



The Council, 27 November 2015

Report of the Health and Safety Committee

Date: 13 October 2015

Chair: Mr A Dodman

Secretary: Mrs D L Fisher

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report provides a summary of matters considered by the Health and Safety Committee at its meeting on 13 October 2015. There were no matters requiring the approval of Council.

1. Matter Arising – Fire Safety Policy – Review

The Committee approved the amended policy¹.

2. Maintenance of LEV's

Due to a prior appointment, Mr Lilley requested the Maintenance of LEV's which was originally scheduled to be discussed under Item 21 – Any Other Business be brought forward.

Mr Fleming informed the Committee that the Health & Safety audits within Science and Engineering departments had established that not all LEV's had received the compulsory 12 month maintenance check. Mr Fleming stated that this issue had been discussed at the University Executive Board and actions had taken place to rectify the problem.

Mr Lilley noted that changing the contractors for this work to be carried out had significantly improved the situation and questionnaires had been issued to all Departmental Safety Officers requesting checks be made to note the last maintenance check.

3. Progress of Management Health Surveillance Policy

Mrs Tait presented the paper and gave a brief update to the Committee that the health surveillance audit had been sent to prioritised departments that they believed would require health surveillance. Mrs Tait confirmed that a complete audit from Animal and Plant Sciences had been received which showed records on the system equalled that of Workplace Health and Wellbeing of which was 100% current.

Ms Tait and Mr Fleming agreed to cross match the list of contacts that were held in both Workplace Health and Wellbeing and Health & Safety.

¹A copy of all policies available from Mrs Debbie Fisher, Secretary to the Health and Safety Committee, Health & Safety, Extension: 27466

²A copy all annual reports available from Mrs Debbie Fisher, Secretary to the Health and Safety Committee, Health & Safety. Extension 27466

4. Trade Union - School of Law Update

Mr Dodman introduced the paper and requested an observation update.

Mr Ashman commended the support given by Human Resources to the number of issues raised from the inspection and commented that a further inspection was to take place to assess whether improvements had been made.

An update will be given at the meeting following the next trade union inspection.

5. Terms of Reference

Mr Fleming presented the paper and noted that no notable changes had been made.

The Committee approved the Terms of Reference.

6. Health and Safety Annual Report with Executive Summary

Mr Fleming circulated a paper² and informed the Committee of each of the 'key issues' within the Health and Safety Annual Report.

Professor Jackson raised concerns over failure of fire alarm activations caused by detectors end of life and queried how this could be remedied. Mr Lilley commented that this issue was being reviewed in the Fire Key Risk Review Group meetings and that a replacement programme was in place for all systems coming to an end of their life. Mr Salter advised the Committee that four buildings had been identified (Sir Robert Hadfield, Hicks, Chemistry and Regent Court) that required a system upgrade and the project would be driven through the Health and Safety Project Group for work to commence.

Mr McKown raised concerns over the false fire alarm activations at the residences, with showers being the main cause of accidental activations; and smoking the main cause of deliberate activations. Mr Salter informed Mr McKown that smoking had been brought into the deliberate category due to smoking being prohibited in all University buildings.

7. ACS Annual Food Hygiene Report

Mr McKown presented the paper and notified the Committee that the 24 units covered were audited on a monthly and quarterly basis by the designated Manager to ensure critical control points were contained.

Highfield Ltd, an external food hygiene and food safety consultancy conducted an external audit February 2015. The audit highlighted that although the Food Information Regulations had been well implemented in the units more work was to be carried out with the implementations.

Mr McKown raised concerns over departments using external caterers and not complying with University policy.

Mr Fleming agreed to write to all Heads of Department reminding them of their responsibilities in relation to Food Safety, though commented that although the policy was signed off by the Vice Chancellor, it had not been issued University wide which was probably where the problem laid. On this, ACS agreed to formally audit any specialist caterers that may be required by departments.

The Committee agreed that a Food Safety Policy needed to be adopted University wide.

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8. Student Union Annual Food Hygiene Report

Ms Drew noted that staff training had been carried out and records kept locally. All new food servicing staff would undertake the CIEH level 1 award within their first 6 months of employment.

Ms Drew informed the Committee that the Students Union Policy and Procedures was to be reviewed to ensure compliance with the University.

Ms Drew noted that 3 out of 5 outlets had received the 5* food standard rating. Work was being carried out to re-address the two that hadn't achieved the 5* standard.

9. Annual Report of the Security Adviser

Mr Yates presented his annual report. This informed the members that overall reported crime figures at the University of Sheffield highlighted a reduction of 4% over the past 12 months, but noted that since 2009-2010 there had been a significant 51% crime reduction, of which serious crime was extremely low.

Mr Yates informed the Committee that difficulties had been apparent as public spending budget cuts had hit South Yorkshire Police of which had caused closure of the Crewe station. Discussions between the University and South Yorkshire Police had taken place, but with the station now being centrally based, no continuous information was being shared. However, Mr Yates noted that there had been a 100% uplift in policing at orientation and freshers weeks and the University of Sheffield was ranked 4th nationwide for keeping crime at bay.

