

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

University Health & Safety Executive Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee
held on 6 March 2013

Present: Ms J Horsburgh (Chair), Professor C Hughes, Ms R Loft, Mrs L McCarthy, Mrs R Roke, Mr R Wilson

Apologies: Ms N Cabral, Mr N Sanders, Mr K Sloan, Professor M Shipman

In Attendance: Professor A Easton (for item 08/12-13.), Mrs C Farren, Dr I MacKirdy.

01/12-13 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Professor Christina Hughes and Ms Rosemarie Loft as new members and welcomed back Mrs Ros Roke.

02/12-13 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2012 be approved as accurate.

03/12-13 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Internal Audit Report (minute 22/11-12 refers)

REPORTED: by the Director of Health and Safety

- (a) That guidance for Heads of Department had been placed on the University Health Safety and Wellbeing website and the final sections of SITU withdrawn;
- (b) That a paper would be presented to the next meeting of the Committee on areas for discussion taking account of decisions arising from the Effectiveness Review of Council.

04/12-13 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

REPORTED:

That no conflicts of interest were raised.

05/12-13 Terms of Reference and Membership 2012/13

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety on the Terms of Reference and membership for the academic year 2012/13 (paper UHSEC 01/12-13).

RECOMMENDED (to the Council):

That the membership of the Committee be amended so that the Registrar may delegate authority to Chair the Committee to a nominee, as set out in paper UHSEC 01/12-13 (Revised 3).

06/12-13 Effectiveness Review

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Health and Safety on proposals for input to the Effectiveness Review of Council (paper UHSEC 02/12-13).

REPORTED (by Dr I Mackirdy):

- (a) That provision of assurance to the Council on health and safety matters could be enhanced by separation of the role of audit of health and safety from the role of executive management of health and safety, with each based on performance against the standards adopted by the University on direct risk management, engagement, learning from events, and leadership and planning.
- (b) That the establishment of a formal group of senior managers chaired by the Deputy Registrar with the role of setting policy, setting strategy for delivering the required standards, and setting implementation requirements for Departments would further strengthen the management of health and safety.
- (c) That responsibility for health and safety in Departments should continue to lie with Heads of Department.

(by Mr R Wilson):

- (d) That the Estates Office had appointed a Compliance Manager to ensure that their procedures and statutory checks were being implemented by staff and contractors.

(by Mrs L McCarthy):

- (e) That Departments should be required to demonstrate improvement against key performance indicators.

(by the Chair):

- (f) That a programme to enhance understanding and competence of Heads of Department and senior staff in the required standards was needed to

ensure that appropriate behaviours were demonstrated across the University.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Committee endorsed:

- i. the principal of separation of the role of audit of health and safety from the role of executive management of health and safety;
- ii. continuation of delegation of executive authority for health and safety by the Council to the Registrar;
- iii. replacement of the University Health and Safety Executive Committee with a Committee accountable to Council for Audit and Assurance of health and safety performance with a core membership of lay members including a lay member with professional expertise in health and safety and preferably a lay member of Council as the Chair;
- iv. establishment of an Executive Group accountable to the Registrar for health and safety policies, strategy and performance;

(b) That the Director of Health and Safety develop further the proposed paper in consultation with members to clarify accountabilities and the flow of business and information.

(c) That the paper as revised be submitted via Chair's action to the Effectiveness Review of Council.

07/12-13 University Health and Safety Committee

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Health and Safety on the meetings of the University Health and Safety Committee held on 18 October 2012 and 12 February 2013 (paper UHSEC 03/12-13).

REPORTED (by Professor C Hughes):

(a) That the UHSC was evolving, seeking to recognise good practice and to improve engagement through the use of presentations and tours during Committee meetings and a planned programme of discussion of strategic issues.

(by Dr I MacKirdy):

(b) That the UHSC had endorsed the analysis and action planning on fire safety.

(c) That the formation of the Campus and Commercial Services Group (CCSG) Health and Safety Group provided a single forum for the agreement of objectives and action across all the Departments in CCSG.

- (d) That risk assessments in line with the requirements for the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations and corrective actions had been completed for all waste compactors across campus: waste compactors are classed as machinery and operate under high pressure.
- (e) That further changes to the management of compactors across campus had been instigated following an unexpected incident to a member of staff when the retaining mechanism on the unloading 'door' to the rear of a compactor failed under pressure, noting detailed investigations by specialists into the cause were ongoing since the incident involved failure of two engineered safety measures.

(by Ms R Roke):

- (f) That there was a need to develop the skills in Departments since operational risks often were not reflected within Departmental Risk Management plans.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee consider the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2012 and the proposed Health and Safety Strategy for 2013 and 2014 at the meeting of the Committee in June 2013.

08/12-13

University Genetic Modification and Biosafety Committee

CONSIDERED:

A report from Professor Andrew Easton on the meeting of the University Genetic Modification and Biosafety Committee (GMBSC) held on 17 October 2012, 8 November 2012 and 14 February 2013 (paper UHSEC 04/12-13).

REPORTED: by Professor Easton

- (a) That in the two years that the GMBSC had been running, it had established oversight of biological work across the six laboratory Departments.
- (b) That members of the GMBSC were of the opinion that processes for receipt and review of new research proposals and new containment facilities/building were effective, noting the need to improve the guidance available to researchers.
- (c) That inspections, monitoring of compliance and annual review had been instigated by the Biosafety Advisor with reports to the GMBSC.
- (d) That the GMBSC would be considering mechanisms for maintaining records regarding whether projects were live, dormant or closed.
- (e) That the amount of interdisciplinary research was increasing.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee endorsed the work of the GMBSC in providing peer assessment of biological projects and oversight of biological hazards across the six laboratory Departments, including the Annual Review of Biosafety for 2012, while noting that areas for further improvements had been identified.
- (b) That the Major Incident Team be encouraged to consider as a strategic topic for a future Team meeting the planning for a significant loss of containment of hazardous substances.

09/12-13

Dates of future meetings

Thursday 13 June 2013 at 10:30 in University House, CMR1.2