Minutes of the Health & Safety Assurance Committee be held on Thursday 18th June 2015 at 2.30 pm in the Principal’s Meeting Room.

Present: Ms Chris Shoukry (Chair), Mr Gurpreet Dehal, Mr Mark Newlands (via conference call)

In attendance: Professor Paul Layzell, Mr Simon Higman, Professor Paul Hogg, Professor Bob O’Keefe, Mr Matt Purcell

Apologies: Professor Katie Normington

Minutes: Hilary Baker

1. MINUTES

   Approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 30th March 2015 (M15/01 –M15/42) 15/43

2 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

   DISCUSSED that it was difficult for Mark Newlands to attend the meeting in person but that his contribution via conference call was valued. Mr Newlands confirmed that he would be willing to continue his membership of the Committee on that basis.

   NOTED that the terms of reference allowed for two further independent members of Council and for a maximum of two co-opted members to be appointed to the committee.

   DISCUSSED that it would be helpful for a deputy chair to be appointed so that meetings could go ahead if the chair was unable to attend. It was agreed that Mr Gurpreet Dehal should be appointed as Deputy Chair

   ACTION that Council Executive should be asked to approve Mr Dehal’s appointment as Deputy Chair and to recommend a further independent member or pool council member to serve on the Committee.

   NOTED that the action regarding the appointment of an external adviser from a local company was still outstanding. It was suggested that it might be possible to have a reciprocal agreement with another university

   ACTION that the Registrar and College Secretary would try to identify an appropriate individual to attend.

   DISCUSSED that the terms of reference stated that the Committee should receive reports from the Health & Safety Consultative Committee. It was noted that although the Committee had previously received the minutes it had been decided that these did not provide the assurance the Committee required. It was agreed that Health & Safety Consultative Committee should be asked to provide an annual report to Health & Safety Assurance Committee. In addition if there were any significant issues these should be reported at the time and should not wait for the annual report.
ACTION that Health & Safety Consultative Committee should provide a report to the next meeting of the Committee and that in future this report should be received at the October meeting.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Update on training for major incidents.

NOTED that a date for the training had not yet been set but that it was hoped this could be organised for September.

3.2 Terms of reference of Deloitte Health & Safety Audit 2014.

NOTED that the terms of reference had been provided following concerns that during the audit that the internal auditors, Deloitte had not spoken to members of the committee but had made a recommendation about ensuring that scrutiny and challenge should be included in the minutes. The Committee had therefore asked for clarification about what had been included in the audit terms of reference regarding communication with Health & Safety Assurance Committee.

DISCUSSED that as Health & Safety Assurance Committee did not appear to have been in the scope of the audit there was a question mark as to why it had been reported on. The Committee noted that the minutes of the last two meetings had reflected the degree of discussion in the meeting.

DISCUSSED ways to ensure whether each meeting had been effective particularly whether it would be useful for independent members to provide feedback.

DISCUSSED whether the minutes of the last meeting reflected the degree of discussion in the meeting. Also methods of how the Committee could ensure that each meeting addressed the issues raised effectively.

AGREED that Chair would e mail independent members after each meeting to check that they were content with the degree of assurance provided by the College and that the meeting had addressed issues raised adequately.

3.3 Minutes of Estates Project Delivery Group

NOTED the minutes of the Estates Project Delivery Group held on 24th March & 27th May 2015.

ACTION The Committee recommended that health and safety should be added to their agenda as a standing item.

4. REPORT FROM THE HEALTH & SAFETY DIRECTOR

RECEIVED the report from the Health & Safety Director.

4.1 Accident Statistics

NOTED the number of reportable incidents. The Health & Safety Director was working with Estates to look at how to improve reporting of maintenance issues in order to identify/monitor physical defects in the external environment before they lead to an incident. In addition consideration was being given to whether the Compliance
team could carry out inspections of different areas although this would not be publicised
at this could discourage staff from reporting risks they spotted themselves.

DISCUSSED that there had only been two personal injury claims in the last three years.
The Committee questioned whether if the insurance company were aware that work was
being undertaken to mitigate the risk of accidents this would reduce the premium. It was
confirmed that the College was already deemed a low risk institution and so this was
unlikely to make any significant difference to premiums, however, having effective
monitoring arrangements would improve safety generally and the defence of any
personal injury claim. Noted that the Health & Safety Director did not find out the
outcome of any insurance claims as a result of reportable incidents.

ACTION Health & Safety Director to obtain the information from Finance and report the
outcomes of personal injury claims to the Committee.

4.2. Fire Alarm Activations

NOTED that the numbers of activations were similar to previous years. It was questioned
where most of the activations took place. There had been issues around contractors
causing activations in the past but these had been resolved and the majority were in
student residences. However there had been a small fire in Bourne Building as a result of
some trays with plastic packaging being put on the bottom of a drying cabinet. Action
had been taken to ensure that the research group understood the safety procedures for
drying cabinets. The Fire Safety Officer had recently completed a Fire Service
Information folder for Queens building and had now started work on one for Bourne
Building.

