UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

JOINT SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

9 May 2017

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Members present:	Professor J Arthur (Chair), Ms C Boscolo, Mr J Cochrane, Mr J Face, Mr T Green, Mr B Hattiloney, Mr A Jones, Mr R Marguerie (for Mrs C Jarvis), Mr M Moore, Professor J Preece, Ms A Reynolds, Mr A Sheridan, Dr A Thewles (for Ms K Willis), Mrs D Willmetts (for Mrs L Gaytten)
Also present:	Mrs M Ashfield, Mrs P Hawkins, Mrs C Rogers, Mr L Wright, Mrs G Newis (Committee Secretary)
Apologies:	Mrs L Gaytten, Ms A Gulliver, Mrs C Jarvis, Mr J Smith, Mr N Waugh, Ms K Willis
Papers:	The Minute Book contains copies of all written papers or reports referred to below.

1 Minutes of the last meeting of the Joint Safety Advisory Committee

Approved:

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2017 (Document A – JSAC 09.05.17).

3 Matters Arising

Noted:

Action points as listed in the minutes.

a) Publication of the approved minutes on the web

Reported:

(i) Minutes of the previous meeting had been uploaded to the staff intranet and will be so in future.

b) Hazardous substances database

Reported:

(i) MM reported concerns regarding the delays in introducing the hazardous substances database. LW reported this delay had been the result of changed priorities when the radiation inventory became urgent. JA had reported to the University Health and Safety Executive Group (UHSEG) that the hazardous substances database remains the highest priority for investment in health and safety software.

(ii) LW and CR reported that a meeting had been held with representatives from Colleges to give consideration to other health and safety software needs, including an on-line risk assessment and accident reporting platform. The idea was to consider which option would represent the most urgent need, and the best value for the investment of the limited funding currently available. MM indicated that the need for the accident reporting and risk assessment software had not yet been discussed at JSAC.

Agreed:

(iii) JA indicated that ambiguity about this decision was unnecessary seeing as JSAC had previously agreed hazardous substances database was the priority. JA will discuss the issue with the Provost.

(iv) Similar requests for health and safety software will in future be submitted to the UHSEG with a supporting business case.

c) HAS and Estates representation at JSAC

Reported:

(i) JA had discussed with Trevor Payne and Stuart Richards representation from their respective areas on JSAC. JF would represent Estates and SR would represent HAS.

d) Staff Survey

Agreed:

(i) As the next staff survey approaches, there seemed little benefit from meeting to discuss the previous survey results. JA would meet with the trade unions to discuss the next survey at an appropriate point in the future.

e) James Arthur's Short Review for the Structures, Processes and Culture which support Health and Safety within the University

Reported:

(i) JA reported that his review report had been discussed at the UHSEG,

where the chair had requested a summary paper combining both JA's report and an HR paper which outlined progress against his recommendations.

(ii) The trade unions wished to see both papers.

Agreed:

(iii) JA will discuss this further with the Provost.

f) Internal Audit of Fire Safety arrangements

Noted:

(i) The action plan from the internal audit had been circulated to the trade unions in advance of the meeting (copies were available on the day for other JSAC members). The trade unions requested that similar plans be made available to them in the future. LW reminded JSAC that the Provost had advised against distribution of internal audit reports.

g) University vehicle use

Reported:

(i) That fitness to drive tests had been carried out for all of Monica Guise's team and the requirement for these checks to be mandatory for all drivers of the University fleet were being reviewed. This matter had previously been discussed with Wellbeing Services, and more recently with the Safe Campus Travel and Transport Group and Estates.

(ii) That although the University did not provide any driver training, driving assessments for all fleet drivers and HAS fleet drivers were conducted (with records kept accordingly). Recommendations for driver training (by an external training provider) were made for staff whose assessment raised concerns.

(i) That a reduction in accidents involving HAS vehicles had been noted since the introduction of these assessments.

(ii) That this training had been offered to Estates and other departments.

