

10 March 2021

Present: Professor David Cardwell, (**Chair**), Dr R Henderson, Acting Head Department of Pharmacology. Dr Tamsin O'Connell, Department of Archaeology, Dr Mick Mantle, Department of Chemical Engineering. Jessica Gardner, University Librarian, Dr M Vinnell - Director of Health and Safety, Ms Andrea Hudson – Interim Director of Human Resources, Dr Caroline Edmonds, Secretary of the School of Clinical Medicine, Mr Philip Rule - Acting Head of Estates Facilities. Gary Moss, Director of Estates Operations, Graham Matthews, Director of Estates Division, Dr Richard Sandford, Department of Pharmacology, Dr Graham Christie - Lecturer Chemical Engineering. Mrs Dee Vincent, Governance and Compliance Division (minutes).

1. Apologies

Ms Emma Rampton, Registry

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2020 were approved as a correct record.

3. Matters arising

3.1 The departmental water template letter, circulated to HSEC members was approved for use.

3.2 The purchase of an X-ray generator to replace a sealed source unit is on hold.

Principal Business**4. Compliance Update**

The Director of Estate Operations, Gary Moss introduced the compliance report and provided an update on progress since the last HSEC meeting. In relation to water hygiene, partial building occupancy has resulted in reduced water flow that can lead to a risk of raised legionella camps. To bring water hygiene compliance to the required standard, the Estates Division have proposed that Estates staff resume the responsible person role for water across the Estate.

The Committee suggested that rather than escalating to this solution, there should be further engagement with Heads of Department, or Departmental Administrators and Business Operations Managers. This course of action would enable the Estates team to judge the scale of the problem and build a register to audit the position across the Estate.

The Committee recognized that water testing carries significant implications for the University, and not all departments have the required technical support to ensure compliance.

The Director of Health and Safety explained that Departments have been asked to log their position with water testing; this approach does not allow for any understanding of where complications may exist.

The HSEC agreed that the Estates team produce a document that assesses the current position with water testing. The findings would allow resources to be appropriately targeted across the University Estate. Assessment of results will consider compliance by department, building and staffing capacity within these settings.

Action: Director of Estates Operations

The Director of Estate Operations mentioned that in other areas where there is a split of responsibility between departments and the Estates Division, a similar discussion is required to improve governance and allow the closure of outstanding remedial works. HSEC members agreed that any new processes created from water hygiene should be utilized within other areas of the compliance programme.

The Chair congratulated the Estates team for maintaining a compliance level of 85%. The Committee agreed that aspirations could now be raised to achieve a target of 95% compliance.

5. HSE and Other Enforcement Agency Actions, Visits and Information:

The Director of Health and Safety reported that the Health and Safety Executive had undertaken a proactive visit in relation to genetic modification. This was the first time the University had received a visit from a specialist inspector looking at large GMOs.

6. Consultative Committee for Safety: (CCFS)

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the CCFS meeting held on 23 February 2021.

In relation to *CCFS minute, item 9: Asbestos at Cavendish II*. The Director of Health and Safety explained that detailed discussion had taken place regarding the future use of the Cavendish II site. The HSEC were assured that robust mechanisms are in place to keep the Cavendish II building safe, discussions are ongoing regarding future use of the building.

7. Audit Report:

The Director of Health and Safety reported that the overarching safety management audit programme remains paused whilst the safe space team is repurposed. Activity specific audits (e.g. Radiological and Biological auditing) have been maintained. The safe space team remain active in supporting staff with assessment of ventilation within buildings and risk assessment of activities.

An independent review of the Safety Office has been conducted; looking in particular at how the Safety Office operates and the effectiveness of governance systems. The final report and recommendations were formulated without direct oversight of the Director of Health and Safety to ensure the independence of the review.

It was noted that some functions of the Safety Office could benefit from rationalisation, these include primary activities such as auditing, inspection, accident and incident reporting. The review

recommends that these areas will remain as a core function of the Safety Office. The Committee were advised that a minor role reorganisation within the team will necessitate a consultation with all staff. A resumption of the high level auditing reports to HSEC will resume following the transition period.

8. Safety Report Update:

8.1 HSEC Annual Report:

The Director of Health and Safety explained that the HSEC Annual report is delayed. Once finalised, the Report will incorporate Covid activities from 2020 and contain sections on Staff Counselling, Safety Office, Occupational Health and Fire Safety.

8.2 First Aid:

The Director of Health and Safety explained that First Aid is a centrally operated and budgeted operation lead by the [Safety Office](#). The University has approximately 500 First Aiders; each receives training and honoraria in respect of this additional responsibility. The current system is incompatible with staff working from home and will prove difficult to operate within a hybrid-working model.

A paper looking at how the University operates its First Aider function is to be drafted and will consider other ways of supporting staff if not financially. It was noted, that the removal of honoraria might prove controversial.

University First Aid provision will be included as an agenda item at the next HSEC meeting.

Action: Dee Vincent

9. Any Other Business:

The Chair offered formal thanks on behalf of the HSEC to the Estates Division. The team had worked together to provide clear guidance and instruction whilst ensuring the efficient closure and re-occupation of buildings.

10. Date of next meeting of the HSEC

Wednesday 2 June 2021

Time: 14:00 – 15:30