

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN
HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 MAY 2017

Present: Mr A Donaldson (Convener), Ms S Blaney, Mr S Carle (vice Mrs M Paterson), Dr E Compatangelo, Mr N Curtis, Dr R Ebel, Mr L Fuller, Dr C Harrington, Mrs S Hay, Mrs A Innes, Mr D Malcolm, Ms A McClellan, Mr S Napier, Mr R Philp, Dr S Pugh, Mr N Qamar, Mrs E Robertson, Professor C Secombes, Mr K Smith, Mrs J Tuckwell and Ms J Walker.

In attendance: Mrs J Taylor and Professor A Welch (for Minute 9).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs C Inglis, Mr A Anagboso, Professor P Fowler, Ms J Killin, Mrs M Paterson, Dr A Petrie and Mr E Stephen.

1 MINUTES OF THE MEETING

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2017 were approved.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

2.1 Eye Protection Policy (Minute 2.3 refers)

The draft policy on the use of eye protection in laboratories would be considered at today's meeting.

2.2 AOCB (Minute 2.5 refers)

Aberdeen City Council had been approached and had agreed to improve signage on Elphinstone Road but a date had yet to be confirmed for the work to be undertaken. **Action AD**

2.3 AOCB (Minute 2.6 refers)

Aberdeen City Council would be approached again regarding pavement markings and improved signage outside Zoology Building. **Action AD**

2.4 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report (Minute 5.7 refers)

To address gaps in representation, two sections had nominated representatives to routinely attend meetings. The composition would be brought back for review at the next meeting on 9 November 2017.

It was noted there was a lack of representation for some areas based on Foresterhill campus, Mr Qamar agreed to explore this further outwith the meeting. **Action NQ**

2.5 Use of Drone Policy and Guidance (Minute 6.1 refers)

The Policy had been amended and subsequently approved by the University Court at its meeting of 28 March 2017.

3. FIRE SAFETY

3.1 The Committee received an update on fire safety (*HSC16:11 copy filed with principal copy of minutes*). Mr Napier made specific reference to fire drills in centrally timetabled teaching facilities where there was no permanent staff base. To address the lack of leadership in these areas, notices have been prominently displayed stating that the tutor/lecturer is responsible for ensuring the evacuation of occupiers.

3.2 Mr Napier also remarked that on some drills there were not enough floor checkers and or floor checkers could not report the status of their area. It was suggested that the Fire Marshall Training online module could be made mandatory for all staff. Alternatively, additional guidance could be produced. This would be further discussed outwith the meeting. **Action SN and NQ**

4. PROGRESS WITH AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The Committee received an update on progress with the audit recommendations (*HSC16:12 copy filed with principal copy of minutes*). There were two outstanding Priority 2 recommendations.

5. HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT

- 5.1 The Committee received a summary of Health, Safety and Wellbeing developments (*HSC16:13 copy filed with principal copy of minutes*). In summary these were:
- BeOnline training had been successfully rolled out to Professional Services and roll out to Schools had begun;
 - Four Managing Safely courses had been delivered since August 2016, receiving very positive feedback;
 - Over 150 staff were taking part in the End to End challenge and a Health and Wellbeing Day on Foresterhill campus was scheduled to take place at the end of May;
 - The University had been granted Cycling Friendly Employer status.
- 5.2 There followed an extended discussion on the wellbeing of staff, with focus of those in the College of Arts and Social Sciences. The principal points of the discussion were:
- The Committee considered the factors negatively impacting staff wellbeing and discussed initiatives that could be implemented to alleviate common problems such as stress and absence from work.
 - It was suggested that staff absence data could be used to explore the link between attendance and workplace health and could help identify areas of particular concern. The Committee were to receive a presentation at its next meeting. **Action AA**

6. HSE CL3 INSPECTION

- 6.1 The Committee was reminded of the recent routine inspection of IMS Containment Level 2 and 3 Labs and were assured that all issues had been remedied and a written response had been prepared.

7. BIOSAFETY POLICY

- 7.1 The Committee received the Biosafety Policy for consideration (*HSC16:14 copy filed with principal copy of minutes*). The Policy had been drafted in response to the recent inspection which suggested there should be formal oversight of work with bioagents and Genetically Modified Organisms. Mr N Qamar invited feedback from Committee Members. **Action All**

8. EYE PROTECTION POLICY

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper (*HSC16:15 copy filed with principal copy of minutes*) that set out the University's Eye Protection Policy to eliminate or control the risk of eye injury. Some members expressed concerns around making eye protection mandatory in some laboratories where the risk of eye injury was low. Issues with use of eye protection by visitors, contractors and cleaning staff also need to be considered further in the Policy. Mr N Qamar welcomed feedback from Committee Members and requested that they feedback their comments in writing to him. **Action All**

9. WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES

- 9.1 Professors Secombes led a brief presentation on the work of the Old Aberdeen Genetic Modification and Biological Safety Committee. The presentation highlighted the remit of the committee and the management of research activities involving genetically modified organisms.
- 9.2 The Committee also received a brief report on the Radiation Hazards Sub-Committee from Professor Welch. The presentation set out the role of the committee and provided an overview of how hazards and risks arising from the use of radiations and lasers are controlled.

10. AOCB

- 10.1 Dr Compatangelo sought clarification on a number of health and safety matters arising from transnational education projects. His main concerns can be detailed as:
- The healthcare provisions available for staff teaching overseas;
 - Security precautions for staff travelling to areas with regional conflict;
 - The rights of female and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender staff and students;
 - The obligations of the private partners to University staff in terms of healthcare and insurance.

- 10.2 Mr Qamar would address these concerns with UCU and report back to this Committee at the next meeting. **Action NQ**
11. ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS UPDATE
- 11.1 There were no comments on the Accidents and Incidents Update (*HSC16:16 copy filed with principal copy of minutes*) which provided the details of eight incidents during January, February and March 2017.
12. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS
- 12.1 The Committee noted the next meeting would be held on Thursday 9 November 2017 at 10.00 am in Court Room, University Office.