ASTON UNIVERSITY

HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (HSC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 14th April 2011 in the Council Room

Present Mrs Adèle MacKinlay (Chair) Mr K Munday

Mr J Batt Ms K Newman-Brown

Miss D S Cowan
Mrs M Robins
Mrs C De-Silva
Mr B Smith
Rev C Dowd
Dr N R Smith
Dr G A Drahun
Mrs K Taylor
Mr G A Evans
Mr M Tonks
Dr M Green
Mr A P Vickers
Mr K Hughes
Mr D White

Ms R Hunt

Apologies Mr N Birch Mr S Ludlow

Mr J Finucane Mr G Moulder
Mrs K Glynn Dr M Y L Nye
Dr A Hartley Dr P Tissington
Mr A Hawkesworth Mr C Vidgeon

Ms D Lacey

In Attendance Ms V Carroll

Mrs A Hegan Mr S Shah

MEMBERSHIP

11/25 Noted: 1. That Chantal De-Silva was welcomed to the committee as the

new representative for the School of Languages and Social

Sciences.

2. That Victoria Carroll was in attendance, representing the Centre

for Learning, Innovation and Professional Practice (CLIPP).

3. That Ian Harrison, Head of Security, had taken early retirement from the University, and recruitment processes were in progress to identify a suitable replacement, who, on being appointed, would become a member of the Committee. In the interim, Mike Kirkman would remain the contact for HSC in connection with

Security issues.

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3rd FEBRUARY 2011

11/26 Resolved: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd February 2011 be

accepted as a correct record.

Training Records (11/05)

11/27 Noted: That Cliff Vidgeon and Steve Ludlow would report back at the

next Committee meeting (on 9th June 2011), concerning the training record requirements of the School of Engineering and

Applied Science.

[Action: Cliff Vidgeon, Steve Ludlow]

Constitution of the Health and Safety Committee (11/08)

11/28 Noted: That Stuart Doughty, a lay governor of the University, had

agreed to become 'Health and Safety Champion' on behalf of the

Council. Mr Doughty had a background and extensive

experience in civil engineering, and would be offering his advice and expertise, from a health and safety perspective, with a view to helping the Committee's work. This was in addition to the support and advice that Keith Munday continued to provide to

HSC.

Risk Assessment Software (11/09)

11/29 Noted: That the matter was now concluded, and no further action was

required on the part of the Committee.

Accident and Incident Reports (11/11)

11/30 Noted: 1. That manual handling guidance produced by the Safety Office

had been circulated to Executive Deans and Heads of Support

Departments.

2. That those most likely to be involved in lifting heavy items should

have access to the guidance.

3. That, in accordance with an envisaged future strategy for further enhancing Aston's Health and Safety culture (cf Minute 11/36

below), steps would also be taken to disseminate this information

by alternative, more innovative means.

[Action: Safety Team]

Reports from Schools and Departments (11/12)

11/31 Noted: That emergency evacuation guidance would be updated and

communicated via Aspects within the next few days.

[Action: Dave White]

Any other business (11/15)

11/32 Noted: That signage highlighting pedestrian routes would be in place by

the start of the next term. The matter was now an Estates issue

and no further action was required by the Committee.

Emergency Management Planning (11/16)

11/33 Noted:

- That the University was recently visited by the Property Risk Surveyor from Aston's insurers in connection with emergency and business continuity arrangements. The Deputy Secretary was pleased to report that the insurers were happy with the arrangements in place, and that no further recommendations were made.
- 2. That work in implementing the recommendations which had arisen from the last training session for Emergency Incident Managers (EIM's) were in progress. The vast majority had been completed with the exception of those relating to Security, requiring some discussion with Mike Kirkman. Additionally, future training of EIMs would be enhanced through the provision of response checklists for use by participants during the sessions.
- 3. That Kate Parsons was still awaiting confirmation of key contacts from some areas. Training would be arranged for next term.

[Action: Kate Parsons]

Accident and Incident Reports (11/20)

11/34 Noted:

That the items under discussion at the previous meeting had

now been resolved.

Reports from Schools and Departments (11/23)

11/35 Noted:

That Nick Smith had prepared a draft document detailing the potential issues and associated costs of implementing a Fire Warden scheme within the Library, for discussion with the Safety Office and subsequent, onward transmission to the Executive

Operations Group.

[Action: Dr Nick Smith]

ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

11/36 Received:

 The Annual Health and Safety Report for 2010, as endorsed by the University Executive and, subsequently, presented to the Council. This version awaited the incorporation of a few minor comments made by Stuart Doughty, prior to wider circulation across the University.

[Action: Adèle MacKinlay, Safety Team]

2. A tabled paper from the Chair, setting out recommendations further to enhance Aston's Health and Safety culture.

Noted:

1. That the recommendations now before the Committee, in the form of a 10-point, high-level strategy, arose from Council's consideration of the Annual Report, and, in particular, the need to deliver a transformational change in embedding Health and Safety across the University during the current year and beyond.

