



Thursday 15 October 2020, 0930 on Microsoft Teams

Present: Ms Saba Alai (SA - Chair and Physics), Mrs Andrea Eccles (AE - Secretary and Safety Adviser), Dr Piete Brooks (PB - School of Technology representative), Dr Adrian Carpenter (AC - Clinical School representative), Dr John Ellis (JE - School of Physical Sciences representative), Mr Mark Elsdon (ME - School Safety Officer, Biological Sciences), Mrs A Gower (AG - Safety Adviser), Mr S Halliday (SH - University Library), Mr Tim Jones (TJ - Senior Maintenance Manager, Estate Management), Mr Will Smith (WS - Union representative), Mr Gary Steele (GS – Departmental Safety Officer, Engineering), Dr Keff Tibbles (KT - Clinical School Safety Officer) and Dr Richard Turner (RT - Departmental Safety Officer in Chemistry)

Minutes: Miss L Durrant (Safety Office)

Apologies: Mrs Liz Smith (LS - Occupational Health Manager) and Dr Martin Vinnell (MV - Director, Health, Safety and Regulated Facilities)

Sub-committee for Physical Safety

Introductions were carried out.

1. Minutes of the Sub-committee meeting held on 15 January 2020

The minutes were approved.

2. Matters arising not covered elsewhere

There were no matters arising.

3. University policies and guidance

There was nothing to report.

4. Audits

The Audit programme is on hold whilst SafeSpace Team work is carried out.

5. Pressure vessels and lifting equipment statutory inspections

The Secretary reported that Bureau Veritas inspections have continued as usual in most departments, when buildings were open and access permitted. Inspections of equipment are one of the Estates Division checks for Test 1.

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Items in the Department of Engineering's new building had not been added to the database for inspections but this is now being resolved. The Project Manager in Estates Division should pass this information to Bureau Veritas.

6. Action plan review

The action plan was reviewed. As the Covid-19 pandemic had stalled progress, the target dates will be extended to January 2021.

7. Covid-19 related matters

7.1 Ventilation advice in buildings with 'natural ventilation' schemes

In older buildings lacking mechanical ventilation/air conditioning systems, the advice is that windows should be opened to permit as much fresh air as possible. In autumn and winter this advice will conflict with comfort guidelines and staff expectations.

Estates Division guidance states that rooms should be 19°C, which is not possible with ventilation. Ventilation is being prioritised over comfort and people moved where necessary. SH had considered air filtration units but these are very expensive, possibly noisy and take up a lot of space. If buildings do not have good ventilation, they should not be used. The Estates Division has ordered some mechanical equipment, which has not been delivered yet. TJ has carried out some CO₂ monitoring but this is difficult when no-one is in the building. SH invited TJ to visit University Library, which has some old rooms lacking mechanical ventilation/air conditioning.

TJ was asked to provide information about how departments can work out ventilation required.

ACTION: TJ to suggest a person to be contacted to request advice and techniques to work out ventilation.

AG will ask the author(s) of Safety Office Guidance on Ventilation if there is anything new to report as the guidance is changing frequently at present.

ACTION: AG will ask the author(s) of Safety Office guidance on Ventilation if there is anything new to report.

7.2 Safety Office Update

AE explained the SafeSpace Team's work for Test 2, which follows Estates Division's checks for Test 1. Eighteen departmental inspections still need to be undertaken for buildings due to open this term. There were 364 individual buildings requiring inspections on original list and 50 left to do. As some inspections were combined and included many buildings belonging to the same department this has meant over 150 have been carried out. In general, these have been very good with many control measures having been put in place and thought given to introducing one-way systems, staff bubbles, etc. Lecture theatres are checked to ensure they are safe for the proposed numbers. The Estates Division have been asked to take a second look at internal unventilated areas in some buildings. People can work around this and use unventilated



areas when needed whilst wearing a face covering and maintaining social distancing and reducing the amount of time spent in these areas.

