



Sustainability, Social & Civic Responsibility Committee

Tuesday 5 October 2021, 2pm

Via Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

- 1 Minute** **A**
To approve the minute of the previous meeting on 15 June 2021

- 2 Matters Arising**
To raise any matters arising not covered on the agenda or in post-meeting notes

STRATEGIC AND SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

- 3 Talloires Network & Social Impact** **Verbal**
To receive a presentation from the Director of the Edinburgh Futures Institute

- 4 Edinburgh Living Wage City** **B**
To note and discuss a paper from the HR Partner Reward

- 5 Vision and New Structure for SRS Department** **C**
To note and discuss a paper from the Director of SRS

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

- 6 Supporting Sustainable Development Goals through Open Education** **D**
To receive a paper from the Assistant Principal Online Learning and Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services

- 7 COP Update** **E**
To receive a summary paper from the SRS Projects Coordinator

- 8 City of Edinburgh Council Climate Strategy Consultation** **F**
To note a consultation response from the Director of SRS

- 9 Modern Slavery Statement 2020/21** **G**
To endorse a paper from the Deputy Director of SRS

- 10 Implementing the Schools Sustainability Framework** **H**
To receive a paper from the Sustainability Innovation & Engagement Manager

- 11 SRS Programmes Report** **I**
To receive a progress report from the Deputy Director of SRS

- 12 Forestry Update** **Verbal**
To receive a progress report from the Director of SRS

- 13 Any Other Business** **Verbal**
To consider any other matters from Group members

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

MINUTE OF A MEETING *of the Social Responsibility and Sustainability Committee held via MS Teams on 15th June 2021.*

- Present:** Sandy Tudhope (Convenor), University Lead on Climate Responsibility and Sustainability
 Michelle Brown, Deputy Director and Head of SRS Programmes
 Laura Cattell, Head of Widening Participation
 Juan Cruz, Principal, ECA
 Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability
 Claire Graf, Joint Unions Liaison Committee representative
 Colm Harmon, Vice Principal (Students), Principals Office (part)
 Pete Higgins, Director, Global Environment & Society Academy
 Gary Jebb, Director of Place
 Lesley McAra (Vice Convenor), Assistant Principal Community Relations
 Catherine Martin, Director of Corporate Services Group
 Theresa Merrick, Director of Communications & Marketing
 Rachael Robertson, Deputy Director of Finance (part)
 Beth Simpson, EUSA Vice-President Community
 Tony Weir Director of IT Infrastructure (representing ISG)
- In attendance:** Matt Lawson (item 8) and Jennifer McGregor (item 6)
- Apologies:** Gavin McLachlan VP and Chief Information Officer
 Anne Payne CSE Registrar
 James Saville, Director of HR
 George Sked, Director of Procurement
 James Smith, Vice Principal International

1 Minutes

A

The minute of 29th March 2021 was approved as a correct record. The revised remit was noted with one correction highlighted by JC.

2 Matters Arising

B

The Convenor took the opportunity to apologise on behalf of himself and DG for an administrative error which meant some members were invited to the meeting at short notice and hence some apologies as a result. He welcomed Juan and Beth to their first meeting, noting Tony was representing Gavin and that Matt and Jennifer were joining the meeting for items 8 and 5 respectively. The website pages will be amended in due course and committee was now almost at full strength- we are still seeking an MVM representative. The Convenor noted that in order to build a sense of ownership and common understanding in tackling the embedding agenda, we would not normally expect substitutes and members should consult with him prior to nominating substitutes to attend.

STRATEGIC AND SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 Times Higher Impact

F

The Convenor agreed to bring item 8 forward. The Student Engagement, Reporting and Events Programme Manager introduced the paper. Members welcomed the paper and agreed that the new rankings would likely take some time to stabilize. Members agreed that our purpose in taking part was to learn and improve and use the rankings to evaluate our performance honestly. On that basis, the effort in compiling the submission was worthwhile and useful. Members agreed that the University should seek to improve the quantity and

quality of data it shares online. The Committee thanked Matt Lawson for his efforts in compiling the submission.

4 Community Survey and Social Impact

The Vice-Convenor presented on the forthcoming community perceptions survey being organised by CaM and on the necessity for a full University-wide social impact survey, possibly in 2025 and 2030. Our current social impact measurement is fragmented and not systematic and we need a more rigorous and independent survey, with processes put in place prior to 2025 to support an evaluation. Members welcomed the forthcoming perceptions survey and noted the need to tie information together and align with other surveys. Director of SRS reported it was his intention to try and strengthen SRS capacity in this area; DG also reported that the Principal had requested action in this area. Members noted further drivers included city deal needs and strategy 2030 needs. It was recognised a full survey would be resource intensive. Members supported LMA's call for discussions to inform the generation of a consensus that a full impact survey was required and that exploration of resourcing should start now.

5 Climate Emergency and SDGs: Guidance for Committee Papers

The Deputy Director of SRS introduced the paper and the rationale for it. Members warmly welcomed the paper, whilst making the following key points:

- MB to consider the links to EDI and risk management further
- MB to continue to ensure the right balance between rigour and the resources required to complete and ensure supporting training is in place
- Clarification that the guidance was intended for major corporate committees, though there is nothing to stop other committees from using it

Members were invited to send any further comments to MB directly

Action: MB to discuss links further with CM

Action: ALL to offer further comment to MB directly

Action: Final version to be submitted to University Executive for approval

C

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

6 Strategic Performance Framework and Social and Civic Responsibility

The Senior Strategic Planner introduced the paper and suggested a focus for today on the SRS indicators. Members warmly welcomed the paper and the chance to comment. It was felt that the Court indicators were correct but that consideration should be given to a number of changes to the Executive level indicators. DG noted that in the light of the earlier discussion on social impact, we would want to develop that space over time. JMG confirmed that whilst the first set of indicators were going to University Executive in July, there would be further opportunities for discussion and changes. DG noted that the committee still needed to discuss any reporting it wanted to see to itself on SRS matters and that this would be a topic for a future conversation.

Action: Members to offer further comments to JMG in the coming weeks

7 School Sustainability Framework

The Deputy Director of SRS introduced the paper, explained its purpose and invited comment, noting that this was potentially fulfilling the role of the 'self diagnosis tool' proposed in the Director of SRS's embedding paper from summer 2020. The Director of SRS warmly welcomed the paper and thanked MB for preparing, suggesting that over time we could also consider piloting with professional groups. JC and TW offered their areas as pilots. CH noted the need to connect this framework to the curriculum transformation programme and ensure the 'ask' was sufficiently ambitious for the learning/curriculum criterion. Members strongly supported the draft framework and agreed it should now be

D

E

tested with schools and that over time we should seek to integrate with planning round guidance.

8 Draft Anti-Slavery Policy

G

The committee received a paper by the Deputy Director of SRS on the draft anti-slavery policy. Members supported the draft policy with two proposed amendments:

- Deletion of the sentence 'This policy...at any time'
- Clarification that the policy also applied to students

MB confirmed that the policy would be submitted to University Executive for approval in due course

Action: MB to submit the amended policy to University Executive for approval in due course.

9 Any Other Business

PH advised members of forthcoming U7 meetings and provided further detail. DG reported that he was meeting the People and Planet student group after the meeting on investment issues and would prepare a note following the meeting.



SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIAL & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE

October 2021

Edinburgh Living Wage City

Description of paper

The purpose of this paper is to inform the Sustainability, Social & Civic Responsibility (SSCR) Committee of the Edinburgh Living Wage City initiative and the work carried out to date by the City of Edinburgh Council and city partners (including Edinburgh University) towards Living Wage City accreditation.

The Edinburgh Living Wage City programme contributes to the following outcome in Strategy 2030:

- Working together with local communities to contribute to improving the lives of people across the Edinburgh City Region
- We will continue to be Living Wage accredited

Action requested

The Committee is asked to review the draft Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Plan in Appendix 1 and consider the need for additional University of Edinburgh representation on the Action Group, HR Reward are currently representing the University.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee approve additional representation from the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability or a member of the SSCR Committee.

Background and context

As a socially responsible employer, the University has paid its eligible staff the Real Living Wage rate since 2012 and achieved accreditation in November 2017. Accredited employers must ensure that not only directly employed staff receive the Living Wage but also contracted staff and subcontracted staff that work regularly (defined as two or more hours in any given day for eight or more consecutive weeks of the year) on University premises.

The Living Wage Places initiative is operated by Living Wage Scotland and is a key opportunity for Edinburgh city to radically reduce the number of city workers relying on low pay. The overall objective is to increase the number of workers earning the Real Living Wage by promoting Living Wage accreditation locally.

The scheme encourages local partners to collaborate and co-design the actions needed to increase the number of local employers committed to paying at least the Real Living Wage to all their employees.

Edinburgh Council in relation to their “End Poverty in Edinburgh Delivery Plan 2020-30”, wish to establish Edinburgh as a Living Wage City and have invited the University of Edinburgh to be a part of the Living Wage City Action Group.

Discussion

Low pay in Edinburgh is real and widespread, approximately 37,000¹ workers in Edinburgh earn less than the Real Living Wage of £9.50 per hour. The Living Wage Places initiative recognises that actions are needed to ensure that jobs in Edinburgh pay enough for families to live on.

At the same time it is recognised that the City is at an early and uncertain stage in its economic recovery from the pandemic, and this context makes it a challenging time for many businesses to take on additional costs in the form of higher wages.

With this context in mind, any actions to encourage and promote Living Wage Accreditation is carried out with a full appreciation of the pressures businesses currently face.

The Living Wage City Action group is chaired by the Council (Convenor of the Housing, Homeless, and Fair Work Committee) alongside a business leader co-chair (as yet to be appointed). The Group currently comprises of 10 employers across a range of sectors in the city including third sector, financial services, hospitality, culture, retail, tourism and trade unions. It is proposed that the Action Group will meet at least quarterly, with further meetings arranged as required.

The Action Group has committed to agreeing and implementing a five year local action plan designed to:

1. Research and understand the living wage landscape in Edinburgh, and the support/actions needed to encourage growth in take up
2. Celebrate employers working together locally to promote the real Living Wage and accreditation take up
3. Design and deliver events and actions to encourage and support more Edinburgh businesses to become living wage employers, particularly in key target sectors

Latest data from Living Wage Scotland details over 420 businesses in Edinburgh are accredited Living Wage employers (2% of the total business base). The growth of Living Wage accreditation has been notable, expanding by an average of 65 new accreditations per annum. The Action Group have proposed a target of supporting 500 Edinburgh businesses over the next five years to become Living Wage accredited employees. Assuming an average of 79 employees per accredited business, this provides a target of 40,000 new employees supported by Living Wage policies.

Appendix 1 provides the draft Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Plan. This plan will be used to submit an application to Living Wage Scotland for Edinburgh's formal accreditation as a Living Wage City.

¹ Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

Subject to successful accreditation process, a series of communications and engagement activities will be held to celebrate the city's new status and champion businesses that promote the living wage in Edinburgh. These actions are planned to **commence** from Living Wage Week in November 2021,

Resource implications

Further University representation on the Action Group would require greater time commitment. Additional resource implications, including any financial resource, to be considered by the SSCR Committee when known.

Risk Management

Additional University representation on the Action Group will assist with setting agreed actions which will contribute positively to Strategy 2030 outcomes and reduce risk of not meeting the Social & Civic Responsibility Delivery Plan.

Equality & Diversity

Due consideration has been given to equality and diversity when researching the Living Wage. Research carried out by the Living Wage Foundation entitled "Employee Jobs Paid Below The Living Wage 2020", detail that jobs held by women were more likely to be paid below the Living Wage, 60% of below Living Wage jobs were held by women.

Next steps/implications

The next Action Group meeting is on 30 September 2021 and this will inform the submission for Living Wage City accreditation to Living Wage Scotland.

Consultation

Reviewed by James Saville, Director of Human Resources.

Further information

Author

Louise Kidd
HR Reward
13 September 2021

Presenter

James Saville
HR Director Human Resources

Freedom of Information

This paper is open.

Edinburgh Living Wage City – Draft Action Plan

September 2021

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Executive Summary

In September 2020 the Edinburgh Poverty Commission called on employers and institutions across the city to come together and radically increase the number of Real Living Wage accredited businesses in the city. This action was needed, it said, in order to reduce the number of people in the city for whom work is not enough to keep their families out of poverty.

Building on existing commitments by the City of Edinburgh Council and other partners, this plan is a key step towards delivering on that challenge. It has been developed by the **Edinburgh Living Wage Action Group**, a collaboration of employers, public sector bodies, trade unions, social enterprises, and business organisations, all committed to the promotion of fair work.

The group aims to:

- Encourage more Edinburgh employers to become Real Living Wage accredited businesses,
- Reduce the number of Edinburgh workers earning below the living wage, and increase the number who experience fair work, and
- Make a critical contribution to the city's goal to End Poverty by 2030.

