

NAS Health and Safety Committee Meeting
22 July 2010 10.00am, LCR

Attendees: Dave Brownlee (Deputy Keeper); John Mitchell (Central Accommodation Services Team); Jimmy Gilmour (Readers Services Branch); Alex Cochrane (Central Accommodation Services Team); Keith Gray (Central Accommodation Services Team); Gordon Stocks (Conservation Services Branch); Catherine Dowe (Secretary).

Apologies: James McCormack (Court & Legal Services Branch); John Fraser (ICT Digital Information Systems); Tracy Richardson (Development Centre)

1. Apologies for absence

1.1.1 Apologies for absence were noted.

2. H&S Inspections, Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessments

2.1 Most staff have received their DSE assessments for last year and Keith Gray is currently updating the spreadsheet to reflect this. John Mitchell stated that the assessments for this year would be starting soon, but explained that they should now be easier to complete as not all staff will require one.

2.2 As part of the H&S Inspections the Health and Safety Liaison Officers (HSLO) for each building conduct a “walk round”. Once again they have discovered that clutter in stairwell areas is a common theme in all three NAS buildings. Items such as unused display cases or filing cabinets are being placed in these areas temporarily but then are not moved to a more suitable location. Dave Brownlee asked how this matter could be resolved and John Mitchell suggested that some of the empty offices could be used. Alex Cochrane suggested the use of stickers which could indicate whether an item was to be kept or whether it could safely be disposed of.

<p>ACTION- Dave Brownlee and the Keeper will try to find time to look at these items when they next visit the buildings and decide what to keep and what to dispose of.</p>
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2.3 John Mitchell and Jimmy Gilmour have been discussing the quarterly H&S reports and have decided that they will do these together thereby relieving some of the pressure on the HSLOs.

3. Current H&S issues of concern

3.1 Fire evacuations have been held in WRH and GRH recently and John Mitchell indicated that the test in WRH did not go completely according to plan. There was some confusion over the meeting point, which is now at the rear of the building and not on Charlotte Square as it was previously. Also due to the limited number of fire marshals in WRH, not all the exits and entrances were staffed, which led to a member of the public gaining access to the building when it had been evacuated. There is still an evacuation due at TTH and John Mitchell suggested that this be done later in the day so that staff who work later shifts would then have the opportunity to experience a fire drill. He

expressed his concern that back shift staff may miss out on the DSE assessments.

ACTION: Ask staff in WRH if any of them would be willing to volunteer to act as fire marshals.

3.2 Dave Brownlee went on to talk about the external areas in GRH. He said that the quadrangles and the basement area had lots of weeds growing in them and required cleaning. John Mitchell agreed to examine the facilities management contract to check what the agreement is regarding the upkeep of these areas Keith Gray pointed out that the path areas had recently received a power wash, as they had become slippery during the recent spell of wet weather causing a staff member to fall.

3.3 Alex Cochrane raised a concern about the amount of cardboard often left lying in the shop area of the ScotlandsPeople Centre. He has previously spoken to the staff and informed them that the proper procedure is to call the Help Desk who will arrange for accommodation staff to uplift it. Dave Brownlee suggested that Alex speak to them again and if the matter is still not resolved he will speak directly to Dee Williams, the Centre Manager.

3.4 Gordon Stocks then spoke about a recent DSE assessment he had carried out with a member of staff at TTH. The staff member has back trouble and Gordon asked what procedure he has to follow to get him a Herman Miller office chair. John Mitchell explained that the staff member could have a chair for a trial period. If they felt it improved their situation then they would need to obtain a doctor's certificate and NAS would order a chair for them. John Mitchell also pointed out that there is a shortage of ordinary office chairs.

ACTION: John Mitchell will order three new Herman Miller chairs in case of future need

3.5 John Mitchell suggested that NAS should undertake refresher training in fire awareness. He has DVDs which would be suitable in both general staff training and for training fire officers.

ACTION: John Mitchell to arrange refresher training in conjunction with the Development Centre

4. Accident reports since the last meeting

4.1 There have been four minor accidents since the last meeting.

4.2 Dave Brownlee informed the meeting that the customer who had twice previously tried to sue the NAS after falling down the moat stairs has once again retained a lawyer and is attempting to claim damages from us again.

5. Disability/equality issues

5.1 Dave Brownlee informed the meeting that Tracy Richardson is still working on the single statement regarding equality issues which will be required under new government regulations. [5.1]

5.2 Alex Cochrane then informed the meeting that the three NAS buildings had undergone a DDA survey and we await their report. He pointed out that the doors situated at the Garden entrance had recently failed a pressure test – they require too much force to open as they are so heavy. He is looking into the costs of fitting an electric door opener. He and Alec Cochrane discussed the fact that electronic door openers can be problematic too. For example after every fire alarm test the electronic doors in GRH require resetting.

ACTION: John Mitchell and Alex Cochrane to work with the FM contractor to try and find a solution to the problems with the electronic doors.

6. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

6.1 Dave Brownlee enquired about the progress of repairs to the damaged west staircase in GRH [4.1] John Mitchell informed him that a new stair section has been fitted but Arthur MacKay are waiting for the banister and bracket repairs to be complete before they can continue. They have been sent to a specialist by Linda Ramsay.

ACTION: Jimmy Gilmour will ask Linda Ramsay if she has a time for completion of these repairs.

6.2 [6.2] Dave Brownlee also asked what progress had been made in training staff in the use of the evac chairs. John Mitchell informed him that it had been completed at the end of February 2010. John also felt it would be a good idea if those who were trained held practice sessions every few months and he would like to arrange refresher training annually.

ACTION: John Mitchell will look into the costs of annual training in the use of evac chairs.

7. Any other business

7.1 John Mitchell explained that he is in the process of updating the Health & Safety policies on the Oracle, which he hopes to have published by the next meeting.

8. Date of next meeting

8.1 The next meeting is due to be held in November 2010. Catherine Dowe will canvass for dates nearer the time.

Catherine Dowe
22 July 2010