Joint Safety Advisory Committee

21st May 2013

Minutes

Members Professor M Stringer (Chair), Mr K Byng, Ms S Chalder, Mr J Cochrane, Present: Mr M Tomlin, Mrs C Wellington, Mr D Checkley, Mr T Green,

In Attendance: Sarah Brant, Mr L Wright, Mr M Hoare, Mr D Eden.

Apologies: Professor J Franklyn, Professor K Chipman, Mrs C Jarvis, Mrs H Paver, Miss K East, Professor J Preece, Ms A Sathi.

**13/12 Minutes**

*Approved:* The minutes of the meeting held on 12 February 2013 (JSA 13.5.1) were approved.

**13/13 Chairperson’s items**

*Welcome:* The Chair asked for everyone at the meeting to introduce themselves.

1. Responsible Research

The Chair *reported* that this recently published National sector guidance was important and it would be beneficial for this document to be discussed across the University. *Agreed:* that this would be part of the annual review of action plans. It was also agreed that colleges should develop their action plans to demonstrate how they will implement the guidance where it is relevant. **Action:** Colleges to report back to the next JSAC how they have implemented the principles from the guidance in their relevant activities.

1. Radiation Advisory Group

The Chairman proposed that it would be useful to have a Radiation Advisory group to be able to engage with colleges on matters related to radiation safety (in the same way other groups act in relation to bio-safety and hazardous substances). **Action:** Mr Wright to progress the proposal outside the committee, including discussions with Gus Zabierek (as radiation lead).

**13/14 Matters Arising**

1. Transport Safety on Campus Group update

*Reported:* The group were looking at various ‘hot spots’ across the campus including signage, traffic calming, visibility issues and condition of pavements. It was noted that currently there is no budget allocated to fund improvement works. *Discussed*: The signage and traffic calming measures at the junction of the Ring Road and University Road East and the Ring Road and University Road West. It was agreed to refer these matters to the Transport Safety on Campus Group. **Action:** Transport Safety on Campus Group.

Mr Hoare reported that a *Safe Travel* website including a video *Travel Around Safe and Sound* was now available. https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/has/sustainable-travel/Safe-Travel-Guidance.aspx.

1. Draft Working at Height Policy

**Action:** Mr Byng and Mr Hoare would meet at a later date to discuss.

1. Cryogenic Liquids Policy

*Noted:* It is not realistic for the Health and Safety Unit to maintain a detailed inventory of all stocks of cryogenic liquids held on site. Mr Cross, the Chemicals Hazards Adviser, is aware of the general location of cryogenic liquids, but local management have the responsibility to maintain effective inventory control.

iv) Gisbert Kapp

Mr Wright had spoken with Claire Williams and she would be happy to assist with safety issues but would prefer that maintenance service issues go through the approved Estates channels before being taken to JSAC. Mr Checkley felt that improvements around the cleaning standards had been achieved. Non safety issues will be dealt with through the HAS or Estates processes.

v) Fire Update

*Noted:* Mr Wright had spoken with Alan Hickingbotham regarding the use of pagers. It is understood that this responsibility is for departments to set up these arrangements.

vi) Estates Near Miss System

*Noted:* Estates have a ‘Near Miss’ system in place. Mr Hoare *reported* that the University as a whole does not have such a system. The Health and Safety Unit record incidents rather than near misses. **Action:** On everyone in the Safety Community to encourage near-miss reporting.

vii) Snow/Extreme Weather Conditions

*Noted:* It has been established there are two policies impacting on the response to snow or extreme weather conditions. Human Resources have a policy for severe weather, which informs decisions about attendance and staff matters, and Estates have a snow clearing and gritting policy. *Discussed:* The group felt that the Estates Department do an excellent job on campus in severe weather conditions, to help keep University staff and students safe. They should be commended for their hard work. Mr Wright suggested that as an additional precaution, it would be appropriate to properly prepare staff engaged in snow clearing at the beginning of each winter, with refresher training, covering the safe work practice and use of proper clothing and equipment.