The context

Low pay in Edinburgh is real and widespread. Some 37,000 workers in Edinburgh earn less than the Real Living Wage of £9.50 per hour and 27% of Edinburgh workers are in jobs that do not provide 'satisfactory' pay, contracts, or hours. Such low paid and insecure work is a key driver of poverty in the city. Even pre-pandemic, data showed that 65% of all people in poverty in Edinburgh were in working households.

Edinburgh remains a city where work is not always the secure pathway it needs to be. This plan recognises that meaningful actions are needed to ensure that jobs in Edinburgh pay enough for families to live on.

At the same, the city is at an early and uncertain stage in its economic recovery from pandemic. Edinburgh businesses in 2021 carry an estimated

£0.5bn of additional debt as a result of Covid, 36% are worried about how they will make debt repayments, and 53% are worried about trading conditions in the city.

This context makes it a challenging time for many businesses to commit to taking on additional costs in the form of higher wages. As such, this plan will make sure that any action to encourage or promote Living Wage Accreditation among employers in Edinburgh is carried out with full understanding of the pressures businesses face, and rooted in real engagement with employers from key target sectors.

The plan

With this context in mind, this plan sets out the tasks the Edinburgh Living Wage Action Group will take over the next five years. It includes actions designed to:

- **Learn**, research and further understand the Living Wage landscape in Edinburgh, and the support needed to encourage growth in take up.
- **Promote and encourage** real Living Wage accreditation in the city, towards delivering a radical increase in the number of Living Wage employers in Edinburgh, and
- **Celebrate** those employers who commit to the Living Wage, and the city's successes building a the real Living Wage movement.

The targets

Through the actions in this plan, over the next five years the group aim to:

- Support an additional 500 Edinburgh businesses to become living wage accredited employers
- Bring some 40,000 employees up to the real living wage minimum standard, and
- Ensure that growth in Real Living Wage take up is focused on those sectors where low pay and insecure work in the city is most prevalent.

1. Introduction

This report provides an action plan to support Edinburgh's commitment to become a Living Wage City.

The plan has been developed by the **Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Group** and has the full support of key city anchor institutions including the **City of Edinburgh Council** and the **Edinburgh Partnership**.

The commitment to becoming a Living Wage City arises from the calls to action made by the **Edinburgh Poverty Commission**, and its conclusion that:

“Edinburgh has a thriving local economy with high rates of employment and high average pay, but even here work is not always the secure pathway out of poverty that it needs to be.

We call on Edinburgh's employers, Trades Unions, social enterprises, and public sector bodies to come together in a new alliance to make Edinburgh a Living Wage City in 2021”

In response to this call to action, the City of Edinburgh Council Business Plan, published in February 2021, built on existing pledges to promote fair work in the city by committing the Council *“to achieve accreditation for Edinburgh as a living wage city and promote the use of living wage and fair work practices throughout the city economy”*.

In taking forward this commitment, the plan forms part of a number of actions connecting the city's End Poverty Edinburgh Delivery Plan, Edinburgh Economy Strategy, and Local Outcome Improvement Plan with ongoing work on youth employability and the Edinburgh Guarantee all of which share core objectives to promote fair work as part of a route to **End Poverty in Edinburgh by 2030**.



The Real Living Wage and Living Wage Places

The Real Living Wage is an independently calculated rate based on the cost of living and is paid voluntarily by employers. For 2021 The rate is currently £9.50 and is calculated each year in November by The Resolution Foundation on an analysis of the wage that employees need to earn in order to afford the basket of 'goods' required for a decent standard of living. This basket of goods includes housing, childcare, transport and heating costs.

This rate is significantly higher than the statutory minimum and living wage rates set by the UK Government. Adults working for employers who pay a minimum of the Real Living Wage receive at least 6.6% more per hour than the equivalent worker receiving the statutory minimum.

	The UK Minimum Wage <i>Government set minimum wage for under 23 year olds</i>	The National Living Wage <i>Government set minimum wage for over 23 year olds</i>	The Real Living Wage <i>The only wage rate based on what people need to get by.</i>
What is it? (per hour)	Ranges from £8.36 for 21-22 year olds to £4.30 for Apprentices	£8.91 for over 23 year olds	£9.50 for anyone over 18 years old
Is it the Law?	Yes, this is a statutory minimum.	Yes, this is a statutory minimum.	No, this is a voluntary standard.
How is it set?	A negotiated settlement between Government, Trade Unions and employers.	A % of median earnings, aiming to reach 66% of median earnings by 2024.	An annual calculation based on the cost of living in the UK.

Living Wage Scotland was launched in April 2014 with the aim of increasing the number of employers in Scotland who are recognised for paying their staff the Real Living Wage. Established by The Poverty Alliance, Living Wage Scotland works in partnership with the Living Wage Foundation and is funded

by the Scottish Government. Businesses which commit to paying the Real Living Wage to all their staff, and who have a plan to pay living wage to all contractors can become an **accredited Living Wage Employer** as part of the scheme administered by Living Wage Scotland.

In the past five years, the campaign has seen local authorities, health boards and private sector companies across all sectors and industries commit to paying their staff a decent wage. During 2021 Living Wage Scotland celebrated reaching the milestone of 2,000 living wage accredited employers in Scotland, meaning over 45,600 workers every year receive a pay rise that genuinely reflects increases in the cost of living.

Making Living Wage Places

As part of its campaign work, the Living Wage Foundation established a new scheme to formally recognise place-based approaches to promoting Living Wage accreditation: **Making Living Wage Places**.

The Making Living Wage Places programme seeks to recognise the places that are leading the way on the real Living Wage. It is designed as an opportunity to encourage collaboration between key local institutions and harness place identity as a motivator for more employers to join the Living Wage movement.

The scheme builds on findings of research conducted by the Smith Institute which analysed the ripple effects, on wages, productivity, and local spending, that occur when clusters of employers in a city region commit to paying the real living wage.

In recent years, towns and cities such as Dundee, Glenrothes, Cardiff, Salford and others have established themselves as Living Wage Places, with the aim of making local actions to encourage such ripple effects. Evidence to date points to the effectiveness of these approaches in significantly increasing the number of local employers committed to paying at least a Real Living Wage to all their workers.

Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Group

The Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Group is a collaboration of Edinburgh based employers working together to:

- Achieve and maintain accreditation for Edinburgh as a 'Living Wage City' as a part of the Making Living Wage Places scheme.
- Agree and help implement a local action plan designed to:
 - **Research** and understand the living wage landscape in Edinburgh, and the support/actions needed to encourage growth in take up
 - **Celebrate** employers working together locally to promote the real Living Wage and accreditation take up
 - Design and deliver events and actions to **encourage** and support more Edinburgh businesses to become living wage employers, particularly in key target sectors
 - **Promote** and encourage adoption of 'Fair Work' business practices in all sectors and types of business in Edinburgh

In doing so, the group aims to:

- reduce the number of Edinburgh workers earning below the living wage
- increase the number who benefit from 'Fair work', and
- make a critical contribution to the city's goal to End Poverty by 2030

Terms of reference note that:

- the group is comprised of 10-12 members appointed by invitation of the chair(s)
- all members are Edinburgh based and either current Living Wage Accredited employers, or actively seeking Living Wage accreditation at the point of joining the group

- membership should be representative of key employment sectors in the city, and key sectors for targeting increases in living wage accreditation
- the group will meet at least quarterly in formal session, with further meetings arranged as required to meet agreed actions
- Secretariat support will be provided by City of Edinburgh Council, Policy and Insight team.

The group will be led by two co-chairs including:

- **A City of Edinburgh Council co-chair** – this position will be held by the Convener of the Council’s Housing, Homelessness, and Fair Work Committee, and
- **A Business leader co-chair** - this position is currently open and to be confirmed in consultation with the group.

Membership

At the time of drafting this plan, the group comprises ten members covering key sectors including:

- Local Authority
- Anchor institutions such as Universities and Chambers of Commerce
- Financial Services
- Tourism and visitor economy
- Hospitality and culture
- Independent retail
- Trades Unions
- Community and third sector

In future development, the group has committed to continued review of membership with new members invited to join to address any identified gaps or priority programmes. In particular, the group has identified an intention to seek members or support from key target areas including the Hospitality, Construction, and Care sectors.

Name	Position	Organisation	LW status
Clr Kate Campbell (co-chair)	Convener, Housing Homelessness and Fair Work Committee	City of Edinburgh Council	Accredited
Helene van der Ploeg	Business Manager	Space & Broomhouse Hub	Accredited
Joanne Davidson	Director of Policy	Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce	Accredited
Meredith Adams	Sustainability Manager - Social Impact	ABRDN	Accredited
Dougie Cameron	Chief Operating Officer	Centre of the Moving Image	Accredited
Michael Apter	Managing Director	Paper Tiger	Accredited
Louise Kidd	HR Partner Reward	University of Edinburgh	Accredited
Sandy MacDonald	Director, Public Policy and Communications	Scottish Financial Enterprise	Accredited
Kat Brogan	Managing Director	Mercat Tours	Accredited
Mary Alexander	Deputy Regional Secretary	Unite the Union	Pursuing Accreditation

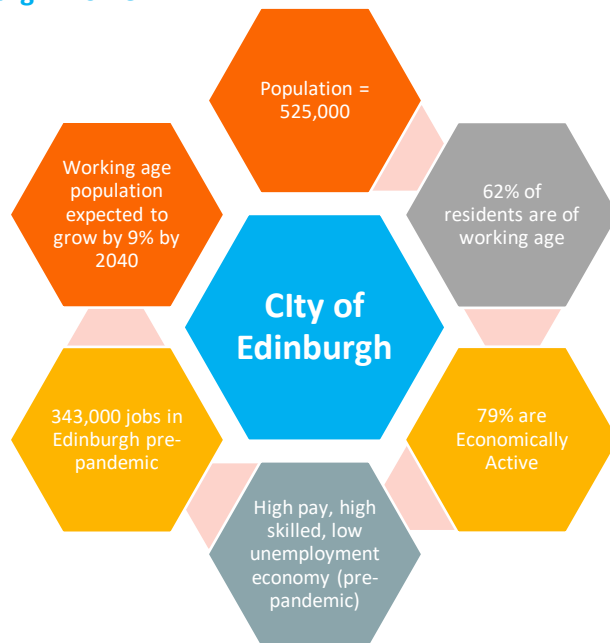
Geographical Focus

The work of the group is to focus on influencing employers within Edinburgh City, as defined by local authority boundaries.

In doing so, the group recognises that the city operates within a wider regional economic geography and that partners across the city region are committed to actions designed to promote fair work and living wage accreditation. As such, a priority of the group will be to engage and build links with regional partners to build knowledge, share best practice and maximise available opportunities to build the living wage movement across the region.

2. Setting the context

City of Edinburgh Profile



Key facts:

- Average hourly pay in Edinburgh in 2020 £17.49
- But some 37,000 workers earned less than the real Living Wage of £9.50 per hour
- Largest sectors in the city include:
 - Professional and admin services – 60,000 jobs
 - Health and care – 51,000 jobs
 - Hospitality and catering – 33,000 jobs
 - Finance and insurance – 33,000 jobs
 - Education – 33,000 jobs
 - Retail – 27,000 jobs
 - Public sector – 19,000 jobs
 - Arts and Culture – 18,000 jobs

The recovery from pandemic represents the biggest challenge Edinburgh's economy has faced for a generation. The city remains the most successful economy in Scotland, but over the next decade the extent to which the city can thrive will depend upon the building of a fair and sustainable recovery from the economic storm brought over the past two years.

Evidence tells us that over the next few years:

- **Real recovery will be slow...** While recent upturns in activity are welcome, projections show that it may be 2026 before Scotland's economy recovers all the output lost during the pandemic.
- **...with a continuing risk of insolvency for many Edinburgh businesses...** The experience of pandemic for many businesses has involved an increase in debt burdens. Analysis by the Federation of Small Businesses show that Edinburgh firms now carry £0.5bn of additional debt as a result of Covid. 36% of firms are worried about how they are going to make debt repayments.
- **...particularly in key sectors such as Retail, Hospitality and Tourism...** Visitors to Edinburgh fell significantly during 2020 severely impacting on sectors such as retail, hospitality and tourism - hotel occupancy rates in the city were down by over 80% at times during 2020. While relaxation of covid measures has benefitted these sectors recently, latest data suggests that spend in the city centre is still at least 20% below its pre-pandemic level.
- **Unemployment has risen, but will be slow to fall...** By Spring 2021 over 18,000 people in Edinburgh were claiming unemployment related benefits, more than three times the level recorded pre-pandemic. The lesson from previous recessions is that unemployment rates are slower to return to normal than other economic indicators, and it may be several years before the labour market returns to the conditions that held pre-pandemic.
- **Inequality is on the increase...** Edinburgh has long been marked by deep inequalities, with the gap between rich and poor larger in this city than anywhere else in Scotland. The impact of pandemic has been to widen these gaps.

- **...with people on low pay jobs most likely to have lost income...**
While a substantial proportion of Edinburgh's economy has been able to transition and continue operating through working at home during lockdowns, those in the lowest wage sectors have been most impacted by lost hours, redundancy, or by having to continue to work in difficult conditions
- **...meaning women, young people, people with disabilities, those with caring responsibilities, are all likely to be hardest hit.** These are the groups most likely to work in sectors most affected by pandemic effects. Data shows, for instance, that job numbers among people under 24 are falling twice as fast as the workforce as a whole in Edinburgh.

