

**Date:** Monday 23rd September, 2013

**Present:** Doreen Cantrell (DAC); Oliver Anderson (OA); Julian Blow (JJB); John Brown (JB); David Coates (DC); Alex Cop (AC, attending on behalf of JM); Tom Eadsforth (TE); Mike Ferguson (MAJF); Rob Ford (RF); Donald Gardiner (DG); Letty Gibson (LMG); Ian Gilbert (IHG); Lisa Grayson (LG); Nick Helps (NRH); Zoe Hirons (ZH); Monica Lacey (ML); Ian Leith (IRL); Luke Newman (LN); Ian Scragg (IGS); Nicola Stanley-Wall (NSW, attending on behalf of TP); Kate Storey (KGS); Colin Watts (CW)

1. Apologies

- DAC ran through the apologies: Tracy Palmer (TP); Sam Swift (SW); Jonathan Monk (JM); Irwin McLean (WHIM).
- DAC welcomed Tom Kane, the new University Fire Safety Adviser, to the meeting.

**ACTION**

2. Committee Composition (paper A)

- DAC announced the appointment of Nick Helps to the role of CLS H&S Coordinator.
- DAC introduced the newly appointed PhD Student Rep, Oliver Anderson, and new Postdoc Rep, Tom Eadsforth, and thanked them both for taking on their respective roles.
- DAC proposed that Carol Iversen joins the Committee as the Wash-Up/Media/Waste Autoclave Facility staff representative. Given her scientific background and H&S knowledge and experience she should be an asset to the Committee. Committee approved. LG to send formal invite.

**LG**

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising (paper B)

- Item 3, Matters Arising, second bullet point
  - DAC asked the Committee members to email their thoughts on an appropriate time to show the safety presentation on the Xibo digital noticeboards to LG.
- Item 3, Matters Arising, third bullet point
  - DAC informed the Committee that, although implementation of the Lone & Out of Hours Workers' policy has improved, compliance is far from 100% and this is not acceptable. When asked, OA and TE both said they were unaware of the requirement to complete a questionnaire. This suggests a definite communication problem. DAC asked Committee members to remind their staff/colleagues of the requirement.
  - DAC explained the executive decision taken in relation to Summer Students undertaking out of hours work i.e. their access card will only be programmed for 24/7 access once the student completes and submits a questionnaire AND their PI sends an email to LG confirming their student(s) will be supervised at all times. This now extends to Honours Project Students.
- Item 5, Annual H&S Return to Safety Services
  - Ian Scragg has subsequently agreed that the plan to conduct a survey to assist in assessing Line Managers' competency in terms of their H&S responsibilities was not the best use of resources and

**All**

**All**

**ACTION**

that the focus should be on developing and delivering a training package for PIs.

- Item 7, Review of JBC Drinking Water Contamination Incident
  - DAC asked the Division Heads if they have instant access to emergency contact telephone numbers for all their PIs. The majority do not. MAJF suggested recording emergency contact numbers on a laminated card and keeping the card to hand at all times, e.g. in one's wallet/purse. ZH said she will ask the Divisional Secretaries to ensure these cards are prepared for each Division Head. **ZH**
  - DAC asked RF if he has instant access to emergency contact telephone numbers for all Support Service Managers. RF explained that this is problematic given the number of people he would have to keep up to date numbers for. DAC acknowledged this but stressed that a solution has to be found. RF to investigate the options. **RF**
  - The issue of data protection and the constraints this might place upon the storing of emergency contact numbers by line managers was raised. LG to look into this and report back to DAC. **LG**
- Item 9, Short presentation by Ian Scragg on Managers' H&S Responsibilities
  - The training package for PIs was piloted on 30/10/12. Head of College, both Deans and five Division Heads were unable to attend. DAC said this was unfortunate but understandable given how busy these people are. MAJF proposed changing tack and asked IGS if he would be willing to meet with new PIs individually to go through the training material. IGS replied that he was happy to do this and will make the necessary arrangements. ZH to give IGS a list of new PIs. **IGS**  
**ZH**
- Item 13, AOCB, second bullet point
  - NRH volunteered to look into getting defibrillators on site. **NRH**