It has been noticeable that people are positive and feel safe on return to work. Return to work packs have been organised and some departments have produced returning to work videos. There had been some frustration in terms of communication when people were unable to find things but this has improved. Anya Howe (Department of Physics) put together some signs, which are being used throughout the Estate. Departments need to consider social distancing measures etc for outside spaces too.

The University has a Covid Helpdesk (email Covid-helpdesk@admin.cam.ac.uk). New information about track and test is also available.

7.3 Lecture theatres

WS expressed concern about social distancing if people have to enter/leave lectures through narrow doorways. Where possible some departments prop doors open when people enter a lecture room. Hand sanitiser is also available on arrival and face coverings should be worn. One-way systems have been introduced for entry and exit. Seats furthest from the entrance are filled first and people remain seated until they are able to file out safely. Heavily used lecture theatres run by Estates Division eg Mill Lane and Sidgwick Site have a team who carry out cleaning between lectures. Lectures are being held for postgraduates but not undergraduates. Departmental lecture theatres have their own systems in place. A third of the cohort are invited to a lecture at one time, while the other receive the same lecture online, those present for face to face time with the lecturer is then rotated.

7.4 Communication

The Chair felt it would have been helpful if the University had provided detailed information to ensure consistency across all departments. Government guidelines have been provided at short notice and things happened very quickly, which made things more difficult. There was some confusion at the beginning with people being told different things. Human Resources and the Safety Office kept the unions up-to-date. WS thought the Safety Office had done a sterling job and unions were confident with the thorough checks being done. All the Covid-19 briefings are being sent to Administrators to pass on. It would be helpful if the Departmental Safety Officers (DSOs) were informed too. Consultation within the University would be helpful and introducing an online forum eg chat room where DSOs can communicate with one another would be beneficial.

ACTION: WS will look at possibility of a Chat Room for DSOs.

Colleges have different approaches in dealing with the crisis. Some have strict policies whereas others have more relaxed ones.



7.5 Possibility of using Ultraviolet (UV) lights to clean areas

The possibility of using Ultraviolet (UV) lights to clean areas was raised. These could be turned on remotely whilst outside a room. This use of UV would introduce significant risks so would need to be controlled and carried out by a suitable team. AG will speak to the University Radiation Protection Officer about the use of Ultraviolet sterilisation.

ACTION: AG to speak to the University Radiation Protection Officer about the suggestion to use Ultraviolet sterilisation.

8. Accidents and incidents

The accident/incident report was circulated prior to the meeting. Three RIDDOR reportable accidents/incidents had occurred since January.

Incident number ACCB410/A18

There had been a manual handling incident when an individual was delivering 25 kg bags of water softening salt tablets.

Post meeting note: RT provided details of a supplier of smaller bags of water softening salt tablets, which were circulated after the meeting.

AssessNET is working fine. Trend analysis can be looked at in the future.

9. Any other business

9.1 Occupational Health

Occupational Health will be asked if they have seen an increase in numbers since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

ACTION: The Occupational Health Manager will be asked if there has been an increase in numbers since the pandemic.

9.2 University Fire Team and BBC

TJ was asked to thank the University Fire Team and BBC for continuing their service throughout lockdown. All safety critical systems carried on out throughout.

9.3 Remit

The Chair will review the Remit before it is circulated to the Committee.

ACTION: The Chair will review the Remit before it is circulated to the Committee.



It was suggested that having a college representative on this Committee might be helpful, although college staff are not members of the University.

Sharing Sub-committee documents online would be useful so the Chair will look at the possibility of using MS Teams for that.

ACTION: The Chair will look at using MS Teams to share documents online.

9.4 PUWER Training

This is a practical course and therefore held face-to-face so cannot take place now. AG will find out when this training may be able to go ahead.

ACTION: AG will ask the PUWER training provider when face-to-face training is likely to be possible.

10. Dates of the next meetings

The next meetings will take place on Thursday 21 January 2021, 0930 and Thursday 15 April 2021, 0930.