"The wages of average jobs do not keep up with the cost of living...This means working becomes only a means to survival and not prospering."

Edinburgh Poverty Commission contributor

These challenges act to exacerbate the pre-pandemic challenges Edinburgh's economy faced with regard to fair work and poverty. Evidence gathered by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission showed, for instance, that:

- Pre Covid the majority (65%) of people in poverty in Edinburgh were in working households
- Around one in ten (9%) of all jobs were casual, temporary or non-contract.
- In a survey of citizens 'work does not pay enough' was the single factor most commonly raised as a cause of poverty in Edinburgh – cited by 83% of all respondents.
- 27% of Edinburgh jobs do not provide workers with 'satisfactory' pay, contracts, or hours, and
- Approximately 37,000 Edinburgh workers are paid less than £9.50 ph, the current threshold set by the Living Wage Foundation.

Who is affected by low pay in Edinburgh?

Relatively little firm data is available on the 37,000 people in Edinburgh who work below living wage levels, but much information can be derived from analysis on Scottish datasets and research.

New research published by the Living Wage Foundation, for instance, shows that 11% of workers across Scotland as a whole are affected by low paid, insecure work. Overall, the research shows that:

- 13% of BAME workers are affected by low paid insecure work, as are
- 17% of workers under 25 and 15% of disable workers
- 'Worst' performing nationwide sectors with high employment base in Edinburgh include:
 - Wholesale and Retail – 14% of workers
 - Health and social work – 10% of workers
 - Construction – 19% of workers
 - Hospitality and catering – 22% of workers
 - Arts and culture – 22% of workers
 - Admin and support services – 19% of workers

A July 2021 report by Skills Development Scotland highlights that low pay sectors are likely to be major sources of jobs growth in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region in the near future.

Over 60,500 new job openings are expected to be created by employers in Retail, Health, Construction, Hospitality, Arts, and Admin services in the region during 2021-24.

These account for 65% of the total forecast jobs requirement of the whole regional economy.

Further analysis shows that workers who are low paid are also likely to be affected by other aspects of insecure work with:

- 12% receiving less than 24 hours notice for changes to working hours

- 90% get shifts cancelled without full pay, and 42% have experienced unexpected cancellation of shifts
- 35% said short notice periods for shifts had a negative impact on their household finances
- 23-25% said they had had to pay higher transport or childcare costs due to short notice periods for shifts or work schedules.

Overall the connection between these findings and increased poverty is clear. 66% of working adults living in poverty are low paid. In addition to the characteristics cited above, such adults are more likely than average to be women and more likely not to have educational or professional qualifications.

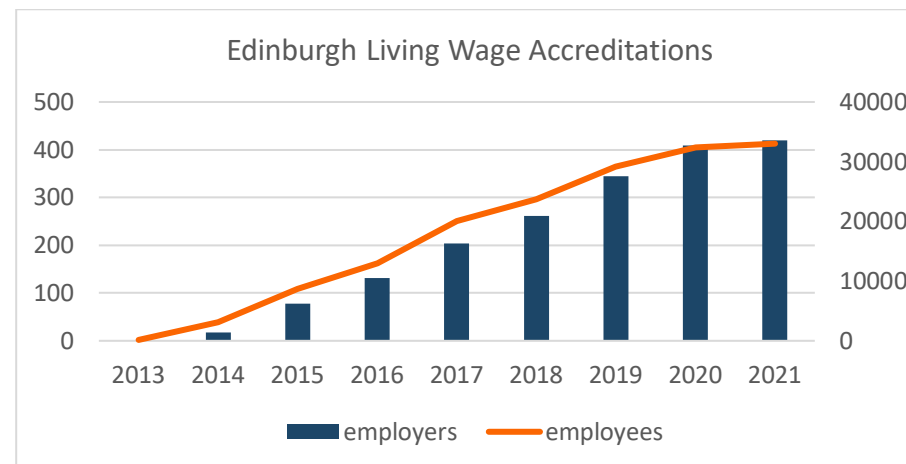
Living Wage Accreditations in Edinburgh

Latest data shows that over 420 businesses in Edinburgh are accredited Living Wage employers. Excluding very large employers (such as City of Edinburgh Council and University of Edinburgh) these businesses employ an estimated 33,000 jobs in the city, or an average of 79 jobs per accredited business.

In recent years the growth of living wage accreditation in the city has been notable, expanding by an average of 65 new accreditations per annum, or some 4,800 additional covered employees.

Overall, Living Wage accredited businesses account for some 2% of the total business base (20,715 enterprises), but over 10% of total employees in the city.

420 Living Wage Accredited Businesses in Edinburgh	2% of all employers
More than 33,000 people work for Living Wage Employers in Edinburgh	10% of all employees



Analysis by sector shows that living wage accreditation take up is highest among charitable sector, financial sector, public sector and other service sector businesses. These four sectors account for almost 60% of all accredited businesses.

By contrast, take up rates are lower in many of the sectors which have been identified as high employers in the city, as well as those which are identified as accounting for high numbers of low paid workers.

For instance:

- Only 23 Wholesale and Retail businesses in the city are accredited, representing only 1% of the 2,425 such employers in Edinburgh
- Only 22 Catering and hospitality businesses are accredited, representing only 1% of the 1,840 such employers in Edinburgh
- Only 19 Health and Care businesses are accredited, despite the sector being one of the largest employers in the city, and
- Only 19 Construction businesses are accredited, representing only 1% of the 1,615 such employers in Edinburgh
- Only 19 Health and care businesses are accredited, representing 1.8%



Further analysis of accredited businesses in the city identify other areas where improvements may be targeted. For instance:

- Although public sector and charitable sector accreditations are high, there remain significant numbers of notable national and local institutions based in the city which are not currently accredited
- Although accreditation rates in the financial sector are high, there remain significant globally recognised employers based in the city which are not currently accredited
- Not all of the city's major higher and further education institutions are currently accredited

In addition to these, Edinburgh's capital city status offers opportunities to expand the living wage movement into new and influential areas of civic society. Edinburgh is home to sporting, cultural, religious and other institutions with significant influence beyond the boundaries of the city.

As with other sectors, analysis of living wage take up highlights notable target organisations for the Action Group to engage with and promote the benefits and impacts of accreditation.

Conclusions

Taken together, these findings suggest that:

- Edinburgh's economy remains at a fragile point in its recovery from pandemic.
- The combination of additional debt and slow recovery in turnover make it a challenging time for any businesses to consider committing to taking on additional costs in the form of higher wages.
- Any action to encourage or promote Living Wage Accreditation among employers in Edinburgh needs to be carried out with full understanding of the pressures businesses face, and to be rooted in real engagement with employers from key target sectors.
- At the same time, the city's commitment to eradicating poverty can only be achieved by improving working conditions and moving the city's population of 37,000 low paid workers into real living wage employment
- This will require at least 470 new Living Wage Accredited employers in the city, and
- These new accreditations need to include significant increases in targeted key sectors including Retail, Hospitality, Construction, and Health and Care.

On current trends it would take over 7 years to reach that number of new accreditations, with no guarantee that the level of take up would sufficiently penetrate into the sectors needed for a real improvement in the experience of the lowest paid workers. This suggests that additional, focused activity is needed in the city to promote, engage, and celebrate the living wage movement.

As well as targeted key sectors, however, data also suggests that a strong strategic approach should focus on influencing accreditation and take up in the large number of major employers and nationally important public,

private and third sector institutions in the city which are not yet accredited living wage employers. While most of these employers are likely to be paying above living wage for most of their staff already, significant impacts can be made by such employers committing to accreditation, through:

- Improving and expanding living wage accreditation throughout their supply chains, and
- Providing a strong market signal to all employers and workers that Edinburgh is a city where all workers can expect to be paid at least a real living wage.

The analysis also highlights a number of areas where information available to date is limited and where more learning and research is required. More work is needed, for instance, to better understand:

- What barriers there are to accreditation among employers in the key sectors highlighted?
- What incentives or support would be most effective in encouraging employers to pursue accreditation?
- What are the most persuasive arguments for businesses considering a commitment to accreditation?
- What examples can we show of the business benefits of accreditation in practice in Edinburgh?
- What evidence can we gather on the impact of living wage accreditation and fair work for workers experiencing poverty in Edinburgh?
- How can we better understand the Gig Economy in Edinburgh, and what actions can we take to support workers in these sectors?
- How can we better understand underrepresented groups with barriers to accessing fair work and living wage jobs (e.g. care experienced, disabled, homelessness, young people, ex-offenders, refugees)?

3. Targets

The Edinburgh Poverty Commission set a challenge to End Poverty in the city by 2030. As a key part of this, the commission challenged the city to take 37,000 workers out of low pay, and into secure jobs which pay a minimum of a real living wage.

The analysis above, and this challenge, suggests a number of targets for the Edinburgh Living Wage Action Group to work towards. They suggest that over a five year period, the group should aim to:

- Support an additional 500 Edinburgh businesses over the next five years to become living wage accredited employers
- Assuming an average of 79 employees per accredited business, this provides a target of 40,000 new employees supported by living wage policies
- This implies an overall target of at least 900 living wage accredited businesses in Edinburgh by 2026, or 4% of the current business base.
- This would represent an additional 200 accreditations (or 40 per year) above the recent recorded annual rate of growth.
- This should include targets to ensure that
 - All Edinburgh Partnership Board members are accredited (including NHS Lothian)
 - All Edinburgh Higher and Further Education Institutions are accredited
 - All public sector institutions located in the city are accredited
 - A key target list of other major employers and institutions is agreed by the action group
- In addition to these, targets should aim to ensure at least a double of take up rates in specific key sectors. This includes ensuring an increase in accreditation rates from 1% to 4% in the following sectors such that:
 - An additional 75 accreditations in the Wholesale and Retail sector

- An additional 50 accreditations in the Hospitality and Catering sector, and
- An additional 50 accreditations in the Construction sector, and
- An additional 20 accreditations in the Health and Social Care sector.

All these targets, it is proposed are profiled over five years on a straight line basis, with the recognition that rates of progress will vary around this trend over time.

These targets should be reviewed by the Action Group on an annual basis in light of progress and new challenges.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Total
All Sectors							
New accreditations per annum		100	100	100	100	100	500
New employees covered by accreditations		7,900	7,900	7,900	7,900	7,900	39,500
Total Accreditations	419	519	619	719	819	919	
Target sectors							
New Retail/Wholesale accreditations		15	15	15	15	15	75
New Hospitality/Catering accreditations		10	10	10	10	10	50
New Construction accreditations		10	10	10	10	10	50
New Health and Social Care accreditations		4	4	4	4	4	20

4. Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Plan

This section sets out key actions for partners to commit to towards meeting the targets outlined above.

Progress against these actions will be reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Action Group, with revisions and additions agreed at least annually.

Edinburgh Living Wage City Action Plan 2021-26					
1	Demonstrate Leadership	Lead Partner/Group	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3-5
1.1	Identify a business co-chair to provide credible leadership and influence across the business community	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
1.2	Maintain members' commitment to living wage accreditation and the living wage movement	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
1.3	Further encourage accreditation through supply chains of member organisations	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
1.4	Promote the real Living Wage on member Websites	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
1.5	Recruit major accredited companies to Edinburgh LW City Action Group where capacity is required	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
1.6	Review resourcing requirements and seek opportunities for funding to promote living wage city action plan delivery	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
1.7	Present Living Wage Action Plan to the Edinburgh Partnership Board to seek the commitment of all members to the plan and encourage all members (including NHS Lothian) to become Living Wage Employers.	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
1.8	Agree a refreshed Edinburgh Economy Strategy that puts fair work at the core of the city's economic recovery from pandemic	City of Edinburgh Council	✓		
1.9	Agree a new City of Edinburgh Council Fair Work Action Plan to set out and drive council actions to promote fair work among employees and businesses in Edinburgh	City of Edinburgh Council	✓		
1.10	Identify and agree individual group members to lead on specific appropriate actions in this plan	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
2	Learn	Lead Partner/Group	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3-5
2.1	Arrange meetings with senior members of key target sectors to capture insight into sector and opportunities for influence and engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail, Hospitality and catering, Construction, Care 	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	

