Joint Safety Advisory Committee

13th February 2014

Confirmed Minutes

Present: Professor M Stringer (Chair), Ms S Chalder, Mr D Checkley,

Mr J Cochrane, Mr K Dickinson, Mr T Green, Ms A Gulliver,   
 Professor J Heath, Mr S Johnson (for Professor J Franklyn),

Ms O Kew-Fickus, Mr M Moore, Professor J Preece, Ms C Wellington, Mr G White.  
In Attendance: Ms K Hall (Committee Secretary), Mr M Hoare, Mr L Wright, Dr G Zabierek  
Apologies: Professor J Franklyn, Mr D Hickey, Mrs C Jarvis, Mrs H Paver,   
 Mr M Raine.

**14/30 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31st October 2013 were held as an accurate record of the meeting.

**14/31 Chairperson’s Items**

*The Chair asked everyone at the meeting to introduce themselves for the benefit of new members.*

1. Apologies
2. Membership and attendance

Received: An updated membership list was circulated in advance of the meeting for comments/ alterations.

Noted: Certain attendees of JSAC should be listed as ‘in attendance’ and some as ‘present’, depending on their status as actual committee members.

**Action**: That this would be amended on the next set of minutes.

**KH**

**Action**: Miss K East was no longer a representative for the Guild and Mr T Wragg should be invited to attend committee meetings.

**KH**

**14/32 Matters Arising**

1. Update on chemical and fuel oil spillage update

This was being progressed by Mr D Cross who had received reports from each college and various other groups. This showed evidence of good engagement between JSAC and the University and a timely response leading to operational improvements. This item was discussed under item 7vii.

1. Radiation Advisory Group and draft radiation policy  
   This item was discussed under item 7iia.
2. Draft working at height policy

**Action**: As this item was still outstanding (having not progressed over the previous few meetings), the specific duties of the Director of HAS needed formalising in the policy and this would then be reported back at the following meeting.

**KD**

1. Wellbeing Day

Noted: This was an ongoing item with limited progress to report since the previous meeting.

**Action**: A departmental objective would be developed within HR Workplace Wellbeing to explore the delivery of a University Wellbeing Day during 2014-15. **LW**

1. Laboratory inspection report from LES

Noted: There was nothing to report as yet.

1. Safety and wellbeing related objectives in PDR/SDR process

Received: A document outlining the proposal and a document with comments on this, from MDS.

Discussed: This proposal was originally put forward by the TU Representatives (and was also a proposal in the MDS annual Health and Safety report). The comments from MDS were considered as useful examples of consultative feedback. Points raised by MDS on whether this was appropriate for all groups of staff or just for PIs were considered.

Noted: The TU safety representatives were strongly in favour of this initiative and would like to be part of the consultative body.

**Action**: Consultation responses back to JSAC Secretary by *(date to be determined by MS).* Anticipating the consultation responses, the Committee indicated a preference to move towards safety and wellbeing objectives in PDRs, initially on a voluntary basis.

**LW**

1. Use of Canvas to share good practice

Reported: That Mr D Cross had been working on the content for a training course for using Canvas. This was an ongoing development.

1. Induction review – POD

Noted: A review had taken place and was in the process of being implemented. POD would be asked via HRLT to provide JSAC with information on how health and safety induction needs (including the employees support and wellbeing content) are being addressed within this review.

**LW**

1. LEVs

Received: A verbal update from Professor J Heath

Reported: JH had been in discussions with the College of EPS and had communicated on this issue with LES and MDS. A document had been put together using a ‘traffic light system’ to detail what kind of action needed completing on each LEV system in use. It had been agreed that central University funds would be used to pay for repairs to the ‘red’ LEVs, the College would be responsible for ‘amber’ LEVs and all ‘green’ LEVs should be safety compliant.

Discussed: There was some confusion over whether the list was composite and whether some of the ‘green’ LEVs did actually still need work doing on them. There were also issues raised over the need for a log book to be kept in the future, on the status of the various systems and who would be responsible for overseeing this.

**Action**: These issues would be discussed by the relevant parties outside of JSAC who would report back at the next meeting.

1. Responsible Research in the colleges

Noted: The Committee reinforced the expectation that College boards were aware of the IOSH Responsible Research guidance, and should have been implementing it where appropriate.

1. Annual college action plans

Noted: That these were available on the staff intranet under:

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/worksafe/committees/annualhsplans.aspx>

1. Contractor performance monitoring and review

Noted: This was being discussed within Estates (and existing Estates processes were already monitoring contractor performance). Any further developments would be brought to future JSAC meetings and it would be kept on the agenda for the next meeting.

1. Invitations to new TU representatives

Noted: That these had been sent and those who could attend the meeting had done.

1. University Fire Strategy Group progress update

Noted: This would be dealt with under item 7i but was still in progress as an appropriate representative from West Midlands Fire Service still needed to be appointed.

1. Rumble strips outside the Guild and Barber

Noted: Discussions at the Committee demonstrated the challenges of delivering road safety improvements such as the rumble strips. The Transport Safety Group identifies opportunities for improvement, but cannot deliver improvements which require financial resources. These had been priced up but there was a query over the funding stream.

**Action**: To give this issue further consideration outside of the meeting.

**JH and KD**

**14/33 Annual Assurance Report and Termly Reports**

Received: The Annual Assurance report dated 18th November 2013 was circulated in advance of the meeting. This had been submitted to UEB. No comments were made by the group.

