



Minutes of the 209th Health & Safety Consultative Committee meeting on 04 June 2024 held via Teams.

Present: Andrew Allison (Chair), Sareen Galbraith (Joint Chair), Alison Barker, Hamera Bashir, Shaun Beckingham, Jo Benn, Harsh Bhatia, Carole Birley, Helen Dickson, Jennifer Dodds, Katherine Everest, Andrew Forknell, Ryan Hill, Jonathan Holland, Vikki Johnston, Neil Mackenzie

In attendance: James Chester, Fiona Riley, Sarah Swales, Liz Proctor (Secretary)

Apologies: Mobina Begum, Oliver Bray, David Haigh, Lizzi Kijewski, Nicola Queenan, Andrew Manley, Joan Sheehan

Note: Meeting was recorded for minuting purposes.

Preliminary Items

Membership Update 2023/24

- 055.2023.HEA The Chair presented the 2024/25 membership update (paper reference HEA-2023-031). It was **noted**:
- Neil MacKenzie had replaced Kerry Radford from the Student Union.
 - Alison Barker had replaced Tracy Commons from External Relations.
 - Mobina Begum and Shaun Beckingham to cover the Unison vacancy on a rotational basis.
 - Harsh Bhatia (Student Union) is leaving the University and leaves a vacancy for the SU.
 - It was highlighted by Unison:
 - David Page was no longer a member of H&SCC and this was Carole Birley's last attendance at the Committee.
 - Gordon Knowles was a new H&S Union representative and was to be added to the Committee when fully trained.

Declaration(s) of interest

056.2023.HEA No declarations of interest were made.

Minutes of the meeting held on 06 February 2024

057.2023.HEA The Committee **agreed** that the minutes of its meeting on 06 February 2024 were an accurate record (paper reference HEA-2023-032).

Matters arising

058.2023.HEA The Chair presented a report on the matters arising from the previous meeting held on 06 February 2024 (paper reference HEA-2023-033). The following was **noted**:

- a) Item reference 007.2023.HEA – The Head of Health & Safety confirmed that e-scooter and the wider transport risks had to remain as an ongoing action, as focus was now concentrated on priorities for the coming academic year. The fire hazard from e-scooters would be incorporated into the fire safety policy and the wider transport risk into existing documentation at the appropriate time.
- b) Item 018.2023.HEA – The training and compliance reports are covered in the training report on the agenda.
- c) Item 037.2023.HEA – The Deputy Director of Human Resources confirmed the action on Disability Passports was ongoing. Initial research had been carried out, but further work was required in order for it to be brought to the next meeting of H&SCC for discussion.

059.2023.HEA

The Committee **agreed**:
The Deputy Director of Human Resources was to bring the Disability Passport proposal to the next meeting in October for feedback from the Committee.

Major Topics

Good Practice Discussion

- 060.2023.HEA The Committee received a verbal update from the Health & Safety Manager (LSA) on good practice within Leeds School of Arts. It was **noted**:
- a) LSA had many practical courses with a range of high-risk activities both on and off campus and good health and safety was imperative.
 - b) The school priority was to encourage the promotion of a good health & safety culture.
 - c) A key emphasis was to ensure teams met regularly to discuss health and safety specific matters for their areas, in particular high risk practical areas and looking at risk assessments, code of practice, safety systems of work and other essential elements.
 - d) The review of health & safety training requirements in teams is to involve all teams so there was inclusion. This also extended to the review of risk assessments and code of practice to allow staff to have input to encourage teamwork.
 - e) Regular meetings took place with managers/staff in low to medium risk areas to look at the office environment and any matters of concern relating to health and safety.
 - f) Formal health and safety inspections carried out with key staff members who managed areas to promote ownership. Weekly spot checks also encouraged.
 - g) A first aid email group had been set up and rotas in place for checking first aid boxes.
 - h) The school had its own training matrix identifying what different staff training was required and discussed with management in all areas.
 - i) All new starters had to be made aware of school specific health and safety information via presentations. Inhouse training and toolbox talks provided to staff and students.
 - j) Students good practice was encouraged and every semester presentations carried out to students on general health and safety that was specific to their courses, including emergency evacuation and first aid.
 - k) The school had a good health and safety culture due to staff and students being positively engaged and it was vital to maintain the momentum.
 - l) The Joint Chair suggested this item was re-visited at the next meeting for further good practice case studies in terms of managing health and safety across the university.

061.2023.HEA

The Committee **agreed**:
The Joint Chair requested any members who would be interested to share further good practice at the next meeting to contact either the Joint Chairs or Committee Secretary to add to the agenda.

