1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the mechanisms in place to ensure the University of Sheffield is meeting health and safety requirements and to highlight the actions being taken where these standards fail to be met.

Since the last report to Council, the focus of the Health and Safety Department has been almost exclusively dedicated to the management of COVID-19 and ensuring the safe return of staff and students to campus, where Government guidance has permitted this. This report reflects that focus.

2. Coronavirus (COVID-19) Management

The most significant risk to staff and the primary focus of the Health & Safety Department since the previous report in February 2021, has continued to be the University’s response to the threat from Covid-19.

The University’s response to Covid-19 has continued to be timely and proportionate and the key actions to ensure the safety of our staff, students and visitors since the last meeting in February have been:

COVID-19 Outbreak
The Health & Safety Department monitor positive COVID-19 cases, identify, and report potential outbreaks. Between 10th January and 18th January 2021, four members of Security staff and the two onsite Police Officers (for the purposes of this update they will all be referred to as staff) all tested positive for COVID-19. Five of these staff members are based in 2A Hounsfield Road and one visited this location from 6 Hounsfield Road to attend an informal briefing session. An Outbreak Control Team (OCT) was convened to discuss these cases, which involved representatives from Sheffield City Council Public Health (SCC PH), Public Health England (PHE), Health & Safety Department and Security Services.

The following has been extracted from the OCT Minutes:
- Meeting took place possibly Weds / Thurs before 07/01. Usually there is an interval if the virus moved from one person to another, possible common source could be a visitor rather than the staff member from No.6 (incubation period is generally 5 – 7 days)
- The first group caught it on 07/1 and the person who picked it up on the 9th possibly got it from them.
- Presume very contagious as could be the new Covid variant. It could very well be at the meeting that they all acquired the virus but not for definite due to short interval of exposure, it’s very difficult to pinpoint
• Possible staff transmission from persons who caught virus 7th/9th to person on 10/11th January. Exact initial meeting date not given
• When people do return to work University to reinforce messages and workplace practices
• Formerly in-person meetings between security staff to become virtual

The above recommendations have been addressed.

• **Covid-19 Incident Management Team**
The University convened a Covid-19 Management Group under the business continuity procedures. This group is co-chaired by Rob Sykes and Heidi Fraser-Krauss and continues to do an excellent job in integrating health and safety measures into other management responses being implemented to mitigate the effect of Covid-19 on staff/student safety and business interruption. The Covid-19 Management Group continues to convene online once a week.

• **Covid-19 Risk Assessments**
The Health & Safety Department continues to review and update the University’s Covid-19 risk assessment templates in line with Government/Department for Education (DfE) guidelines, there are 4 templates which were last updated on the 21st February 2021:

  o Reviewed working arrangements for research and support staff
  o Students return to campus
  o Teaching staff returning to campus
  o Teaching support staff return to campus

The Health & Safety Department is currently in the process of merging the four risk assessment templates into one and this document will be updated in line with the recent changes to the Government guidelines; updated guidance from DfE is awaited. Once updated it will be uploaded to the University’s COVID Google Drive folder.

Departments who have returned to Campus must ensure that they have up to date Covid-19 risk assessments in place. The Health & Safety Department has created a central repository for these risk assessments and continues to remind Departments to save their assessments in this folder.

• **Trade Union Covid-19 Inspections**
In February 2021, Trade Union representatives carried out a COVID-19 inspection of Western Bank Library and Information Commons. There were no significant issues identified and all recommendations have been addressed.

• **University Track & Trace Team**
The University has a team of eight contact tracers (currently 2 vacancies) managed by the Health and Safety Department. The team has been in place since Saturday 24 October 2020 and continues to have a high success rate (92%) for contact tracing.
**Covid-19 Testing Centre**
Estates & Facilities Management worked closely with Public Health experts to open a Covid-19 rapid testing facility for our students and staff on campus. This Centre opened on 30 November 2020.

The Testing Centre continues to run very effectively and efficiently.

**Study Spaces and COVID-19 Marshals**
Study spaces are being patrolled by COVID-19 marshals to deter students from not complying with the COVID-19 Guidelines eg 2m+ social distancing and wearing of face coverings. The marshals are recording every time they walk into a room and see non-compliance. They have not had to escalate anything yet and have found that when asked to comply with the rules, students do. Non-compliance has reduced since the implementation of the marshals with significant improvements being recorded within ACS study spaces since the introduction of their COVID-19 marshals.

**Health & Safety Executive (HSE) COVID-19 Spot Checks**
The Health and Safety Executive is carrying out spot checks and inspections on all types of businesses in all areas to ensure they are COVID-secure. By visiting premises and speaking directly to employers, they can check the measures the University has put in place are in line with government guidance.

In February 2021, the HSE carried out a spot check within Engineering and the feedback was that it was one of the best sites that the inspector had visited. A second spot check took place, also in Engineering, with no actions arising.

**COVID-19; Returning to Campus Mandatory Online Training for Staff/PGRs**
The Health and Safety Department produced an online training course in June 2020 that is mandatory for all staff/PGRs who return to Campus. This is a short training course that aims to help staff and postgraduate research students return to work safely during the COVID-19 pandemic. The content of this training course continues to be updated in line with Government/DfE Guidance and was last updated in March 2021.

As of 7 April, this course has been completed by 6508 staff/PGRs and compliance continues to be monitored by Departments/Services and by the Health & Safety Department when attending Departmental/Faculty Health & Safety Committees.

**Guidance for staff working from home**
The University retains a duty of care for staff who are required to work from home. The Health and Safety Department has produced an online training course that includes a self-assessment. This training course and self-assessment is mandatory for all staff that are display screen equipment (DSE) users, who are working from home. This course has been put in place to provide DSE users with guidance to help reduce risks and mitigate injury from home DSE work.

As of 7 April, this course has been completed by 5783 staff/PGRs and compliance continues to be monitored by Departments/Services and by the Health & Safety Department when attending at Departmental/Faculty Health & Safety Committees.
3. Significant Accidents and Incidents and Trends

There has been one significant accident since the last report was made to Council:

3.1 On the 8 March 2021, a member of staff was replacing a mop head, during this process their hand slipped, and they banged it against a metal sink. This resulted in a broken finger and an over 7-day absence.

The Supervisor reviewed the task with the member of staff and felt that the task was being carried out correctly but, on this occasion, they had not given themselves sufficient space. The Line Manager to observe the activity being carried out on their return to ensure it is being done correctly.