4. Annual Review and Approval of H&S Policy (paper C)

- LG pointed out that the composition of the CLS College Board still has to be updated. ZH to send current composition to LG. LG to update policy document accordingly. **LG**
- LG informed the Committee that the CLS H&S Working Group has been disbanded and the University Lab Safety Working Group – LG, NRH, IGS and Carol Gallacher (Medicine) - takes its place. IGS clarified that the Group's remit is simply to share best practice. LG to update policy document accordingly. **LG**
- NRH summarised the content of the new appendix: Appendix 7 "ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCH GROUP LEADERS AND ACADEMIC TEACHING STAFF IN RELATION TO YOUNG PERSONS". This led to much discussion about the arrangements for bringing young persons into the College on work experience/placements. DAC concluded that responsibility for defining an official process would fall to the new Schools Outreach Officer, Erin Hardee.
- MAJF asked if the word "subordinates" could be replaced with "colleagues". LG to update policy document accordingly. **LG**
- The Committee approved the new version of the H&S policy subject to the minor changes detailed above.

**ACTION**

5. Annual Lab Coat Policy Compliance Check (paper D)

- MAJF insisted that PIs take a zero tolerance approach to non compliance with the lab coat policy.
- While conducting the compliance check, LG and NRH noticed many individuals working in the labs without any eye protection. JBC Floor 1 was the exception, with all workers wearing lab coats and safety glasses.
- DAC is satisfied that we are moving in the right direction in terms of improving compliance.
- LG noted that approximately £4500 has been spent on lab coats and non-prescription safety glasses and £15000 on prescription safety glasses since the decision was taken to fund these items from a central budget.

6. Training Portfolio Proposal (paper E)

- NRH outlined his proposal, stressing that review of an individual's training portfolio would have to become an integral part of staff OSAR/PhD Student review to ensure compliance.
- MAJF pointed out that people with a hectic schedule can find it difficult to attend training events on a specific date/time and asked if web based training packages that people can undertake in their own time could be developed. LG informed the Committee that on-line training modules for cryogenics, compressed gas and TC safety are already available and more modules will be added as they are developed. IGS said Safety Services already have training packages on Blackboard and are happy to expand on this. IGS, NRH and LG to take this forward.

**IGS,  
NRH, LG**

7. Approval of new Policy on Safe Use and Disposal of Sharps (paper F)

- NRH explained why clear policy and guidance on safe use of sharps is necessary, referring to the accident/incident statistics in Paper N and new regulations introduced this year, and pointed out that there is additional, supporting material not included in Paper F: posters, a web page and a slide to include in the H&S Induction Seminar.
- There was some discussion about the need for glass pasteurs and whether these could be replaced with the plastic alternatives. DAC asked for Committee members to consult with their colleagues and feed back. JJB asked if a cost comparison could be done. LMG to ask Carol Iversen to look into this. DAC stressed that there would be no outright ban on use of glass pasteurs, acknowledging that they may be essential for certain techniques.
- Committee approved the policy.

**All  
LMG**

8. Fire Risk Assessment (paper G)

- TK informed the Committee that he had just retired from 30 years active service in the Fire Brigade before taking up the post of University Fire Safety Adviser and that he was attending the meeting today specifically to highlight the fire risk posed by use of Bunsen Burners within in the labs. He admitted to being quite shocked to find this degree of risk was being tolerated and strongly recommended that this risk is address and minimised as a matter of urgency.
- LG commented that the fire alarm activation summary in paper G and reports from previous years supported TK's assessment.

- TK added that, given the nature and range of hazards within our buildings and the risk this presents to fire fighters, he strongly suspects that a defensive approach would be adopted if a fire took hold, i.e. the Fire Brigade would retreat and fight the fire from a safe distance. This would lead to more extensive fire and water damage than a targeted, offensive approach.
- DAC thanked TK for sharing his concerns with the Committee and agreed that the risk is serious and must be addressed.
- There was much discussion on possible risk reduction measures with the following conclusions:
  - The use of sterile glass beads for spreading plates, as pioneered in MMb, will be promoted throughout the College. NSW said she would be happy to demonstrate to the technique to any interested parties. Use of disposable, single-use, sterile spreaders should also be considered as an alternative to gas burners/naked flames.
  - Where use of a gas burner/naked flame is essential, the safer Fireboy burner should be used in preference to the traditional Bunsen.
  - Gas burners/naked flames must only be used in areas where all unnecessary combustibles/flammables have been removed.
  - Monthly fire safety inspections will be implemented and must include specific checks on safe use of gas burners/naked flames.
  - Additional fire blankets will be provided in areas where gas burners/naked flames are in use.
  - Additional training in safe use of gas burners/naked flames and fire fighting equipment will be provided.

