

Department of Biology Infrastructure Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2nd March 2011

Present: D Cartwright, A Collingwood, S Haddock, D Nelson, C Abbott, L Hudson, D Nelmes, S Dwyer (Secretary), M Bentley, S Howarth, N Charlton, A Haigh

Apologies: Phil Roberts, J Whyman

IC11/016 Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd February 2011

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as written

IC11/017 Matters arising

Meeting rooms [IC11/008]

DC has spoken with Stuart Priest who is looking into the possibility of automatically transferring the room booking data to estates so that the heating can be planned for the rooms. This is currently done manually on a weekly basis.

Service Level Agreements [IC11/008 iv]

- i It was noted that cleaning in some areas of the department is still not satisfactory. The cover provided for absent cleaners is also not acceptable and does not comply with the SLA; DC to discuss with JW. If issues are not resolved then the matter will be raised at the next Biology Safety Committee. Floor cleaning in laboratory areas was discussed; D Nelson to speak to lab staff about their expectations of cleaning. It was noted that there is some responsibility on the Researchers to clean up any spills as soon as they occur. It was also acknowledged that it would be very difficult to clean some laboratory floors due to the amount of boxes/equipment stored beneath the benches. **Action: DC/DN**
- ii Infrastructure to start a cleaning audit to provide data for the next Safety Committee. **Action: DC/LH**

Recent Safety Inspections [IC11/009 b]

Bench top autoclaves have an annual insurance inspection. At this time the autoclaves are labelled to say they have been checked, and records have been updated.

Use of pressure cookers [IC11/009 c]

D Nelson has checked the pressure cooker mentioned - it is not used very often and is operated using a hot plate which is on a 45 minute timer for shut down. DN believes the risk of problems with this equipment is minimal because of automatic shut off.

Liquid nitrogen [IC11/009 e]

Ongoing – LH / AC to set reminders in their calendars

Action: LH/AC

Environmental Performance [IC11/010 c]

Supplies and Goods Services now have a can recycling bin.

Parking for Contractors [IC11/011]

Discussed later in the minutes

Statutory and Compliance Training [IC11/012 b]

LH has spoken with HR and is waiting for a date for the face-to-face Diversity training.

Issues with the Onity Security System [IC11/013]

DC has raised the problems with the Onity Security system with J Meacock, he has been briefed by Bailey Oliver (Security manager). We await further developments.

Additional Bank Holidays [IC11/014]

The additional bank holiday is on the Onity system as a bank holiday, this means the doors will be on bank holiday status. SH to monitor the situation nearer the time to see if any teaching time is booked and access required.

Any other business [IC11/015 a]

Feedback from Resource board meeting: where it says car park G should read D, and where it says F should say G.

IC11/018 Safety

D Nelson stated that he will be undertaking a schedule of safety inspections; he asked that all sections ensure they have appropriate up to date risk assessments in place before his visits. **Action: All**

IC11/019 Environmental Performance

CA gave an explanation of the environmental issues facing Horticulture and what steps were being taken to combat them.

Supplementary lighting and heating represent the major part of energy use in the glasshouses. The design of the supplementary lighting installations took account of researchers concerns that light would be the limiting factor during the winter months. Thus each zone of P Block glasshouse was fitted with 50 400 watt high pressure sodium lamps to maximize supplementary light levels. However, in practice it has been found that the number of lamps can be reduced to 25 per zone using single rows with alternative lamps off without impacting on plant growth rates. Further energy savings have been made this winter by setting the sensor measuring outside radiation levels from over 600 to 400 μ moles thus reducing the lights on period without compromising plant quality. Arabidopsis continues to be the most widely grown plant; experience shows that this plant can be successfully grown in controlled environments with light levels as low as 150 μ moles. However, continuous monitoring of plant growth rates is necessary to ensure that supplementary light levels in the glasshouse environment are sufficient for the range of species currently being grown. It is difficult to quantify the reduction in energy use; however it is bound to be significant. The installation of additional thermal screens in P Block glasshouse corridor contribute to the reduction of heat loss. Heating set points are under constant review to ensure that temperatures do not exceed the required minimum.

