

Minute of the meeting of the Sustainability Working Group (SWG)

5 October 2022 via Zoom

Attending: David Duncan (DD) (Chair), Jaime Toney (JT), Stewart Miller (SM), Fabrice Renaud (FR), Ian Campbell (IC), Peter Craig (PC), Josephine Gallagher, Hilda De Groot, Euan Smith
GUEST Co-ordinators - Molly Davison,

SRC - Katie Fish (VP Activities)

Apologies: Gioia Falcone, Minty Donald, Rinna Vare (SRC President), Hailie Pentleton (VP Student Welfare), Robert Garnish, Ross Barker, Fan Henry (GUEST), Alasdair Thomson (AT), Kelum Gamage, Barry Morton, Laila Elaasar

Attending: Rhona Little (Clerk)

1 **Minute**

The Minute of the meeting of 3 August 2022 was approved

2. **Matters Arising**

2.1 Sustainability ranking

Euan Smith (ES) updated the group on the STG report; a draft will be taken to the SMG Sub-Group.

2.2 Bid for levelling up impact accelerator

JT informed the group that this bid comes on the back of the Gallant City Wide partnership as CfSS have been approached by a number of businesses around the River Clyde who would like to be involved at the early stages in the Council's city-wide energy system.

2.3 Sustainability Team

Estates are ready to launch a new sustainability team consisting of a new Director, two Development Managers and a Project Coordinator alongside various members of the existing team. The Primary project is the Heat Transfer Project with Scottish Water.

3. **Tree Planting Update – Garscube and Cochno Farm**

Woodland Creation Scheme at Cochno Farm

There is an agreement to plant approximately 15 hectares of native broad leaf trees on the farm estate and we have been awarded £125K from Scottish Forestry to proceed with this project. Green Action Trust have pulled together detailed planting plans and specifications for the work which will hopefully take place over this winter.

The Tiny Forest Project

Funding has been received from Queens Canopy Project which will allow planting of a tiny forest on the Garscube Estate. Tiny forests are tennis court-sized pieces of land densely planted out with shrubs and trees in a tightly packed area. A provisional planting date of 16 November is planned subject to soil sampling which will be done in the interim.

The Convenor of Court has a particular interest in farms and rural areas and has asked the Principal to develop a plan for Cochno Farm.

To note that Professor Gioia Falcone had Masters' students working at Cochno and has been invited to provide an update to the SWG

Action: Gioia Falcone

4. Carbon Footprint Data Summary for 2021/22

A summary paper had been circulated for 2021/22 which indicated that overall emissions have increased on the previous year by about 9000 tones. The biggest increase is travel related as we emerge from pandemic restrictions with a resumption in air travel and commuting travel as staff and students return to the campuses. Gas consumption has reduced along with increased electricity consumption although this is likely due to reduced operation of the CHP engine over the last 2 years. CHP was out of action for a while last year and not all buildings were fully occupied. It does indicate how moving away from the combined heating power plant significantly affects our carbon and one of the plans in our Carbon Management Plan is to switch that off before 2030.

Based on a travel survey carried out earlier in the year, about 38-40% of staff are still working from home. We use a standard home working carbon impact supplied by Scottish government when data is completed on the data portal to produce the figures in the summary.

In terms of projecting figures for next year this would be very difficult, but the prediction would be an increase again because of increased business travel.

It is important to understand travel numbers and where they come from and to ensure that purchasing card and corporate card spend via Selective Travel have been captured in the data.

It is hoped that travel would not increase again to pre-pandemic levels and that new working practices will help to remove the need for some business travel.

Although not 100% accurate the group agreed that these figures were helpful as they give an idea of progress and where we need to focus to make big differences to the CMP.

5. Business Travel Emissions Reporting

Viola Retzlaff (VR), Travel and Transport Co-ordinator, working with Stantec, has published webpages that give staff and student some background around the impact of business travel and directs them to a file to look at data in more detail. The webpage is:

<https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/sustainability/businesstravelreporting/>

Distribution of this information has already started with discussions at the Senior Leaders Forum and School Administration Forum. The data should be monitored on a six-monthly basis but in a way that does not target individuals but make everybody feel they have a contribution to make.

Many schools have been in touch with the CfSS as either they have a sustainability committee or a sustainability champion and they would be interested to see the reports.

At the moment there is no ban on air travel to London but the University would encourage use of alternative means of transport. We will revisit the wording relating to the Selective Travel Hub.

Action: VR to draft a communication to introduce this and highlight its importance.

Action: it was proposed that the following should take this information forward to Schools - Peter Craig (MVLs), Fabrice Renaud (CoSS), Gioia Falcone (CoSE), Minty Donald (Arts), David Duncan/Ian Campbell/Hilda de Groot (US).

6. **GUEST Update**

The whole team is now into its third month of working. At present it is developing a campaign called Fossil Fuel Free Careers to work with the University's Career system. This is aimed at promoting more sustainability focussed careers.

