

# CONFIRMED

## LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

### HEALTH & SAFETY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021

**PRESENT:** Ms S Beecroft (in the Chair), Mr M Beecroft, Mr A Catterall, Dr R Cousins, Mr J Ellison, Mr B Grice, Mr D Kerry, Dr J Lux, Ms G Mair, Ms R McManniman, Mr D Owen, Mr J Ryan

**Apologies:** Dr W Bignold, Prof S Davismoon

**Secretariat:** Mr M Jones

#### 1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members had received unconfirmed minutes of the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020 (CHS 212). The minutes were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

#### 2. Matters Arising

- (i) Agenda items from previous meeting

Mr Jones confirmed that he would add these to the agenda for the next meeting.

- (ii) Overarching risk assessment

The Chair informed members that this would be discussed later in the agenda.

- (iii) Working from home

The Chair confirmed that this had been discussed at the COVID 19 Health & Safety meeting.

- (iv) Fire Safety Policy

Mr Ellison confirmed that the Fire Safety Policy has been updated as requested.

- (v) Student attendance

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The Chair informed members that so far it has not been possible to link records of students self-isolating with attendance registers.

### 3. COVID 19 Update

#### (i) Update on latest position

The Chair informed members that as of the date of the meeting (16<sup>th</sup> February 2021) there were 193.8 cases per 100k in Liverpool, and that  $R = 0.7-0.9$ . The Chair added that the University is awaiting guidance from the government as to when a return to campus will be possible. The Chair informed members that resident students have been given an eight week rent rebate as a good will gesture in recognition of the national lockdown, adding that around 300 students are currently in residence on the University's campuses. The Chair informed members that only essential staff members are currently on campus.

#### (ii) Infections on and off campus

Members had received the updated Covid Data Dashboard (CHS 213). The Chair informed members that data from the University's Covid team shows that there are currently no cases among academic or support staff, while one resident student and one non-resident student have tested positive. Mr Catterall added that in cases where members of academic staff have tested positive for COVID 19 the infection was not acquired on campus.

The Chair informed members that the University has put in place three tests which will determine when the return to campus is made: (i)  $R$  must be below 1. (ii) Local infection rates must be low, (iii) There must be no major outbreaks on campus. Re (ii) Dr Lux asked whether it would be possible to clarify what rate of infection would be classed as 'low'. Mr Catterall informed members that the University took responsibility for determining this, with which Dr Lux concurred. The Chair added that it would be difficult to state an exact number as the figure in question would vary on a daily basis. Dr Lux informed members that UCU's position is that no in-person teaching should take place while cases are above 50 per 100k, adding that some teaching could return when they are below this number, with a fuller return possible when cases are below 10 per 100k. Mr Catterall asked whether this was the position of UCU nationally, or of the Liverpool Hope University branch. Dr Lux confirmed that the latter was the case. Mr Catterall asked where the data behind this position was sourced from. Dr Lux replied that sources in the USA and Germany had been used.

#### (iii) Overarching Risk Assessment

Members had received the updated Overarching Risk Assessment (CHS 214). Dr Lux noted the progress made on the document, while raising concerns on behalf of UCU in relation to strategies for dealing with new variants of the virus and around distance between student desks. Dr Lux added that UCU would welcome

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a broader risk assessment document in relation to working from home, in which mental health and stress were given greater prominence. Mr Catterall thanked Dr Lux, UCU and Unison for their participation in the extensive consultation which had taken place in creating the overarching risk assessment. Dr Cousins said she had no issues to raise in relation to the overarching risk assessment and asked for clarity in relation to which member(s) of the University community are owners of each risk. The Chair undertook to look into this.

**ACTION: Chair to assign ownership of each risk, as above.**

### (iv) Student testing/vaccination centre

Ms Mair informed members that resident students at Hope Park, Creative Campus and Aigburth are tested twice a week, adding that the uptake for testing is improving weekly. Ms Mair added that the majority of staff working on campus are accessing testing on a weekly basis. Ms Mair informed members that the testing will be available until 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 at the earliest. Mr Ellison informed members that Hope Park Sports will become a community vaccination centre as of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021, adding that this will necessitate the relocation of the Hope Park testing centre, which is currently situated on the Hope Park Sports mezzanine.

## 4. Health & Safety Report 2019/20

Members had received the Health & Safety Report 2019/20 (CHS 218). Ms McManniman informed members that there were 62 reported accidents and incidents on University premises during 2019-20. There were 37 sports related accidents which were recorded separately to the overall accident figures. Ms McManniman informed members that there were two accidents considered serious enough to require a report to the regulator under the RIDDOR regulations. Both accidents were formally investigated and relevant managers briefed accordingly. Dr Lux asked whether aggregate data was available for work related stress illnesses. Mr Catterall informed members that this data is monitored on a regular basis, adding that he provides quarterly and annual reports to Staffing Committee. Mr Catterall informed members that no member of academic staff was absent with work related stress in the first quarter of the academic year, adding that around seven stress risk assessments are in place to support staff currently in work. Mr Catterall undertook to forward Dr Lux headline information in relation to this.

**ACTION: Mr Catterall to send Dr Lux information, as above.**

## 5. Fire Safety Performance Report 2019/20

Members had received the Fire Safety Performance Report 2019/20 (CHS 219). Ms McManniman informed members that there were no fires reported in a University building during the 2019-20 academic year. There were 35 activations

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of the fire alarm recorded in a University building during 2019-20, continuing the overall decline in the number of activations. Ms McManniman added that during 2019-20 this decline is likely attributable to the reduction in staff and students on campus due to the restrictions imposed in light of the pandemic. Mr Catterall thanked Ms McManniman and the Safety Co-ordinators for their work and the success they have achieved in this area.

### **6. Health & Safety Action Plan 2020/21**

Members had received the Health & Safety Action Plan 2020/21 (CHS 220). Ms McManniman informed members that the action plan's focus is on making the University's campuses Covid-secure. Dr Lux requested an update on the working from home risk assessment. Ms McManniman informed members that she is currently reviewing the document in question. Dr Lux requested that a review of the Work Related Stress Policy also be included in the action plan. Ms McManniman responded that this might not be possible within the timeframe of the next 2-3 months but undertook to look into this.

### **7. Student Safety Issues**

The Chair presented an update submitted by Dr Bignold, informing members that the Residential Life team continues to contact residential students who are isolating on a daily basis for well-being checks. Senior Resident Tutors are making fortnightly welfare phone calls to all resident students who remain at home. The SRTs have supported 'lone' students in flats with support bubbles to aid mental health.

Mr Ryan informed members that the Mental Health & Counselling teams have seen a slight reduction in students accessing services and suggested this may be attributable to the majority of students being at home. Mr Ryan added that the average waiting time from initial contact to first appointment is seven days. Mr Ryan informed members that the average waiting time between initial appointment to starting counselling is two weeks. Mr Ryan informed members that in the current academic year the service has provided a greater number of appointments to fewer students, adding that non-attendance at appointments has reduced by 15%. In relation to Mental Health appointments Mr Ryan informed members that the number of students accessing the service has fallen by c.14% while the number of sessions delivered has increased by 26%.

### **8. Departmental Updates**

Mr Kerry informed members that Estates have reduced the number of colleagues working on site, adding that Domestic Services now clean halls of residence three days per week rather than five, as was the case previously.