

2 June 2021

Present: Professor David Cardwell, (**Chair**), 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, 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, Mrs Dee Vincent, Governance and Compliance Division (minutes).

Apologies Dr Robert Henderson, Ms Andrea Hudson, Dr Graham Christie.

Welcome: The Chair welcomed Dr Anne-Marie Farmer, H&S Director of Safety Governance and Assurance to the meeting. Dr Farmer will line-manage staff within the Safety Office and take forward the recommendations from the recent review of the Safety Office.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2021 were approved as a correct record.

2. Matters arising

The Director of Estate Operations, explained that since the last HSEC progress had been made with water testing. The Estates team are conducting meetings with staff who have a responsibility for water. The HSEC were advised that a matrix will be created showing water responsibility across the Estate, this will also provide accurate information to the Estates team.

The HSEC were advised that early feedback from staff within Schools and departments indicated a preference for the Estates team to have responsibility for water hygiene. The HSEC agreed that if departments rescind responsibility for water testing, then HSEC must be appraised of any savings achieved.

Principal Business

3. Compliance Update

The Director of Estate Operations, introduced the compliance report and provided an update on progress since the last HSEC meeting. It was noted that the update report would also be given to the Buildings Committee. Compliance activities that form part of the programme, are between 71% and 79% complete. The level of compliance across the Estate has increased from 85% to 87%. The overall compliance target remains 95%.

The HSEC were informed of some on-going issues in relation to water at the Biomedical campus. The Committee were reassured that the issues were under control and problematic water outlets have been identified and isolated. It was noted that a permanent water manager will be situated at the Biomedical campus, this additional staffing resource has been supplied by a Contractor.

The Director of Estate Operations explained that the structure of the compliance team is being reviewed. The future structure will also consider the upgrading of systems to ensure robust procedures are in place. It was also explained that in relation to the maintenance of procurement activity, some areas of compliance may move to external contractors. The Human Resources department will be contacted to assist the Estates team when required.

The Chair thanked the Estates team for achieving consistently improved compliance figures and noted the aspiration to achieve a 95% target.

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

The Director of Health and Safety reported that following a relative quiet period, a number of proactive inspections had taken place. Many of the inspections were conducted virtually via online platforms, this may continue post Covid restrictions.

The Health and Safety Executive are conducting visits related to Covid secure measures. This is a significant change to the duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAWAct) which previously did not include the risk assessment and management of communicable diseases (between employees) in the workplace. The Director of Health and Safety explained that there was some uncertainty as to whether the reference to communicable diseases under the HASAWAct and therefore under risk assessment – was purposely included in documentation received by the Department for Education, or that this exclusion of the principle was not taken into consideration. Regardless, the University will continue to use a risk assessment approach to managing teaching and work spaces.

The Director of Health and Safety explained that as we move out of the Coronavirus Act 2020 which had prescriptive requirements for Covid secure measures; we enter a new period of risk assessment to reduce Covid transmission.

The Committee were advised that the Safety Office will support departments through the new process.

5. Unconfirmed minutes of the Consultative Committee for Safety: (CCFS)

The minutes of the CCFS meeting held on 23 February 2021 were received and noted. The HSEC were advised that a new CCFS chair is to be appointed for next academic year.

6. Audit Report:

The Director of Health and Safety mentioned that a new auditing platform is now available on line to improve auditing function. The Director of Safety Governance and Assurance explained that in relation to the overarching safety management auditing programme; a survey had been distributed across departments and some returns had been received. The HSEC were reminded that subject specific auditing, which includes biological, human tissue, human fertilization, embryonic and radiological have all continued throughout the period. Reporting of data will be available for the next HSEC meeting.

Action: H&S Director of Safety Governance and Assurance

7. Safety Report Update:

Alternative office space is being sought for the safety technical services, currently based at Mill Lane in the city centre. It is anticipated that cost and efficiency savings will be achieved through rationalisation of functions.

8. University First Aid Provision:

The Director of Health and Safety introduced the First Aid report and associated assessments of options for the future of First Aid provision at the University. All the options detailed within the report

had all been costed. The HSEC were advised that a guideline is required from HSEC members as to the preferred option.

HSEC agreed it would be prudent that no immediate changes are made to the current management, or funding of University first aider provision as offered in option 3. This would allow for option 4, to be adopted which recommends that the First Aider role is made compulsory for certain job roles across the Estate, funded by the Safety Office. This option also allows the integration of the role of a First Aider into certain job roles that are permanently on-site and which do not have the option for agile working, such as some administrators, security or maintenance staff. It was noted that this option may potentially require less first aiders but may require an increased honorarium payment for additional responsibility.

The HSEC endorsed the report and the suggested options to take the work forward.

9. Any Other Business:

9.1 The Learning Together Programme

The report of the Advisory Body on Working with Offenders and Ex-offenders, which had been asked to advise on the further development of Learning Together's safeguarding and risk assessment processes, was discussed at an additional meeting of the HSEC in April 2021. The strengthening of the recommendations, as suggested by the HSEC had now been attached as a formal note to the final report.

The Advisory Body had agreed to reconvene to review the risk management policies and procedures for activity undertaken by staff and students across the University which involves people who have offended but which sits outside the Learning Together Programme. It was noted that this was one of three strands the Advisory Body had originally been asked to consider. As a preliminary step, the Safety Office is surveying departments, faculties and Colleges to identify what activity takes place.

The Registry also reported that the jury to the inquests had commented in answer to the question, "Was there any omission or any deficiency in the organisation of and security measures for the event at Fishmongers' Hall which contributed to the deaths of Jack Merritt and Saskia Jones?" that there was "Failure to complete event specific risk assessment by any party." It was agreed that the HSEC should review the relevant risk management policies and procedures in light of this finding. Dee will add this to the agenda of the next meeting.

Action: Dee Vincent

9.2 Review of the Safety Office

The Director of Safety Audit has begun the review of the Safety Office, working with staff and the Director of Health and Safety.

10. Date of next meeting of the HSEC

The HSEC agreed that an additional meeting should be scheduled to take place in September 2021.

Action: Dee Vincent

10.1 Dates of HSEC 2021/2022

- Wednesday 8 December 2021, 14:00 – 15:30
- 9 March 2022, 10.30am – 12 noon
- 9 June 2022, 10.00am - 11.30am
- 15 September 2022, 10:00am – 11:00am
- 8 December 2022 , 10.00 – 11.30am