details of nominated individuals from Schools and relevant Support Departments.	K Parsons, HSC members
		That further training would be provided to nominated individuals once their details had been collated.	K Parsons

Topic	Minute	Resolutions	Actions
Out of Hours	11/17	Those HSC members wishing to comment on the draft report should submit their suggestions directly to Andrew Vickers.	HSC members
Out of Hours (continued)		That the final version of the report would be brought to the next Committee meeting.	A Vickers
New Business	11/18	That HSC members should submit any comments on the first draft of the Annual Report directly to Darnette Cowan by the end of February.	HSC members
		That Keith Munday be asked to prepare a commentary on the University's management of health and safety during 2010, which should accompany the Annual Report in its presentation to the Council.	K Munday
Fire Safety	11/19	That, following future evacuations of the Main Building - planned or otherwise - findings from each evacuation should be communicated to staff and students via email.	D White
		To discuss with the West Midlands Fire Service the possibility of including a map, highlighting the location of fire assembly points, within future Fire Safety Awareness sessions.	D White
		HSC members to reinforce to staff and students within their areas the need to attend the relevant assembly point during an evacuation, and to refrain from entering adjacent buildings.	HSC members
		Mike Kirkman to reinforce with the Security Team the need to give the 'all-clear' notification to evacuees at each assembly point following an evacuation.	M Kirkman
		That the Executive Team might now consider the frequency for attendance at refresher Fire Safety Awareness sessions.	A MacKinlay
Accident and Incident Reports	11/20	To consider improving the method of distribution of grit around the Campus, and the use of external contractors for clearing car parks of snow and ice.	M Kirkman
		To return to Kerstin Taylor for correction a near-miss incident report regarding a toaster over-heating in Conference Aston.	D Cowan, K Taylor
Radiological Safety	11/21	That following a meeting with the Executive Dean of LHS, an action-plan would be drafted for submission in response to the Environment Agency's report.	K Hughes
Reports from Schools and Departments	11/23	A summary of legal and practical issues with respect to provision of Fire Warden cover within the Library 'out of hours' would be prepared for consideration by the Executive.	N Smith, A Vickers, D White