Mr Green *reported* that heavy rainfall can also be a cause for concern. Estates/maintenance staff are often very busy addressing leaking roofs. Mrs Wellington endorsed this issue. Mr Byng reported that University House, Muirhead Tower and Chemical Engineering are being looked at for leaks by a ‘Work in Process’ system. Professor Stringer asked whether the group felt that safety measures presently in place were adequate and sufficient. The Committee thought they were but would periodically review.

**13/15 Report to U.E.B.**

1. *Noted:* Report to UEB (dated 4th April 2013)
2. Proposed new format for Report to U.E.B.

*Reported*: Mr Wright discussed the proposed new format. Mr Wright had produced a draft report which had previously been discussed with Professor Stringer and Professor Tickell. This will be presented to U.E.B. on a termly basis. Ideally, the report will also be formatted to include information and data that would be useful for colleges and departments.

There were discussions about the content of future reports, in the benefits from including information on activity, accident and ill health data, and exception reporting regarding risks and relevant developments in the external environment.

**Action:** Professor Stringer**,** Mr Wright and others to continue to develop the new format report.

**13/16 New Policy and Guidance documents**

1. Revision to: Action, Investigation and Reporting in the Event of an Accident, Incident, Near Miss or Occupational III Health.

The Chairman noted the new impact assessment feature as useful. **Action:** Colleges and Departments to note change to the reporting and investigation arrangements for serious accidents.

1. Draft Radiation Policy

*Noted:* Ongoing. Professor Stringer and Health and Safety Unit to continue to develop. **Action:** Mr Wright to progress and report to the next committee meeting.

**13/17 Trade Union Matters**

The issue of new Trade Union Appointments/Safety Representatives was raised in light of recent retirements. **Action:** Mr Green to progress**.**

**13/18 Fire Update**

*Reported:* Work continues on implementing zoned evacuation across campus. This includes content within training concerns reflecting the different arrangements staff will encounter.

**13/19 Radiation Adviser Report**

*Recorded:* There was discussion on how summary reports outlining the main developments might be sufficient for JSAC, with the proposed Radiation advisory group deliberating over the full detail reports, and advising JSAC accordingly.

**13/20 Health and Safety Statistics**

Accident data for the preceding quarter.

**Accidents and Incidents**

The accident and incident data for the preceding quarter was tabled. Mr Hoare reported that six of the accidents were reported to the Health and Safety Executive. One of these included a student who had injured her hand in a laboratory machine. An enquiry was held and the report recommendations forwarded to the Health and Safety Executive. These required Colleges to ensure that suitable risk assessments and safe operating procedures, where appropriate, were in place for laboratory equipment, supervisors are aware of and carry out their responsibilities and records of training and instruction are kept. **Action:** Heads of College

Mr Green reported an accident that had just occurred. A bottle containing nitric acid had corroded and leaked. It was agreed that this would be discussed at School Safety Committees.

In response to a question from Professor Stringer, Mr Hoare was able to assure the meeting that repeat accident and incidents are monitored and the appropriate action taken.

**Sickness absence data.**

*Discussed:* The Wellbeing Advisory group contributed a new format of data report, which continued to explain old and new categories. This data report was discussed by the Committee, to highlight any relevant leads etc. The report will continue to develop and may be influenced by the on-going review of Occupational Health (being overseen by the Wellbeing advisory group).

**13/21 Any Other Business**

*Discussed:* The Committee agreed in principle that a University led Wellbeing day will be re-introduced but not before 2014. **Action:** Mr Wright.

*Further discussed:* The actions on Colleges and Corporate Services to report to JSAC regarding two specific items, responsible research guidance and in light of the recent incident within the School of Chemistry – the practice of supervision. ***Agreed:***for colleges to report on their local action plans for 2012-13 and future plans for 2013-14.

**Next Meeting: 31st October 2013 – Seminar Room at 54 Pritchatts Road.**