2.2	Hold target sector focused events with businesses to understand barriers to take up and what incentives or support would be most effective in encouraging employers to pursue accreditation	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	
2.3	Hold a series of discussion sessions with End Poverty Edinburgh to explore and articulate the importance of fair work on people living in poverty	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
2.4	Hold workshops with sample employees from member organisations to explore the experience of workers in living wage organisations	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
2.5	Establish a short-term Gig Economy Forum to understand the real experiences of, and to explore actions that could improve working conditions, rights and quality of employment for workers in the gig economy	City of Edinburgh Council	✓		
2.6	Engage with underrepresented groups to understand the barriers to accessing fair work and develop an outreach approach of mitigation (e.g. care experienced, disabled, homelessness, young people, ex-offenders, refugees).	City of Edinburgh Council	✓	✓	
2.7	Hold workshops with existing living wage employers in Edinburgh to understand and gather case studies on the business benefits of fair work and living wage accreditation	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
2.8	Explore the potential for use or development of existing schemes (including Fair Fringe Charter, Construction Charter, Living Hours campaign and others) to promote living wage take up and wider fair work goals	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	
2.9	Engage with national funding bodies to explore ways of embedding living wage and fair work goals within funding agreements for key target sectors	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	
2.10	Engage and work with action groups from other UK Living Wage Places to learn from experiences and identify best practice for implementation in Edinburgh	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	
3	Promote	Lead Partner/Group	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3-5
3.1	Launch Edinburgh's accreditation as Living Wage City in LW Week November 2021	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
3.2	Develop and deliver a Communications Strategy to maximise awareness and understanding of the Real Living Wage and this action plan	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
3.3	Develop and launch a project website and social media presence	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
3.4	Promote Living Wage at annual business events, business breakfasts (or others)	Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce	✓	✓	✓
3.5	Promote the value of LW accreditation to employers and use research data to support such benefits e.g. increased productivity, lower staff turnover etc.	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
3.6	Assist local applications for UK Living Wage Awards	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
3.7	Hold sector focused events to raise profile and interest with contributions from advocates/role models from their sector	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓

3.8	Arrange introductory meetings with priority target organisations identified by the Action Group	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	
3.9	Arrange an ongoing programme of media content highlighting current LW employers in partnership with City of Edinburgh Council Communications Team	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
4	Celebrate	Lead Partner/Group	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3-5
4.1	Invite all accredited companies to annual LW week celebration & hold bespoke event	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
4.2	Prepare and publish a suite of case studies of local accredited employers and employees	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
4.3	Organise an annual Fair Work event to celebrate all Edinburgh's Fair Work Employers	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
4.4	Arrange for the co-chairs of the Action Group to write in welcome to each new accreditation and support with press release	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
4.5	Work with local news media to celebrate key milestones achieved towards the action plan's five year target	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
5	Monitor	Lead Partner/Group	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
5.1	Nominate LW City lead implementation officer	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓		
5.2	Publish annual public report in living wage week each year showing progress towards delivery of action plan	Edinburgh LW City Action Group	✓	✓	✓
5.3	Report on impact of procurement, community benefits and LW commitments to relevant City of Edinburgh Council Committees	City of Edinburgh Council	✓	✓	✓



SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIAL & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 5 October 2021, 2pm

Supporting Sustainable Development Goals through Open Education

1. Description of paper

This paper presents a review of relevant developments relating to the Open Educational Resources (OER) Policy introduced in 2016, and outlines how the University's strategic support for open education contributes to achieving the aims of the Sustainable Development Goals and civic responsibility.

Engagement with OER and open education helps to contribute to the following Strategy 2030 outcomes:

- The undergraduate curriculum will support breadth and choice, preparing students, graduates and alumni to make a difference in whatever they do, wherever they do it.
- We will be leading Scotland's commitment to widening participation.
- Improved digital outreach will see us enabling global participation in education.
- We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
- We will see integrated reporting of our whole organisational impact against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

2. Action requested

The Committee is requested to review the paper and provide feedback.

3. Background and context

The paper outlines some of the ways that the University of Edinburgh's strategic commitment to OER and open knowledge has enabled us to make an active and ongoing contribution to achieving the aims of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, while improving the quality of our student experience, and contributing to our shared knowledge commons.

Particular aspects that may be of interest to this committee are:

- The involvement of students in co-creating open educational resources
- Embedding OER activity in the curriculum across all colleges
- The reach and impact (metrics) of this activity
- Local work with schools
- Decolonising and breaking down silos
- Areas of innovation
- The embedding of OER choices in business as usual (spread and levels of involvement)
- Training and support available for staff and students to get involved

The University's commitment to OER is in line with UNESCO's 2019 [Recommendation on OER](#), which highlights the important role that OER can play in achieving the aims of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which the University is committed to through the SDG Accord. The Recommendation recognises that:

“in building inclusive Knowledge Societies, Open Educational Resources (OER) can support quality education that is equitable, inclusive, open and participatory as well as enhancing academic freedom and professional autonomy of teachers by widening the scope of materials available for teaching and learning.”

The Recommendation highlights that mainstreaming OER can make a significant contribution to achieving six of the sustainable development goals;

- SDG 4 Quality education,
- SDG 5 Gender equality,
- SDG 9 Industry, innovation and infrastructure,
- SDG 10 Reduced inequalities within and across countries,
- SDG 16 Peace, justice and strong institutions,
- SDG 17 Partnerships for the goals.

The University of Edinburgh's OER Policy was approved by our Education Committee in 2016 and reviewed for updates in 2021. The policy is supported by a central OER Service, based in Information Services Group, which encourages staff and students to use, create and publish OERs to enhance the quality of the student experience, expand provision of learning opportunities, and enrich our shared knowledge commons. Investing in OER and open licensing helps to improve the sustainability and longevity of educational resources, while encouraging staff and students to reuse and repurpose existing open materials expands the pool of teaching and learning resources available and helps to diversify the curriculum.

4. Discussion

OER activities in local schools and colleges

In the five years since the OER Policy was first approved, the University of Edinburgh has become an internationally recognised exemplar of sustainable open education practice, with institutions worldwide frequently approaching the OER Service for advice and guidance on OER policy implementation and strategic support for open education. The quantity and quality of open educational resources produced by staff and students across the University's schools and colleges has increased considerably. This includes:

- Over 4,700 open licensed videos on Media Hopper Create,
- 223 open resources and collections shared through the Open.Ed OER Showcase,
- 67 student-created OERs for schoolteachers on Times Education Supplement (TES) Resources (a website which offers curriculum teaching materials for schoolteachers to use), which have been downloaded over 60,000 times.
- The OER Service has run over 230 digital skills workshops, employed ten student interns and won three awards.
- Our 'How To' Guides on Open.Ed have been accessed 109,502 times.

Students, interns and projects

Students have always played an important role in supporting and engaging with open education and OER at the University of Edinburgh. The Students Association were

instrumental in encouraging the University to adopt an OER policy, and we continue to see student engagement and co-creation as being fundamental aspects of open education and open knowledge.

Since 2016 the OER Service has employed ten student interns who have worked with their peers across the institution to co-create a valuable collection of high quality open licensed teaching and learning resources.

- ***Interdisciplinary Learning Resources for Schools***

Staff and students, in collaboration with the OER Service, have co-created and shared a significant series of over 60 free interdisciplinary teaching resources for schoolteachers and educators. The resources, which can be downloaded free of charge from TES Resources, are accompanied by Curriculum for Excellence learning objectives and outcomes, and are designed to be easily re-used and adapted for different classroom scenarios and curriculum levels. Topics covered include climate change, marine pollution, food production, environmental sciences, statistics, biodiversity, sustainability and conservation, infectious diseases, vaccines and chemical reactions. These open interdisciplinary teaching resources have been downloaded over 61,000 times. Commenting on The Climate Change Game, one school teacher said:

“This was a fantastic resource. I used it with my S1 class and they were totally engaged in it. The resource is highly interdisciplinary with aspects of Science/climate change, the geography of Germany, language skills, skills associated with selecting information and presenting arguments to name but a few. I will definitely use this again in the future and next time try to involve other departments in the school!

- ***Open textbooks***

This year, as part of a Student Experience Grant funded project, students from the Reid School of Music worked together with the OER Service, to repurpose existing open licensed content from the Fundamentals of Music Theory MOOC and course, to create a new open textbook. This experience is particularly valuable at a time when institutions are facing rapidly increasing textbook costs as a result of moving from print to digital materials in response to the COVID pandemic and longer-term trends in academic publishing. This has resulted in increased interest in publishing open eBooks, open textbooks and open journals. Open textbooks have the potential to benefit the University by reducing textbook costs, benefit staff by providing access to easily customisable open textbooks, and benefit students by providing free, high quality digital learning materials.

Responding to the Global Pandemic

Strategic sustainable support for open education and OER enabled the University to respond to the unique challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

- As the pandemic spread, our Masters in Critical Care team realised open content from their course would be invaluable to healthcare professionals at the front line of critical care. The content was rapidly migrated to FutureLearn where it was freely accessed by over 50,000 learners from 200 countries.
- With the University’s global reputation for research, many turned to the institution for access to COVID-19 research. Our Website and Communications division

developed an online application using open-source software and technologies, to enable the Usher Institute to share Open Access COVID-19 reviews, journal articles and educational materials. UNCOVER, the Usher Network for Covid-19 Evidence Reviews, provides access to rapid evidence reviews on COVID research in response to requests from policymakers, through a convenient and accessible website.

Sustainable Online Learning Resources

As part of our commitment to providing open access to high quality online learning opportunities and widening access to our scholarship, the University has created a wide range of free short online courses that have been accessed by almost four million learners worldwide. In order to ensure the sustainability and accessibility of these courses, course materials are designed to be shared and reused under open licence.

- Over 500 high quality media resources from our MOOCs have been shared under Creative Commons licence in our Open Media Bank. Topics covered include Sustainable Global Food Systems, Critical Thinking in Global Challenges, and Unlocking the World of Data.
- The OER Policy also underpins our success in reaching Data-Driven Innovation (DDI) targets. As of January 2021, we have accumulated a total of 355,243 learners and 15,499 certificates sold on DDI MOOCs.
- As a result, the University of Edinburgh is recognised as a leader amongst UK universities in terms of the amount of content we share to the sector and the impact our OER Policy has on practice. We are regularly invited to contribute to international events and to learning and teaching conferences at other universities to talk about this area of work.
- Our commitment to OER helps to support social inclusion and enables both our teachers and our learners to become fully engaged digital citizens. Open resources include materials from the lifelong learning course Democracy in Theory and Practice and media from The Making of the US President, Understanding the Scottish Referendum, and Christian Muslim Relations MOOCs.
- Edinburgh colleagues reuse and repurpose open resources created elsewhere. This highlights the value of sharing, and actively challenges the idea of silos and not using materials that were ‘not invented here’, which is one of the troublesome issues in higher education and prevents us from de-colonising and diversifying our content.

Open Resources for Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education

Professional and academic colleagues across the University have created a wide range open resources focused on education policy, pedagogy, online teaching and learning, and digital skills development, that help to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. These include:

- open licensed videos from our How to Create an Online Course MOOC,
- open educational resources covering open assessment practices, academic integrity, independent research, and radical digital literacy.

- our award-winning self-paced open learning course 23 Things for Digital Knowledge.
- The University has also created and shared a growing suite of influential open licensed education technology policies and guidelines to benefit institutions across the higher education sector.

Embedding in the curriculum

The University's support for OER and open knowledge is helping to diversify and decolonise our institution, improve gender equality, reduce inequalities and improve knowledge equity. Learning activities have been embedded in the curriculum. A wide range of Wikimedia in the Curriculum initiatives are helping to represent marginalised topics on the encyclopaedia.

- Global Health Challenges postgraduate students collaborate to improve Wikipedia articles related to natural or manmade disasters, such as the 2020 Assam floods;
- World Christianity MSc students create new articles to ensure the encyclopaedia's coverage focuses more on world Christianity and less on white Northern hemisphere perspectives.
- History students are re-examining the legacy of Scotland's involvement in the Transatlantic Slave Trade and creating new articles that present a more positive view of Black History;
- Design Informatics students uploaded the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft Database to Wikidata as linked Open Data, enabling the data to be geolocated and visualised, in a project that surfaced hidden histories and captured the attention of global media.
- Undergraduate medical students, used existing open educational resources to develop a suite of materials covering lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual health, in order to cover a gap in the medical curriculum and provide valuable skills for qualifying doctors. New open resources, including digital stories recorded from patient interviews and resources for Secondary School children of all ages, were also created and released as OER for others to use.

5. Resource implications

The OER support service is delivered by ISG. No additional funding is being requested in this paper.

6. Risk Management

By encouraging the use of open licences and supporting colleagues to improve their copyright literacy through digital skills workshops, the OER Policy and Service lessens the legal and reputational risks to the University and its members resulting from copyright infringement and inappropriate use of copyright content.

The OER Service prepares monthly service reports for ISG senior management to monitor the KPIs and success of the service.

7. Equality & Diversity

The University's strategic support for OER should continue to have a positive impact on the needs of a range of diverse groups by facilitating sustainable curriculum diversification, mandating accessibility of resources and encouraging colleagues to engage with a huge worldwide pool of diverse resources. The [Equality Impact Assessment](#) of the OER Policy

undertaken in January 2016 has been reviewed and we believe it is still appropriate and relevant.

8. Responding to the Climate Emergency and the Sustainable Development Goals

The UNESCO Recommendation on OER recognises that mainstreaming OER can help to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 4 (Quality education), SDG 5 (Gender equality), SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities within and across countries), SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals). The University's strategic support for open education through the OER Policy and Service supports these goals.

