

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

7 April 2021 via Zoom

Attending: David Duncan (DD), Stewart Miller (SM), Josephine Gallagher (JG), Blair Anderson (GUEST), Dounia Diatsentos (GUEST), Lauren Scott (GUEST), Jaime Toney (JT), Gioia Falcone (GF), Liam Brady (SRC), Robert Garnish, Billy Ferguson, Dan Haydon, Rhona Little (Clerk), Kelum Gamage

Apologies: Susan Ashworth, Ian Campbell, Barry Morton, Amy McKenzie Smith (SRC), Minty Donald, Peter Craig, Alvero Perez Guardiola, Fabrice Renaud, Nick Wade (NW),

1 The Group welcomed Dr Kelum Gamage, Senior Lecturer in the School of Engineering to his first meeting.

2 **Minute**

The Minute of the meeting of 3rd February was approved.

3 **Revised short-term sustainability action plan**

The group noted the action plan listing a broad range of interventions. Action points 13 & 14 highlighted in yellow were still awaiting confirmation from Barry Morton. Apart from that the plan was ready to be published as appropriate.

Action: DD to append to his report to April meeting of Court

4 **Cochno Farm Research Proposal**

The group noted the paper assessing the offsetting and ecosystem service opportunities at Cochno Farm which explained the background, progress to date and the proposed work ahead. Before creating an action plan for Cochno Farm, several assessments need to be carried out to make informed decisions and to do this a budget of approximately £14.5K has been requested. It was noted that George King has indicated that he would prefer the 20 hectare option for tree planting. The group approved funding to move this proposal forward.

Action: DD to contact Comms Team to publicise

5 **Carbon Offsetting – Savill’s brief (SM)**

A paper was circulated outlining the UoGs options for tree planting and peatland management. There are several different options available in terms of developing a carbon offsetting strategy.

The first option was the most straightforward, but the disadvantage is there would be little say in the specifics of the projects invested in and nearly all the offsetting projects are located overseas.

The second option would be a joint approach with other HEIs/FEIs with the main advantage being additional EUAC assurance that projects invested in are robust and credible.

The third option would be for UoG to purchase suitable areas of land in Scotland for either tree planting or peatland restoration. While this is likely to be the most complex option of the three, we are keen to understand if it might be most financially prudent.

The final page of the paper sets out the required outputs from Savills who are due to report back by the end of May and at that point we will be in a better position to decide.

It was noted that there were no details in the paper about paying for the carbon offsetting and any budget for this would have to be considered in the budget rounds.

It was noted that students would prefer to use local community offsetting options as opposed to worldwide. **Action: Savills rep to attend SWG June meeting to present findings**

6 **Impact of International Student Flights during 2020/21 (SM)**

The group noted the above paper. They agreed with the methodology used but it was suggested that SM check that the airlines are not doing carbon offsetting of their own. The figures did not include EU students as it took the position that for the most part, EU students could travel to Scotland either by rail or sea. It was felt that the figures were broadly right and that covid had not impacted too much so it would be unlikely that these figures would go up much in future years. The group agreed this was paper a good start, but more would need to be done.

Action: SM to check double accounting with airlines

Action: SM to check figures with Registry for projection

7 **Climate Ready Clyde – City Region Adaptation Strategy & Action Plan (SM)**

This strategy and action plan was circulated for information only. The UoG is working in partnership with 15 other public sector bodies and the strategy should be published within the next few weeks. It describes a number of large scale, high-ambition flagship actions over the next 10 years where there is a strong consensus on the need for progress and a recognition of the whole systems approach that is required to address core, underlying challenges.

It was noted that the document is not yet in the public domain and members were asked not to share outwith the group. The Action plan from 2021-25 will be published on website.

8 **Update on Climate Assembly 31st March – Carbon & Energy Management**

A paper was circulated outlining the UoG Climate Assemblies Energy and Carbon Management Resolutions. Blair Anderson presented the outcomes: and gave a resume of each point.

