

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

COUNCIL

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE
12 November 2007**

Present: Mr Dick Melly (in the Chair), Mr Hugh Jones, Mr Barry Douglas, Ms Patsy Carter, Mr Chris Pearson, Ms Kelly Thompson, Ms Sheila Turley, Ms Eva Snell, Ms Raymond Kingsbury, Ms Anna Sabti, Ms Elizabeth MacFarlane, Ms Bronwen Bernard (Secretary).

Apologies: Dr Des Freedman, Ms Anna Furse, Ms Laurel Sills, Mr Steve Collins.

In Attendance: Mrs Mary Bright, Mr James Hutchinson.

OPEN BUSINESS

1 MINUTES

Received:

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2007.

Resolved:

to approve the minutes of the meeting held 23 April 2007.

2 ANNUAL REVIEW OF COMMITTEE

Received:

Annual review of the Committee for 2006-07 (07/380).

Resolved:

to approve the annual review of the Committee, including indicative business/ agenda items for meetings in 2007-08.

3 HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE VISIT

Received:

a verbal report from the Head of Health and Safety on a recent visit by the Health and Safety Executive.

Noted:

- (i) that the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) were carrying out inspections focussed on management of asbestos, Legionella and stress at work and were visiting Goldsmiths because the College had not been inspected before.
- (ii) that the HSE Inspector had met the Head of Health and Safety, Head of Estates, and Plumbing and Heating Officer to discuss management of asbestos and Legionella risks. The Inspector was pleased with the risk assessments and arrangements in place to manage these risks.
- (iii) Legionella management plans should show clearly the allocation of responsibilities for routine monitoring and record keeping.
- (iv) the Director of Human Resources and Head of Health and Safety will be meeting the HSE Inspector on 16 November, to discuss management of stress at work.
- (v) the Head of Health and Safety had emailed Union Branch Secretaries, offering to arrange a separate meeting with the HSE Inspector if they wished to do so.
- (vi) the HSE are expected to follow up their visits with a letter to the Warden, outlining any further actions that Goldsmiths should take to comply with legislation relating to asbestos, Legionella or stress at work. Copies will also be sent to the Unions and to members of the Health and Safety Committee.

3 ITEMS REQUESTED BY UNISON

Received:

A request from Unison for information about

- (i) the location and output of mobile phone masts and internet wireless (wi-fi) areas on campus;
- (ii) the response of the Estates Department to a flooding incident in the Education Building in July 2007;
- (iii) plans to participate in heating from the waste burning plant at Bermondsey.

Noted:

- (i) that there are two mobile phone masts and one radio mast located on the roof of Whitehead Building. A risk assessment was carried out by the phone company when the masts were installed in 1999.
- (ii) that further details of phone mast outputs and of wireless networked areas would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting in February 2008.
- (iii) that the flooding was caused by a roof leak on the Education Building that has now been repaired and that the Estates Department is reviewing communications with other departments in an emergency such as flooding and electrical failures to ensure that those affected know what action is being taken.
- (iv) that the Head of Capital Projects is continuing to investigate the feasibility of obtaining low-pressure hot water for heating the College from the combined heat and power incinerator in Bermondsey but that the technical issues are considerable.

- (iv) that some staff living locally are not in favour of the existing waste burning plant (CELCHP) because of concerns about air pollution from the plant. These views should be taken into account when considering Goldsmiths participation in heating plans.

4 ITEMS REQUESTED BY UCU

Received:

a request from UCU for a progress report on provision of occupational health services for staff.

Noted:

- (i) that the average sickness absence for Goldsmiths staff is 8 days per year, compared to a Higher Education sector average of 6 days per year. Sickness absence costs the College approximately £1.2 million per year.
- (ii) that a formal occupational health provision would include pre-employment screening, advice on reasonable adjustments and return to work, annual reviews of sickness absence and impact on college business, and also links with college services such as health and safety, counselling, gym and catering.
- (iii) that tendering documentation is being prepared by the Director of HR, for occupational health provision for staff.
- (iv) that the Medical Centre will be relocating to the former NHS Walk-in Centre in New Cross early in 2008. The College has prepared a specification of student health needs and this will be discussed with the Medical Centre.

5 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLEMENTATION GROUP

Received:

Notes of the Health and Safety Implementation Group meeting held on 13 June 2007 (07/381).

Noted:

that since this meeting, good progress had also been made in implementing fire risk assessment recommendations in Surrey House and Raymont Halls.

6 ACCIDENTS REPORTED 1 OCTOBER 2006 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2007

Received:

A summary of accidents reported between 1/10/06 and 30/9/07 (07/382)

Noted:

- (i) that during this twelve month period, a total of 44 accident reports had been received, of which 4 were notified to HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR).

- (ii) that in comparison with 112 other Higher Education institutions, the College accident rates for staff and students are lower than the sector average. However, a further twelve month period of reporting will be needed to establish whether this is a true reflection of the situation or due to under-reporting of accidents within the College.

7 CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER LEGISLATION

Received:

A summary of the Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act (07/383)

Noted:

- (i) that this Act comes into force from 6 April 2008 and that offences will be investigated by the Police.
- (ii) that prosecutions under this Act will be taken against companies and institutions, not against individuals.
- (iii) that individuals and companies etc. can still be prosecuted under the Health and Safety at Work Act and gross negligence manslaughter legislation, which can result in imprisonment, fines and adverse publicity.
- (iv) that updated guidance on health and safety responsibilities of directors and board members has been published by HSE and the Institute of Directors.

8 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Received:

a report on Environmental Issues from the Environmental Advisor (tabled).

Noted:

that the report would be circulated to members with the Minutes of the Committee meeting.

9 MEETING DATES

Noted:

that the next meetings of the Committee will be held on

Monday 11 February 2008
Monday 9 June 2008

Both meetings will start at 1430 and will be held in Deptford Town Hall Building, room 110.