Agreed:

(i) In response to the unions' request for inductions for drivers to be formalised, it was agreed that this matter would be raised with the Safe Campus Travel and Transport Group, with a report provided to JSAC when it had been progressed.

h) Fire Alarm activation data from contractors

Agreed:

(i) JF will follow up his request for fire alarm activation data relating to contractors. This information would be provided by Estates and circulated to JSAC in due course.

i) Muirhead Tower (ventilation and temperature)

Reported:

(i) DW reported that the 10_{mm} window opening in Muirhead Tower was considered to be a balance between what could practicably be achieved in fabricating and securely fixing a bracket to the existing frame against ensuring that gaps that allowed wind uplift stresses on the fixings in to the framework were not created.

(ii) DW had circulated information on use of the ventilation system.

(iii) JA had raised this matter with the UHSEG at the meeting held on 2 March 2017. A paper from Trevor Payne (Estates) had been received by the UHSEG at their meeting on 4 May 2017. TP had outlined arrangements planned for responding to discomfort or poor ventilation in the building if the existing ventilation failed during the period before the windows are replaced.

Agreed

(iv) The report referred to above ('Muirhead Tower Windows – Health and Safety Executive Group update April 2017'), will be circulated to JSAC members.

j) Trade Union and Management Joint Workplace Inspections

Reported:

(i) LW outlined that a proposal was considered within the UHSEG for a new approach to joint workplace inspections to be carried out jointly by trade unions and management. The trade unions would be invited to participate in the development of more detail as part of the revision of the University Health and Safety policy.

k) Stress Task Group

Agreed:

(i) PH will address trade union requests for membership of the WAG Stress Task Group. MM proposed that CB and TG would represent the trade unions on that task group.

l) Review of Accident Reporting procedures

Reported:

(i) LW reported that the UEB had asked the Director of HR to provide an explanation for an increase in the total number of accidents being reported under the category 'other' in the most recent termly report. CR had conducted an initial review of the accident reporting data and concluded that the reporting categories required a review and additional information and training would be provided to those required to report accidents.

Agreed

(ii) The trade unions would be invited to participate in the review and revision of the accident reporting procedures.

m) Trade unions' request for information on health and safety groups and committees

Noted:

(i) LW reported that the membership and function of health and safety groups and committees was being considered by the UHSEG during the process of reviewing and revising the University Health and Safety policy. Terms of reference for the UHSEG have been agreed. Proposed terms of reference for other groups had been shared with UEB and the UHSEG and, trade unions and JSAC members will be invited to consult on these in due course. This was considered further at this JSAC meeting under the Assurance report item.

n) Providing information to trade unions from risk assessments

Noted:

(i) The trade unions and CR had discussed fire risk assessments briefly at the end of a meeting relating to workplace inspections.

The trade unions maintain that full fire risk assessments should be made available to them to review, as documentation is necessary for the exercise of their roles.

A summary of significant findings from all fire risk assessments will be made available to the trade unions. Also, trade unions can view full information found in any Fire Risk Assessment but the full detail used in the assessment, including building drawings, will not be provided.

Agreed

(ii) Meetings involving CR and the trade unions for the purposes of developing a better understanding of the building fire risk assessment process and how the significant findings can assist trade unions in carrying out their functions would be convened.

4 Termly Health and Safety Assurance report to the UEB (Document B – JSAC 09.05.17

Received:

(i) The Termly Assurance report, dated 27 March 2017, had been circulated in advance of the meeting (Document B – JSAC 09.05.17).

Noted:

(ii) Regarding the reorganising of the committees and groups (placing the University Health and Safety Executive Group at the centre of the management and reporting system), the trade unions reinforced their view that they fulfil an important consultative function. This was agreed by JA.

(ii) LW explained the rationale behind the proposed reorganisation of the groups and committees in accordance with the proposals that had been agreed within the UHSEG. The key objective was to place the UHSEG at the centre of the system. The consultation function carried out by a renamed JSAC remains important. JA indicated that the UHSEG proposals would be subject to further consultation, at which point trade union feedback will be taken in to consideration.

(iii) The general point made by the trade unions was that they had not been consulted on the proposal being considered within the UHSEG. LW indicated there was recognition of the benefits of involving trade unions in the development of the revised Health and Safety policy, and the specific proposal for early trade union involvement in addition to the formal consultation process that was agreed at the UHSEG meeting on 4 May 2017.