9. Next steps/implications

This work on embedding and increasing OER activity will continue as part of ISG services. As the activity grows and gains external reputation the work will be reported by ISG against the university-wide commitment to embedding work which is in support of the UNSDGs. Schools and units may also wish to publicise their involvement in this work as part of their UNSDG work.

10. Consultation

Senate Education Committee received a paper regarding updates to the OER policy in September 2021. The updates were approved.

11. Further information

Author

*Lorna Campbell, OER Service Manager,
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Presenter

*Melissa Highton, Assistant Principal
Online Learning and Director of Learning,
Teaching and Web Services*

12. Freedom of Information

This paper is open.



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH

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Sustainability, Civic and Social Responsibility Committee

5th October 2021

Update on COP26 Current and Planned Activity

Description of paper

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide an update to the Sustainability, Civic and Social Responsibility (SCSR) Committee on what activity has been undertaken to date, and is planned for the future, in relation to the University making a strong contribution to and having a presence at COP26 in Glasgow this November.
2. The activity detailed in this paper contributes to the following outcomes in Strategy 2030:
 - i) We will see our research having a greater impact as a result of partnership, international reach and investment in emergent disciplines.
 - ii) Improved digital outreach will see us enabling global participation in education.
 - iii) We will have created opportunities for partners, friends, neighbours and supporters to co-create, engage with the world and amplify our impacts.
 - iv) We will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040.

Action requested/Recommendation

3. The Committee is asked to note the update and provide comments or suggestions on activity gaps and further opportunities.

Background and context

4. The 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26), is taking place this year in Glasgow from the 31st October to the 12th November. At this global climate summit, almost all countries of the world will gather to set targets and reach agreements on tackling climate change.

COP26 is particularly important, as it marks five years since the Paris Agreement was reached, with all countries now required to commit to revised Nationally Determined Contributions which reflect their highest ambition possible. Commitments made at this COP26 will strongly impact the trajectory of global warming and the climate crisis.

The UK Government has stated that it intends to host COP26 as an in-person event, including the Negotiations themselves, the Blue Zone and the Green Zone. At present there has been no official communication indicating that in-person events will not go ahead.

The UK Presidency priorities for COP26 are:

1. Secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5 degrees within reach
2. Adapt to protect communities and natural habitats
3. Mobilise finance
4. Work together to deliver

To support this, each day at COP26 will focus on a specific theme, details of which are available in the [Presidency Programme](#).

The University of Edinburgh plays an important part in helping to tackle climate change. From generating world leading research on climate science and policy, to teaching the next generation of climate leaders and activists, through to engaging local and global communities on key issues, the University's role in pushing for and developing solutions is vital.

A home COP26 is a valuable opportunity for the University to visibly demonstrate its support for the COP process and to showcase its strengths and contribution to action on climate change.

To fully utilise this opportunity, the COP26 Planning Group is overseeing and coordinating the University of Edinburgh's response and contributions to COP26.

Discussion

5. The COP26 Planning Group was formed for 2021 to ensure a coordinated approach in the lead up to and during COP26. The group is comprised of staff from across the University, including academic and professional services staff, and student representatives.

The group considers the breadth of opportunities for the University community to engage with and contribute to COP26 including: hosting events and exhibits in the Blue and Green Zones, volunteering at the conference, Observer delegation, partnerships, and events in Edinburgh.

This paper provides a non-exhaustive overview of what activity has taken place to date to encourage participation, and what is planned for the weeks leading up to COP26 and during the conference.

6. Activity to date and in progress

Expressions of interest for UK Government managed spaces

Earlier this year, in March, expressions of interest were sought from organisations across the UK to apply for space within the UK Government managed area. A total of 12 submissions were made by University of Edinburgh staff where the University was listed as the lead organisation, and a further 12 made by staff where another organisation was the lead. Overall, more than 4000 applications were received, with five proposals from University staff being successful to host a Green Zone event.

Side events and exhibits at COP26

Applications for side events and exhibits at COP26 opened in June/July, and one application for a side event was made (each organisation was only permitted to submit one proposal). Professor Soledad Garcia Ferrari was nominated to submit her proposal titled "The New Galapagos 'Sustainability, Innovation and Resilience Hub': Experiences on the Ground", and the outcome of the application is expected by the end of September.

Attending COP26 – Volunteering and Observer Passes

As anticipated, there has been a high level of interest from our staff and students in being able to attend COP26.

Volunteering - One route which was promoted was to apply to be a COP26 Volunteer, with the process managed by Glasgow City Council. To assist our staff and students with this, an online information session was held to help answer questions and let people know what would be involved.

We are not able to find out exactly how many of the University community applied or were successful in being selected as a volunteer.

Observer Passes – The other main route open to staff and students to attend COP26, is through applying for an Observer Pass. Each accredited Observer Organisation is able to apply to send delegates as observers to the conference. To ensure a fair opportunity, all those interested were invited to make an application in order to be considered.

The registration form closed on the 13th August, with a total of 177 suitable applications being received. To show the demand for passes, and hopefully receive a substantial number of passes, all suitable applicants were nominated to the official UNFCCC registration system. At the beginning of September we were informed that the University has been allocated 15 passes, which can be split into week long blocks, allowing up to 30 different participants to attend.

A selection process is currently underway to decide which applicants will receive a pass, and the outcome is expected in early October. Those selected will then be supported to attend the conference and share their experience with the wider University community.

University Communications

To ensure the entire University community has a high level of awareness of COP26 and to show our commitment externally, a range of communications campaigns and strategies have been employed.

To inform and engage with internal audiences, a number of University social media channels regularly share COP26 content, including SRS and central CAM. There are dedicated COP26 webpages hosted on the SRS website, and a mailbox for COP26 related enquiries. Additionally, a Teams Channel was created to facilitate the networking and sharing of information for interested staff and students. COP26 was also highlighted to staff and students in their respective welcome emails, with a further COP26 focussed email planned for November.

Communications and marketing staff across all Schools/Colleges/Departments are regularly updated on COP26 activity via monthly Marketing & Communication forums, and asked to communicate upcoming events and opportunities within their areas. They are encouraged to feedback what is being organised in their areas and find COP26 research stories in their own Schools.

Central Communications and Marketing are developing a sustainability brand campaign looking to raise awareness of climate and sustainability related degrees to prospective students in a wide range of countries

At regular intervals, the Principal has been kept informed of the University's involvement and key activity.

Commented [FS1]: You could have a new heading here on University participation in COP26-related events in other sectors, e.g. several staff from the Edinburgh School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture (ESALA) are taking part in a "COP26 Built Environment Virtual Pavilion" being organised by the UK Green Building Council:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WWJjgik415I67kmbmTfh7jXw9Mfm4GKy/view>

I could probably think of a few others too.

All good examples of our research being showcased in various sectors

Commented [FS2]: True. Presentations at the monthly Marketing & Communication forums to update all comms & marketing staff and ask them to communicate upcoming events, opportunities etc and find COP26 research stories in their own schools.

Commented [FS3]: New paragraph: CAM are developing a sustainability brand campaign to raise awareness of climate & sustainability related degrees to prospective students in a wide range of countries. **BARTON Rachael** I can forward you more info on this if you need it

Commented [FS4]: COP mentioned in staff & student welcome emails, and another COP26 email to students and staff is planned for Nov.

Student Engagement

To support a particular focus on student engagement and opportunities, a sub-group was formed within the main COP26 Planning Group to advance this area.

The group considered key priorities and the most effective initiatives to involve students, with the following having been delivered or currently in progress:

- Student Climate Innovation Grants, supported by Derek & Maureen Moss - 5 x £1000 grants
- SRS Student Project Grants - £5000 available, up to £500 per project
- Focused communications during Welcome Week
- SRS Welcome Event
- Promotion of existing training and online courses including Carbon Literacy and Introduction to Sustainability
- Progressing the Curriculum Transformation Programme
- Planning a month-long Careers in Sustainability event this semester

Commented [FS5]: This is now going to be a month long; check with Matt for more detail

This is in addition to the offerings available through the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability e.g. the Sustainability Champions Network, SRS Student Pathways, Students as Change Agents

Community and Public Engagement

A number of initiatives aiming to engage the local Edinburgh population and schools have been developed, with a call for ideas from the Edinburgh Research Office over summer generating 26 proposals.

Highlights of these activities include:

- The Big Balloon Blow Up – a hands-on science investigation that links school-based experiments with real-life climate change research at the University of Edinburgh.
- Dear Green Place – Youth Voices from the Global South
- Festival of Repair

The SRS department also facilitated the creation and delivery of a number of COP26 Community micro grants, with a total value of £15,000 made available, and contributed £6000 to public engagement activities.

Alumni Engagement

As the University has a global alumni community, another sub-group was created to focus on opportunities to engage our alumni.

Two main strands emerged and are in progress – promoting taking MOOCs and investigating opportunities with Alumni Clubs e.g. hosting events.

Promotion of the upcoming COP26Casts is also intended, as alumni are considered to be an ideal audience for these.

External partnerships

Several members of the COP26 Planning Group are in contact with or sit on external groups.

To ensure a cohesive and joined-up approach to Edinburgh's participation in COP26, we have representatives on the following groups, who liaise and share activity in other sectors:

- City of Edinburgh Council COP26 Working Group
- City of Edinburgh Council International Strategy Group
- Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce COP26 group
- The City Deal co-ordination group
- Transport for Edinburgh Co-ordination group

Professor Dave Reay also represents the University in the COP26 Universities network, a group of 55 Universities working to coordinate participation at COP26 and the contribution of the University sector.

Further highlights

COP26Casts – Following the success of the Business School's COPCasts in previous years, a series of COP26Casts was planned for throughout the year. This plan was adapted in the light of viewership numbers, and only two COP26Casts were released earlier in the year, with the topics being a US politics focused event and a carbon accounting one.

MOOCs – A number of Massive open online courses (MOOCs) have been developed this year, with the Climate Solutions course having launched in May. This course is in the process of being developed in a number of other languages too.

Carbon Bubble exhibit – In October/November (weather dependent) the SRS department will host the PwC Carbon Bubble in High School Yards, in front of the ECCI. This event will focus around a balloon sized to represent one tonne of carbon, and staff will be running an engagement stand open to the public.

Edinburgh Earth Initiative – The Edinburgh Earth Initiative was announced at an event earlier in summer, attended by Her Majesty The Queen and Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal. The formal launch is expected in October, to tie in with the lead up to COP26.

Climate Beacons – With the support of the ECCI, and run by Creative Carbon Scotland, the Climate Beacons project brings together seven hubs across Scotland in a collaborative project between climate change or environmental organisations and arts, heritage or cultural organisations to stimulate long-term public engagement in the lead-up to and following COP26. The seven hubs have now been selected and Climate Beacons will run until July 2022.

ClimateExp0 – This office pre-COP event took place in May across five days, with several Edinburgh staff and students representing us on different topics.

Commented [FS6]: postponed due to high wind. Likely to return in Oct or Nov

These COP26 activities run alongside and in addition to the existing SRS programmes and opportunities open to our staff and students year-round e.g. training courses, events.

Planned and Upcoming Activity

In addition to the activities that are currently in progress, there are an increasing number of events being planned for the weeks leading up to COP26 and during the conference itself.

Lead up to COP26

Pilgrimage for COP26 – With the support of the University Chaplaincy, a number of community groups have organised for a pilgrimage to take place from the 17th – 31st October 2021. This will take the form of a walk and a learning journey from Dunbar to Glasgow to reflect on the climate and ecological crisis in anticipation of COP26.

COP26Casts - Two to three weeks before COP, the COP26Casts will return. During an Impact Week, three COP26Casts will be presented, with a range of supporting thought leadership pieces with reflection on current issues.

Public Engagement – A series of six public broadcast events – the ‘Edinburgh COP Conversations series’ is planned for the two weeks leading up to COP. Some of the themes are; the future of food, how to be a good ancestor, nature inspired solutions.

There will also be a Festival of Social Science, which will include activities such as a self-guided walking tour, films, and exhibitions.

Students – The SRS department and Dave Reay are supporting a group of students to develop a student focused series on COP26 - A young person’s guide to COP26.

Exhibitions – The Centre for Special Collections are planning an online exhibition, looking at the history of climate research at the University and the impact it had.

Running throughout October and November, EI is running the Discovery Series: People, Places, Planet campaign, which aims to take advantage of global attention and showcase the University’s strengths, particularly in relation to the climate crisis.

During COP26

In addition to the Climate Solution MOOC already launched, the Sustainability - Developing a Personal Ethic course will start in October and will include a Live at COP26 element.

On the middle weekend of the conference, the 6th November, a high level symposium has been planned. This event will be focused on UK-Africa Partnerships for Climate Action, and will be a hybrid event open to a range of audience members.

Resource implications

7. Supporting the COP26 Planning Group with project management capacity is being met through an existing SRS Projects Coordinator role, with 0.2FTE having been made available.

Additional communications support has been requested by members of the COP26 Planning Group (Gavin Donoghue and Sarah Ford-Hutchinson) from the central Communications and Marketing team. This has been provided, with further communications staff offering help in the lead up to and during COP26.

