

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*
DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY

Resources Board
Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 31 January 2008

Present: Dawn Cartwright (DC), Lorna Evans (LE), Peter Hogarth (PJH), Ian Jennings (IJ), David Nelson (DN), John Pillmoor (JBP), Janina Pirozek (JCP), Duncan Rotherham (DR)
Apologies: Peter Crosby, David Hammond (DH), Jim Hoggett (JGH)
In Attendance: Andrea Johnson (AJJ)

08/001 Minutes of the meeting of 29 November 2007 were agreed.

08/002 Matters Arising from Resources Board, 29 November 2007

(i) *07/075 (viii) Lecture theatre/seminar room problems*

DC reported that she had sent out a communication about the new mail collection times.

It was noted that the situation relating to cleaning had improved. A Team Leader has now been appointed and is about to start although recruitment is still underway for a Supervisor, and there are other cleaning vacancies still to be filled. It was anticipated that the Cleaning Supervisor appointment would mitigate some of the problems within Biology. Furthermore the Rapid Response Team is now operational and this too should ease problems.

(ii) *07/084 Asbestos Update*

The issue had been raised at a Departmental Consultation meeting. No-one had raised any specific queries and those present had been informed of the current situation.

(iii) *07/086 Lighting in the Atrium*

It had previously been agreed that an override be provided so that lighting in the atrium could be switched on when need be. Although this has been chased, there has been some difficulty in trying to work out the wiring, and this is still ongoing.

On the recent UCAS day, although it had been sunny outside, a request had been received to improve the lighting in the atrium and it had ultimately been necessary for staff to use ladders to resolve the situation. It was noted that whilst the intention is that adequate lighting would normally be provided naturally on bright days without recourse to an override switch, in instances like the UCAS visit days when there is a considerable quantity of reading material available in the atrium, good lighting is vital. However it was anticipated that by the next UCAS day the override switch would be in place.

(iv) *07/088 Recycling*

DC advised that at present, the Department was still waiting to see if the University has got funding to expand the waste recycling scheme to Departments.

(v) *07/089 Phones in Lifts*

DC reported that the issue is still ongoing and that she intended to spend some time looking at the issue prior to the next Estates meeting in February. Whilst alarms are in place in the lifts it was noted that people stuck in lifts needed to be able to communicate both ways with people on the outside in the event of an emergency.

08/003 Matters Arising from Infrastructure Committee, 5 December 2007 & 7 January 2008**(i) IC7/061 Identification of areas for recycling bins**

It was queried whether it would be possible to have paper recycling bins in offices that were big enough to have their own ones, so staff within an office space could effectively have one bin for waste paper and one bin for everything else. Staff with such a facility would then need to ensure that they periodically transferred the contents of their paper bins to the larger recycling bins for collection by the University.

Accordingly, it was suggested that paper bins could be purchased as an initiative to encourage and educate staff to recycle more paper than is presently being done, or alternatively to use some other receptacle for the recycling of paper such as photocopying paper boxes. DC agreed to discuss the issue further with Jo Hossell.

DC

It was further noted that the use of double-sided printers would further reduce paper wastage, particularly as more and more documents are sent via email and the onus is on the recipient to print out the documents. However, it is uncommon for printers to be replaced before they break down, and it is likely to be only then that a double-sided printer would be purchased to replace a standard one.

08/004 Matters Arising from Safety Committee, 15 November 2007**(i) Safety Committee Attendance**

It was noted that attendance was not particularly high, and DN advised that the Committee were trying to encourage better attendance.

(ii) B.S.C.07/18.3 Loss of radiation source

DC confirmed that the University report will be changed so that it more accurately reflects the situation. It was acknowledged that, in light of the recent media coverage, it would have been beneficial if the timeframe dedicated to revising the report had been given greater priority, as both the original and accurately revised version would then have been made available under the Freedom of Information Act.

08/005 Matters Arising from Environmental Performance Group, 28 November 2007**(i) EPG 13/07 Biology Department Energy Manager**

It was noted that Jo Hossell is now in post and is actively pursuing ongoing issues with Willy Hoedeman.