ACTION agreed that an update on the progress of these folders should be provided at
the next meeting.

NOTED that a new fire alarm system had been introduced in Founders Building. A silent
alarm sounded for five minutes before the full alarm was activated. It was possible to do
this in Founders because in most cases Security were able to reach the alarm in five
minutes. In addition extra marshals (known as ‘Evacuation Assistants) were being
recruited to ensure more efficient evacuation of the building.

The Committee noted that with the new student residences and the increase in student
numbers the number of fire alarm activations were likely to increase.

ACTION it was agreed that this concern should be fed back to the Residences Project
Board and that the Fire Safety Officer would provide advice on this.

DISCUSSED what action was taken to prevent fire alarm activation in student residences.

ACTION that Mike Johnson, Director of Student Experience should be invited to the
meeting to report on work done by the Student Life team to prevent unnecessary fire
alarm activations. Noted prevention work included disciplinary proceedings if students
were found to removing or disabling fire alarms.

4.3 Health & Safety Audits

NOTED that Psychology and Earth Sciences had completed all actions required by their
audits. Following initiation of escalation procedures the Physics department had
submitted an updated action plan for completion of outstanding actions. The School of Biological Sciences had also submitted and updated action plan which was being reviewed.

The committee questioned what triggered escalations procedures and what this entailed. The Health & Safety Director explained that the procedure was in three stages. The first stage is normally initiated by (or with the agreement of) the Director of Health and Safety following his judgement as to a shortfall in the execution of a management responsibility. At this stage, he would meet with the relevant Head of Department to agree a resolution and timescale for completion. While it was anticipated that most instances which require escalation would be addressed at this stage, in the event of an inadequate response to an agreed resolution, the process can proceed to escalation to the relevant Dean or Director of Operations and, ultimately, the Principal.

The Committee was concerned that that there seemed to a significant time lag from the draft report to the completion of actions and questioned whether the deadlines were reasonable. The Health & Safety Director explained that the deadline for an action would depend on what was required, some actions could be turned round quickly while others required more significant changes. Some departments challenged and questioned the deadlines.

The Committee questioned whether Heads of Departments were aware that they had key responsibility for Health & Safety. It was confirmed that they were and that this was made clear in the college policies.

**LIFTING EQUIPMENT AND PRESSURE SYSTEMS**

RECEIVED the action plan to review the inspection of lifting equipment and pressure systems. The Health & Safety Director reported that the Planning & Resources Committee had received an update on the systems which were requiring inspections. He had also received confirmation from Zurich Engineering of which items had been inspected. The deadline for all inspections to be carried out was 31st July 2015. The intention was to rectify the situation and then put systems in place to ensure that this situation did not happen again.

DISCUSSED how the situation had arisen. It was explained to the Committee that previously these inspections had been dealt with by RCS which at that time had included Estates. An assumption had been made that the Compliance Manager had been dealing with compliance across the College but had in fact concentrated on the RCS area and had not covered academic departments. Responsibility for the Compliance Team had now been transferred to the Health & Safety Director. Work was now focussing on ensuring documentation was in place or in some cases working retrospectively to find specifications for equipment. The two academic departments where equipment gave cause for concern were Media Arts and Physics. There could be significant costs involved as it decision might need to be made about whether to carry out testing or whether to purchase new equipment.

The Committee asked whether the work would be carried out in time for the deadline of 31st July. It was confirmed that it would.

DISCUSSED the process to prevent further problems. It was confirmed that the procurement process would flag up when equipment of this nature was bought and a register would be kept. The Compliance Manager would have responsibility for updating the register and ensuring that inspections were kept up to date.
DISCUSSED the legal liability in relation to these inspections.

NOTED that it was a statutory requirement for lifting equipment and pressure vessels to be thoroughly examined by a competent person and continued operation of equipment without an ‘in date’ examination was a contravention of the regulations. Insurance was also likely to be affected as where statute is breached an insurer is likely to deny any claim. Given the seriousness of the situation it was agreed that Council should be kept informed.

ACTION a paper would go to the next meeting of Council on 1st July 2015. As the Chair was unable to be present at that meeting Mr Dehal would speak on behalf of the Committee.

ACTION that consideration be given to Heads of Departments receiving a health and safety briefing from a health & safety professional or lawyer.

MANAGEMENT OF CONTRACTORS ON CAMPUS

NOTED that Mike Berry, Director of Estates was not able to attend the meeting.

AGREED that he would be invited to attend the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

NOTED that there was one outstanding action from the last meeting which was for the Director of Health & Safety to provide list of Health & Safety audit processes.

ACTION agreed that this would be provided to the next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

8th October 2015 at 10.00 in the Principal’s Meeting Room.

SIGNED

Chris Shoukry
Chair of health & Safety Committee