Funding for initiatives detailed in this paper is being provided through the existing budgets of Planning Group members who are budget-holders.

Commented [FS7]: Gavin D and Sarah FH has requested additional communications support within CAM, and other communications staff are now helping and will be available to help during Nov

Risk Management

8. The University is at risk of reputational damage if it were not to have a visible and active presence at COP26. To maintain the University's position as a leader in climate research and action, the University must take opportunities to support the COP26 process and highlight our particular strengths, including through forming partnerships.

The COP26 Planning Group has successfully engaged with a number of opportunities to attend and contribute to COP26, including: securing observer passes to send delegates as official observers, encouraging applications for events within the Green and Blue Zones, and organising events to engage the local Edinburgh population and visiting COP26 attendees. This confident approach will ensure the University is represented well on the international climate action stage.

Additionally, there is a risk that gaps in the themes or types of activity undertaken emerge, or opportunities are missed.

To minimise this, the COP26 Planning Group is comprised of colleagues from all areas and levels of the University, including a student representative, ensuring that a diverse range of perspectives and expertise are incorporated when considering areas of action. Furthermore, this Committee is now asked to provide any comments or suggestions to identify any gaps or opportunities.

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

9. The activities detailed in this paper, to date and planned, all contribute to supporting the COP26 process and its aim of setting ambitious targets to reduce emissions and increase climate action.
10. The various actions of the COP26 Planning Group and the University's involvement with the conference, will contribute positively to the following SDGs:
 - 4 – Quality education
 - 5 – Gender Equality
 - 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth
 - 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure
 - 10 – Reduced Inequalities
 - 11 – Sustainable cities and communities
 - 13 – Climate action

Equality & Diversity

11. The activities and opportunities developed for the University community have and will be open for all to participate in, with communications designed to reach as broad and diverse an audience as possible.

Throughout any selection or decision making process, equality and diversity considerations are incorporated, including but not limited to: gender parity, generational balance, and socioeconomic inclusiveness.

Next steps/implications

12. The next steps include to:

- Receive feedback from SCSR Committee
- Through the COP26 Planning Group, deliver outlined activities with flexibility for including new opportunities – in the lead up to and during COP26
- Feedback to SCSR on outcomes achieved through the actions of the COP26 Planning Group and the University's participation in COP26

Consultation

13. This document has been reviewed by:

Director – SRS
Communication Manager – SRS
University Lead on Climate Responsibility & Sustainability

Further information

14. Author

Rachael Barton
SRS Projects Coordinator
Department for Social Responsibility
and Sustainability
September 2021

Presenter

Author

Freedom of Information

15. This is an open paper.



SUSTAINABILITY, SOCIAL & CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY COMMITTEE

5 October 2021

**City of Edinburgh Council Climate Strategy Consultation –
University of Edinburgh Response**

Description of paper

The paper comprises the University's response to the City Council's Climate Strategy consultation.

Action requested

The Committee is asked to note the paper.

Discussion

Paula McLeay
Policy and Insight Senior Manager
City of Edinburgh Council

Beth Hall
Strategy Manager
Policy Unit
Beth.hall@edinburgh.gov.uk

Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability
The University of Edinburgh
The Boilerhouse,
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Edinburgh EH1 1LT

10 September 2021

Dear Paula

University of Edinburgh Response to City Climate Strategy Consultation

We are delighted to submit this response on behalf of the University of Edinburgh to the consultation on the City Climate Change Strategy. The University of Edinburgh believes that climate change is one of the most pressing issues facing humanity in the twenty-first century and is determined to play a leading role in addressing the issue. As a founding signatory to the Edinburgh Climate Compact, we are committed to working in partnership with the Council and other partners to drive the necessary changes in the city and city region.

The University of Edinburgh employs over 11,000 staff, attracts more than 40,000 students each year and has an estate that spans multiple and varied campus sites across the city. The University has committed to becoming zero carbon by 2040- our Climate Strategy lays out a comprehensive whole institution approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation in order to achieve ambitious targets. It is our intention to update the strategy in 2022 and we look forward to discussing that with the Council in the light of the city-wide strategy.

University staff are heavily involved in city programmes and partnerships- as members of the Edinburgh Climate Commission, Climate Emergency Response Group, Edinburgh Adapts, Place-based Climate Action Network, Edinburgh Living Landscape Partnership, through delivering projects to move Edinburgh to a circular economy, as part of the Thriving Green Spaces FPA project, with

Eco Eats and as partner in Groundswell, to name only a few. Student living lab projects, for instance for Case Studies in Sustainable Development courses, engage our student body with local climate change and sustainability issues to propose solutions, while the University's Community Grants has supported a wide range of organizations to implement green projects that can support Council goals.

We welcome and strongly support the City of Edinburgh Council's 2030 Climate Strategy and look forward to assisting in its successful realisation. More detailed responses to elements of the strategy are provided in the annex to this letter but the key points we wish to make are as follows:

- We strongly agree with the **vision and principles** set out in the Strategy
- However we believe that the Strategy could be strengthened with **greater integration of circular economy in the vision and principles**. Reference to the circular economy does not appear until page 46, in the section "Business and skills in a net zero economy", when it could be embedded throughout the document; nearly half of green house gas emissions arise from the products we make and use so transitioning to a circular economy will be essential to meet net zero and will require systemic change with action from citizens, government, academia and businesses
- In terms of **actions**, we applaud the ambition, but consider that the necessary human resources and capacity, early action and funding, citizen awareness and support, and skills and training, and new financial mechanisms and funding sources, will all be key elements to meet the stretching ambitions set out
- **Adaptation** could be better integrated within the strategy as a whole, clearly linked to action for **biodiversity**
- We would like to see more consideration given to the impact of the transition on fuel poverty, and the risk that in tackling climate change, we exacerbate fuel poverty issues
- We consider the resilience of local energy infrastructure to be a vital issue- as we increasingly electrify the heating and transport systems, and seek smarter two way energy flows, understanding the city's energy infrastructure needs and its current constraints will be important
- We agree that the innovation and business opportunities arising from addressing climate change (and including circular economy) are considerable and we look forward to playing an active role in assisting in seizing these opportunities
- We would welcome more detail, and discussion on how the behaviour change and awareness raising elements of the strategy will unfold. As a University committed to excellence in teaching and learning, we are keen to see the training and skills elements of the transition are given the necessary prominence
- We would welcome clarity on the future of the city cycling scheme in the context of active travel promotion
- We seek it as extremely important that development planning and building control are positively aligned the transition including ensuring key policies and guidance are up to date and supportive
- We particularly welcome proposals for the creation of a new city heat and energy partnership and look forward to playing an active role in it

- We welcome the fact that the strategy addresses offsets but consider this section could be stronger. The University has given considerable thought to this issue and would be happy to share our learning as the Council develops its policies further
- It is clear that a mix of government, public and private investment at scale will be required to deliver the necessary transformational changes- and we would welcome the opportunity to engage with discussions on how this can be delivered
- Finally, we consider that the active involvement of all communities across the City will be important to secure a fair and just transition and that especial attention is needed to engage with communities traditionally under represented in sustainability action in the UK- including groups from lower income areas, and minority ethnic communities. We would welcome a strand developed within the plan to specifically target these groups, and would urge consideration that an Equality Impact Assessment be completed for the final strategy.

The CEC draft 2030 Climate Strategy is ambitious and far-reaching. We strongly agree with the vision and principles set forth, and have considered ways that the Strategy could be strengthened further, particularly in relation to next steps. The programme of actions proposed is a significant undertaking to meet net zero by 2030, and we applaud and give our wholehearted support to the CEC for this comprehensive approach. Please contact Dave Gorman (dave.gorman@ed.ac.uk), Director of the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability for further follow up.

On behalf of the University, we offer our congratulations to the Council and the team developing the plans in delivering this important milestone and commit to working with the Council to take it forward.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Gorman', written in a cursive style.

Dave Gorman
Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Grant Ferguson

Interim Director of Estates

Detailed Response

Introduction

This consultation response has been submitted by the [Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability \(SRS\)](#) at the University of Edinburgh, in collaboration with Estates and other colleagues across the University. The Department for SRS was created in 2014 to understand how the University can work to respond to global challenges including poverty, climate change and the growing demand for energy, food and water. We aim to do this by supporting a culture of change, pursuing excellence and innovation and working collaboratively as part of the local and global community. Our work cuts across scanning, evidence and strategic development; inspiration and communications; operational responsibility and sustainability; links with research, learning and teaching; social responsibility and sustainable governance planning and reporting.

The University of Edinburgh employs over 11,000 staff, attracts more than 40,000 students each year and has an estate that spans multiple and varied campus sites across the city. The University has committed to becoming zero carbon by 2040; the University Climate Strategy lays out a comprehensive whole institution approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation in order to achieve ambitious targets.

University staff are heavily involved in city programmes and partnerships, as members of the Edinburgh Climate Commission, Climate Emergency Response Group, Edinburgh Adapts, Place-based Climate Action Network, Edinburgh Living Landscape Partnership and delivering projects to move Edinburgh to a circular economy, as part of the Thriving Green Spaces FPA project, with Eco Eats and as partner in Groundswell, to name only a few. Student living lab projects, for instance for Case Studies in Sustainable Development courses, engage our student body with local climate change and sustainability issues to propose solutions, while the University's Community Grants support a wide range of organizations to implement green projects that can support CEC goals.

We welcome and strongly support the City of Edinburgh Council's 2030 Climate Strategy and look forward to assisting in its successful realisation. Key responses to elements of the strategy are provided in the following sections.

Key points regarding the 2030 Climate Strategy

We strongly agree with the **vision and principles** set out in the Strategy; the Strategy covers key areas of resilience, energy, active travel, innovation, green spaces, investment and community engagement. The Strategy could be strengthened with greater integration of circular economy in the vision and principles. Reference to the circular economy does not appear until page 46, in the section "Business and skills in a net zero economy", when it could be embedded throughout the document; nearly half of GHGs arise from the products we make and use so transitioning to a circular economy will be essential to meet net zero and will require systemic change with action from citizens, government, academia and businesses.

In terms of **actions**, we applaud the ambition, but consider that the necessary human resources and capacity, early action and funding, citizen awareness and support, and skills and training, will all be key elements to meet the stretching ambitions set out.

Adaptation could be better integrated within the strategy as a whole, clearly linked to action for biodiversity (more detail on this is provided in subsequent points).

Net zero, climate resilient development and growth

The draft Strategy sets out the importance of addressing issues relating to growth and impacts of climate change; we welcome the approach taken. Key points to consider to further strengthen action and the commitment include:

- How does the CEC intend to implement behaviour change elements that are outwith its control or jurisdiction, which include fewer hard surfaces in gardens, a cleaner Edinburgh, use of 20 minute neighbourhoods by residents (rather than travelling to the city centre)? Outlining an approach would be valuable
- The importance of an immediate focus on priority actions for resilience rather than planning for it, based on recent flooding from extreme weather events (and in previous years – risks are known to some extent, data available, to be mapped quickly), specifically addressing drainage infrastructure and impermeable surfaces; we take note of the work being undertaken by the Edinburgh and Lothians Drainage Partnership. Homeowners and business owners could face not only the costs of retrofitting buildings for the net zero target but also costs of flooding and other damage if actions are not taken immediately
- In terms of laying policy foundations, there could be more detail here, for example consideration of mandating percentages of permeable/green surfaces in developments/use of green space factor tools to support this – at this stage, there could be a better sense/communication of how climate resilience and biodiversity enhancements will be designed into city planning; at the same time, how will these expanded and potentially more complex green spaces be maintained, when currently Parks and Green Spaces may struggle to maintain existing areas (not enough concrete details here)?

Net zero energy generation and energy efficient buildings

We welcome CEC's call to create a new City Heat and Energy Partnership as well as CEC recognition of the need to call on Scottish Government to improve support to private owners to enable retrofitting; this is especially important in relation to tenement building stock (37% of all UK building stock), to meet the net zero target. Equally, financial support for retrofit or conversion of CHP away from use of gas for public bodies/local businesses that have these systems should be part of next steps. There could also be more focus on adaptation of existing building stock (as well as in development planning), with consideration of the long-term and rising temperatures. There should be specific focus and priority given to hard to "treat" traditional/listed/tenement buildings in terms of both energy efficiency and adaptation, and immediate retrofitting action in this area with financial support, across owners of these buildings; the timeframe set out in the Strategy seems too late (2028-30 for development of a plan for social housing, and 2023-27 to identify opportunities for public sector).

Net zero emissions transport

We find the suggestion to create a sustainable urban logistics hub for goods and using zero carbon transport for 'last mile' deliveries to be very interesting and this level of ambition is welcomed. We also welcome CEC support for reducing emissions from flying by encouraging local residents/businesses to make more sustainable travel choices, and the plan to do so.

Again, there could be further details provided in the Strategy, for instance in terms of encouraging active travel by reducing car parking spaces and converting these to green spaces/permeable surfaces (depending upon location and need for adaptation and biodiversity); this example shows the links between transport, adaptation and biodiversity. The strategy would also be strengthened

with reference to joint working with surrounding rural areas/authorities to acknowledge the interdependences between the city and its surroundings in term so delivering a net zero transport network, flows of good and resources (etc.) into the city.