**ACTION**

**NSW/  
NRH/LG**

**Lab  
Managers  
NRH/LG**

**NRH/LG**

#### 9. Review of John Davies' Internal H&S Audit Report (paper H)

- IGS drew attention to some of the key findings of the report highlighting references to:
  - the University being a fragmented organisation with a cavalier approach to health and safety;
  - the need for clarity over management and reporting structures;
  - the requirement for sanctions to be available in the event of non compliance;
  - the importance of achieving consistency across the University.
- The University Secretary is currently considering what action to take in light of the report.
- DAC agreed that consistency is important, acknowledging that safety standards throughout the College need to be harmonised but accepting that it will be a complicated process due to differing activities, requirements and resources between Divisions.
- IGS commented that PIs need to recognise their health and safety responsibilities and fulfil their duty of care to their staff and students.
- MAJF underlined the importance of making new PIs aware of their health & safety responsibilities.

#### 10. Inspections

- SEPA, 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012 (paper J)
  - LG reported that the University received an 'Excellent' rating and there were no major issues to address.
- CL3 Facility Internal Inspection (paper K)
  - LG reported that there were only a few minor issues to address and noted that the follow-up visit is still to be conducted.

**ACTION**

#### 11. CLS H&S Progress Report (paper L)

- DAC asked the Committee members to review Paper L, CLS H&S Progress Report submitted to University Safety Sub-Committee in September, and email LG if they have any comments.
- IHG asked if the LEV plans were now complete. LG confirmed that they were and the next step was to meet with E&B to discuss how we ensure all the identified systems are subject to appropriate maintenance/testing.
- LMG assured the Committee that all future refurbishments would be done in close liaison with E&B to ensure any new LEV installations are added to the plans, inventory and maintenance/testing program.
- MAJF wanted it noted that E&B have been kept informed of *all* physical changes to the College infrastructure and claims to the contrary are incorrect.

**All**

#### 12. Accidents/Incidents

- Review of 'Vacuubrand' Incident Report (paper M)
  - IGS gave a brief summary of the incident, investigation and resulting recommendation, emphasising that the report did not seek to apportion blame to any individual/group of individuals.
  - LG reiterated that the LEV plans were complete and the next step was to meet with E&B.
  - IGS stressed the importance of appropriate training and the introduction of the proposed on-line reporting system.
  - IHG seconded the importance of introducing the reporting system.
  - RF to ask Andrew Millar for a progress report.
- Summary of Accidents/Incidents/Near Misses 2011 – 2013 (paper N)
  - LG reaffirmed that the combined number of needlestick and cuts/punctures highlights need for clear policy and guidance on safe use of sharps and that the combined total of chemical spills underlines importance of wearing protective clothing.
  - JJB and IHG commented that to have the data presented as in Paper N was very useful.
  - DAC stressed that the numbers involved were too small to show reliable trends and we should not become complacent based on what appears to be a general improvement.
  - DAC asked the Committee members to share the statistics with their colleagues.

**RF**

**All**

#### 13. Items Arising from Divisional Meetings

- No issues were raised.

## 14. AOCB

- Oversees Travel
  - IGS asked what the College had in place in terms of risk assessing and monitoring overseas travel.
  - RF's understanding is that risk assessments are carried out for travel to high risk countries and insurance is arranged through the University for all overseas travel.
  - ZH clarified that some PIs arrange their own insurance directly with an external company and Divisional Secretaries do retrospective reports of overseas travel on a monthly basis.
  - MAJF noted that a group of PIs are travelling to India in November.

## 15. Date of Next Meeting

- DAC acknowledged that these meetings should be held more frequently but with a shorter agenda.
- Proposed date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2014. LG to book a venue and send appointments in due course.

**LG**