

University of Glasgow

Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

Minute of Meeting held on Friday 20 September 2013 at 10:00 AM in the Melville Room

Present: Mrs Ann Allen, Ms Mae Boyd, Dr Gordon Duckett, Mr James Gray, Mr Robert Kilpatrick, Mr David Mclean, Dr Catherine Martin, Dr John O'Dowd, Ms Julie Ommer, Mr Paul Phillips, Mr Deric Robinson, Mr David Somerville, Ms Aileen Stewart, Ms Selina Woolcott, Dr Robin Easton, Ms Louise Graham

In Attendance: Ms Debbie Beales, Dr Nicholas Elliott, Mr Gordon Scott

Apologies: Mr David Newall, Mrs Christine Barr, Mr John Malcolm

HSWC/2013/1 Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 22 May 2013

The Minute of the meeting of Wednesday 22 May 2013 was approved with the change of the wording "School" to "College" when referring to Arts.

HSWC/2013/2 Convenors Business

David Newall, the regular convenor, was unable to chair today's meeting. Ann Allen, Director of Estates & Buildings, convened in his absence. The convenor welcomed the new SRC rep, Louise Graham, as well as Gordon Scott (deputising for Christine Barr) and Nick Elliott who would be updating the Committee on item 3 on the Agenda.

HSWC/2013/3 Matters arising

HSWC/2013/3.1 Health & safety risk register (Paper 1)

The Committee **noted** the Paper that was circulated. Ms Woolcott **informed** the Committee that this version of the health & safety risk register would be submitted to SMG in order to feed into the strategic risk register in January 2014. The Committee **agreed** that they were happy with the current findings but would like future reports to include graphical representation of the data. Ms Woolcott **agreed** to look into this for future reports. The Committee **discussed** the work taking place between the University fire officer and E&B regarding fire risk assessments and **acknowledged** the fact that funding, most likely through the CapEx route, would be required to address potential high risk areas.

HSWC/2013/3.2 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) review (verbal update SW)

This item is covered under item 9.

HSWC/2013/4 Asbestos management (verbal update NE)

Dr Elliott **informed** the Committee that Estates & Buildings (E&B) had recently employed 2 Compliance Officers to concentrate on in-house asbestos management. A Health & Safety Manager was also being appointed as a result of the Marsh audit report. Dr Elliott **informed** the Committee that the first cohort of this year's annual awareness training had taken place with more being programmed. This training, which cost £50 per head, would prove useful to staff with building related duties and anyone interested should contact him directly.

He also **informed** the Committee that summer had been busy but productive with a successful cleanup of the UPS room within James Watt North while maintaining operation of the equipment. Work had also taken place within Virology, James Watt South and extensive removal works within the QMU. Future work was planned in the Boyd Orr building subject to funding. E&B had procured an asbestos database which, when operational, would provide internet access for relevant parties to the asbestos register and which permitted remote updating in real time.

HSWC/2013/5 Enforcing authority visits (verbal report DMcL)

Mr McLean **informed** the Committee that there had been two recent Health & Safety Executive (HSE) visits:

1. Work had taken place to repair the asbestos lagged Steam Main where the main contractor had left an enclosure up longer than had been notified to the HSE. As a result, the University had received a site visit from the HSE. This resulted in an FFI (fee for intervention) being issued for confined space issues identified in the mechanical repair phase of the works for the University. The asbestos removal contractor was also written to by the HSE.
2. SEPS had received a report regarding a case of carpal tunnel syndrome and, as RIDDOR guidelines state that the use of vibrating machinery can contribute to this condition, the case could be considered an occupational disease and had to be reported to the HSE. A visit from the HSE confirmed that as staff had limited vibration exposure no further action was required.

HSWC/2013/6 Incidents regarding ceiling materials (verbal report DMcL)

Mr McLean **informed** the Committee that there had been various incidents on campus that involved ceiling materials:

1. A plaster ceiling had fallen onto a suspended ceiling in an unoccupied office in the Joseph Black building.
2. A stairwell ceiling had collapsed in the Joseph Black Building (wing adjoining University Place).
3. The Boyd Orr building used a ceiling based heating system which used copper piping. Clips holding ceiling tiles periodically came loose and the tiles occasionally fell to the ground.

Whilst these incidents had not involved any injury to persons they did lead to E&B commissioning a survey on all buildings with repairs being carried out in tandem with the survey. The Joseph Black was nearing completion and remedial work had taken place in the Boyd Orr building to install additional brackets.

