

BANGOR UNIVERSITY

HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

Meeting: 21st May 2009

Present: Dr A R Beaumont (Chair), Dr I Ap-Dewi, Miss S Barnes, Dr G Clarke, Mr I Connor, Mr J East, Mr H Ellis, Mr D N Fordham, Mrs L Fowlie, Mr M Goodwin, Mr J Jackson, Prof M Kalaji, Dr J Latchford, Mrs L Meadows, Mr G Parry, Mr J Patton, Miss E Riches, Dr D M Roberts, Mr E W. Roberts, Mr S Roberts, Mr M West, Mr A Williams, Dr D Wright, Mr G W. Jones (Secretary).

Apologies: Dr G Roberts, Mr L Jones, Mr R Behi, Mr J Clarke, Mrs A Parry, Ms C Monks.

Note: Dr M Kalaji was formally thanked for his contribution to the Committee and to health and safety in general.

322. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting, held on the 20th February 2009, were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

323. MATTERS ARISING

a) Minute 313 (d) Staff Counselling Services:

As of the 21st January 2009, 22 members of staff had approached the Network of Staff Supporters (NOSS), with all being seen in the target response time. Human Resources will in future provide trend analysis reports to the Committee for information.

b) Minute 315 (iv & v), Chemical and Biological Health and Safety Sub-Committee:

It was reported that the training structure and arrangements for access into laboratories is under review.

324. THE STUDENT HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING SUB-COMMITTEE

A report from the Sub-Committee was received. In particular the following items were noted:

- i. The Academic Registrar would present a Paper at the next Sub-Committee meeting on the standards to follow when dealing with student disability or health concern cases that require coordination across a number of Academic and Support Departments.
- ii. The No Smoking Campaign had been welcomed and received positive feedback.
- iii. Concerns were expressed regarding the Student Counselling Service being unable to meet the demands of students. .

The matter of student counselling support was discussed and **it was agreed** more detailed statistics should be provided to the Chair of this Committee and the matter be raised at Council.

325. REPORT BY THE SAFETY EXECUTIVE TASK GROUP

A report by the Task Group was received. In particular the following items were noted:

- i. The University's Health and Safety Policy has been subject to a full review with opinion sought from a specialist solicitor.
- ii. The request to trial the provision of a free physiotherapy service could not be taken forwards at this time due to the University's current budgetary and financial position. This position would be reviewed in due course.

326. AUDIT AND REVIEW REPORTS – OVERSEAS TRAVEL

The Committee was briefed on the reasons for reviewing the existing Overseas Travel Policy, undertaking the Overseas Travel Audit and the methodology used to obtain the data. It was noted the Audit had highlighted the following:

- i. With a few adjustments the existing Overseas Travel Policy is appropriate.
- ii. Problems had arisen due to ineffective communication of the Policy and some staff and students had not received relevant information in good time.
- iii. A number of Colleges have good systems and arrangements in place to manage overseas travel by staff and students.
- iv. Improved guidance is needed regarding the requirements of the UMAL (insurance) risk assessment process.
- v. A webpage dedicated to overseas travel information and guidance is required.

Concern was expressed regarding the health and safety responsibilities for overseas franchised courses. Following discussion **it was agreed** this matter would be reviewed separately by Health and Safety Services.

327. POLICY STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL

The following Policy Standards were presented to the Committee for formal approval:

- i. Risk Assessments.
- ii. Driver and Vehicle Safety.
- iii. Out of Hours Working.

It was noted the Policies would come into force from the 1st September 2009, but with the Driver Register delayed until January 2010 for logistical reasons.

The three Policy Standards, namely Risk Assessment, Driver and Vehicle Safety, and Out of Hours Working, **were approved**.

328. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY REVISION 2009

The existing Policy was adopted in 2006. The latest draft version represented a culmination of effort to ensure the most suitable document is in place to set the standard and enhance health

and safety.

Detailed advice had been sought from a specialist solicitor with regards to legal compliance and interpretations.

Following discussion the Committee agreed that:

- i. The second paragraph under 2.2 The University Council should be re-worded.
- ii. Annexe 1 – List of Central Departments be removed.
- iii. The Trades Unions should be named.
- iv. The number of staff representatives will remain at eight.
- v. Additional Safety Co-ordinators will be co-opted as required.

The revised draft of the Policy will be circulated more widely for comment with a view to final approval at the November meeting of the Committee.

329. THE ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

A summary of the Annual Health and Safety Report was given and the following items were noted:

- i. Staff sickness absence statistics are reported with greater confidence with regards to their accuracy. It was noted that the staff sickness absence rate for 2008 is significantly below the Sector average.
- ii. The Staff Health profile statistics and developing health profile is being used to tailor support and initiatives to help staff. The health profile guides and delivers upon the overall health and safety strategy.
- iii. Health and Safety Training statistics show an increase in the total number of attendees on courses arranged centrally. A greater proportion of future courses are to be tailored to particular needs.
- iv. Accident and incident reporting rates indicate that the University continues to perform slightly better than the national Sector average.
- v. The number of false fire alarm activations has increased for the third year in a row and further action is required to address this worrying trend.
- vi. Biohazard work is increasing across the University with non-biological academic departments now undertaking work with biological agents. A University wide audit of Biohazards is due to be undertaken to assess the current level of performance.
- vii. The use of sealed radioactive sources has been radically reduced in recent years. Also, a programme to dispose of radioactive sources has commenced.
- viii. A Radon Survey of University sites is underway; a report will be presented at a future Health and Safety Committee meeting.

- 330.** In response to the situation regarding Swine Flu the University's Pandemic Response Group has met to ensure plans are in place in case of an outbreak locally and/or increased concern. The Group's work took into account University and Public Health Policies and guidance and included the distribution of general information on Swine Flu to all staff and students.

331. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

i. Effectiveness of the University Health and Safety Committee

The findings of the questionnaire distributed to seek the opinion of members on the effectiveness and value of the Committee were discussed. It was noted the majority of feedback had been positive.

- ii. Dr M Kalaji expressed his thanks to members and instructed the Committee to 'keep up the good work'!