It was agreed that the paper would be forwarded to colleagues updating the Carbon Management Plan for considerations as well as the CfSS who would look at specific items to see what can be achieved. The document would be upload to the GUEST webpages and with more work would be turned into a more in-depth paper and publicised.

9 **Green Gown Award Submissions 2021**

DD reminded the group that the closing date for applications for the Green Gown Awards (UK & Ireland) 2021 was 3rd June and encouraged members to come up with ideas from across the University. There is no limit on the number of applications or categories each Institution can enter. **Action: ideas to be sent to JT to coordinate**

10 **Centre for Sustainable Solutions update**

JT updated the group on the activities of the CfSS:

- Still working on NERC programme grant due 3rd June
- Consumption initiative as university we are being asked to collaborate
- Evening courses now complete and will run again in Autumn in same format
- Upskilling course in climate and carbon literacy launch in April
- First informal evening chat with students has taken place and will be publicised to open this to staff as well

- Interview for s-lab position to work full-time on rolling out leaf framework in conjunction with guest co-ordinator will take place soon

11 **GUEST update**

The GUEST co-ordinators provided an update on the work of the various branches:

- 'Glasgow Goes Green' is working with E&B.
- Amy working with biodiversity projects in local schools.
- The book club is going well.
- Edinburgh University producing student facing COP
- Fashion event specifically on what's happening in Bangladesh
- Food branch survey launched over 100 sponsors
- S-labs – reducing lab plastics event and continue to work on educational resources.
- Virtual audits this year which are slower paced and this will be helped with position filled.
- Glasgow City Food Plan consultation finished
- Biodiversity Working Group are hoping to integrate working with Glasgow Museums and local biodiversity
- Bike hub doing really well with lots of engagement. Working on video content on how to do repairs at home and when able we will go around campus
- Working with SRC and the transport assembly

12 **Sustainable Glasgow Partnership**

DD updated the group on this partnership that was now picking up speed. There was a coalition of interested parties and UoG was on board with four of the hubs where a lot of work was being done. These will have a real impact over time, and will strengthen our links with the city. It would be good to get more academics on board and the SWG would encourage members to put forward some names.

13 **COP26 Working Group**

Rachael Sandison (RS) is chairing a working group and would be able to share its activities with this group. Post-national events and things we can do ourselves to be involved in the Green Zone of the Cop26 space are coming together nicely. There is a lot of uncertainty about how much of this activity will happen live and how much will be limited because of covid. Impossible to call just now but increasingly UoG will be at the centre of it which is great way to raise our profile. SM has put together a proposal to hold a day-long conference on campus to coincide with COP26 which has been submitted by E&B colleagues, CfSS and GCC.

14 **GCC discontinuation of free Nextbike membership**

Although this scheme will still be available to October this year for staff and students, there was concern that this membership was going to end soon. It is hoped the University would support a new application.

Action: APG to provide update at the next meeting.

15 **AOB**

Deloitte decarbonisation tool

JT has been in conversation with Deloitte about sustainability tools looking to partner with them on NERC grant. Deloitte's have created a decarbonation tool for organisations, cities or govts to look at their carbon footprint. It is a management tool that sets targets, how you reach these, offsetting discussions etc and Deloitte is offering the UoG an opportunity to trial this software over 2 years and basically pilot this with them, to use this as case study and how it has been used to reduce our carbon emissions.

This might be a good way of visualising particularly as we are updating our Carbon Management Plan however there is a concern about the amount of work required to get our data into the software and how labour intensive might this be. David Gray, Strategic Manger, might have a better sense of this. The question is, is it worthwhile continuing discussions about what a pilot might look like or would it be useful to have further discussions and pilot the tool at no cost and is this an alternative to the science-based target from Cambridge?

Action: get DG's impression and see about whether we want to engage in conversations about piloting it.

Action: JT will do a bit of research on Cambridge Tool.

Dates of future meetings

3rd June 2021

4th August 2021

6th October 2021

2nd December 2021