Local Reports

Local Reports ** starred items

Summary report from the Low Impact Areas

062.2023.HEA The Committee received and noted the starred report from the Health & Safety Consultant on the Collated Low Risk Areas (paper reference number HEA.2023.034).

Summary report from the Medium Impact Areas

063.2023.HEA The Committee received and noted the starred report from the Health & Safety Consultant on the Collated Medium Risk Areas (paper reference number HEA.2023.035).

Summary report from the High Impact Areas

064.2023.HEA The Committee received and noted the starred report from the Health & Safety Consultant on the Collated High-Risk Areas (paper reference number HEA.2023.036).

Common Themes

065.2023.HEA The Committee received a report and verbal update from the Head of Health & Safety (paper reference HEA.2023.037) on Common Themes. It was **reported**:

- a) The main common themes identified had been:
 - The maintenance of Wellbeing Assessments within schools/services ensuring these were up to date, along with risk assessments.
 - Challenges around the compliance of the health & Safety essential training.
 - Ongoing monitoring of fire wardens and first aider numbers.
 - It was clear from the attendance at schools/services SHWAG meetings that in depth discussions were held locally and this provided assurances.
- b) The Head of Health & Safety was to review the format of the school/services reports before the next H&SCC meeting to provide better consistency and structure.

Safety Reports

Central Health & Safety Consolidated Report

066.2023.HEA The Committee received a Health & Safety Consolidated Report from the Head of Health & Safety (paper reference HEA.2023.038). It was **reported**:

Health & Safety Policy

- a) In the new academic year, the Central Health & Safety Service was to transfer from Estates/FM to the Registrar & Secretary's Office.
- b) The Health & Safety Policy was under review due to the upcoming changes in the management framework, along with clarity on the roles and responsibilities section.
- c) The Head of Health & Safety was working on the revisions and a working draft was to be formally presented at the Annual Health & Safety meeting in September, with final endorsement/approval in the next cycle of governance meetings in October.

New Legislation

- d) There was no new HSE consultations that would impact the University.
- e) There had been a change however in the scope of regulations under the Plant Protection Products (PPP), which had some impact on the Grounds Maintenance Team. The Central Health & Safety team to evaluate compliance with this team.

Fire Safety Management

- f) Fire risk assessments had commenced in May with Total Fire Safety, an external specialist. Expected completion for the majority of buildings was by the end of July.
- g) A new Fire Safety Adviser had been recruited and was to commence on 1st July.

- h) There had been no Spring Fire drills due to resource. However, once in post, the new Fire Safety Adviser was to be tasked with developing a new fire drill structure.

Central H&S Service Update

- i) The homeworking guidance and checklist had been updated and live on the A-Z.
- j) The Pan University Risk Assessments had been under review and transferred into a new format based on the HSE preferred template and was to be live in September.
- k) The contract with Carris Consultants was to finish at the end of July 2024. The H&S Consultants final project was the completion of the roll out of the defibrillators.
- l) The Health & Safety Adviser had not been recruited to and was now a trainee role.
- m) Once the new Health & Safety team was in place a systematic review of university processes and procedures was to take place utilising the HASMAP tool.
- n) The Head of Health & Safety was to undertake a gap analysis risk profiling exercise.

Accident Reporting

- o) The accident reporting process was under review as the data was currently processed manually. By moving to a greater degree of automation it provided more accurate statistics and easier approach.

Training Provisions

- p) The Health & Safety essentials training was to be reviewed due to elements of duplication and be made more user friendly to improve compliance.
- q) The provision of more toolbox talks and improved training on the completion of risk assessments.
- r) Policies and supplementary codes of practice to be concentrated on as a priority.

Accident & Incidents

- s) It was highlighted that the format of the accident reporting had been changed in order to make it more informative and provide illustrative comparisons with previous years.
- t) The themes of accidents are in line with national and educational averages.
- u) USHA had released their statistics and the University accident/incident rate per 1000 employees was lower than the national average.

Training Compliance Figures

- v) The figures only included the Health & Safety essentials.
- w) The University target for compliance was 90% and the overall compliance rate was 92% as at 22/05/2024.
- x) All services had hit the 90% compliance rate, however there had been no schools that had reached this rate.
- y) The Deputy Director of HR confirmed a communication had been circulated to all Deans/Directors to improve compliance and a report was going to Audit Committee.
- z) It was highlighted to that it was essential that short term staff/lecturers be ended on the system in order to cleanse data and reflect true compliance.

Health & Wellbeing

Report from Wellbeing Sub Committee

- 067.2023-HEA The Committee received a summary report from the Deputy Director of Human Resources on the Wellbeing Sub-Committee (paper reference HEA.2023.039). It was **reported**:
- a) The EAP provided by Spectrum was launched in October 2023.
 - b) Follow up work had been carried out to understand concerns raised by colleagues or managers related to Spectrums triaging of calls and guidance provided.
 - c) A balance had to be struck between meaningful information and feedback and the need for confidentiality of colleagues accessing the service.
 - d) Conversations had already taken place between the Wellbeing Managers, UCU and Unison colleagues.