In this connection, the 10 strategy points listed were as follows:

- "1. The strategy will move from one of administration, reporting and audit to one of engaging hearts and minds, of developing a **culture** of health and safety.
- 2. We will initiate a high-visibility safety campaign.
- 3. We will improve the signage in high-risk areas.
- 4. We will communicate minimum health and safety awareness requirements for all staff and identify innovative ways of checking understanding and information gaps.
- 5. We will re-vamp our new staff safety awareness induction.
- 6. We will set targets for the reduction of staff accidents and will continue to benchmark against those 'best-in-class'.
- 7. We will train staff using case studies, prioritising those in areas of highest incidence (catering, cleaning).
- 8. We will increase the awareness of lifting strategies for all staff in an innovative way.
- 9. We will re-write our Health and Safety Policy such that the Policy is a statement of intent, the procedure is the detail, and the implementation is the variation by School/Support Area.
- 10. We will agree the detail of our cultural strategy at the next Committee meeting (9th June), including roles and responsibilities, and guide the implementation through termly (rather than bi-monthly) meetings."
- That among the recommendations were proposals to decrease the frequency of formal Health and Safety Committee meetings to once termly, permitting instead Working Groups to form and progress matters related to an eventual Strategy for H&S Improvement.
- 3. A suggestion, made in the course of HSC's discussion, that an additional, late-Summer meeting could be retained under this arrangement for the purpose of hearing extraordinary business, if required.

Resolved:

That the outline-recommendations be further developed over the next six weeks, and that a detailed strategy for change be developed and brought to the next Committee meeting.

[Action: Adèle MacKinlay]

BIOLOGICAL SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

11/37 Received: A final draft, detailing the proposed Constitution and Terms of

Reference for a Biological Safety Sub-Committee.

Noted: That the document had previously been circulated to the

Biological Safety Officer and key members of staff from the Schools of Life and Health Sciences and of Engineering and

Applied Science for comment.

Resolved: That the document be approved, and that the BSSC be formally

[Action: Kevin Hughes]

OUT OF HOURS WORKING GROUP

11/38 Received: A report from the Out of Hours Working Group, together with an

oral report from the Head of Health and Safety (HHS).

Noted:

1. That the document would be forwarded to the Executive Operations Group for its consideration and approval.

2. That some additional details were required in advance of

submission to the EOG.

[Action: Andrew Vickers]

HEALTH AND SAFETY AUDIT GROUP (HSAG)

11/39 Received: 1. An oral report from the Assistant Safety Adviser (ASA)

concerning the audit of the Business Partnerships Unit (BPU), the Research Support Office (RSO) and Communications, which

had taken place on 2nd February 2011.

2. An oral report from Victoria Carroll on progress in implementing

the recommendations from the HSAG's earlier audit of CLIPP

(on 6th September 2010).

Noted: That, with reference to the audit of BPU, RSO and

Communications, the Audit Group had felt that consideration should be given to 'fine-tuning' the areas' risk assessments, by adopting the new University risk assessment which removes the confusion of risk rating. But overall, it was a positive audit to be

commended.

Resolved: That the report from CLIPP on its implementation of audit

recommendations be approved.

PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTING (PAT) ARRANGEMENTS

11/40 Noted: 1. That, due to the number of electricians available, Estates were

unable to undertake PAT arrangements for all appliances and, therefore, recommended their continued use of approved

contractors.

2. That Estates had negotiated a competitive price of 75 pence per item so Departments should be encouraged to use the convice

item, so Departments should be encouraged to use the service

under this arrangement.

3. That Finance and EAS were the only Departments that employed contractors outside of the arrangement.

4. That, with regard to the frequency of testing, Departments should visually inspect their equipment prior to use and have an effective arrangement in place for reporting defective equipment.

Resolved:

Noted:

1. That a discussion should take place with Finance and EAS outside of the HSC meeting.

[Action: Malcolm Tonks]

2. That the formalised arrangement be publicised through established Estates communications.

[Action: Malcolm Tonks]

DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT (DSE) GUIDANCE

11/41 Received: The revised University DSE Policy.

 That the main emphasis and focus of the revised Policy would be the selection of DSE Assessors within Schools and Support

Departments to undertake DSE training to enable them to carry

out the initial assessments within their own areas.

2. That training would be provided to those identified as DSE Assessors by the Safety Office, through the Centre for Staff and

Graduate Development.

3. That training of DSE Assessors would commence in June 2011.

Resolved: That members supply the Safety Office with the names of

volunteers to become DSE Assessors from their areas, so that

training could be organised.

[Action: HSC members]

FIRE SAFETY

11/42 Received: A written report, prepared by the Fire Safety Adviser (FSA).

Noted

1. To thank Kerstin Taylor, Conference Aston, and John Edwards, Executive Dean of Aston Business School, for their efforts in helping to achieve a successful inspection of the ABS Building

undertaken by West Midlands Fire Service.

2. That the Fire Service would be inspecting the Students' Guild on

16th May 2011.

3. That 51 people had attended the most recent fire safety awareness session, and, following this, only a very small number

of staff had yet to complete this mandatory training.

