**BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF UNIVERSITY JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE (UJH&SC)**

**Held on 31st March 2022, 1300 – 1430hrs**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Present:** | Deputy Chair: Karen Parker (KP) Karen Butters (KB); Adam Wright (AW); Rehan Zia (RZ); Marian Mayer (MM); Steph Allen (SA); Steven Trenoweth (STR); Steve Jones (SJ); Anand Pandyan (AP); |
| **Apologies:** | SU VP Welfare (SUVPW); Ali Ebrahimi-Sabet (AES); Julie Liddell (JL); |
| **Guest Attendance:** | SUBU Democracy Rep – Charlotte Morris-Davis (CMD); Tom Hollingum (TH);  Philip Leahy-Harland (PLH);  Minutes recorded by Sam Clissold (SC); |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
| **1.** | **APOLOGIES** | **ACTION** | **ACTION PLAN NUMBER** |
|  | SU VP Welfare (SUVPW); Ali Ebrahimi-Sabet (AES); Julie Liddell (JL); |  |  |
| **2.** | **REVIEW OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING (20.01.22)** |  |  |
|  | Minutes confirmed by the Committee. |  |  |
| **3.** | **MATTERS ARISING/ ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS** |  |  |
|  | **Action 50 - 5. TU Item - Enforcement of covid risk assessment – Closed – carried over to Action 57**  Karen Parker (KP) advised we had moved on from this and she was seeking comments.  Karen Butters (KB) stated that regular reviews of the campus risk assessments had taken place and the latest version retained the strong recommendation for face coverings in all indoor spaces and mandatory where close contact work takes place, such as health practical sessions, workshops and laboratories.  Adam Wright (AW) confirmed KB statements and stated that in the workshops, face coverings were still mandatory and there was a high level of student compliance in his area.  **Action 52 - 8. TU Item - Roll out of Windows 10 - Ongoing**  MM is still aware of people having issues using windows 10 and is this still ongoing?  Tom Hollingum (TH) was not aware of this – was aware of a delay in BUBS on the roll out but those issues have been resolved and the rollout was proceeding next week.  KB stated that the Windows 10 roll out had identified an issue in relation to compatibility with Dragon Speak which is important as it has a greater impact on the individual – KB agreed to review this on a case-by-case basis and is happy to receive feedback from TU colleagues directly. KB will further liaise with her team and/or IT to ensure any related reasonable adjustments are still achievable despite the Windows 10 implications.  KP advised she will also speak to Tom Ormerod (TO)  TH aware of one issue with Dragon Speak is that it has been removed from the Apple operating system, so would be difficult for Mac users to move forward unless they use alternative voice recognition software.  MM asked what email address she should give her members and KB advised her personal one.  KP reiterated that we need to ensure the individuals are given options and is there potential for some comms to be issued in that respect?  **KB stated it was only a small group of users affected and she will liaise with her team and prepare any comms as a result – and will take that as an action.**  **Action 54 – 10. Fire warden/fire safety cover - linked to reduced staff numbers on campus – Complete**  KP cited the paper that had been sent to EULT. In February.  Stephen Jones (SJ) feedback from the paper was that it was well received and accepted. A potential shortfall, caused by Hybrid working patterns has been highlighted as an ongoing concern but was agreed at EULT that local line managers must ensure enough fire warden cover based on working patterns and activity – liaising with the Fire Officer for advice and/or additional training as required and additional content added to the Fire Awareness course to remind all staff of their responsibilities in the event of a fire/evacuation.  KP advised that it was up to each Head of Department (HOD) and or Executive Dean (ED) to ensure cover – this has been updated in Hybrid FAQs.  AW asked to mitigate are we still having regular fire drills?  SJ advised yes this has also been identified in the paper – Estates Team has tested every building this year.  **Action 57 - 5. TU Item – risk assessment updates – non-compliance - Complete**  KB ensuring that where appropriate, the inclusion of non-compliance advice in the RA at every review.  **Action 59 - TU Item – Update on BU actions related to the staff wellbeing surveys (Hidden lives & stress surveys) – Ongoing**  KB, AW and Steph Allen (SA) agreed to end the Hidden Lives work, update staff via a news item (**KB to draft wording**) and move forward, looking at the initial outcomes of the recent stress risk assessment carried out by UCU. Steve Trenoweth (STre) is leading on this project and confirmed that the focus groups will begin in due course, with a report coming back to this committee with findings and action plan at some point in the future.  **60 - TU item – Room audit/availability – use of allocated offices and availability of space for all staff - Complete**  SJ Picked up the discussion from the JCNC and confirmed that we shall be doing a space audit linked to hybrid working. This will be done in May 2022.  SJ also noted that car parking had been highlighted as an issue, BU consistently working on the strategy issue re car park H as we are at risk of losing car park H in 2024.  KP advised that this would be bought back to JCNC once the audit had taken place.  **Review of ventilation RA** – SJ is looking at industry and government guidance to establish whether we can further adjust our current ventilation strategy. This is also based on current energy costs.  MM stated it sounds like this should be on the JCNC item as related to budget costings.  MM cited issues in Weymouth House (WH), appreciated that this is a localised issue and temperature control in buildings will always be problematic.  MM requested to have this on the JCNC agenda.  SJ requested that he be able to gain further sector information as needs to collate further data.  KP advised that when he had done that this issue should be added to a future JCNC agenda.  **62 - AOB 1 - Smoke free campus – Ongoing**  KB advised that she had one meeting to date and needs to think about the membership going forward.  SJ asked, after a discussion within Estates, whether the Student Union/TUs want smoking shelters on campus, as this goes against the no smoking campus ideals and would be challenging due to using public money – SJ asked for further input.  Adam Wright (AW) – advised he supported smoke free completely.  MM agrees with AW but would be interested in the views of the subgroup, she will go back to TU members for their view.  KB advised that the Subgroup had not yet been formed and she needs to formulate.  TH offered his assistance with joining the Subgroup.  **63 - AOB 2 – Health issue in toilets**  MM – UCU do not agree with the findings re hygiene and disease control and should not have toilets without lids.  SJ cited the Business Disability Forum for further info and MM stated that in her opinion, this was not the best forum to gain this information from as they have a vested interest in the business side of things and the best place to inform for advice is Public Health England (PHE).  MM continued that to maintain lower covid rates on campus we are advised to close the toilet lids prior to flushing to keep down the airborne transmissions rates of covid, even have posters advising of this in toilets. MM requested that these posters be taken down in the toilets that do not have lids.  SJ advised that he had already asked his staff to remove the posters in the relevant areas.  SJ offered to speak with MM further outside of this meeting, but MM declined the offer.  SJ added that some disabled people do have physical difficulties accessing with toilets with lids and Estates are trying to balance many different factors regarding this, but he is willing to seek additional input.  MM cited the Disability Rights Network and advised that if able bodied people have lids due to air borne infection causes then it is discriminatory against disabled people.  KP suggested that we look at how many do not have lids, assess where we are in terms of providing fully accessible toilets whilst trying to manage the risk of airborne transmission then for it to come back to this Committee.  SJ suggested he gather further data.  KB advised she is happy to assist but believes the experts are our Occupational Health Dept and she will liaise with them. | **KP**  **KB**  **KB**  **STre**  **SJ**  **KP**  **SJ**  **KP**  **KB**  **SJ**  **KB** | **52a**  **52b**  **59a**  **59b**  **60a**  **60b**  **61a**  **61b**  **62**  **63a**  **63b** |
| **4.** | **Standing item –** COVID-19 updates |  |  |
|  | KB opened with a caveat stating that BU can not guarantee all Staff are reporting when they have tested positive for Covid.  As of yesterday (29.03.22):  7 new Staff cases in the last 24 hours  35 Staff reported in the last 7 days  59 Staff self-isolating (10 days)  2 new Student cases in the last 24 hours  29 Students reported in the last 7 days  63 Students self-isolating (10 days)  BU still fully supporting all Staff and Students.  KP advised that on a reported basis we are averaging 10 new cases of Staff infection a day, which is higher than at the start of March 2020.  MM acknowledges that BU are doing so much more than most institutions. There is a problem though with people still testing positive after 10 days and now that lateral flow tests are not free the constant testing can be very expensive and the TUs are requesting free lateral flow tests for the Staff and Students who need them.  KP advised that the Government had released a list of scenarios within which, people may still be eligible for free lateral flow tests, and she will have to speak to colleagues about BU supplying as there is a cost implication.  KP to take the point back and see what can be done.  MM asked for further information re Gov advice to free lateral flow test availability. KP agreed to send.  KB review RA - no significant changes – amended some wording re lateral flow test changes – will add KP update to the RA once outcome known.  KB added that a full review of each case where staff may have been covered by previous advice and guidance in relation to clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) status will take place after the Easter break and any implications from this review process will be shared with the TUs. | **KP**  **KP**  **KB** | **64a**  **64b**  **64c** |
| **5.** | **TU Item – Accuracy of Minutes** |  |  |
|  | SA advised that this had also been raised in JCNC in relation to recording of information.  SA and KB had had a discussion and have a way forward where we can ensure minutes only reflect what is discussed in the meetings. |  |  |
| **6.** | **TU Item – Recognising long covid-19 as a disability** |  |  |
