

BANGOR UNIVERSITY

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 4th February 2015

Present: Prof. P Spencer (Chair), Miss S Barnes, Mr R Dart, Mr D Fordham, Mr A Jones, Mrs M Lake, Dr J Latchford, Ms C Monks, Mr D Owen, Mrs E Parry Williams, Ms E Riches, Mr S Roberts, Prof. C Tully, Mr G W Jones (Secretary).

Apologies: Mrs L Fowlie, Prof. J Hughes, Dr L Jones, Mr W Jones, Dr L Murphy, Dr H Roberts, Prof. D Shepherd, Mr R Taylor.

452. Pre-Meeting Notes:

The Chair welcomed Mrs Michele Lake the new Occupational Health Practitioner to the Committee.

453. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 14th November 2014 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

454. MATTERS ARISING

a) Minute 444 (a) Chemical and Biological Health and Safety Sub-Committee:

Dr Leigh Jones is the new Chair of the Sub-Committee.

b) Minute 445 Report on the Tragic Death of Ian Nicholls:

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has informed the University that it is no longer investigating the Institution for a breach of legislation. Two HSE Inspectors have visited the University to de-brief the Head of Health and Safety Services, the Vice-Chancellor, the Dean of the College of Natural Sciences and the Head of Ocean Sciences. It was also noted that the Civil Claim is separate to the HSE investigation and is still on-going.

The Committee thanked and commended the Head of Health and Safety Services for his support throughout this process.

c) Minute 446(ii) Health and Safety Policy:

To be included as an Agenda item.

d) Minute 446(iv) Firearms and Imitation Firearms on University Property:

To be included as an Agenda item.

e) Minute 446(v) Guides for Council Members and Deans of Colleges:

The Deans of Colleges and Heads of Departments Guide has been agreed by SEG and will be issued in due course.

f) Minute 450 Report on Bangor College, China:

A meeting is to be arranged with the newly appointed Deputy-Dean of College in March 2015, this in order to further develop health and safety arrangements for Bangor College, China.

455. RADIATION HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee met on the 20st January 2015 and the following key items were noted:

- i. *Radon:* Work commenced in 2009 with all occupied University buildings surveyed. Radon mitigation work was then subsequently undertaken and radon levels were

reassessed and found to be within acceptable limits. To ensure continued confidence in the mitigation measures an additional survey is now underway, using 3-monthly radon monitors. The results from this exercise are expected in March 2015.

A programme to re-survey all occupied buildings will be undertaken in due course.

- ii. *Use of X-Rays – Radiography Wrexham – School of Healthcare Sciences:* The Radiation Protection Officer is to contact the School Manager with regards to obtaining information on the operator dosimetry and the ethical approval process used when x-raying participants.
- iii. *³²P Dosimetry Badges:* Three badges have shown a false positive reading. The supplier has been asked to investigate. An alternative supplier will be sought if their response is unacceptable.
- iv. *Radiation Protection Advisor (RPA) Visit:* The RPA saw significant improvements over an earlier visit. It was also noted that Natural Resources Wales inspection was due on 10th February to assess the security arrangements for the University's one high activity sealed radioactive source.
- v. *Isotope Database:* It has been recommended that a bespoke database is developed to record local stock and sample records. The existing Isotope Database will continue to be used for training records and as an overarching record of University radiation stocks.

456. CHEMICAL AND BIOLOGICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SUB-COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee met on the 26th January 2015 and the following key items were noted:

- i. *Anti-Venom:* Due to the increase in number and type of venomous snakes held by the University the Biological Safety Officer has written to the local A&E Consultant to ensure they are aware of the nature of the possible snake venom (both cytotoxic and neurotoxic) exposure.
- ii. *New Explosive Regulations:* New Explosive Regulations have been introduced with the key change affecting the University relating to the need to licence certain de-sensitised explosives and their users.
- iii. *Accidents and Incidents 2014:*
 - a. The number of eye exposure/contact incidents decreased notably in 2014.
 - b. One near-miss incident during the year related to the failure of a high speed centrifuge during a cycle. Although it has not been possible to identify the exact cause of the failure, subsequent action has included the introduction of a comprehensive training programme. An inspection of all relevant centrifuges has also been undertaken and the number of centrifuges in use reduced.
- iv. *Changes to GM Regulations:* The revised Regulations which came into effect on 1st October 2014 has seen a relaxation in some requirements for GM biological containment, for example, negative air pressure is no longer required if mechanical ventilation is used for Containment Level 2 (CL2) GM work. It was noted that the Sub-Committee had agreed that to ensure good working practices and standards are maintained, it would not apply all legislative relaxations.
- v. *Use of Hazard Group 3 Organisms:* There are plans to possibly work with a Hazard Group 3 organism. This new development for the University will be further considered by the Sub-Committee, with permission and a licence sought from the HSE.
- vi. *Synthetic Biology:* A proposed new Centre will possibly see joint working between Biocomposites, Chemistry and Biological Sciences. Work will include synthetic biology. The Biological Safety Officer and others, may need to acquire relevant knowledge and may require further training in this area.

- vii. *Chemical Safety Audit*: It was noted that further consideration is required to ascertain the best way to facilitate an audit of chemical use in research activities.

ACTION: GWJ

457. REPORT FROM THE SAFETY EXECUTIVE TASK GROUP

A Paper was tabled and verbal report presented, with the following key items noted:

- i. *H&S on the University Estate*: Discussions have taken place with regards to seeking reassurance on how the University meets its legal obligations on major building projects and the impact of budget cuts on estate related work. Assurance has been provided that statutory obligations are met, with other work undertaken as part of a dynamic arrangement which is reviewed regularly.
- ii. *Offensive Weapons*: A Paper has been considered on how the University should govern and deal with offensive weapons on its residential estate. Halls Regulations will now be amended and clearer procedures have been issued to Security staff when handling imitation or suspected weapons.
- iii. *Electrical Safety Report – Portable Electrical Equipment*: A draft report on how effectively the University is managing its obligations for the periodic inspection and testing of portable electrical equipment has been considered. This will be brought before the May Health and Safety Committee.

458. POLICY REVISION - FIELDWORK

A summary of the Fieldwork Policy Standard, which captures the key principles of the UCEA Guidance on Health and Safety in Fieldwork and British Standard BS8848, was given. It was noted the Policy will be supported by a number of Handbooks (Social and Community Based Field Research, General Day Trips and Visits and Taught Fieldwork and Research Fieldwork) which will provide practical guidance to those responsible for developing, planning or leading fieldwork.

The new Fieldwork Policy Standard seeks to replace OHSU G22 (1998) Code of Practice for Safety in Fieldwork, which was based on the Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principles guidance.

The Committee considered and agreed to the definition of fieldwork used in the Fieldwork Policy and after further consideration approved the Policy Standard & Procedures on Fieldwork.

Appreciation was expressed to those who supported the production of the Policy Standard and the supporting documents, in particular staff at IMSCaR for their assistance in developing the Social and Community Based Field Research Handbook.

459. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY REVISION

It was noted that it is the responsibility of the Health and Safety Committee to lead on the 5-yearly review of the University's Health and Safety Policy, submitting proposed changes to Council for approval. A discussion ensued in which it was agreed a Working Group should be established to undertake this work.

460. AOB

The date of the next meeting: 20th May, 2pm, Council Chamber.