Energy savings have also been made in the controlled environment facilities by re- programming plant growth cabinets and rooms to take advantage of the lower electricity tariff. Phasing out some of the older high energy use cabinets such as Conviron is currently being implemented as these are high energy users. Future procurement policy will take account of specific User requirements asking "do we really need high specification units?" Can a lower specification unit with lower energy use meet operational requirements? Manufacturers do not energy rate controlled environment cabinets. CA plans to lobby them to do this. Further operational savings can be made by requesting multiple use of cabinets when environmental conditions allow and ensuring lighting and temperature set points are appropriate for the work being undertaken.

D Nelmes to speak at the next meeting.

Action: DNelmes

IC11/020 Parking for Contractors

An incident where some contractors were ticketed for parking outside P Block led to some embarrassment for the department. This prompted a request for a parking bay to be marked up for Engineers visiting site in the turning area outside P block. There was a discussion around how this would be policed to allow only certain engineers and not everyone; LH to enquire about this. It was suggested that if a separate bay is not possible then contractors should be advised to leave a note in the window of their vehicles with their mobile phone number so any parking attendants can speak to them. **Action: LH**

Post-meeting note: LH has spoken to Bailey Oliver in charge of parking, Security will not allow a parking space in that area as it would be difficult to police and could lead to additional cars parking alongside. Access is

essential for emergency vehicles at all times. This would also be an exception to the University policy. An alternative solution would be:

- 5 minute parking - Ask contractors to drop off equipment / deliveries place card in vehicle with contact details
- Half day or more - For example when we install the autoclave, contact security and make them aware of the situation who will pass on request to car parking attendant (he checks in with Security Services everyday).

IC11/021 Annual inspection of freezer alarms

A question was raised as to whether all minus 80 freezers need to have their alarms tested. There are currently 53 -80 freezers in the department so if all of them need to be tested it would be a big undertaking; LH to investigate if there is a procedure for testing the alarms and which freezers need to be tested. **Action: LH**

IC11/022 External Caterers

The University has a system of requesting information from external caterers who wish to be a University supplier; if the caterer conforms to the university standards they can become an approved caterer. The forms are issued every 2 years, this is about to happen again at Easter. Recently an unapproved caterer was used within the department. The University H&S guidelines state that if an incident such as an outbreak of food poisoning occurred then it would be the employee who ordered the food who would be held personally responsible. We need to ensure that staff members are aware of these facts. It was suggested that all admin staff could be emailed and it could be raised at the Admin forum. AC is going to request purchasing department to flag up any external catering requests and ask the University to close all accounts on Agresso of unapproved catering suppliers. **Action: AC/DC**

IC11/023 DSE Equipment Funding

The department has been asked for funding for a footrest. Although the centre funds higher value equipment it is accepted that the department should fund low value equipment such as foot rests. It was suggested that the department will pay for a basic model of relevant DSE equipment and any upgrades should be paid for by the section making the request.

IC11/024 Any other business

- A discussion took place regarding the area in between the teaching block and the Atrium. NC noted that there is no signage to indicate emergency egress – this is particularly important after 6pm when non-biology students may leave A corridor and not be able to enter the Atrium. She also noted that there is no lighting in this area. It is believed that a gate is going to be placed in this area as part of the fire improvement works. SH to investigate what the plans are for the gate and LH to look in to proper signage and lighting for this area. **Action: SH/LH**
- LH noted that automatic doors will be put on either end of the teaching corridors and the Atrium exit nearest teaching. The asbestos from the teaching corridor is also going to be removed. LH is trying to get an upgrade to the doors to teaching. **Action: LH**

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6th April 2011, 2.15pm, room M049