Suicide Prevention Strategy

- 068.2023.HEA The Committee received a report from the Deputy Director of Human Resources on the Suicide Prevention Strategy (paper reference HEA.2023.040). It was **reported**:
- a) Following new national data release and updated the government suicide prevention strategy, it had provided an opportunity to review the University strategy to ensure aligned with good practice.
 - b) The paper outlined the University's three strands: prevention, intervention and postvention with the aim to reduce the risk of suicide amongst student and staff.
 - c) It was highlighted that from key risk data, the highest risk groups by age are those people who would be in workforce rather than students. Therefore, the strategy included the risks that encompasses risks for both the student group and staff group.
 - d) The strategy had already received approval for the Wellbeing-Sub Committee and had been brought to H&SCC to seek feedback and sign off in order to be published.
 - e) The Committee highlighted the importance of the strategy and gave full approval.

Sickness Absence Report

- 069.2023.HEA The Committee received a report from the Deputy Director of Human Resources on Sickness Absence Benchmarking (paper reference HEA.2023.041). It was **reported**:
- a) The last report to the Committee had detailed analysis on university absence and trends, whereas this report was benchmarking across the sector and national data.
 - b) It was noted that the timing of this Committee and the timing of data publishing were not always aligned. This impacted on the reporting and therefore the report provided an assessment of absence.
 - c) Benchmarking was important but remained challenging as data sets use different calculations, methodology and national/sector data was potentially a year behind.
 - d) The UCEA data last year and for this year continue to be referenced to covid and post pandemic and how it related to absence. During lockdown covid sickness dropped significantly across all sectors in the UK and only now data was rebalancing.
 - e) The Deputy Director of Human Resources confirmed that once national data was published further information was to be provided.

Wellbeing Assessment Annual Report

- 070.2023.HEA The Committee received report from the Deputy Director of Human Resources on the Annual Wellbeing Assessment (paper reference HEA.2023.042). It was **reported**:
- a) This had been the first report following the transition to the Wellbeing Assessment.
 - b) Feedback from the new process had been positive as it had changed the conversation about wellbeing and mental health and encouraged greater dialogue.
 - c) Three themes had been highlighted from the assessments: workload; uncertainty and staffing and resourcing.
 - d) The positive findings that had emerged had been hybrid working and the flexibility and work life balance it provided for staff. Challenging themes highlighted had been around IT across campuses and workspaces.
 - e) The TU Union Officer noted that a request had been made to JCC for a university wide risk assessment to monitor the impact on health related to the management of change and the voluntary severance.
 - f) The Deputy Director of Human Resources was to follow up the Unison request with the HR Associate Director and respond to the Union via JCC.

- g) The Joint Chair (TU) had previously requested risk assessments for the areas already undergoing restructure, this was to be picked up by the Deputy Director of HR.

071.2023.HEA

The Committee **agreed:**

- a) The Deputy Director of Human Resources to follow up on the request for a university wide risk assessment to monitor impact on health related to the management of change and voluntary severance and feedback to TU and JCC.
- b) The Deputy Director of Human Resources to follow up with the HR Associate Director on risk assessments for those areas already undergoing restructure.

Other Business

072.2023.HEA

The Committee noted the Schedule of Business (paper reference HEA-2023-043).

- a) The Joint Chair requested that members consider items for the major topic section for future meetings including sharing further best practice, case studies and other items.

073.2023.HEA

Topics/items for the next Annual Health & Safety meeting between H&SCC and HSWG.

- a) It was suggested by the Deputy Director of Human Resources to include:
- The Wellbeing Assessment report.
 - The Suicide Prevention Strategy.
- b) The Head of Health and Safety noted that the Health & Safety Policy was to be added for consultation at to the Annual H&S agenda with the aim of seeking approval in the October cycle of meetings.

074.2023.HEA

A query was raised related to the lack of guidance available on office working and DSE. The Head of Health & Safety was to make this available in line with priorities.

075.2023.HEA

It was requested that a note of thanks was minuted:

- a) The Joint Chairs highlighted the departure of the Health & Safety Consultants and expressed thanks from the University for their hard work and commitment.
- b) The Joint Chair thanked Carole Birley for her input as she was leaving the committee.

The next meeting of the Committee was to be held on Monday 7th October 2024 at 13:30 hrs via Teams.

Confirmed by the Committee as a correct record and signed by the Chair:

Signed: Date: