# **ASTON UNIVERSITY**

# **HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)**

# Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011 in the Council Room

Present Mrs A MacKinlay (Chair) Mr S Ludlow

Mrs C De-Silva Mr K Munday

Mr G A Evans Ms K Newman-Brown

Mr J Finucane Mrs M Robins
Mrs K Glynn Mr M Robinson
Dr M Green Mrs K Taylor
Mr A Hawkesworth Mr M Tonks
Mr K Hughes Mr A P Vickers
Ms D Lacey Mr D White

Apologies Miss D S Cowan Dr M Y L Nye Dr G A Drahun Mr D Pennells

Dr G A DrahunMr D PennellsDr A HartleyDr N R SmithMrs A HeganDr P TissingtonMs R HuntMr C Vidgeon

Mr G Moulder

In Attendance Mr S Shah

#### **MEMBERSHIP**

11/49 Noted: 1. That the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Malcolm

Tonks, who would retire from the University later in the Summer,

for his contributions as an HSC member.

2. An expression of thanks to Shagaar Shah, an ABS student on

placement within the Safety Office, for his support to the

Committee in the current session.

# MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 14th APRIL 2011

11/50 Received: The Minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011.

Noted: That, with reference to Minute 11/40 [Portable Appliance Testing

(PAT) Arrangements], confirmation had been received from the School of Engineering and Applied Science (EAS) and from the Finance Department that both areas use an approved PAT-testing contractor. Therefore, the Minutes should be amended to

reflect this.

Resolved: That, subject to the above amendment, the Minutes of the

meeting held on 14th April 2011 be accepted as a correct record.

## Training Records (11/27)

11/51 Noted: That this matter was now closed, with EAS seeking to develop its

own training records system.

## Reports from Schools and Departments (11/31)

11/52 Noted: That emergency evacuation guidance had now been duly

updated, and communicated via Aspects.

# Emergency Management Planning (11/33)

11/53 Noted: That Kate Parsons was currently collating emergency contact

details of nominated individuals from Schools and Support Departments, and that no further action was required of the

Committee with respect to this matter.

# Reports from Schools and Departments (11/35)

11/54 Noted: 1. That a meeting had recently been held between Andrew Vickers,

David White and Nick Smith to discuss the Fire Warden Scheme.

2. That it was the intention for a recommendation to be forwarded

to the Executive Operations Group for due consideration.

[Action: Andrew Vickers, David White, Nick Smith]

#### Annual Health and Safety Report (11/36)

11/55 Noted: That the Annual Health and Safety Report had been amended

following some minor comments from the lay governor appointed

by the Council as 'Health and Safety Champion'.

Resolved: That the final report be now published on the University intranet.

[Action: Darnette Cowan, Andrew Vickers]

[Action: Biological Safety Officer, Kevin Hughes]

#### Biological Safety Sub-Committee (11/37)

11/56 Noted: 1. That EAS had identified two possible candidates for the role of

Local Biological Assistants, while the School of Life and Health

Sciences (LHS) had still to confirm its nominees.

2. That the newly-formed Biological Safety Sub-Committee was

likely to hold its inaugural meeting later in the Summer.

# Out of Hours Working Group (11/38)

11/57 Noted: That a revised document would be submitted to the Executive

Operations Group at its meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2011 for due

consideration.

[Action: Andrew Vickers]

# Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Guidance (11/41)

11/58 Noted: That the Assistant Safety Adviser had previously requested

volunteers for the role of DSE Assessors; however, the response

thus far had been poor.

Resolved: That HSC members should canvass their own areas and forward

names of volunteers to the Safety Office.

[Action: HSC members, Darnette Cowan]

# Fire Safety (11/42)

11/59 Noted: 1. That the Fire Safety awareness training had been completed by

all full-time staff (employed from 2008 or before). However, training for some sessional/part-time staff still needed to be

arranged.

