

BANGOR UNIVERSITY

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 20th May 2015

Present: Prof. P Spencer (Chair), Miss S Barnes, Mr H Ellis, Mr D Fordham, Ms L Fowlie, Mr A Jones, Dr L Jones, Mr W Jones, Mrs M Lake, Dr J Latchford, Mrs L Meadows, Dr K Mundy, Mr D Owen, Mrs E Parry Williams, Ms E Riches, Dr H Roberts, Mr S Roberts, Prof. C Tully, Mr G W Jones (Secretary).

Apologies: Prof John Hughes, Mrs S Barbaresi, Mr R Dart, Ms C Monks, Dr L Murphy, Mr G Parry, Prof. D Shepherd.

461. Pre-Meeting Notes:

The Chair thanked Mr Rhys Dart, Director, Students' Union for his support of health and safety and the performance of the Students' Union whilst under his direction and wished him all the best in his new job. Mr Dylan Williams has been appointed as the new Director of the Students' Union.

462. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 4th February 2015 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

463. MATTERS ARISING

a) Minute 454 (b) Tragic Death of Ian Nicholls:

The Civil Claim into the incident is still on-going.

b) Minute 454 (d) Firearms and Imitation Firearms on University Property:

Halls of Residence Regulations have been amended with clearer procedures issued to Security staff when handling imitation or suspected weapons.

c) Minute 454(e) Guides for Council Members and Deans of Colleges:

Following translation the Guide will be issued summer 2015.

d) Minute 454 (f) Bangor College, China:

A meeting has been held with the newly appointed Deputy-Dean of College. The Staff Handbook, which has been developed to provide general guidance to Bangor University staff working in China, will be finalised in time for the start of the 2015 - 2016 Academic Year.

e) Minute 455 (i) Radon:

The measurements undertaken Oct 2014 – Jan 2015 produced no adverse results.

f) Minute 455 (iii) ³²P Dosimetry Badges:

The cause of the false positive readings on the badges has not been identified. Since this incident there have been no further false positives. The matter will be monitored by the University's Radiation Protection Officer.

g) Minute 456 (vi) Synthetic Biology:

The Biological Safety Officer maintains a watching brief to ensure appropriate arrangements are put in place as the project develops.

h) Minute 459 Health and Safety Policy Revision:

A Working Group has been formed to undertake the 5-yearly review of the University

Health and Safety Policy.

A progress report has been given to Council and it has been agreed to incorporate useable elements of the draft UCEA Guidance on health and safety management into the University Health and Safety Policy. A gap analysis is currently being undertaken to compare both documents. This work will be reviewed by the Safety Executive Task Group before further changes to the Policy are made.

464. POLICIES, AUDITS AND REPORTS

464(a). ANNUAL UNIVERSITY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

A summary of the 2014 Annual Health and Safety Report was given. The following key points were reported:

- i. **Accidents and Incidents:** 47 accidents involving injury were reported (61 reported in 2013); 36 to staff and 11 to students. 8 staff took 1 day or more off work as a result of their injury. The main cause of injury-accidents remains handling and slips, trips and falls. There were 8 RIDDOR reportable incidents in 2014.
- ii. **Sickness Absence:** 4.98 sickness absence days per FTE member of staff was recorded in 2014. 94 incidences of Long Term Sickness Absence, where a member of staff takes more than 4-weeks off work was recorded. Musculoskeletal and Psychological causations remain the two main causes of long term and medically certified absences at the University. Further investigation into possible causes for the rise is on-going. **ACTION: HSS**
- iii. **Health Surveillance:** Over a 180 staff (manual workers, research chemists and technical staff, shift workers, food handlers, contracted drivers, grounds workers and research trials staff) received annual health surveillance to support their health and confirm their work is not causing harm.
- iv. **Fire Alarm Activations:** Total activations decreased to 122; a fall in Academic / Admin Buildings from 59 to 42 and a slight rise in Halls of Residences from 70 to 80.
- v. **Fires:** There were four residential cooking incidents and one minor fire in an Academic / Admin Building which due to the reporting criteria are defined as a minor fire. The Academic / Admin Building fire related to a new UPS system which was later found to be faulty.
- vi. **Enforcement Action:** No enforcement action was taken against the University in 2014.
- vii. **Civil Claims (H&S Related):** There were three new Public Liability Claims and two Employer Liability Claims made in 2014.
- viii. **Staff Training:** 579 staff attended a range of training courses provided by/through Health and Safety Services in 2014, with many more training sessions provided locally but not centrally recorded. The need for more holistic recording keeping was noted. **ACTION: SEG**
- ix. **Contractor Site Monitoring:** The Estates and Facilities Team undertook 223 formal contractor Site Monitoring Inspections in 2014. 87% were found to be of good standard, 9% required a warning to be given and 4% identified a serious breach in working standards. Further work in this area is on-going to reflect changes in legislation. **ACTION: SEG/E&F**
- x. **Corporate Health and Safety Risk Assessment:** This University-level Risk Assessment, that considers 50+ significant and / or University-wide risk areas and which helps direct the working agenda, was again updated in 2014. Updates accounted for progress / changes in risk profile. It should be noted that further Key

Performance Indicators will be developed over coming months to enable improvements in benchmarking. **ACTION: SEG/HSS**

- xii. **College / Department H&S Risk Assessments:** A review of these documents which details specific College / Department health and safety management arrangements for compliance with the requirements of various University H&S Policies and Procedures has been completed and actions identified. Update on progress will be provided in due course. **ACTION: HSS**
- xiii. **NWWHSG:** The regional business & community Health and Safety Group's efforts were again recognised by the National Body 'Safety Groups UK' with the Silver Prize Award for its support of local employers and raising awareness of health and safety in general.
- xiv. **Healthy Living Week:** A range of joint staff / student events were offered over the course of the week to challenge people to find and adopt a healthier lifestyle.
- xv. **The Welsh Government's Life Well, Work Well Project:** A number of staff and student leaders were recruited to work on this Project which involved staff participating in a University Travel Challenge in October and November against four other Universities. Bangor University came top, beating the other Welsh institutions.
- xvi. **No Smoking Day:** The University was joined by 'The Filter' a youth branch of Ash-Wales to help promote the National 'Quit for Wales' campaign as part of the national No Smoking Day.
- xvii. **Food Outlets:** All registered University food outlets have a 5 star Food Hygiene Rating. This commendable achievement was noted and it was suggested that this could be communicated more widely across the institution.

