

## University of Glasgow

### Health Safety and Wellbeing Committee

#### Minute of Meeting held on Wednesday 9th of March 2022 at 10:00 AM via Zoom

**Present:** Mr Ian Campbell, Dr David Duncan, Mrs Elise Gallagher, Mr James Gray, Mr Peter Haggarty, Mr William Howie, Mr Christopher Kennedy, Ms Paula McKerrow, Mr David McLean, Mr Cyril Pacot, Ms Gillian Shaw, Ms Aileen Stewart, Mr Graham Tobasnick, Ms Selina Woolcott, Ms Eva Simmons, Mr David Harty, Mr Gary Stephen

**In Attendance:** Ms Debbie Beales

**Apologies:** Mr John Neil, Mr David Thom

#### HSWC/2021/21 Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 8 December 2021

The Minute of the meeting held on Wednesday the 8th of December 2021 was approved.

#### HSWC/2021/22 Matters arising

##### *HSWC/2021/22.1 Contractor activity (verbal update DH)*

Mr Harty informed the Committee that the 'Don't Walk By' initiative has been relaunched. There have been over 100 near misses reported by contractors in 6 months, showing that the initiative has been embraced by contractors as well as UofG staff. The most serious near miss was in Professor Square, where a mobile platform hit stonework but fortunately no-one was injured. A second occurrence, which has been reported to HSE, involved the disturbance of asbestos in the James Watt North Building. The 2 subcontractors affected were immediately taken to an on-site decontamination unit and there is an ongoing investigation into the matter.

##### *HSWC/2021/22.2 Centralisation of PAT (verbal update DH)*

Mr Harty informed the Committee that whilst the pilot is behind schedule active testing is about to begin and a report will be available at the next HSWC meeting in May.

##### *HSWC/2021/22.3 Wellbeing strategy (verbal update EG)*

Mrs Gallagher informed the Committee that the consultation process will end in the next week, with a launch of the new Wellbeing Portal at the end of April.

##### *HSWC/2021/22.4 Area Fire Officer responsibilities (verbal update DH)*

Mr Campbell informed the Committee that Estates (including HSW) have been reviewing the Fire Safety Procedures. The draft proposal would replace Area Fire Officers with Fire Co-ordinators who would be responsible for hazard identification, co-ordination of fire wardens and drills. The role of Fire Warden remains the same. Fire Co-ordinators would be the responsibility of different units, dependant on the nature of risk, as follows:

- Multi occupancy building - Facility Services staff
- High risk buildings - Technician community
- Low risk buildings - relevant College

All fire equipment testing would in future become the responsibility of the Facilities Services Department.

A subcommittee of the HSW committee will be formed to approve the revised procedures ahead of the next meeting.

#### **HSWC/2021/23 OH Report (Paper 1)**

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only. Ms Stewart informed the Committee that this quarter was extremely busy due to a further increase in management and student referrals, along with a significant increase in staff and students attending clinics for blood tests and vaccinations. This has proved challenging, due to staff shortages and the closure of the University during the Christmas break. The next clinic is in March and then the staff will move onto health surveillance in the next quarter as usual.

#### **HSWC/2021/24 SEPS Report (Paper 2)**

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only. Mr McLean informed the Committee of a recent fire in the Joseph Black Building. The heating element in a water bath had overheated and caught fire, leading to 100% smoke damage throughout the room and fire damage to the corner of the room.

#### **HSWC/2021/25 Audit update (Paper 3)**

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only. David Duncan agreed to speak to the Director of Commercial Services about the outstanding actions within Accommodation Services.

#### **HSWC/2021/26 EAP Report (Paper 4)**

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only. The Committee discussed the fact that red flag cases have increased from 1 per quarter to 7 and Mrs Gallagher agreed to contact the EAP provider to see if there was any information that could be shared on this as, due to staff confidentiality, the University does not receive information on individual cases. Mrs Gallagher informed the Committee that the re-tendering process will take place in the summer, with Procurement currently testing the market for potential applicants. Mrs Gallagher asked anyone interested in being involved in the tendering process to contact her via email.

#### **HSWC/2021/27 Sickness absence stats (Paper 5)**

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only.

#### **HSWC/2021/28 HSW Annual Report (Paper 6)**

The Committee noted the Paper that was circulated for information only. Ms Woolcott informed the Committee that the full report will be published on the HSW website and sent to Court. Highlights from the report include:

- Whilst Covid continued to require a considerable amount of input from HSW staff, work increased on campus to near normal levels. Training, both F2F and online, was delivered to around 10,500 staff and students.

- The renewal of the SAPO licence required a 4-day audit by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This required a considerable amount of work from the Biological Safety Adviser (BSA) at SEPS and included collating pre-audit submission material, accompanying the HSE inspectors on-site and joining follow-up meetings. The BSA also provided a high level of support to the Lighthouse Covid testing lab as they transitioned from employing existing University staff (now required back in their substantive roles) to recruiting new staff. Many of the new employees lack the technical experience of their predecessors meaning that the BSA was required to assist with routine lab skills and systems.
- The Chemical Safety Adviser from SEPS, along with both Fire Safety Officers, was heavily involved in the aftermath of the Wolfson fire as well as arranging for the disposal of an old gas cylinder (contents unknown) for controlled explosion.
- Alex Shearer joined SEPS as Safety and Environmental Adviser and has already been involved in the decommissioning of a substantial fuel tank as well as being involved in an investigation into the injury of a student at the Equine Unit.
- RPS, assisted by the Director of HSW's PA, continued to deliver and process dosimeter badges, deliver isotopes and perform lab surveys.
- The Director of HSW was involved in various internal Covid groups, as well as the Scottish Government/Universities Scotland Covid Leads working group. The Director has also been involved in Business Continuity (BC) management and the creation of a BC Officer post, now under recruitment.
- The Occupational Health Unit, now sitting within HR, maintained a presence on campus. Although staffing the Unit has been challenging, they still managed to provide health screening and immunisation clinics for a high number of students. The Service were saddened to hear of the death of their colleague Rosie Cimmino in December. Rosie was forced to retire from OHU earlier in the year due to serious illness and will be sadly missed.

#### **HSWC/2021/29 Any Other Business**

- Living with the virus - draft revised Scottish Government strategic framework and sector guidance. Ms Woolcott informed the Committee that the framework is undergoing parliamentary process and will be published when that is complete.
- Covid strategic guidance. Ms Woolcott informed the Committee that the guidance will be moving away from suppressing the virus to living with it. Moving forward, the approach will be more risk based. This could change, if necessary, should the variant become more serious. The Covid Planning Group will be scaled down, eventually disbanding and being absorbed into existing groups such as the HSWC.
- Supporting Ukrainian staff and students. The Committee discussed this matter and agreed that practical and pragmatic support was the best way forward.

#### **HSWC/2021/30 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the HSWC will take place on Wednesday 1st of June 2022 at 10am via Zoom.

*Created by: Ms Debbie Beales*