

## UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

### Minutes of the University Health and Safety Committee held on 4 February 2010

- Present: Professor M Whitby (Chair), Mr R Buckle, Ms L McCarthy, Ms C Quinney, Ms C Allender, Dr D Mitchell, Ms P Collins, Mr E Ryan
- In attendance: Dr I MacKirdy, Ms J Rawlinson, Mr M Stacey, Ms J Poole, Ms C Beament, Ms J Brannon, Ms K Hughes
- Apologies: Mr N Sanders, Mr S Bedder, Ms S Foy, Mr K Stokes, Mr M Joy, Mr F Aitken, Mr L Cartwright, Mr A Twiss, Ms C Ayres, Miss K Drakeley, Ms L Burton, Ms S Matthews, Ms M Barwick, Ms A Pulford, Mr A Bastable, Mr E Birch

09/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2009 be approved.

10/09-10 Driving on business (minute UHSC 03/09-10 (c) refers)

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

(a) That Claire Beament, Health and Safety Advisor, had drafted revised guidance on Transport and Travel in consultation with relevant colleagues.

(b) That the Director of Health and Safety was putting this guidance into a new format for new or revised policies and procedures for consultation.

11/09-10 Fire Alarm Systems (minute UHSC 05/09-10 (a) iii) refers)

REPORTED: (by Ms C Beament)

That the Security Team would respond to every fire alarm that were triggered in order to minimise false alarms to the Fire Service.

12/09-10 Joint Inspections (minute UHSC 03/09-10 (d) refers)

RECEIVED:

Two papers from Claire Beament on the findings of joint inspections by members of the University Health & Safety Committee of the Clinical Trials Unit and of the Sports Centre (papers UHSC 07/09-10 and UHSC 08/09-10).

REPORTED: (by Ms C Beament)

- (a) That 6 joint inspections were to be undertaken during 2009/10, two had been completed and that the dates for the remaining four would be set on 4 February 2010.
  - (b) That none of the issues identified during the two inspections were major problems and most of these had been resolved.
  - (c) That the issue of storage in the Climbing Room in the Sport Centre would be resolved.
- (by Mr M Stacey, Head of Estates Services)
- (d) That a docket had been raised to resolve the issue of the pressure in the drinking fountain in the Sports Centre.

RESOLVED:

That Carolyn Quinney, Operations Manager, Sports Centre would report to the Committee at its next meeting on whether the drinking fountain pressure had been resolved.

13/09-10

Annual Health and Safety Report for 2009

RECEIVED:

A presentation from the Director of Health & Safety on key health and safety developments during 2009 highlighting those issues that had not previously been brought to the attention of the Committee, (paper UHSC 09/09-10, tabled at the meeting), including, incidents and injuries at work, non-work related incidents, fire alarm incidents and new legislation:

a) Incidents and Injuries at work

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (i) That the number of staff Reportings of Injuries, Diseases, and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) per 1000 members of staff was higher than the norm for the HE Sector, which is in part due to:
  - A. Not all Universities being campus based and hence incidents external to their buildings not being included in their statistics
  - B. Not all Universities have their own Security and Cleaning teams, which given the nature of the work tend to have higher RIDDOR rates.
- (ii) That the University was recording and investigating other potentially serious incidents, i.e. near misses that could otherwise have resulted in a RIDDOR. There were 17 during 2009 with 8 of these due to two instances of faulty electrical equipment.

- (iii) That there were 457 other incidents involving less serious injuries of which 383 were to staff. The relatively low number of injuries to students, 32 this year, suggested that there was underreporting by students.
- (iv) That the Health and Safety Executive had completed their investigations into the ABB and Jack Martin substation incidents and were complimentary about the University's systems.
- (v) That RIDDORs for the October to December 2009 period were:
  - A. October – 2 manual handling, 3 slips, trips and falls and 1 serious incident which involved a hydraulic lift
  - B. November – 2 manual handling and 1 slip, trip and fall incident
  - C. December – no incidents

(by the Chair)

- (vi) That it was unfortunate that the number of RIDDORs showed an increase at the end of the year, but that the University had demonstrated that it could do better, with a level of 5/1000 staff being achieved in half of the past decade, and that it should continue to strive towards a lower target.
- (vii) That the good work of reporting incidents should continue and the publicised figures should not discourage departments from reporting accidents or incidents.