08/006 Biology/Estates Group

DC queried whether Resources Board was an appropriate group for Biology/Estates Group to report to. Currently the Biology/Estates Group meets 3-4 times a year and at present it does not report to any other committee.

It was debated whether Resources Board would be the most appropriate group to receive the Biology/Estates Group minutes. There may be some resource implications arising from the Group, but some of the content may not be compatible with the original remit of Resources Board. It was acknowledged that the remit of Resources Board has evolved over the years and it now deals with some Operational issues.

It was proposed that DC would ask Strategy Group for advice, including the Terms of Reference of Resource Board as an Agenda item for the next meeting. The Terms of Reference will be discussed again at the next meeting of Resources Board.

DC

08/007 Contractors - authorisation to work forms

The University have established a new management document on the control of contractors, and the Department has a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of any contractors working in the Department with particular reference to hazards which they may be exposed to. In future this will include anyone working in the Department, including service engineers.

The paperwork that has been used to control this work has now been trialled for four months and appears to be working. However, it was noted that this will have consequences in terms of time as whoever has called in the engineer will need to ensure that the appropriate paperwork is completed.

08/008 Contractors - insurance

Before the Department permits any company to carry out work in the Department it is now the responsibility of the person calling the company in to ensure that the company holds both public liability insurance and employer's liability insurance for a minimum of £5,000,000. The appropriate documents need to be seen before any work is started, and Rebecca Regan will be keeping a database to track this. It was noted that there are at least 44 companies who perform services for the Department.

It was noted that both the new authorisation to work system and the requirements relating to insurance will have a time resource – both for the Infrastructure team and also PIs who call contractors and service engineers into the Department and training will need to be put in place.

DC would discuss documentation further with JBP and then Infrastructure Committee will look at the issue in detail including phrasing regarding 'approval' on the authorisation to work form. In some cases approval of a method statement would need to be passed on – for example to the Health and Safety Central Office on campus. It was suggested that once the documentation is finalised, lunch time briefing sessions could be held to update staff, and that guidance notes should be written for PIs and others. DC agreed to progress this accordingly.

DC/JBP**08/009 Fire Safety Works**

The fire safety works have been delayed and Keith Lilly has asked the Department to put in risk assessments and appropriate procedures for areas of the Department that are seen to be at risk until the work is done. The Department has prioritised the areas in which people cannot hear the fire alarm, and Sylvia Haddock is assessing these at present. Restrictions imposed may involve only using certain rooms when other people are around and able to check the room if there is a fire alarm.

It was noted that whilst there is a tender for the fire safety works, this has not yet been signed.

08/010 Problems with fire alarm tests disrupting teaching

The fire alarms in lecture theatres have for some time been sounded for about six rings when tested. This increased length of test time was due to a change in contractor staffing, and over-zealous new staff. The ring time has now been reduced to two rings.

It was noted that the most convenient time for the alarm to be tested was 10 minutes past the hour, and DC would convey this to Estates.

DC**08/011 Health and Safety Audit**

DC reported that a Health and Safety audit is due to take place and the week most likely for this to commence is the week beginning 4th February.

It was noted that this was a University-wide programme with the aim of covering every department every 2 years. People within the Department may be talked to as part of the audit and it was felt that it was appropriate to alert members of the Department to the fact that this will be happening. DC agreed to communicate this information round the Department via the weekly bulletin accordingly.

DC**08/012 External stores improvement works**

Currently there is a covered area outside the main Stores building which the intention is to enclose to reduce the cold coming into Stores. Work has been ongoing on the issue for about 6 months and DC had received a provisional quote of £9,000 plus VAT, thus a total figure of in excess of £10,000.

Funding will come from Fisher "points". Fisher operate a points-based system whereby the Department is awarded points every time an order is submitted, and the intention is that these points will be used to improve Stores. Points have previously been used to contribute towards the new Stores counter, and there are now approximately £6,400 worth of points that can be used to improve the external area of Stores. Any excess cost will come from DC's admin budget. It was agreed by Resources Board that this would be a good use of the Fisher points as all members of the Department use Stores services at one time or another.