(iv) LW reported that the diagram in the termly report has been further discussed in the UHSEG and further amendments will be necessary to clarify the line management relationships, and also the reporting relationships between the various groups and committees.

Agreed

(v) LW and JA to invite trade unions to discuss the proposal for earlier trade union involvement in the details informing the review and revision of the University Health and Safety policy. This informal trade union involvement is in addition to the formal consultation process that will precede decisions related to the revised policy. This trade union involvement will increase their awareness and influence over the new arrangements. Non-union representatives would also be invited to participate in these processes.

(vi) JSAC papers in future will follow a format that is being adopted by the UHSEG for agendas, minutes and other papers in accordance with the UEB standard.

5 Trade Union Matters

a) Request for online information on health and safety groups and committees

Reported:

(i) Trade unions sought clarification on the information that was available regarding the membership and terms of reference for various groups and committees.

(ii) Trade unions reiterated their concerns about the proposed changes to the committees and groups as outlined in the termly assurance report and, as discussed at UHSEG. Their concern is that there is sufficient time to properly consider all the issues in a two hour meeting once per term. LW indicated that issues of relevance to the trade unions are being considered at a number of other meetings across the University, but that the revised Health and Safety policy arrangements will be developed to ensure a good flow of information across the University.

(iii) Trade unions also pointed out that, in their experience, issues reported to them by members are not always being considered in local health and safety groups or committees.

(iv) It should not be necessary for unaddressed local issues to be considered for the first time at JSAC, and more effective channels of communication should be available for staff locally to raise health and safety concerns. Only where these fail to deliver should it be necessary to escalate to either JSAC or the UHSEG.

Agreed

(v) LW acknowledged that the information to staff via the intranet would be reviewed and updated routinely to provide information on groups and committees.

vi) LW will ensure proposals are incorporated in to a revised University Health and Safety policy to enable consideration of local issues in the Colleges and Professional Services department health and safety management committees or some other effective arrangement.

b) Water outage

Considered:

(i) The trade unions acknowledged that communications regarding the water outage, that occurred on 11 April 2017, had been issued during office hours; however, noted a concern that they had not commenced soon after the issue arose (around 6am).

Noted:

(i) In response, JA explained that every effort had been made to inform users of buildings and an initial communication had been issued for business continuity; however senior level input and information from the Water Authority had been awaited in advance of more detailed communications being issued.

(ii) That the University's initial storage of water had been used until water pressure had risen to an adequate level.

(iii) That the Emergency Response procedure required senior staff to be notified of problems.

(iv) That the University had a contingency plan for the supply of water should a similar situation cause a water outage for a longer period of time.

(v) The trade unions' concern regarding the availability of staff members to provide supervision and guidance to building users during the water outage and requested a copy of the Emergency Response procedure.

c) Inspections

Reported:

(i) LW believed that the trade union led inspections were valuable as they were identifying examples of unsafe conditions. The current difficulty was coordinating a response to the inspections where insufficient notice was given to allow them to be planned and supported. The proposals for joint management and trade union inspections aimed to overcome those difficulties.

(ii) CR had met with the trade unions to discuss the issues being raised by the inspections and to agree how safety professionals from Workplace Wellbeing can be deployed to support the inspection process.

Agreed

iii) Trade unions will endeavour to provide CR with at least seven days' notice of their intention to carry out a building inspection. More urgent inspections may occasionally be required, for which the trade unions will provide as much notice as possible.

Health and Safety Policy Review

Noted:

(i) This was discussed in earlier items and will remain an agenda item for future meetings.

6 Standard Reports

Received:

(i) Fire Safety (Document C – JSAC 09.05.17), Radiation Safety (Document D – JSAC 09.05.17), Biological Safety (Document E – 09.05.17), Hazardous Substances (Document F – JSAC 09.05.17) and Wellbeing Advisory Group standard reports (Document H – JSAC 09.05.17).

(ii) Accident statistics (Document G – JSAC 09.05.17).