Investing in Change

The investment proposal in the draft Strategy to develop a pipeline of rapid action net zero infrastructure projects 2021-23 is highly ambitious and valuable and could address some concerns expressed previously regarding the need for immediate retrofitting action. It is a major collaborative task and would require significant effort, so we note concerns about deliverability, but recognise the definite need for such a pipeline to be backed by Scottish Government; CEC would be in a stronger position if Scottish Government commits to investing in this scheme prior to launch of the Strategy. We also suggest consideration of the establishment of a major green infrastructure fund prioritising local companies, which could attract additional businesses to Edinburgh and would align with the University of Edinburgh's current actions.

Carbon off-setting

CEC recognises the frequently contentious nature of carbon off-setting and the need to reduce carbon emissions as far as possible first. The Strategy also recognises the value of Universities in providing support for any city off-setting plans through consultation, which is very welcomed and we look forward to supporting efforts in this area. A city-wide approach could better stimulate partnership working to support large regional sequestration projects and should be explored.

However, we think the Strategy could have presented a more solid approach to off-setting if consultation had been undertaken already, rather than setting out high level possible approaches, which include untested technologies. The final Strategy should set out an overview of favoured approaches, based on gathered evidence and discussions.

Conclusion

The CEC draft 2030 Climate Strategy is ambitious and far-reaching. We strongly agree with the vision and principles set forth, and have considered ways that the Strategy could be strengthened further, particularly in relation to next steps. The programme of actions proposed is a significant undertaking, to meet net zero by 2030, and we applaud and give our wholehearted support to the CEC for this comprehensive approach.

Please contact Dave Gorman (dave.gorman@ed.ac.uk), Director of the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability for further follow up.

Further information

Author & Presenter

Dave Gorman, Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability, September 2021

Freedom of Information

This is an open paper.



Sustainability, Civic & Social Responsibility Committee

5th October 2021

Implementing the Schools Sustainability Framework

Description of paper

The purpose of this paper is to provide follow-up to the June 2021 paper on Sustainability Framework for Schools and Colleges, presenting proposals on how to implement the Sustainability Framework in practice.

The proposals in the paper contribute to the following outcomes in Strategy 2030:

- We will be on track to be a Carbon-Zero University by 2040;
- Our estate will be fit for purpose, sustainable and accessible; and
- We will see integrated reporting of our whole organisational impact against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Action requested/Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note the proposal and provide comments or suggestions for next steps.

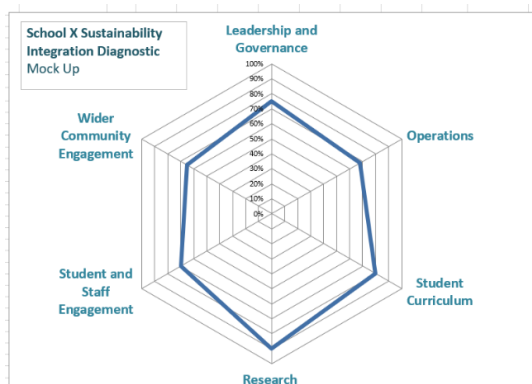
Background and context

The University of Edinburgh's Social and Civic Responsibility Plan sets out our commitments to the climate emergency, to the Sustainable Development Goals and to human rights locally and globally. A key area of activity in the plan was that it would be embedded across the organisation and that Colleges, Schools / Departments will develop plans for how they will integrate SDGs and promote social and civic responsibility in their areas supported by the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS).

Since 2019 and the launch of Strategy 2030, Schools, Colleges and professional services are required to include in their planning round submissions priorities in relation to Social and Civic Responsibility. It is important appropriate guidance is provided as parts of the University develop their plans and strategies. At the same time, schools are looking for guidance on what a whole school framework for sustainability would look like and colleges are looking to understand what 'good' across their schools looks like.

The Department for SRS has been running the Sustainability Awards to guide sustainability actions since 2010, with 37% of University staff working in departments participating in most recent submission. The Office Award framework presents teams of staff with a collection of progressively more difficult actions broken down into bronze, silver and gold levels. Completion of the framework is audited by volunteer students, who judge whether departments achieved their desired level and provide recommendations on possible improvements. It is a well-established process, with good level recognition around the University. The Awards use 'bottom up' approach and depend on the initiative of staff and student champions and volunteers. A digital platform is used to record and audit evidence and provide resources has been developed in-house by SRS, however it is now dated and prone to failures, which creates risks, exacerbated by having recently lost technical support.

In June 2021, the Deputy Director of Social Responsibility and Sustainability presented a draft Sustainability Framework for Schools and Colleges to the SSCR Committee. The Framework has been designed to support schools translate priority objectives into specific actions and support planning colleagues to be more specific in terms of what ‘good’ looks like. **Appendix 1** provides the draft framework presented in June.



Leadership and Governance: setting priorities, aligning resources, integrating in school leadership and engaging students and staff

Operations: understanding performance and taking action for travel, energy, waste, purchasing

Student Curriculum integrating sustainability in formal curriculum

Research for sustainability

Student and Staff Engagement

Wider Community Engagement including volunteering with community partners

Discussion

Consideration has been given to finding best ways of implementing the Sustainability Framework in practice in a way that will realise potential benefits and minimise any duplication of efforts on embedding sustainability in Schools and departments – on both School and SRS side.

Three approaches were looked at:

1. **Running the Sustainability Framework alongside the Awards** as an entirely separate process. There are downsides around duplication of efforts and digital platforms.
2. **Trialling the Sustainability Framework with 2-3 eager schools** currently taking part in Sustainability Awards, with a view to merge the Office Awards and Sustainability Framework at some point in the future. This is attractive due to improved risk and change management, however, leads to substantial duplication of effort on SRS side, especially in the short term.
3. **Developing the Sustainability Framework so that it utilises the existing Office Awards part of Sustainability Awards and builds upon its elements, making changes as required, effectively replacing the current Office Awards.** This is the higher risk approach, as the Sustainability Framework for schools needs to be developed and implemented in a timely manner; it also requires efficient change management and communication for participants. Two main benefits of this approach are i) much more efficient use of SRS resources and ii) more effective and faster progress on embedding sustainability in University schools.

It is recommended that the latter approach is taken and that the Sustainability Framework utilises the existing Office Awards part of Sustainability Awards and builds upon its elements, making changes as required, effectively replacing the current Office Awards. Due to time constraints, the Sustainability Framework would be developed in the first year primarily with academic schools in mind, with a potential for professional departments to enter on a “trial” basis (without customised content parts of the framework will not be relevant – e.g. sustainability in research). Once an approach to embedding sustainability in professional departments has been agreed, an appropriate framework would be developed (building on and modifying the planned framework for schools).

A mapping of existing Office Awards criteria against the Sustainability Framework proposed in the June SSRC paper revealed many areas of overlap – majority of the 72 Office Awards criteria could be logically allocated into the Sustainability Framework categories. This presents several benefits: cuts down the staff time required for development of new criteria, guidance and resources; allows existing Office Awards to fairly easily transfer onto the new framework and removes any potential for duplication between the two.

This also presents an opportunity to rethink the desired level of detailed action required from departments and streamline the criteria, potentially allowing departments additional flexibility and tailoring action to address activities where there will be most impact at a local level. It is hoped that departments will feel empowered to play more active part in managing the sustainability of their workplace and will be more strategic in choosing high-impact actions.

Appendix 2 presents an example criterion, showing how changes could result in a more flexible approach.

Assessing change:

It is proposed that confirmation of accomplishment of criteria would be via student auditors and staff/peers from other schools. It is hoped that such a mixed approach will have several benefits.

- For students, training in and experience of real-world auditing as well as an opportunity to engage more with University sustainability practices and provide recommendations.
- For staff, in addition to often valuable experience of auditing, main benefit will be in conversations and networking with peers and seeing how other schools overcome similar challenges.
- For schools, this will be an opportunity to provide valuable means of engagement for their staff and students, to receive recommendations on the way forward and to learn from others. Mixed student and peer audit will give valuable external perspective.
- For SRS, there is a transparent auditing process and this would support the embedding of sustainability across the organisation. SRS will provide training for auditors and provide the necessary project coordination.

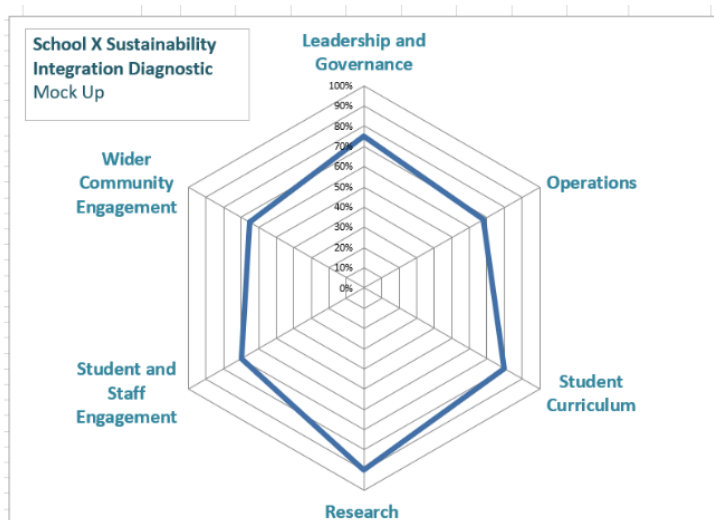


Figure 1 A mock up sustainability report

A report outlining criteria accomplished, together with recommendations for next steps will then be provided to participating schools. It will provide an overview of progress towards embedding sustainability outlined as % completion against each category and an overall score.

This report could be then used by schools as a benchmark, outlining future areas of focus and might serve as a basic tool of comparability between schools (taking into account complexity of any such comparisons).

Resource implications

Supporting schools with the development of their sustainability strategies would be delivered within current resources in the Department for SRS as part of our Sustainability Leadership and Innovation Programme.

There is a need for development of an online platform which will allow recording and auditing evidence from participating schools and departments. A review of solutions on market and an initial meeting with IS Sharepoint Solutions Team has taken place. The review indicates that a Sharepoint solution will likely be most cost-efficient and will provide a suitable platform, at a cost of ca. £9,000-£12,500 which would need to be confirmed alongside Department plans.

Linked with this framework, we would support schools with scoping of their risks and opportunities, delivering a workshop (similar to the model used in March 2021 with the SSCR Committee) and, if required, some support for the School Plan. A workshop with one school is planned in the coming months to further test the approach.

A shared framework will help focus school and staff action on organisational priorities in sustainability and will simplify reporting of progress therefore leading to improved efficiency and time savings.

Risk Management

The proposal addresses the risk of no action on the SDGs and climate emergency by providing guidance for school management with actionable ideas to integrate. A unified framework provides a clear indication of priorities and a reporting mechanism. Further, the proposal addresses the risk of duplicating efforts within the SRS department.

Risk	Mitigation
Loss of engagement resulting from the move from Office Awards to Sustainability Framework	Careful communication of the change and how it will impact participants. Communicating the move to be part of the wider Building Back Better approach. Participation in the Office Awards has been low during the Covid-19 pandemic, as colleagues were working from home, so impact will be difficult to measure.
Loss of detail or assessment rigour resulting from the move to less prescriptive criteria.	Auditors checking the criteria will receive training from SRS. Some individual actions will likely not be completed, since departments will be asked to prioritise the highest impact areas, but this is seen as a benefit.
Seen as adding to the time pressure on schools, which may lead to lack of engagement.	Schools will be supported with resources and pre-made templates as well as by a Project Coordinator within SRS. The Framework seeks to support Schools in embedding sustainability in their operations, breaking down complex areas into smaller elements that can be planned and progressively worked through, in effect supporting the planning round submissions.

	It is hoped that participation in the scheme will make it simpler for Schools to address the complex issues highlighted in SDGs by suggesting best practice and providing reporting templates, thus leading to a time saving overall.
There are too many criteria and the framework is too big. There is an overlap between Sustainability, Equality and Diversity and Wellbeing.	Focus of the framework is on the Objective 1 in the SRS Plan ("We will become a zero carbon and zero waste university"), with links to Objective 3 ("We will work together with local communities") and the wider SDGs. Actions covering other areas will either be linking to already existing resources and guidance (EDI, wellbeing guides from HR and H&S) or replicating existing Sustainability Awards criteria (on wellbeing).

Responding to the Climate Emergency & Sustainable Development Goals

The proposed approach will create a common school framework for considering, actioning and reporting of school activity on climate emergency and on Sustainable Development Goals.

Equality & Diversity

Achieving the global Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change require transformations and complementary actions by all organisations. Climate change impacts disproportionately on the world's poorest and most vulnerable. Tackling climate change and the SDGs makes a major contribution to global justice, gender, education and protection of natural resources. Specific projects and programmes designed to meet our commitments will undertake appropriate assessment of equality and diversity implications.

No separate EQIA for the framework itself has been conducted.