08/013 Air Conditioning in the Protein Production labs

JBP reported that the protein production labs suffer from excessive temperature and humidity and improved air conditioning needs to be installed to cope with the range of equipment now in situ in the labs. It will cost approximately £13,000 to install a system and connect it up with the other main system. Alternatively a "bolt-on" system can be installed for about £5,000.

Whilst it was acknowledged that the air conditioning provided for the room was never ideal, the use of the room has evolved so more equipment is in place than originally envisaged. There is disparity between the laboratories, but it is not known whether the Department is in a position to ask the original building contractors to undertake work free of charge to solve the problem as this will be dependant on what it was stated would be put in the rooms on the original specification.

It was noted that the principle that is used with other groups is that if air conditioning is needed for a particular piece of equipment used by that group, then the cost of installing the air conditioning is put back to that group. However, if air conditioning is required more because of accumulative equipment rather than one particular piece, it may be possible to consider split funding. There is also the argument that if the air conditioning has never been ideal, some contribution should be considered.

JBP agreed to talk to Jo Hossell to see what the differences would be in energy consumption in the future between the £13,000 air conditioning option and the £5,000 one. It was agreed that the findings should be brought back to Resources Board, along with details of what was stated on the original room specification.

JBP**08/014 Security in the Stores yard and cycle shed**

DC reported that there is no CCTV coverage in either the Stores yard or the cycle shed area, and that she has asked for quotes for installing CCTV cameras in both areas. It was noted that the zone could be asked to contribute financially, particularly in relation to the cycle shed area.

It was discussed whether it would be preferable to have the areas enclosed instead (with onity card access required), as this would likely to be more of a preventative than CCTV cameras. DC agreed to look into the possibility and bring any findings to Resources Board in due course.

DC

08/015 Car parking – hanger permits

DC had received a request for the hanger permit situation to be looked at again. Originally, when no limits had been applied, the Department had issued 920 permits over a 7 month period. Tightening up the categories of those eligible for permits had vastly reduced this, but there had been issues with some research groups who had benefactors coming to visit who had needed to use the pay and display car park actually being able to find spaces when they visited.

It was acknowledged with the loss of the pay and display car park near Wentworth in summer, it will be increasingly hard for visitors to find parking spaces close to the Department. It was suggested that turning all car parks on campus to pay and display ones may make it easier for visitors to find spaces later on in the day (for example when staff who work part time have left), and DC would check with Ken Batten at the next CII working group meeting in February to see whether there were any proposals in place to turn one or more of the other car parks on campus into pay and display ones to compensate for the loss of the one near Wentworth. It was suggested that the University look at car parking off campus with a bus into the site e.g. Grimston bar car park with the Park and ride bus coming through the University grounds.

DC**08/016 Disruption due to Drainage Work**

DC reported that there is anticipated to be considerable disruption when the final part of the drainage work on the old Bleachfield site is completed. The Department will be affected as pile driving will be necessary. An alternative to this will be to lay the drains along the edge of the lake, pushing the bank out. It will not be possible for the work to be done before summer, and it was hoped that the drains round Biology will not cause problems in the interim.

08/017 IIU Development

Concern was expressed whether the Resources Board representative who attends the Working Group for the IIU development was attending the right Group. It was suggested that decisions may be being made by the Steering Group which would have consequences for Biology, and at which there isn't a Resources Board representative present.

It was acknowledged that Biology's involvement hinged on how the building was funded. If it was to be a HYMS building funded purely by HYMS, then there shouldn't be any consequences for Biology staffing or IT resources, etc as such issues would fall under the HYMS department rather than Biology (i.e new staff employed to work in the new building would be HYMS staff rather than Biology staff).

If, however, the Building is to be wholly or partly counted as Biology then Biology needs to be involved in all decision making processes. The areas that Biology would particularly need to be involved with prior to any decision making would be IT, personnel, supplies, and Health & Safety (though there would be other issues to sort out such as mail delivery/collection, etc).

DC agreed to investigate the situation further and report back in due course.

DC**08/018 Date of next meeting:** Thursday 21 February 2008 in B/K/126 at 9.00am.