(by Mr M Stacey)

- (viii) That inspections of footpaths had been instigated during 2009, once it was recognised that the footpaths were a factor in the slips and trips statistics.
- (ix) That departments needed to review deliveries to buildings to prevent further damage to footpaths.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (x) That whilst statistics were open to interpretation the benefit of statistics was to tease out trends.
- (xi) That the central and local Health and Safety teams would use the data collected to focus on potential problem areas and concentrate on improving these to make a difference.

(c) Fire Alarm Incidents

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (i) That trends were analysed by the Director of Student Support and Residential Life regarding students misusing fire alarms, and that students were fined when they had activated fire alarms maliciously.
- (ii) That when responding to fire alarms, Security had good working practices and do not put themselves at risk.

(by Mike Stacey)

- (iii) That the incidence of fire alarms was likely to increase since the number of smoke detectors was increasing significantly in line with relevant legislation when Residences were refurbished.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That work would be undertaken by Claire Beament to benchmark a more relevant group for the incidence of staff RIDDORs, which would be other campus based universities which also employ their own Security and Cleaning staff.
- (ii) That joint inspections should be extended to include footpaths and access routes around the buildings being inspected.
- (iii) That guidance for Heads of Department and staff on 'fit notes' would be produced in consultation with the HR Department.
- (iv) That the Director of Health and Safety submit the Annual Report for consideration of the Committee at its meeting to be held in February 2011, noting that the date of that committee may need to be delayed to ensure adequate time to produce that annual report.

Note: That subsequent to the meeting, paper 09 /09-10 was circulated to the Committee.

14/09-10

Occupational Health

CONSIDERED:

A presentation from Jane Poole, Senior Occupational Health Advisor on new ideas in the provision of Occupational Health.

REPORTED:

(by Ms J Poole)

- (a) That Occupational Health would change its focus in order to become more proactive, to prevent problems, to develop a more collaborative approach with departments and to provide managers with useful reports and clear advice.

(by the Chair)

- (b) That departments needed to understand what Occupational Health could do to assist them and to be proactive when dealing with issues.

(by Mr E Ryan, Amicus Trade Union representative)

- (c) That individuals needed to be clear about the role of Occupational Health Service, compared to a GP, the health centre and the Disability Support Staff.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a copy of the presentation be circulated to Committee members.
- (b) That the Director of Health and Safety would explore methods to communicate the Health and Safety Strategy and the new approach to Occupational Health more widely to staff.

15/09-10

Progress in the Chemistry Department

RECEIVED:

A presentation from Julie Brannon, Health & Safety Advisor, on the developments made in the Department of Chemistry.

REPORTED: (by Ms J Brannon)

- (a) That inspections were undertaken jointly by Health & Safety and the Department of Chemistry to identify and resolve issues relating to Health and Safety, and that key issues highlighted included housekeeping and the duplication of chemicals.
- (b) That targets had been agreed including local guidance for the safe operation of fume cupboards, broader guidance notes on the website, the development of self inspection checklists for departments and local laboratory rules.
- (c) That support was available for the training of research staff, further spot checks and training in use of fire extinguishers.

(by the Chair)

- (d) That a joint approach to inspections had demonstrated a fruitful collaboration between the Health and Safety and the Department of Chemistry, and that
- (e) a joint approach should be encouraged, extended and rolled out to other departments.

(by the Director of Health and Safety)

(f) That invitations would be welcomed for Health and Safety Advisers to visit and engage with Departments.

(by Mr E Ryan, Amicus Trade Union representative)

(g) That all colleagues had a responsibility for health and safety, and that post doctoral research staff in departments were critical to safe working practices.

16/09-10

Dates of future meetings

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the UHSC would be held on 20 May 2010 at 11.00am in the Council Chamber, University House.