2. The intention that future delivery (for new staff or re-fresher training) of Fire Safety awareness training will be provided

electronically ('on-line') to all staff, including sessional/part-time

staff.

[Action: David White]

#### Accident and Incident Reports (11/43)

11/60 Noted: That the lockers in Café Tierra had now been secured.

# Reports from Schools and Departments (11/46)

11/61 Noted: That the issue regarding the fire alarm in Lakeside residences

had been resolved

#### **HEALTH AND SAFETY STRATEGY**

11/62 Received: A tabled paper from the Chair, setting out in more detail the

plans and objectives to enhance Aston's Health and Safety

culture.

Noted: 1. That, following a number of productive meetings with David

Farrow, Director of Marketing Strategy and Communications, a programme to initiate a high-visibility safety campaign would be produced by his team within the next two weeks. It was the intention to commence this programme in August, keeping it

'low-key' in the first instance, then 'ramping it up' at the

beginning of the Autumn Term.

- 2. That, although it was agreed the campaign should initially be targeted at staff (with students later), consideration should also be given to postgraduates, researchers and visitors at the first stage.
- 3. That, over the Summer vacation, a review of the signage of 'high risk' areas would commence and, where appropriate, would be replaced/supplemented with new 'Aston' signage. The new signage would also take into consideration vulnerable persons (including those with disabilities) and any other languages in which it might helpfully be written.
- 4. That a review was currently being undertaken to evaluate the delivery and effective communication of safety training/information packages through 'on-line' methods. It was intended to have those packages available in a number of key European languages and to incorporate a system of monitoring use and completion.
- 5. That, currently, there was an evaluation of Aston's accident/nearmiss data, making comparisons not only with similar sectors but also within certain key groups of the University. It was agreed to consider, as part of the evaluation, incorporating statistics for other illnesses\* (eg, stress/RSI), while noting that confidentiality of individuals must be ensured.

## [Action: \*Human Resources Directorate]

- 6. That future training requirements would need to be successful, accessible, engaging and appropriate to various staff groups.
- 7. That various systems would need to be examined on how best to enhance and engage awareness of such issues as manual handling.
- 8. That, while retaining and regularly updating the Policy document, it should be developed to include a simple mission statement which would become part of the communication campaign.
- 9. That the University intended to apply to the Royal Society under the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) H&S award scheme.
- 10. That a representative from the Campus Services area should be invited to serve on the Committee.

# [Action: Adèle MacKinlay, Safety Team]

- That all Committee members should spread a positive message of the new H&S Strategy within their own Schools and Departments.
- 12. That the agreed, finalised version of the Strategy's Project Plan would be circulated to the Executive Team, as well as to Schools

[Action: Adèle MacKinlay, Safety Team]

#### **ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS**

11/63 Received: A written report from the Assistant Safety Adviser, presented by

the Head of Health and Safety.

Noted:

1. That there were no reportable RIDDOR occurrences during the

period since the last meeting.

2. That a graph had been produced detailing the number of staff accidents for the period January to December 2010, against the

numbers for January to May 2011.

3. That a 'near miss' incident had occurred on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2011. The incident occurred when contractors working in the inner courtyard, near to Registry, lost control of a pulley system resulting in a metal object falling and breaking the glass of a nearby window. The shards of glass fell inwards towards a member of staff who avoided injury by quickly moving away from the desk. The contractors were then interviewed for an explanation and had since made their own investigation resulting in a revised method statement and additional control measures

being implemented.

# RADIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE (RSS-C)

11/64 Received: A tabled report from the Site Radiation Officer, summarising

progress to date on action taken in respect of radiological issues

outstanding.

Noted: 1. That some of the actions arising from the December 2010 RSS-

C meeting had been completed.

2. That substantial progress had been made on the actions

following the Environment Agency visit in January 2011. Notably, all of the LHS School actions had been completed apart from the independent surveys which would commence in mid-June, and the University action (a Radiation Awareness course for key

personnel) which was to be delivered in early September 2011.