HSWC/2013/7 Accident statistics (Paper 2)

The Committee **noted** the Paper that was circulated. Mr McLean **informed** the Committee that there were no significant findings to report and asked that in future this item be reworded as a SEPS report so that the item could cover all SEPS related information and not just accident stats. The Committee **agreed** that this was a good idea and would become effective in time for the December meeting. Mr McLean **informed** the Committee that he would be advertising 3 risk training courses in the Campus News. The courses were risk assessments, accident investigating and inspection regimes. These courses would be free to attend and open to all staff. Interested parties should contact SEPS directly. He also informed the Committee that 14 Units were being invited to participate in internal audits for

session 13/14. E&B had already agreed dates but SEPS had received no other replies as yet.

Mr Gray **informed** the Committee that an incident had taken place in August in the GBRC building. This incident involved a 1st year PG student who had been using a UV light box on her own at 2am on a Friday morning. She had initially used the face shield provided but had removed it as it kept slipping. As a result she had suffered keratitis of the cornea and possibly her lens. This had been treated but she was still experiencing problems with her sight. Mr Gray had submitted a report to both the GBRC and SEPS which highlighted a lack of signage, a lack of training and an issue with lone working. The Committee **agreed** that this incident showed that these issues need to be addressed both at student and staff level and various actions were delegated. College reps **agreed** to take the issues to their College Graduate Schools to ensure that this issue was covered in student inductions. The SRC and Ms Ommer **agreed** to take it to the Student Support Committee and Ms Woolcott would revisit the Lone Working Procedure to see if amendments were required.

HSWC/2013/8 OH report (Paper 3)

The Committee **noted** the Paper that was circulated and asked that future reports also show the information in graph form. Ms Stewart **agreed** to look into this for the next meeting and **informed** the Committee that in addition to the OH report she had just received the sickness absence stats. These were shared with the Committee via a PowerPoint presentation and showed that the cost of sickness absence had risen from last year by £400,000 (£2.3M to £2.7M). The figures reinforced the fact that there was still under reporting of absence within academic staff and staff in higher MPA grades. The top sickness reasons for session 2012/13 were mental health 17%, colds 5.9%, chest infections 4.3%, stomach upsets 4.1%, cancer 3.6%, flu 3.5% and "other" 61.6%. The Committee **agreed** that the "other" section should be broken down further and Ms Stewart would work with HR to achieve this in the coming months. The average length of absence was higher than the Russell Group average but number of working days lost was lower. The other stats were comparable with other HEI's. The Committee **welcomed** the sickness absence stats and felt that they were a useful addition to the OH report.

HSWC/2013/9 EAP statistics (Paper 4)

The Committee **noted** the Paper that was circulated. Ms Woolcott **informed** the Committee that a review of the service was currently in place and the group, consisting of representatives from HR, OH and Psychological Services, would produce a report with their findings at a future HSWC meeting. As there was such a low uptake of the service the group were appraising options for delivery of a more varied selection of services, whether that be internal or external. The trade union reps **stated** that they would like to be involved in future meetings of the review of the service. Moving on to the quarterly report, Ms Woolcott **informed** the Committee that, as the service had now been running for more than a year, comparisons could be made with the same quarter last year. Overall, the service had increased by almost 7.4% with telephone counselling rising by nearly 9%. However, face to face counselling had dropped by 7%. Although the uptake was similar to the previous provider it was still an extremely low uptake considering it was a free service to staff. Another publicity campaign had taken place with an article in Campus e-news alongside the official launch of the revised Management of Stress in the Workplace Policy, and a poster drive.

HSWC/2013/10 Employers liability report (Paper 5)

The Committee **noted** the Paper that was circulated. Ms Woolcott **informed** the Committee on the report that had been provided by the University's Insurance & Risk Manager. She explained that figures cited or paid out had been categorised into ranges and details of accidents which had been anonymised to protect the confidentiality of pursuants.

HSWC/2013/11 Any Other Business

Fire safety training update

Mr McLean **informed** the Committee that, as of 18 September 2013, 745 staff had completed the e-fire safety awareness training with an additional 73 partially completing it.

HSWC/2013/12 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HSWC will take place on Thursday 12 December 2013 at 10am in the Senate Room.

Created by: Miss Debbie Beales