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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

HEALTH & SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: 4TH OCTOBER 2023

PRESENT: Ms S Beecroft (in the Chair), Mr M Beecroft, Ms J Burgess, Ms M Caldwell, Ms C Campbell, Professor R Cousins, Ms N Donaldson, Ms J Egerton, Mr E Fahy, Ms H Furlong, Ms M Gilmurray, Mr B Grice, Ms S Haimes, Mr D Kerry, Ms T Lewin, Dr G Pennington, Mr J Ryan, Mr M Wells

Apologies: Mr J Ellison, Mr D Salter

Secretariat: Mr M Jones

1. Terms of Reference

Members had received the updated Terms of Reference (CHS 271). The Chair noted the need to update the committee's membership. Mr Ryan suggested that the committee's receipt of the annual Student Mental Health Report be added to the document.

ACTION: Mr Jones to amend document, as above.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members had received unconfirmed minutes of the meeting on 17th May 2023 (CHS 272). Mr Grice requested that the spelling of his name be corrected. Pending this change the minutes were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

Re Staff Stress Survey, The Chair informed members that the survey will take place from 16th October to 6th November 2023. The Chair asked Ms Lewin if there was any information available on the outcomes of the recent Advance HE survey. Ms Lewin responded that the results are currently embargoed but will be made available in due course.

Re staff sickness absence, Professor Cousins suggested that statistics should be brought to every meeting of the committee. Ms Lewin expressed a preference for an annual presentation of figures. The Chair undertook to discuss this matter with Professor Cousins and Ms Lewin outside the meeting. Professor Cousins suggested that the University use statistics derived from GP notes in order to assess the number of staff off work with stress.

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ACTION: Chair to discuss with Professor Cousins and Ms Lewin, as above.

Re panic buttons, Mr Beecroft confirmed that the rooms at Creative Campus which required panic buttons now have them. Ms Haines undertook to let Mr Beecroft know of any further rooms in need of buttons.

ACTION: Ms Haines to contact Mr Beecroft, as above.

Mr Wells raised the issue of an emergency telephone for the defibrillator in the Health Sciences Building. Mr Beecroft undertook to look into this.

ACTION: Mr Beecroft to look into options re emergency telephone, as above.

Re the Health & Safety Policy, the Chair confirmed that this had gone to Council Standing Committee on Health & Safety and had been recommended for approval.

Re defibrillator locations, Mr Fahy confirmed that a document had been produced showing these and has been distributed to Health & Safety Co-ordinators and uploaded to the University website.

Re Serious Incident Policy Mr Fahy informed members that this is currently at draft stage following consultation with relevant colleagues during the summer. The Chair asked Mr Fahy to bring the draft policy to the next meeting of the committee.

ACTION: Mr Fahy to bring draft policy to next meeting, as above.

4. Health & Safety Annual Report

Members had received the Health & Safety Annual Report (CHS 273). Mr Fahy informed members that a total number of 70 incidents were reported during the academic year 2022-23. Mr Fahy added that the average number of incidents from statistics over the past 10-year period and excluding pandemic affected years is 77 incidents. Mr Fahy drew members' attention to the 'Slip, Trip and Fall' numbers for Plas Caerdeon and informed members that the centre's car park has been resurfaced to reduce risk in this area. Mr Fahy drew members' attention to the Health & Safety Objectives for the 2023-24 academic year (Review University Wellbeing policies (Continued), Review university emergency planning and related procedures, and Establish a Health and Safety audit programme across all university areas).

5. Statement on RAAC

Members had received the Statement on RAAC (CHS 274). The Chair informed members that the Estates team has extensive knowledge of the University's buildings and has never found evidence of RAAC being present. For further

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independent assurance, unrelatedly the University had commissioned an estate wide building condition survey within the last year as part of its quinquennial estate assessment. This was to provide a benchmark for building condition generally and also to inform a 5-year costed maintenance plan. The survey was conducted by Rider Levett Bucknall (RLB) who are an RICS Regulated surveying practice. The building condition survey did not identify any RAAC. The Chair added that a further information gathering exercise by RBL has been instructed by the University to fully rule out the potential for RAAC in any of our buildings. Ms Beecroft assured members that the University will undertake further investigations / surveys should RBL advise any further work is required to provide complete assurance.

6. Covid Protocol

Members had received the updated Covid Protocol (CHS 275). The Chair informed members that the University is following current NHS guidance in relation to Covid following the pandemic. The Chair added that staff are advised to remain at home for five days following a positive Covid-19 test. Mr Ryan requested that the wording of this section be clarified to state 'five days from an initial positive test'. The Chair undertook to make this change.

ACTION: Chair to update wording, as above.

The Chair informed members that protective screens have been removed from catering and commercial outlets, at the request of staff in those areas. The Chair added that the screens are currently in storage and can be re-installed should the need arise.

Professor Cousins raised the issue of ventilation in teaching rooms, with particular reference to SSA007. Mr Wells raised the same issue in relation to HCA 103-106. Mr Kerry undertook to look into these.

Action: Mr Kerry to look into ventilation issues, as above.

7. Serious Fire Update

Members had received the report on the recent fire at one of the University's houses on Taggart Avenue (CHS276). Mr Fahy informed members that the fire had emanated from a Triton shower unit, adding that Triton has removed the unit in order to conduct its own investigation. Mr Fahy informed members that this is the only such model of shower in any University property. The Chair assured members that all emergency protocols were correctly followed during the incident.

8. Union Items

Dr Pennington raised the issue of academic colleagues being required to make telephone calls to non-attending students, informing members that this was having an impact on some colleagues' mental health. Dr Pennington suggested

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that email would be a more effective means of contact with non-attending students. The Chair undertook to discuss this with Dr Haughan.

ACTION: Chair to contact Dr Haughan, as above.

9. Student Support

Members had received the report from Student Support (CHS 276a). Mr Ryan informed members that a total of 354 students accessed counselling support during the 2022/23 academic year, a drop of eight percent compared to the previous year (385 students). 1,242 counselling appointments were delivered, a reduction of 14 percent, compared to 2021/22 (1,442). Of the 354 students who accessed counselling support during the previous academic year, 96 percent were retained in their studies. Mr Ryan added that there were 18 known incidents of significant/life threatening self-harm during the 2022/23 academic year, involving a total of 16 students. This is a significant decrease of more than half (56%) when compared to the number of incidents known to have occurred during 2021/22. The number of students involved in such incidents also dropped significantly (55%) when compared to the number involved during the previous year (36). Ms Haines informed members that the role of Senior Resident Tutor has been retitled Wellbeing Assistant, with a greater emphasis on student wellbeing.

10. Legal Update

Members had received the Legal Update (CHS 277). Mr Wells informed members that a new Radiation Protection Advisor has been appointed in relation to radiation-related equipment in Health Sciences.

11. Student Safety Issues

Ms Haines informed members that the University is currently working with Merseyside police in relation to illegal drug use among the student population. Ms Haines suggested that the University's night-time security measures be reviewed following a recent incident where unauthorised guests accessed the campus at night, culminating in the police being called.

12. AOB

Ms Lewin informed members that a new People Strategy is currently in the process of being drafted, adding that volunteers will be requested for the role of Mental Health & Wellbeing Champions.