7 Training for Health and Safety

Noted:

(i) LW reported that there are proposals being developed with the review of the University Health and Safety policy that consider both health and safety training and health and safety improvement planning. These proposals build on consideration given to these matters at JSAC in previous years, and are examples of the details which trade unions will be invited to participate in through the informal process.

(ii) CR gave an update on a number of health and safety training related developments including:

- a half day Health and Safety Coordinators course;
- a four day IOSH Managing Safely course;
- a risk assessment course;
- a health and safety competence matrix (which is being considered in the proposals for a revised policy and will be useful when identifying and meeting health and safety training needs);
- fire safety training courses provided in-house that now involved a new practical demonstration of fire extinguisher use.

8 Any other business

Noted:

(i) That JA had raised his concerns regarding cars parked on double yellow lines around the Edgbaston campus (that could restrict access to emergency vehicles) with Security.

(ii) With the anticipated increased pressures on transport (following the opening of the Sports and Fitness Club and the Hotel and Conference Centre), LW proposed that the status of the Safe Campus Travel and Transport Group be raised to strengthen their position in dealing with safety concerns such as these.

(iii) In response to the trade unions, JA explained that, although advisory groups would not be formalised, they had the opportunity to attend

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meetings and raise concerns should they consider it necessary to do so

Agreed:

(ii) JA will ask Gail Eagles (HAS) to write to the relevant schools in the vicinity of the Edgbaston campus to ask that parents are aware of the parking restrictions and how unauthorised parking creates safety problems for the University community.

9 Next Meeting

Reported:

(i) The next meeting of the Committee will take place 14:00 – 16:00 on Tuesday 10 October 2017 in the Seminar Room at 54 Pritchatts Road.

Summary of Actions

Minute	Action	Responsibility
3 (a)	Publish the approved minutes on the web	GN
3 (b)	Raise the trade unions' concern regarding a hazardous substances database with Professor Tim Jones	JA
3 (d)	Meet with the trade unions to discuss the next staff survey at an appropriate point in the future	JA
3 (e)	Clarify with Professor Tim Jones which version of his 'Short Review for the Structures, Processes and Culture which support Health and Safety within the University' report could be circulated to JSAC	JA
3 (g)	Raise the formalisation of driver inductions with the Safe Campus Travel and Transport Group and provide a report to JSAC when the matter has been progressed	LW/CR
3 (h)	Follow up his request to for fire alarm activation data relating to contractors and circulate their response to JSAC	JF
3 (i)	Circulate the 'Muirhead Tower Windows – Health and Safety Executive Group update (April 2017)' report to JSAC	LW/JF
3 (j)	Invite the trade unions to participate in the development of more detail on joint trade union and management inspections as part of the revision of the University Health and Safety policy	LW
3 (k)	Finalise membership of the Stress Task Group, addressing trade unions' requests for membership	PH
3 (l)	Review accident reporting categories	CR
3 (l)	Review accident reporting procedures with involvement from the trade unions	CR
3 (m)	Invite trade unions to consult on proposed terms of reference for JSAC and other groups	JA/LW

3 (n)	Convene follow up meetings with the trade unions to discuss fire risk assessments	CR
4	Consult with trade unions on the proposed reorganisation of groups and committees	JA/LW
4	Invite trade unions to discuss the proposal for earlier trade union involvement in the details informing the review and revision of the University Health and Safety policy	JA/LW
4	Follow the new format that is being adopted by the UHSEG for agenda, minutes and other papers in accordance with the UEB standard	GN
5 (a)	Ensure that proposals are incorporated in to a revised University Health and Safety policy to enable consideration of local issues in the Colleges and Professional Services department Health and Safety Management committees or some other effective arrangement	LW
5 (b)	Provide a copy of the Emergency Response procedure to the trade unions	LW
5 (c)	Aim to provide CR with at least seven days' notice of their intention to carry out a building inspection	Trade Unions
7	Invite trade unions to participate in further discussion on health and safety training and improvement planning through the information consultation process	LW
8	Ask Gail Eagles to write to the relevant schools in the vicinity of the Edgbaston campus to ask that parents are aware of the parking restrictions and how unauthorized parking creates safety problems for the University community	JA