Resolved: That a further progress report/action summary be made available

at the next meeting.

[Action: Kevin Hughes]

#### **FIRE SAFETY**

11/65 Received: A written report from the Fire Safety Adviser.

Noted: That all fire safety issues covered in the report had been

discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### EXTERNAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE AND NEW/UPDATED LEGISLATION

11/66 Noted: 1. That subscription to the IHS service had ceased. However,

subscription to a similar system - the 'Barbour Index' - had now commenced on the basis of a considerable cost saving.

2. That access details for the new system would be circulated to all

members shortly.

[Action: Andrew Vickers]

#### REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS

11/67 Noted: 1. That only four sets of minutes from School and Departmental

Health and Safety Committee or Group meetings had been

received.

2. That, in view of this return, it had been difficult to select matters

of significant importance and best practice for inclusion in the

combined summary.

3. That Sub-Committee Chairs should ensure that only matters

relating purely to H&S were discussed at these meetings.

Resolved: That a template for 'local' H&S meeting agendas be circulated to

relevant Committee members.

[Action: Andrew Vickers]

#### DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

11/68 Received A tabled paper, setting out proposed dates of HSC meetings for

the forthcoming academic year.

Resolved: 1. That, unless there was any extraordinary business to discuss,

only three meetings would be held during future sessions.

2. That the dates for meetings in session 2011/12 should be as

follows (Thursdays, commencing at 10am):

24<sup>th</sup> November 2011

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012

7<sup>th</sup> June 2012

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

11/69 Noted:

1. That, further to a report of a bicycle being ridden within the Main Building, a request was made for University guidance on use of bicycles/motor bikes/motor scooters on campus.

[Action: Safety Team]

2. That Dr Andy Sutherland had stepped down as Chair of the Health and Safety Audit Group, and that Dr Malcolm Booth (EAS) had agreed to take over this role.

# **ACTION SUMMARY**

Topic	Minute	Resolutions	Actions
Reports from Schools and Departments (11/35)	11/54	A recommendation to be forwarded to the Executive Operations Group for due consideration.	A Vickers, D White, N Smith
Annual Health and Safety Report (11/36)	11/55	Publication of the finalised Annual Health and Safety Report on the University intranet.	D Cowan, A Vickers
Biological Safety Sub-Committee (11/37)	11/56	Arrangements for convening an inaugural meeting of the newly-formed Biological Safety Sub-Committee.	Biological Safety Officer, K Hughes
Out of Hours Working Group (11/38)	11/57	A revised document to be submitted to the Executive Operations Group at its meeting on 20 <sup>th</sup> July 2011 for due consideration.	A Vickers
Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Guidance (11/41)	11/58	HSC members to canvass their own areas and forward names of volunteers to the Safety Office.	HSC members, D Cowan
Fire Safety (11/42)	11/59	To progress future, 'on-line' delivery (for new staff or refresher training) of Fire Safety awareness training.	D White
Health and Safety Strategy	11/62 (5)	To consider, as part of the evaluation of Aston's accident/near-miss data, incorporating statistics for other illnesses (eg, stress/RSI), while noting that confidentiality of individuals must be ensured.	Human Resources Directorate
	11/62 (10)	That a representative from the Campus Services area be invited to serve on the Committee.	Adèle MacKinlay, Safety Team
Radiological Safety Sub- Committee (RSS-C)	11/64	That a further progress report/action summary be available at the next meeting.	K Hughes
External Health and Safety Guidance and New/Updated Legislation	11/66	That access details for the 'Barbour Index' system be circulated to all members shortly.	A Vickers
Reports from Schools and Departments	11/67	That a template for 'local' H&S meeting agendas be circulated to relevant Committee members.	A Vickers
Any Other Business	11/69	Provision of University guidance on use of bicycles/motor bikes/motor scooters on campus.	Safety Team