Next steps/implications

- Review with Sustainability Leads and Heads of Schools from a selection of Schools (Aug-Sept)
- Review with opportunities for student engagement (Aug-Sep)
- Seek feedback from Registrars and Heads of College (Oct)
- Feedback to SSCR and to Strategic Planning for planning round guidance (Oct)

Consultation

This paper has been reviewed by the Deputy Director of SRS, the Sustainability Innovation and Engagement Manager and the SRS Project Coordinator

Further information

Author and presenter:

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Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability

Freedom of Information

This is an open paper

Appendix 1: School Sustainability Framework: embedding sustainability and the SDGs

Working draft for review

The purpose of this framework is to provide a rough guide of indicators for what embedded sustainability might look like from a School perspective. It is based on a mapping carried out by SRS staff for 3 colleges as well as comments received on those reports along with reviews of existing tools and frameworks. It is by no means comprehensive but to support our school engagement on sustainability. The term *sustainability* is used here in many places for ease of communication but it refers to both social and environmental sustainability as reflected in the SDGs and the University's Social and Civic Responsibility Plan.

Area	Opportunities / Recommendations
Leadership and Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Plan: The school has identified key impacts and opportunities for sustainability in their area. The college and school is able to communicate plans to address/ integrate Climate Emergency and SDGs and the 3 priority objectives of the Social & Civic Responsibility Plan. • Embedded in governance and management committees: There is either a school sustainability committee or clear articulation of how sustainability is integrated into executive and management committees at college and school level. With participation from academic and professional services staff and students. This Committee will have links to cross University initiatives like the Sustainability Awards as well as any School 'Green Teams' and groups of student and staff volunteers. • Stakeholder engagement: The school has a systematic process for engaging stakeholders in identifying sustainability plans and priorities. This could be through representation of staff and students and other stakeholders in the committees or through other channels. • 'SRS' lead and allocation of staff time: The area has an appointed lead or contact with some time allocated. • Inductions and Training: Local induction plans and learning and development plans include sustainability. • Integrated into objectives at different levels: staff have sustainability as part of their performance, learning and development objectives (note the People & Money system may be able to help us track this in future).
Operations	<p>There is a local plan in place for actions to address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy • Waste and Resources • Travel • Nature and Biodiversity • Wider social impact <p>Setting objectives and targets will also require local information. SRS will work with Estates and others to support the School with school specific data where possible (ie Business Travel Database) and in future to make this more widely accessible. Recognising that some activities may be determined by the spaces and places occupied.</p>
Student Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is taking action to integrate sustainability into programmes, courses and degrees
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school articulates the research connections to sustainability and the SDGs • Laboratories are accredited to Silver Sustainability Awards (funding bodies in future may require) • Sustainability and the SDGs are part of the industry engagement at College and School level
Student and Staff Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are active Sustainability Champions from student and staff population • Participation in the Community Engagement Community of Practice: • Labs and Offices are accredited to Silver Sustainability Awards • Sustainability is articulated in staff objectives and as part of inductions and staff and time is allocated for training and awareness raising activities. Sustainability is clearly part of the student inductions

Wider Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is investing in community partnerships which bring benefits to our local communities • The School has identified key Community Plan commitments it is or will be contributing to • Staff are taking up the University volunteering day (hope to track through People and Money) • Students are provided with opportunities to connect their research and learning to wider community impact. This could be recognised through participating in Edinburgh Award. Example courses: Students as Change Agents, Sustainability Pathways.
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Appendix 2 Example Sustainability Framework criterion, compared to existing Sustainability Awards.

Working draft for review

There are currently 13 criteria relating to waste and resource efficiency, this could be simplified to an overarching theme of creating a resource efficient workplace.

Sustainability Awards – resource efficiency-related criteria	New approach, falls under Operational Sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calculate the carbon footprint of an aspect of your office (Silver) • Embed paper saving practices (Bronze) • Join and use Warp It (Bronze) • Ensure bins are correctly labelled and carry out bin audits (Bronze) • Recycle toner cartridges (Bronze) • Take an action to reduce food waste (Bronze and Silver) • Take an action to reduce disposables (Silver) • Run a resource efficiency initiative (Silver) • Reduce plastic in your office (Silver) • Commit to only using reusable items at any planned events (Silver) • Purchase more sustainable options (Bronze) • Avoid purchasing through reuse (Silver) • Switch the milk in your workplace to either plant-based alternatives or glass bottles (Silver) 	<p>One criterion (wording is subject to change):</p> <p>“All departments are expected to be efficient in their use of resources, with the aim of working towards a Circular Economy lifecycle.</p> <p>You are encouraged to implement these principles innovatively and creatively, but should include action and improved processes in relation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paper saving practices • using Warplt • effective recycling • recycling toner cartridges • reducing disposables • reduce plastic in your office • commit to only using reusable items at any planned events • purchase more sustainable options “



Sustainability, Civic & Social Responsibility Committee

5th October 2021

SRS Programmes Report

Description of paper

The purpose of this paper is to update SSCR members on the Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability (SRS) Programmes 20/21.

Action requested

SSCR are asked to note the paper and provide any comments or suggestions.

Background

The Department for Social Responsibility and Sustainability provides high quality support and advice and facilitates programmes to catalyse action and collaboration. Our shared vision across our programme areas is that sustainability and social responsibility is fully integrated and embedded across the organisation. This supports the delivery of the University's [Social and Civic Responsibility Plan](#) including our commitments to net zero carbon, zero waste and a positive social impact near and far.

The purpose of this update is to share **quarterly highlights** from our Department programmes up to the end of the 2020/21 academic year. **Annex 1** provides a snap-shot with additional information below. Highlights are also published online [here](#). For an in-depth update on our whole University performance in relation to our commitments, see the annual [Sustainability, Social and Civic Responsibility Report](#).

Discussion

The **Sustainability Leadership and Innovation Programme** aims to support staff contributions to zero carbon and zero waste goals through impactful engagement projects.

- A significant amount of work was carried out by the team in relation to climate policy and carbon analysis for the University over the year.
- Work continued to progress on **Climate Conscious Travel** and a new Travel Policy was approved by University Executive with further engagement planned. At the end of the year there were 320 Staff **Sustainability Champions** across the University. Over the year, 63 staff completed the pilot Carbon Literacy Training, 219 completed the online induction (now renamed from 'Be Sustainable' to 'Introduction to Sustainability') with ISG providing support for updates on the Learn platform. 53 staff completed the in depth Be Sustainable Advanced with Learning for Sustainability Scotland (now being renamed to Taking Action for a Sustainable World).
- The IT Reuse Project pivoted to support [community reuse](#) with Midlothian Council and Edinburgh Remakery to donate computers and laptops to local schools and community groups to help families and support home schooling during Covid-19 lockdown restrictions. The Waste and Reuse Portal (Warp-it) helped avoid over 4100kg waste and saved an estimated £70k.

- The team also delivers the **laboratory** and **office 'Sustainability Awards'** framework which was mostly paused due to the Covid-19 lockdown. This project is being updated to now deliver the Schools Sustainability Framework. A *Work from Home* toolkit was launched and carbon implications of hybrid working analysed.
- Six projects for the **Sustainable Campus Fund** were finalised for approval in the year estimated to bring annual savings of £78k and 300tCO₂e.
- Following the University Executive commitment to integrate Climate Emergency and the SDGs in all committee papers, work on guidance to support paper writers took place with next steps discussed in the SCSR Committee.

The **Student Leadership for Sustainability** programme is supporting efforts to ensure students have opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and actions to address the climate crisis and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

- Through a short term secondment, the team supported the Students as Change Agents Programme, improving the coaching resources and strengthening its links to the climate crisis and the.
- A new process was rolled out to identify and support projects for the Case Studies in Sustainable Development Course.
- The Student's Guide events on ethical eats and greenwashing in the fashion industry were popular over the year, and the theme of inclusion continued to be addressed in the Visions for Change event series.
- Ten student-led projects were supported through the Student Project Grant involving 140 students and additional funds secured with D&A for the new year.
- At the end of Q4 there were 285 Student Sustainability Champions in the network. 103 students had completed the pilot Carbon Literacy Training and 118 students completed the sustainability induction.
- The Department worked with colleagues around the university to support next steps for the integration of climate and sustainability in curriculum reform feeding into the vision for the Edinburgh Graduate in Q1 2021/22.

Through our **Sustainable Business, Fair Trade and SRS in Supply Chains** work we aim to contribute to efforts to help make the University supply chains (and the businesses we buy from and invest in) more sustainable including embedding our climate commitments and addressing indirect emissions from purchasing.

- Some projects needed to pause in the year due to staffing changes. In Q4 a review of carbon emissions from procurement took place to help inform future carbon targets related to Scope 3 (indirect) emissions as well as next steps for action.
- We reviewed our commitments and actions in relation to the Principles for Responsible Investment as part of our annual reporting to the PRI and looking at next steps.
- During Q4, a student from the Law School was on placement with the Department looking at the nexus between climate change and modern slavery. The Department supported finalisation of the Anti-Slavery Policy and the updates to the Modern Slavery Statement.

The **Biodiversity Programme** supports action to protect and enhance conditions for biodiversity on our campuses aligned with the Climate Adaptation Framework.

- A range of projects were ongoing with engagement from staff and students.
- The University was awarded a silver award for Hedgehog Friendly Campuses and we are on our way to achieving gold.

- The GI mapping project continues to generate a lot of interest. Living lab projects took place in the biodiversity space.
- Community partnership working continues with development of green space project proposals for funding and the Community 'Micro Grants' in Q4 focussed on local environmental opportunities in the run up to CoP26 in Glasgow.

The **Community Engagement** team is working to deliver impactful projects and engagement with local communities.

- In Q1/Q2 the development and roll out of the Community Plan was received positively.
- The team has fielded c115 requests from communities for links and access to resources from the University over the year with 21 deemed to be 'fulfilled' and 8 still 'pending'. The team plays an important role connecting with internal and external stakeholders for positive community impact.
- £127k was invested in community projects through Community Grants scheme in the year via 56 projects.
- Next steps to support employee volunteering and digital inclusion were developed and a project with the Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Security and with support from the DDI was delivered.
- **259** members of the Edinburgh Community Engagement Forum continued to share good practice and lessons learned and further opportunities to link with procurement community benefits identified.

In our **Communications** channels, engagement with our SRS social media continues to grow with an estimated 10 percent increase in followers compared to 2019/20.

- The newsletter had a slight decrease in subscribers compared to the previous year.
- The Department has worked to integrate in other internal and external communication channels where relevant and a range of SRS stories at UoE were included in an estimated 42 internal and 29 external channels.
- The Department completed a brand refresh with Communications and Marketing and updated some aspects of our website with more to follow.
- A key project for us is to work with others to supportive effective communications and engagement for CoP26.

Risk and Opportunity Management

- The growing interest across a range of sustainability and community issues and the need to achieve impact while working with the same or fewer resources is both a risk and an opportunity. It provides an opportunity for us to think differently and smarter about how we deliver programmes. Senior engagement with Heads of Schools in Q3 helped us to think through approaches to embedding and integrating sustainability. International partners continue to want to engage with us and we have invested in important university partnerships integrating SRS such as the U7+, UNICA, UNA Europa and the USR.
- Stakeholder fatigue and range of opportunities. At the same time as increasing demand for SRS services, staff, students and our wider community partners were all under new pressures in the last year and we saw drop off in engagement in the second half of the year. While we want to make sure sustainability is not seen as 'optional' we also recognise we need to accept some risk here but are reviewing potential impact on projects.
- Online and hybrid working has posed challenges for staff and team coherence while also enabling us to engage with new audiences in different ways.
- The hiring freeze, and some staff leave in 2020/21 provided challenges for how we deliver work as well as some staff uncertainty due to short term contracts. This also provided an opportunity to review future resourcing requirements and following a proposal developed by

the Director and Deputy Director, next steps on a new department resourcing strategy and structure will be implemented. A proposed 'Sustainability Unit' will bring together the key programme areas mentioned here which focus on sustainability together with the climate strategy work for more coherence and an opportunity for even greater impact. The 'Social Impact Unit' will bring new senior capacity to this important area of work linking to the community programme and delivery of ambitions locally.

- After nearly 8 years with the Department the Head of SRS Programmes, Deputy Director of SRS will be leaving the University at the end of October. While the longer-term recruitment takes place, the Student Engagement, Events and Reporting Manager has been appointed as the Senior SRS Programmes Manager / Interim Head of SRS Programmes to provide some cover and support the Director with the transition.

Equality & Diversity

We have taken new steps and trialled different approaches to diversify participation in our projects and programmes. We have worked with student representatives to support a more diverse student community and increased the number of underrepresented student voices at our events and in our communication channels.

Climate Emergency and the Sustainable Development Goals

Our programmes directly contribute to supporting the University's net zero by 2040 climate strategy and commitments to the SDGs.

Consultation based on team and programme and project specific reports.

Further information

Prepared by: Michelle Brown, Deputy Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainability and Head of SRS Programmes based on Manager Reports and Quarterly Reviews.

Freedom of Information: this is an open paper