

Sustainability Forum – Meeting Notes

Held on: 31st of January 2024 – 13:00 – 15:00 - TEAMS

Attendance & Apologies

Attendees: Paulo Cruz (Chair – Head of Operational Sustainability), Kärt Tori (Sustainability Coordinator), Alan Chim (Head of Asset Management), Mary Daly (Strategy & Planning), Therese Fraser (Head of Campus Services), Leanne Irvine (Procurement Manager), Sara MacLean (GCU Students Association), Yvonne McVey (Facilities Services Manager), Greg O’Donnell (Conference & Events), Wilfred Obi (GCU Students Association), Derry Wyllie (Student Comms), Gillian Hunter (School of Health and Life Sciences), Richard McAvoy (Head of E&FM Safety and Performance).

Apologies: David Halliday, Kathleen Campbell, Douglas Chalmers, Eilidh Martin, Stuart Martin, Nicholas Healy

Notes from the previous meeting

Available from the University’s [sustainability pages](#).

Updates – Head of Operational Sustainability (HOS)

1. The University ranked 43rd in the 2023-24 People & Planet University League (up 8 places from the previous year). The ranking reflected targeted improvements that made existing practice easier to find in our webpages. Scope for further improvement has been identified.
2. The University Executive Group approved our Sustainability Student & Staff Engagement Plan and 2022-23 Carbon Footprint Report were approved on 15/1/2024. Both have been uploaded to our webpages. HOS gave a presentation on the 2022-23 Carbon Footprint Report. The presentation is appended to these notes.
3. The business case for the project with the global engineering company is now with Finance & General Purposes Committee. The project will provide the foundation for the University’s Estate’s carbon management plan. It centres around five opportunities that will: enhance visibility of where energy is used on-campus (to a building-level); cut energy use with enhanced building controls (with a new building management system); improve efficiency of ventilation systems and heat distribution network; and maximise the electricity output from the University’s Energy Centre.

4. Our EMS was recertified ISO 14001/EcoCampus Platinum with only three opportunities for improvement (OFI) identified. This audit outcome reflects the University's combined efforts to embed sound environmental practices across its operations. The audit follows our own internal audit in December, which raised a greater number of OFI and a couple of corrective actions (which are being addressed).
5. Work ongoing with on a vertical project with SCEBE Applied Computer Games programme to develop a recycling game. The concept/pitch video is available from [here](#).
6. Conversations are ongoing with a number of colleagues about how the University might deliver Carbon Literacy Training at scale.
7. HOS gave the presentation that he originally gave to EAUC's Waste Topic Support Network on 21/11/2023. The presentation is appended to these notes. The HOS also participated in a discussion panel hosted by Zero Waste Scotland looking at re-useable cup schemes/libraries.

Updates – Sustainability Coordinator (SC)

8. As part of the Sustainability Student and Staff Engagement Plan, SC is currently organising the [Glasgow Goes Green](#) week during which three sustainability events for staff and students will be taking place at the University: **a) Every Tree Tells a Story** walk and talk, where people can learn some facts about the campus history through the stories trees can tell us; **b) Carbon Food-printing** for learning about the environmental impacts of food while having your favourite recipe carbon footprinted by the Sustainability Team; **c) Interwoven threads**, which provides people with a space for a chat about sustainability while having the chance to try out knitting.
9. SC is developing a calendar of events (linked to our other thematic action plans – food, biodiversity, travel and general understanding of sustainability).
10. Additionally, a new Sustainability Map is under the development which would be based on Google Maps and can be used by staff and students to look up any sustainability elements related to the University campus.

Updates – Others

11. Alan Chim (Head of Asset Management) reported on multiple projects that have taken place within the last few months: **a)** The University has now EV charging points installed which are located behind the ARC; **b)** Hoping to change the gas boiler systems into electric water heater systems at the Caledonian Court to contribute to the decarbonisation agenda; **c)** Annie Lennox 2nd and 8th floor refurbishment project has seen good progression with Passive Infrared sensors (PIR) being installed in the 2nd floor classrooms to identify electricity overuse. In addition, 8th floor is being converted into new offices where emphasis has been on using 32 pre-used office desks; **d)** 6 metal frames from old tables have been repurposed with new melamine table tops.
12. Sara MacLean (GCU Students Association) is currently working with HOS and SC to deliver the funding to green the student groups and societies. The funding is launched at the end of January and you can read more about the funding [here](#).

13. Mary Daly (Strategy & Planning) reported that data is currently being gathered for the QS Sustainability rankings which is due Monday 15th of April 2024. Last year the University ranked 508th and this year the goal is to be among top 500 Universities.
14. Leanne Irvine (Procurement Manager) is working closely with APUC to develop a bank of sustainability questions to assist procurement team with the technical aspects of tendering processes. The document is currently in the draft stages and procurement teams from different institutions can add questions as well as comments on lessons learned.
15. Gillian Hunter reported on hosting a sustainability day for SHLS suppliers in December 2023 where multiple vendors showcased their sustainability events. This event could potentially guide future equipment purchasing decisions.

Planned Activity – HOS & SC

16. Waste Composition Analysis with SCEBE Environmental Management Students on 15/2/2024.
17. HOS will be giving a guest presentation to GSBS Tourism & Events/International Marketing students on sustainable food at the University on 22/2/2024.
18. Fairtrade Recertification is coming up with the deadline on 22/04/24.

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19. Wilfred Obi – asked how is the insight of student travel modes being acquired. HOS explained that the University conducts regular travel surveys. Previous travel surveys are available from [here](#).
20. Alan Chim – asked if pre-used white goods will be used during the refurbishment project of the further three Caledonian Court blocks (summer 2024). HOS said this was the intention, particularly if lesson learned from the pilot were taken on-board.
21. Mary Daly – asked if it would be possible to write up a case study on the refurbished goods project in Caledonian Court refurbishment project to support THE impact rankings process in October/November 2024. HOS noted that if the refurbishment project continues, a case study may be written.

Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday – 8th of May 2024.