

Sustainability Forum – Meeting Notes

Meeting held: 7th June – 14:30 – 15:00 - TEAMS

Attendance & Apologies

Attendees: P Cruz (Chair – Head of Operational Sustainability - HOS); Mary Daly (Strategy & Planning); David Halliday (Head of Security & Business Resilience); Nick Healy (Library); Sara MacLean (Student Comms); Yvonne McVey (Campus Services); Greg O'Donnell (Conference & Events); Derry Wyllie; Wilfred Obi

Apologies: K. Helwig, T. Fraser; Richard McAvoy; Gillian Hunter; Yvonne Dempsie; Julie Adair; Alan Radcliff.

Notes from the previous meeting

Are available from the University's [sustainability pages](#).

Updates – Head of Operational Sustainability

1. A minor refresh to enhance clarity of the SF ToR was proposed and agreed.
2. Announced that changes to how spend on sustainability are documented enable reporting. Sustainability spend was defined as additional spend endorsed by the HOS. Spend for 2021-22 is to be added to the University's webpages and spend for 2022-23 will be added at the end of the academic year.
3. To support the University's refresh of a carbon management plan (CMP) for its Estates, work is in the final stages with a project with a global engineering consultancy for a proposal that will: enhance metering and monitoring; improve building operation control; reduce heating and cooling conflicts and optimise output from the University's Energy Centre. It is anticipated that a proposal will be available for consideration by the University in the next week or so. Independent external consultants have been commissioned to review the proposals. These proposals will be incorporated into the refresh of the CMP.
4. The recruitment exercised for the Sustainability Coordinator was successful and the candidate would start on 26/6/2023. Also recruiting for an Energy Performance Manager.
5. Environmental Management System (EMS) – Annual external audit took place early March 2023. Successful audit with only 7 opportunities for improvement raised (several around EMS documentation and used cooking oil storage). These are observations by the external auditor and it is at the University's discretion how to respond.
6. Biodiversity & Water Efficiency plans – Approved by UPRG and now live on website. Currently working on metrics to track changes to on-campus biodiversity. Supported a couple of dissertations on water use/losses, but issues around data availability highlighted (and noted that this should hopefully change in the coming months with work that is being done as part of the Estates Carbon Management Plan).
7. Worked to prepare the University for the Deposit Return Scheme which has now been postponed until October 2025.
8. As part of the University's Circular Economy Plan, we have been working with Circular Communities Scotland members to develop additional re-use options for items of furniture

that are surplus to the University's requirements. We are also working with an organisation that collects used white goods to pilot the use of re-furbished white goods at the University.

9. Have also been working with numerous stakeholders across the University to ensure that information about the University's sustainability ambitions and performance is readily available. A summary table of key targets and priorities will be published shortly.
10. HOS attended EAUC Scotland (Feb 2023) and SSN (May - online) conferences. Co-convened EAUC-Scotland Waste TSN (focusing on DRS – May). He also attended a workshop at City Chambers for Glasgow's Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies.

Updates – Others

11. Greg O'Donnell reported that Conference & Events were going to work towards Green Meetings accreditation (an extension of Green Business Tourism scheme). Currently reviewing the requirements.
12. Mary Daly (Strategy & Planning) – reported on a couple of THE Awards with submissions focusing on the University's Library and [#myclimatepledge](#) campaign.
13. David Halliday reported that Central Stores were currently focusing on a series of office relocations and would explore any opportunities for furniture re-use.
14. Sara MacLean (GCU Students' Association) reported on a joint initiative with the HOS to establish a Sustainability Projects Fund (mirroring Common Good Fund) which would provide financial support for students, societies and clubs seeking to develop sustainability projects.
15. Sara MacLean also reported that the Association had submitted its evidence for the next Green Impact assessment (which will be reviewed over the next month). The Association are hoping for a 4th consecutive "Excellence" Award.
16. Yvonne McVey (Campus Services) reported on ongoing evaluation considering how food waste collection might be offered to residents at Caledonian Court.
17. Derry Wyllie (Student Comms) noted that videos/content was being developed to feature the University's 'Urban Orchard'. A video featuring the catering contractors' new organic milk supplier was also in development. A suggestion to explain how food waste at the University's refectory was managed was welcomed.
18. Nick Healy (Library) reported that the 'digital first' approach was proving popular. It was also reported that the environmental credentials of new study pods were being considered.

Planned Activity - HOS

19. Commenced work on a Student & Staff Engagement Plan. Consultation on ideas/proposals would take place in the summer. Input from the SF and wider University welcomed.
20. On-boarding new member of staff.
21. 2022-23 greenhouse gas emissions report and annual statutory reporting likely to be the focus during August.
22. Working with GCU Students' Association on a mechanism for providing financial support for student and societies environmental projects.

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23. Sara MacLean – Asked for clarification on what happened to the University's electrical waste. HoS noted that item re-use was prioritised (with a number of partners/contractors) prior to recycling in the UK.

Date of Next Meeting

24. Within the next 3 months. Date to follow.