**14/34 New Policy and Guidance Documents**

Noted: A guidance document relating to managing certain emergencies had been drawn up by HR (in consultation with the TUs) following a student suicide in the Library during 2012. This guidance was now available on the web under:

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/worksafe/accidents/emergencies/emergencyaction.aspx>

**14/35  Trade Union Matters** i) All new members were introduced to the committee  
 ii) A discussion took place over what happened to Health and Safety policies after they had been approved by JSAC. It was reported that they then went to SPRC.  
 **Action**: That all polices approved by JSAC be put on the web as draft polices before they go to SPRC, so they could be found easily if necessary.  
 **MH  
 Action:** That the process for guidance documents (i.e. which groups needed to see them and in what order and who is responsible for implementing them) would be discussed by the Executive Group and reported to the next JSAC.  
 **LW and MS**

iii) Requested: With regards to the section in the Annual College Reports which asked for issues the College felt needed to be dealt with at University level, that more feedback be given by the University if it is stated the request cannot be fulfilled. An example of this was the University looking after fire safety training records centrally.   
 **Action**: That a process be introduced to consider proposals from College and departmental annual improvement plans.   
 **LW** **Action**: The specific item relating to centralisation of training records would be discussed within both Executive Group and HRLT (as it may be an HR service issues as much as a health and safety issue).   
 **LW**   
 iv) Requested: That a decision be made regarding electronic cigarettes which could be implemented across campus.   
 **Action**: To identify who owned the University policy, and to develop proposals for revising that policy to ensure it reflected best practice regarding e-cigarettes.  **LW** v) Discussed: If the health and safety impacts from industrial action were being considered. Mr L Wright reported that there were thought to be no detrimental impacts from industrial action. It was believed that there were sufficient fire marshals and first aiders available. Dynamic local risk assessments were expected to be developed by managers.

**14/36 Standard Reports**

Received: Standard Health and Safety reports and attachments from various H&S teams and advisory groups were submitted to JSAC and commented upon.

Noted:

i) Fire Safety  
Noted: That Fire Safety Contingency Packs had been available and used during a recent emergency and these had been found to be useful by the WMFS.

ii) Hazardous Agents

a) Radiation safety  
 Reported: Dr G Zabierek reported that after the previous RAG had been disbanded by the predecessor to JSAC, progress had been very slow on renewing the membership. The issue was finding members with the appropriate level of expertise to populate the group.

Discussed: It was agreed that the group should be dealing with both ionising and non-ionising forms of radiation (perhaps using a sub group for non-ionising).

**Action**: Mr L Wright would take this forward outside the committee and provide support to Dr Zabierek on identifying constituencies and an academic sponsor.

Dr G Zabierek would report on progress at the next JSAC.   
 **LW**

b) Biological safety   
 Reported: Mr L Wright suggested a little more detail under each bullet point of the standard report sections might increase the benefit of the report to the committee.

c) Hazardous substances – The members of the group had been very active on working at preventing harmful spillages after two spillages had occurred. In terms of the group physically meeting however, this was difficult as no new chair had been appointed by UEB. It was important to have a senior academic in this position.

**Action**: To raise the issue of academic sponsorship of the Hazardous Substances group in the Executive Group.

**LW and MS**

iii) Physical workplace and work equipment

Noted: For clarification, the School being reviewed was EPS and not LES. A new HSE Regional Director, Mrs Sam Peace, had been appointed and Mr M Hoare had met with her to introduce himself and the University.

iv) Transport and Pedestrian Safety   
Noted: That there had been success in fencing off the Tennis Court student accommodation to prevent students from crossing a dangerous part of Edgbaston Park Road. Speeding of vehicles on campus was still a major issue. A speed warning sign had been installed outside the Old Gym on the approach to the ‘shared space’. Average vehicle speeds had reduced to 18mph.  
Discussed: The pros and cons of enforcing speeding restrictions on contractors and staff. The issue of threatening to, or actually removing contractors from site who were reported to be speeding was discussed as it was felt that this was not easily determinable, but also that the idea was to create a community where speeding was deemed socially unacceptable.

**Action**: To install more speed warning signs so drivers were more aware of their speeding and to identify funding for this.

**JH**

Discussed: Issues surrounding shared space and vehicles parking where they should not.

**Action**: To raise this issue with Chris Hoad to ensure that Security Services were taking action against those parking illegally.  **JH**

Noted: Edgbaston Park Road has narrow pavements and a high footfall of pedestrians, mainly students walking between campus and the Vale. This was exacerbated recently due to contractors changing lamp posts. A scheme existed to construct a footpath to the Vale avoiding Edgbaston Park Road.

**Action**: To look into this.

**JH**  
v) Accident statistics:

Noted: The reports had been slightly reformatted to make them more user-friendly.

vi) Wellbeing Advisory Group:

**Action**: To invite Mrs Philippa Hawkins to the next JSAC meeting.

**KH**

vii) Reports on spillages:

Noted: That these were for information purposes. Good work was being carried out in this area.

**14/37 Any other business**

i) Fire in North East car park  
Reported: There had been an incident where a contractor fire in the car park caused smoke and chemical fumes to enter buildings requiring Gisbert Kapp and 52 Pritchatts road to be evacuated. As with any incident of this type lessons were learnt, and from these a proposal had been developed for an improved first-responder process which will improve the immediate incident control.   
ii) Spill in MDS  
Reported: 50ml of chemicals had been spilt in the Robert Aitken building as a result of chemicals being carried down the stairs in an unsuitable container (a cardboard box with a wet base). As a result, the building had to be evacuated, although it was reported that the spill response was effective. Work continued on consolidation of good spillage control across the University (see previous items reported under the Hazardous Substances Group).   
iii) UMAL inspection  
Noted: The University’s insurers were due to inspect the University for a week, commencing on 24th February. The Colleges were encouraged arrange for local staff to accompany the inspector.

**Next Meeting: 29th May 2014 – Seminar Room, 54 Pritchatts Road.**