Mr Yates highlighted on the legal requirement for risk assessments on radicalisation / extremism.

10. Annual Report – Staff Sickness Absence and Statistics

Ms Tait presented the paper to the Committee and remarked that the two trends showing an increase were short term and mental ill health.

Mrs Tait noted Professional Services had the highest absence from work due to ill health but noted that these areas have very high levels of accurate reporting.

Workplace Health and Wellbeing were actively working on mental wellbeing issues. Mr Fleming queried as to when a stress policy be in place. Mr Dodman advised that a stress policy was currently being written, and would go to the Human Resources Committee in November for feedback and approval before the Health and Safety Committee.

11. Policy and Guidance for the Placement of Students

The Committee agreed that the policy was to be implemented at a local level and was to be piloted through the School of Nursing and Midwifery and the Department of Chemistry with feedback given at the next meeting.

12. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) Procedure

The members approved the policy.

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13. Procedures for Emergency Evacuation – Other than Fire

Mr Fleming presented the paper informing the Committee of the contingency planning / procedures being put in place should the building or area have to be evacuated for reasons other than fire ie bomb, chemical, radioactive etc. with the person made responsible be based on knowledge of the incident.

Mr Fleming and Professor Jackson agreed to jointly discuss the clarity of the wording and to update at the next meeting.

14. Significant Accidents and Incidents Report

Mr Fleming presented the paper that outlined the number of accidents and near misses that had occurred since the last meeting.

Four of the recorded accidents resulted in formal notification to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR. This resulted in a 7-day lost time absence.

15. False Fire Alarm Activations in Residences

Mr Salter notified the Committee that fire alarm activations due to tampering with the fire detectors within residences had increased.

Mr Salter advised that fitting warning labels adjacent to the sensor would diminish the risk of residents tampering with the device. Mr Yates informed the Committee that he had been informed that this was in place at Loughbrough University and false activations through tampering with the detectors had significantly reduced by 50%.

The Committee approved the fitting of warning stickers throughout the Residences and Mr Fleming agreed for Health & Safety to cover the cost.

16. Report of the BioSafety Committee

Mr Fleming presented the paper to the Committee.

The members accepted the report of the BioSafety Committee.

Mr Dodman presented a letter from Professor Andrews; Chair of the Biosafety Committee that raised concerns of outstanding immunisations for staff working with bacterial agents. Professor Andrews strongly requested that all immunisations be carried out through the NHS and not through the University of Sheffield.

Ms Tait informed the Committee that the immunisations would be carried out through the University Health Service (UHS) as per the University protocol.

17. Report of the Radiation Working Group

Mr Fleming informed the Committee that Mr Moseley, Radiation Protection Adviser for the University of Sheffield would be retiring at the end of 2015.

The Committee gave special thanks to Mr Moseley for the work carried out over 35 continuous years working for the University.

The Members accepted the report of the Radiation Working Group.

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18. Report of the Legionella Key Risk Review Group

Mr Fleming presented the paper from the Legionella Key Risk Review Group to the Committee on Mr Lilley's behalf.

Mr Fleming noted that legionella was under control and monitoring was continuing.

19. Report of the Asbestos Key Risk Review Group

Mr Fleming presented the paper from the Asbestos Key Risk Review Group to the Committee on Mr Lilley's behalf.

Mr Fleming informed the Committee that the number of areas categorised as red had reduced significantly over the past 12 years.

20. Biological Safety and Policy Procedures - Review

Mr Fleming informed the Committee that only minor amendments had been made of which the Biosafety Committee had approved.

The Committee approved the policy.

21. Ionising Radiation Policy and Procedures - Review

Mr Fleming informed the Committee that the Ionising Radiation Policy had been reviewed and no amendments had been made.

The Committee approved the policy.

22. Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment Policy and Procedures - Review

Mr Fleming informed the Committee that the Inspection of Electrical Equipment Policy and Procedures had been reviewed and no amendments had been made.

The Committee approved the policy.

23 Any Other Business – Fire Safety Issues at the Diamond

Mr McKown raised concerns of fire safety issues at the Diamond.

Mr McKown informed the Committee that fire extinguishers were frequently going missing and fire door exits were jammed.

Mr Fleming reassured the Committee that the issue of the fire doors had already been resolved and the fire extinguishers were not missing but had changed location due to being free standing at present and not fitted on brackets yet.

Mr McKown raised the issue of false fire alarm activation. Mr Fleming stated this was because of the design of post containing both the fire alarm call point and the exit release button near the exits and people exiting pressing the wrong button. This would be rectified shortly by placing a plastic flap over the fire alarm activation panel to ensure people 'think' before accidentally pressing the alarm button instead of the exit release button.

Mrs Gouldsbrough informed the Committee that out of hours fire evacuations would be carried out at the Diamond, Information Commons and Arts Tower.

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