Walk2COP27 is a mass participation and engagement initiative on Climate Change, based around a virtual journey from COP26 in Glasgow to COP27 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt; GUSA are involved and all the coaches and sports teams have received an information pack on how to make up a team. GUEST hope to collaborate with the SRC to make an SRC team, a community team and get UoG involved as much as possible. The campaign ends on 7th November when COP27 begins.

Promotors are working on smaller projects such as the bike hub, climate cafes hosted in the Hunterian Museum and a project in collaboration with student accommodation which aims to save about 200 items from landfill by giving them out free to other students. GUEST will be at the SRC open day on 22 October and a Global Development Congress Stand is coming up at the beginning of November. In general, all is going well and promotors are very passionate and engaged.

DD thanked Molly for the update.

7. **Centre for Sustainable Solutions Update**

CfSS hosted a Greening the ARC Hackathon looking at novel solutions for PhD students to put forward solutions to how we green the ARC. The solutions have been judged and passed on to the Building Manager in the ARC. An Away Day is planned to set the scene and to look at successes the CfSS has had and what other opportunities around sustainability there are for the Centre to take forward. Another green recovery dialogue in collaboration with GCC focused on food systems, the food plan, food security and creating urban farms within the city. On education, CfSS continues to work with FutureLearn releasing two MOOCs in August, October and January and discussions are ongoing with Learning Innovation Services about delivering the first online Sustainability Degree on their platform. This has allowed CfSS to hire an Education Officer to help develop the MOOCs until December 2023.

The Centre will continue to run the Council's upskilling courses and quite a few participating companies have asked for bespoke courses to be delivered.

Collaborating with GCC and ICLEI (a global network of international cities, local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development) the CfSS has set up an Urban by Nature Scottish hub which was launched during climate week.

An update on sustainable labs programme suggests we now have 35 LEAF labs across the university, with 8 silver awards and 13 bronze awards. There continues to be a weekly demand for the online training programme across both staff and students. The lab has developed a calculator, still in its pilot phase, where labs can see what actual savings are.

SWG3, an events venue located near the Clydeside, have been in touch as they are taking forward several projects around construction and interactions with communities. As UoG student housing is very close to the venue, conversations are taking place about how the University might get involved with some of these projects.

8. **Engaging staff with respect to sustainability**

A discussion followed about whether enough is being done to engage staff. Some schools have sustainability champions and sustainability committees but are there particular

initiatives we could engage staff in which might encourage collaboration on projects. We might also develop a competitive element or create another structure that engages staff on a voluntary basis across the Institution.

It was noted that quite a lot is done already through the sustainability webpages and sustainability twitter feed. The GUEST team have a big social media presence and are very active on Facebook and Instagram. GUEST also have lots of outreach events throughout the year with regular week-in week-out events like the bike hub and the gardening sessions, and bigger one-off events like Go Green week which they run in conjunction with other Universities. A lot of work is done through CfSS and S-labs but they have a limited resources and are pulled in a lot of different directions. If the idea is to do something more structured in Schools and Colleges, we would need to think carefully about how to do this.

It would be good to encourage committees and champions in every school. If we do more it needs to be evidence based and we should test whether it is effective.

We are currently in the process of setting up a sustainability forum that would be co-led by the Green New Deal coalition or by the SRC. Communications are challenging but we need to reach out to everybody with this agenda.

Competitions around campus might be a fun way to engage staff and students. Funding has been received by researchers from the Royal Society of Edinburgh to create a network around filming sustainably in Scotland and they have said they would be happy to help with anything we need so perhaps we would talk to them about a video competition.

A sustainability committee will be set up in the School of Interdisciplinary Studies in the new year.

External Relations have a sustainability working group and are doing things small scale like a monthly email, organising a green event and trying to come up with an sustainable activity for an away day. These are small things, but they do influence people.

The GUEST team from last year came up with a more structured version of the climate café and would like to look at having an in-person forum to encourage staff and students on a monthly basis. The main aim would be to have a topic each month and talk to students about how they feel about it, what they think is being forgotten about and then take this agenda up to the SWG and then work from there. The focus is to give staff and students a more direct voice and to play a more active role.

It was suggested that there be a Principal's Prize for Sustainability across the University.

9. **AOB**

Following the Carbon Management Plan, Estates have established a group looking at driving the CMP forward. It was recognised that not enough work was being done on climate adaption and a separate group may well be established which focused on this area. It is important to formally report back to the SWG so there is an appropriate governance structure and these groups keep linked up.

A workshop is planned for mid-November and colleagues from within the Estates Directorate, colleagues from Climate Ready Clyde colleagues and hopefully academic colleagues will take part in this to help reinvent our adaptation plan for the next few years so it will be more externally focused. This will help stimulate a broader discussion at a city-wide level and to

support any research our academic colleagues are doing in this field. SM would like to invite academic members to join this group - he would be happy to invite them to the workshop.

Euan Smith is putting together our STG status report which will feed into global rankings at the Times Higher Education congress.

10. **SWG dates 2022-23**

8 December 2022

8 February 2023

5 April 2023

7 June 2023

2 August 2023

4 October 2023

6 December 2023