|  | MM opened by saying that in 2021, her, KB and STre had met with Dorset Healthcare Trust colleagues who provide our OH service to discuss in detail their approach to Long Covid and raised concern that given there is yet to be an official diagnosis, how would it be supported by BU and whether we would consider it alongside other health conditions for Equality Act purposes?  KB advised that we don’t need to wait for diagnosis as the approach within BU is person centred, meaning the impact of any health condition is the primary focus, not the diagnosis. We would therefore consider Long Covid alongside any other longer term health condition, look at the health impact, how we support Staff and what reasonable adjustments could apply.  KP advised that we treat this the same as any other condition and that we have recently updated the intranet information regarding long and post covid syndrome.  MM thanked KP and said that it is good to hear BU are taking a view regarding the symptoms and impact.  KP reiterated that it is so important for people to disclose/share any longer-term condition with BU to ensure the appropriate support is in place and anything TU colleagues can do to support this would be appreciated. |  |  |
| **7.** | **TU Item – Alleged bullying in FHSS** |  |  |
|  | MM opened that for years now UCU had been talking to UET and JCNC regarding alleged bullying in FHSS. Two EDs ago they were advised that the culture within the NHS was being mirrored in BU. Before Christmas 2021, a small number of FHSS staff had experienced inappropriate behaviour by colleagues and that they were approved time away from work in advance of the Winter break to rest and recover. UCU are aware of two recent reports that would potentially highlight these issues and feel that they are being delayed in some way. There are Staff in two Departments being supported by UCU. Employers have a duty to manage the risk, and the alleged Faculty bullying has reached a point where UCU will be recommending a ‘stop work’ intervention until this is fully investigated.  Staff health is deteriorating and there are genuine concerns about immediate harm, and this cannot continue, UET have stated that this is a line management issue, this is not tolerable. UCU will be having a discussion with the Health & Safety Executive to intervene if this is not resolved immediately.  MM asked what the point of this H&S Committee is? This situation in FHSS is not unknown to this committee and it has to end.  STre advised that informal support was being offered to Staff affected, but that Staff were reluctant to take forward in a formal sense and his role is becoming more of a therapist than a TU representative.  MM commented that this was a major issue as Staff think making a formal complaint will just make things worse and people just give up and, in some cases, leave BU. MM added that we have all the evidence now what is to be done?  AP understands MM frustration and that part of the delay in one report cited earlier is because FHSS are looking at the options as to how to support staff. As a further option AP has agreed that exit interviews can be heard by him.  AP agreed there was a time delay on the case involving the staff earlier cited but the aim is to find a solution which is not easy, but he is accepting that there is a problem, and he is trying to deal with it.  MM responded that so far, options offered for resolution were inappropriate:  Staff having to mediate with colleagues who are behaving inappropriately with them.  Or  Move to a department where they don’t fit and are further impacted by similar behaviour.  MM advised that the solution is to deal effectively and immediately with the senior leaders responsible.  KP advised that alleged bullying of any nature is not acceptable and this needs to be looked at immediately. The ongoing Stress Risk Assessment in MS&PH will be expedited, and the outcome will be shared with AP, forming part of the overall picture within that Department and possibly the wider Faculty.  KB reminded the Committee that this conversation pertaining to this item was totally confidential as there are Staff going through an internal process and we do not want to compromise that process. She confirmed that the MS&PH Stress RA is going to AP this afternoon and all concerns that have been raised as part of this discussion will be taken forward by KP, KB and AP.  AP wants to make this work and is fully committed to doing so.  KP is happy to be involved as this needs to be looked at urgently.  KP/KB/AP to take offline. | **KP/KB/AP** | **65** |
| **8.** | **BU Item – Health and Safety management documents and processes** |  |  |
|  | KB advised that when she joined BU, a process was in place for each individual department and faculty to make available local H&S management information, accessible by the H&S Team at all times. Given that the landscape for H&S has moved on significantly and we need local managers and department leads to maintain a proactive approach to H&S management, she is proposing some changes to the existing policy and procedure.  SJ requested to be involved in the review of the practices and paper. AW requested the same from a Unison perspective.  KB to launch a sub group and report progress at a future meeting of the committee. | **KB** | **66** |
| **9.** | **AOB** |  |  |
|  | No AOBs |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | **Meeting concludes at 1421hrs 30.03.22** |  |  |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING – 19.05.22 – 1300 – 1430hrs** |  |  |