4. That the names of any remaining persistent non-attendees needed to be identified, so that the appropriate action could be taken.

[Action: David White, Safety Office]

5. That the FSA would work with the Guild's Welfare Vice-President to develop a strategy for educating the new student intake of the dangers of excess alcohol and drug consumption, with particular relevance to fire safety.

ACCIDENT AND INCIDENT REPORTS

11/43 Received: A written report from the ASA.

Noted:

- That a member of staff in Café Tierra sustained slight bruising to her head after being struck by an unstable locker which had fallen. Work could not be undertaken to stabilise the lockers until keys were available with which to open them and affix them to the wall.
- 2. That Marie Walton had been tasked with sourcing a master key from the supplier, prior to Estates conducting the necessary remedial work.

[Action: Marie Walton, Estates]

RADIOLOGICAL SAFETY

11/44 Received:

- 1. The Minutes of the Radiological Safety Sub-Committee meeting held on 15th December 2010.
- 2. A written report, prepared by the Site Radiation Officer (SRO), summarising progress to date on action taken in respect of radiological issues outstanding.
- 3. An oral summary from the SRO following the site inspection by the Environment Agency (EA) in January 2011.

Noted:

- That the action-summary report also included actions arising from the most recent Radiological Safety Sub-Committee meeting.
- 2. That, as a result of the two minor non-compliances identified during the site visit by the EA, a formal response was submitted, setting out a number of wide-ranging actions proposed by both the University and the School of Life and Health Sciences.
- 3. That the EA Inspector had confirmed his satisfaction that the actions set out in the University's formal submission were an appropriate response in respect of the two non-compliances.

Resolved: That an update on the implementation of these actions would be

included in the action-summary report for the next meeting of the

HSC.

EXTERNAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDANCE AND NEW/UPDATED LEGISLATION

11/45 Noted: That there was no new or updated Health and Safety legislation

matters to report to the Committee.

REPORTS FROM SCHOOLS AND DEPARTMENTS

11/46 Received: A written report of significant safety issues identified in the

Minutes of School and Departmental Health and Safety

Committee or Group meetings

Noted: 1. That the fire alarms in Lakeside could not be heard on the fire

panel in Lakeside Reception, meaning that members of the portering staff had no knowledge of an alarm until Security

telephoned to advise them of the situation.

2. Good practice within a School, which had embraced online web

fire safety training for their postgraduates. The system tracked all

students who had watched the DVD.

Resolved: That the fire alarm issue in Lakeside be resolved.

[Action: Dave White, Di Lacey]

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11/47 Resolved: To thank the Estates and Capital Development Directorate for its

support in the resolution of nuisance noise experienced by staff in 'The Hub' and associated areas, due to adjacent construction

and demolition works.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11/48 Noted: That the next meeting would take place on 9th June 2011 at

10am in the Council Room.

ACTION SUMMARY

| Topic | Minute | Resolutions | Actions |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Training records (11/05) | 11/27 | That Cliff Vidgeon and Steve Ludlow would report back on discussions concerning the training record requirements of SEAS, with particular reference to postgraduates. | C Vidgeon, S Ludlow |
| Accident and Incident Reports (11/11) | 11/30 | More innovative dissemination of the manual handling guidance | Safety Team |
| Reports from Schools And Departments (11/12) | 11/31 | That the Emergency Evacuation Guidance be updated and publicised in <i>Aspects</i> . | D White |
| Emergency Management Planning | 11/33 | Kate Parsons to complete the collation of emergency contact details of nominated individuals from Schools and Support Departments. | K Parsons |
| Reports from Schools and Departments (11/23) | 11/35 | To submit a document on the potential costs for a Fire Warden scheme in the Library for consideration by the Executive Operations Group. | N Smith |
| Annual Health & Safety Report | 11/36 | The Annual Report, once finalised, to be published across the University. | A MacKinlay, Safety Team |
| | | That a strategy for change be developed and brought to the next Committee meeting. | A MacKinlay |
| Biological Safety Sub-Committee | 11/37 | The BSSC to be formally established as a Sub-Committee of the HSC. | K Hughes |
| Out of Hours Working Group | 11/38 | Some additional details were required prior to submission to the EOG. | A Vickers |
| Portable Appliance Testing Arrangements | 11/40 | That the formalised PAT arrangements be publicised through established Estates communications, and, specifically, discussed with Finance and EAS. | M Tonks |
| Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Guidance | 11/41 | That HSC members supply the Safety Office with names of individuals volunteering as DSE Assessors. | HSC members |
| Fire Safety | 11/42 | To identify any members of staff that had persistently failed to attend for fire awareness training. | D White |
| Accident and Incident Reports | 11/43 | That issues relating to stabilising the lockers in Café Tierra be resolved. | K Glynn, M Walton |
| Radiological Safety | 11/44 | That an update on the implementation of reported actions would be included in the action-summary report | K Hughes |

| | | for the next meeting of the HSC. | |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Reports from Schools and Departments | 11/46 | To resolve the fire alarm issue in Lakeside Residences. | D White, D Lacey |