

BANGOR UNIVERSITY

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 18th February 2011

Present: Dr D Assinder, Miss S Barnes, Mr J East, , Ms L Fowlie, Mr M Goodwin, Dr J Latchford, Ms C Monks, Dr L Murphy, Mr J Patton, Ms E Riches, Dr D M Roberts, Dr G Roberts, Mr S Roberts, Mr G W Jones (Secretary).

Apologies: Dr G Clarke, Mr R Dart, Mr H Ellis, Mr D Fordham, Prof J Hughes, Ms D Giles, Prof M Khan, Mrs L Meadows, Mr E Roberts, Prof P Spencer.

366. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting, held on the 5th November 2010 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

367. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minute 359(b) Centrally Timetabled Spaces:

It was confirmed work was still ongoing to determine the technical and general ownership of spaces such as centrally timetabled laboratories.

(b) Minute 361 Biological Hazards Review:

It was noted the HSE Specialist Inspector for GM Hazards was to visit the University to review arrangements in February / March 2011.

Laboratory Safety training has been provided to a number of Estates and Facilities staff and contractors, with training commencing in March for Domestic staff and others.

(c) Minute 364 Health Initiatives Report:

Work has commenced to develop a partnership with Gwynedd Council to look at land and water based activities to help people develop strength and fitness, supporting the fitness of people at work. A programme of joint initiatives will be produced in due course and a Paper presented to the Safety Executive Task Group for support and approval.

(d) Minute 365(c) Control of Contractors:

It was noted that concern was expressed regarding outstanding estate-related actions being raised at the H&S Committee instead of, in the first instance, Estates and Facilities or Health and Safety Services. It was preferred that such items be raised with the relevant Department in the first instance.

368. REPORT FROM THE SAFETY EXECUTIVE TASK GROUP (SEG)

It was reported that SEG meets once a month with extraordinary meetings arranged as required. The following significant items have been discussed since the last Committee meeting:

- i. The Corporate H&S Risk Assessment and proposed planning model has been under discussion.
- ii. A Senior Managers briefing, opened by the Chief Executive of the HSE as keynote speaker, was held on the 7th February. Attendance from Heads of Colleges, Schools and

Departments was very good.

- iii. An initial Travel Plan Report that includes such matters as promotion of walking, cycling, car sharing was considered and is now under consideration by other groups ahead of further University consultation.

369. POLICY STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL

A brief summary of the purpose and requirements of the Control of Vibration in the Workplace, Health and Safety Training and Information and Overseas Travel Policy Standards were given. The following comments were made:

- i. Control of Vibration in the Workplace: The Policy was approved.
- ii. Health and Safety Training and Information: The Policy was approved subject to minor amendments.
- iii. Overseas Travel: The Policy was approved subject to minor amendments and the establishment of the on-line support system to streamline the required risk assessment and University insurance process.

370. AN UPDATE ON STAFF HEALTH SUPPORT

It was noted the Occupational Health Practitioner was recently invited to become a permanent member of Dame Carol Black's Occupational Health Sounding Board, administered by the Department of Work and Pensions.

The Health Programme was discussed. In summary:

- i. Health Surveillance, Health Checks, Health Promotions and the Management of Sickness Absence work is ongoing.
- ii. Flu has been the biggest cause of sickness absence over the winter, but instances are still no greater than previous years.
- iii. 17 long term sickness cases are currently being supported by the Occupational Health Practitioner and Human Resources.
- iv. Health Promotions include the Weight Loss Challenge that has involved support from Catering to You to establish healthy menu options and the School of Sport, Health and Exercise Sciences to promote exercise and fitness.

371. COLLEGE AND DEPARTMENTAL SELF EVALUATION 2010

A brief summary of the self evaluation review was given. It was noted the 2010 review is reliant on the information provided by Colleges and Departments and as a snap shot had raised the following areas where improvement is required:

- i. Record keeping.
- ii. Risk Assessments

It was noted that scoring should be treated as an indication of performance only, this as the data relates to self-reported performance and does not involve an audited method.

The Committee considered the Report and it was agreed the feedback process to individual Colleges and Departments should also be used to help identify whether the data collected is both accurate and valuable.

372. HEALTH AND SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AUDIT

A brief summary of the audits carried out of the College of Natural Sciences, College of Business, Social Sciences and Law and the College of Physical and Applied Sciences was given. In particular it was noted that:

- i. The health and safety management performance of each College was described as Good or Very Good
- ii. Themes emerging from the Audits included difficulties with data storage and clear roles & responsibilities
- iii. Colleges would benefit from the production of template policies and arrangements which could then be easily adapted.

It was reported that the Audit Reports had been submitted to the Safety Executive Task Group for consideration and it was agreed to temporarily postpone the Audits until template College health and safety management systems and pro-forma are produced. The College of Physical and Applied Sciences has agreed to assist in this process and work will commence week of the 21st February. Once completed the documents and arrangements will be used with other colleges and the audit process re commenced.

373. HEALTH AND SAFETY THEMED REVIEWS

Reports of the following Health and Safety Themed Reviews were given:

- i. Non Smoking Policy

The Report advised that a Working Group, established to review the existing Non Smoking Policy, identified a number of difficulties in complying with the current University 5metre rule and had investigated the following options:

- a) A complete ban: Felt not to be achievable due to the 'open access' nature of some areas of the University estate eg College Park.
- b) Improved enforcement of the 5m rule.
- c) Improved signage to raise awareness of the 5m rule.
- d) Designated Smoking Areas: Felt to be difficult to implement in some areas with regards to identifying the smoking area and subsequent enforcement.

It was advised that the Working Group's preferred option was the implementation of 'Smoking Areas' together with improved enforcement of the 5m rule.

It was noted the Safety Executive Task Group has considered the Report and has suggested in the first instance that:

- e) Signage for the 5m rule should be erected across the estate
- f) Concerted enforcement is undertaken in key and problematic areas periodically
- g) The viability of introducing local smoking prohibitions in key areas, such as the front of Main Arts, should be further assessed
- h) The viability of introducing smoking areas on main sites should be assessed further

The Committee considered the Report and agreed there is no single or simple solution to the problems experienced. It was observed that peer-pressure was the most valuable enforcement tool and University Security staff should always be called if there is any threat of confrontation.

ii. Safe Use of Pressure Systems

The Review considered current arrangements for managing risks from pressure systems & vessels across the University. Primarily the Review found that:

- a) Details of all pressure vessels and systems are not held centrally and therefore Statutory Inspections are not be comprehensive
- b) Written Schemes of examination are not always held by the user Department/College
- c) There is no visual indicator or label affixed to vessels or systems which would readily confirm they are on the central Register and are being Inspected by a Competent Engineer
- d) Responsibilities and duties are on occasions unclear and such could result in recommendations not being actioned.

It was confirmed that Health and Safety Services is currently working with the Insurance Officer and others on the introduction of a revised system for managing the safe use of pressure systems & vessels. Once agreed the current University Guidance Note will be replaced.

374. NEW CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING MODEL

A brief summary of the work to revise the existing Corporate Health and Safety Risk Assessment was given.

It was noted that the exercise involves the identification of the University's significant hazards and risk assessing these against specific performance standards. The primary intention is to be able to show how the University is performing as an institution and on particular these or hazards.

The first stage of the exercise will be completed in April 2011 and thereafter will be discussed with the Health and Safety Executive.

375. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that the next Committee meeting is scheduled for 10am on the 20th May 2011.

The next North West Wales Health and Safety Group Conference will be held on the 15th September 2011 and all members are encouraged to attend.