464(b). **MINIBUS SAFETY REVIEW**

A summary of the Minibus Health and Safety Review, which assessed compliance with the requirements of the University's Minibus Safety Policy Standard, was given. The following key points were noted:

- i. **Driver Competence:** Nearly all of the 115 staff, students and volunteers named as minibus drivers during the Review period had the required MIDAS Minibus Driver Training.
- ii. **Small Bus Permits:** A number of Schools / Departments operating minibuses over the review period did not hold a Small Bus Permit. Action is needed to improve this element of technical compliance with the relevant legislation and procedures.
- iii. **Insurance Requirements:**
 - a. **Annual Driving Licence Checks:** It is clear that Colleges / Schools / Departments are having difficulty with assessing Driver Licences every year. It is expected this process will become even more difficult with planned DVLA changes which see the paper counterpart of driving licences being removed from use.
 - b. **Information availability:** The current insurance and vehicle rental information management system currently does not readily support auditing and monitoring, with cross-checking particularly problematic.

Subsequent to the Review a reminder regarding minibus safety and general driver / vehicle requirements will be issued to Colleges / Schools / Departments.

Discussions are also to be held with the Finance Department to identify how their systems can be enhanced to support Policy requirements. This will include, in light of DVLA changes, a review of the current need to undertake an annual driving licence check of those driving on University related business. **ACTION: SEG/Finance/HSS**

Completion dates will then be set against each of the actions identified in the Review Report.

464(c). ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT SAFETY REVIEW

An outline of the Review to assess the general level of College and Department compliance with the Safety of Electrical Equipment Policy Standard, was given. The following key items were noted:

- i. Distinct progress with regards to the level of formal visual inspections and testing (PAT Testing) of portable electrical appliances and associated record keeping has been made since the 2008 Electrical Equipment Safety Review.
- ii. *Departments:* Significant improvements have been seen across most Departments, with only very small Departments not having a system in place.
- iii. *Colleges:* Previous good systems have been further enhanced within two Colleges, with a third having good arrangements within most Schools but a weakness in central monitoring and within some institutes.
- iv. Of the remaining two Colleges, one will be undertaking significant work over the summer to address outstanding areas. The Final College is yet to finalise a plan.

An update on progress will be provided in due course. **ACTION: HSS**

465. SAFETY EXECUTIVE TASK GROUP

A summary of the work of the Task Group was given and in particular it was noted that:

There has been a recent change in how the University responds to automatic fire alarm activations. This following the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service announcement that as of 1st April 2015 it would no longer attend any daytime 999 call (from any person or business) reporting a fire alarm activation unless the cause of the activation is a confirmed fire or other emergency incident. Similarly, they will only attend evening 999 calls if the call relates to a residential property or there is a confirmed fire.

As a result all University Security Officers have received tailored training on Fire Alarm Investigation techniques and protocols. A summary of the new fire investigation procedure is as follows:

- All fire alarm activations on the non-residential estate (academic and administrative) will be investigated by trained Security Officers and will not be reported to the Fire Service (via 999) unless a fire or smoke has been confirmed.
- Fire alarm activations within Halls of Residences between the hours of 08:00 and 20:00 hrs will be investigated by Security Staff.
- During the evening and early hours (20:00-08:00) any fire alarm activation within Halls will be reported via 999 to the Fire Service and will not be investigated in-house.

For the occupants of every University building the procedure to be followed upon hearing the fire alarm has not changed and immediate evacuation must take place.

The Chair thanked Security staff for their assistance in supporting this significant change in procedure.

466. MAJOR ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

There were no items to report.

467. HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICES

This agenda item minute has been established to offer information on the work of Health and

Safety Services. In this instance, the item was devoted to occupational health and health promotion and in particular it was noted that:

- i. To help ensure suitable support is offered, stakeholders will once again be consulted and plans and systems revised as needed.
- ii. To try better understand the steady increase in the number of long-term sickness incidences since 2011 a review of causations and national trends is currently underway.
- iii. Free Health Checks will be offered to groups of staff on a rolling programme; these will undertake basic health assessments and provide an opportunity for staff to discuss their individual health needs. Information gained will also help direct the future Health Agenda.
- iv. A number of health promotion activities have occurred during the year, including: a Healthy Living Week, Tai Chi sessions, Self Defence and free Dr Bike for staff and students.
- v. The University has signed-up to the Welsh Government's Healthy University project. The project has also funded 10 staff to attend the ½ day Mental Health 'Lite' First Aid Course.
- vi. The Travel the World health and activity promotion initiative is running once again, with over 38 Schools / Departments and 150 staff taking part.
- vii. A new on-line DSE Self-Assessment and training system has been developed, allowing increased flexibility for training and record keeping.

468. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

This new agenda item has been included to enable attendees to raise particular health and safety concerns. There were no items to report on this occasion.

469. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- i. Following on from the report of Electrical Equipment Safety a query was raised regarding electrical standards at Bangor College, China. It was noted this has been captured in the gap analysis, undertaken to identify operational differences between Bangor University and the CSUFT and which will be considered in due course.
ACTION: HSS