

## UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

**MINUTE OF A MEETING** of the Sustainable Laboratories Steering Group held in the Cuillin Room, Charles Stewart House on Wednesday 14 September 2016.

**1 Welcome and Introductions**

The Convener welcomed attendees to the fifth meeting of the Group and outlined the agenda for the session.

**2 Minute**

The minute of the meeting held on 22 March 2015 was approved as a correct record.

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**3 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

**SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS****4 Vision Statement & Metrics**

The Labs Sustainability Coordinator presented the Vision Statement which would communicate the aims of the Group to a variety of stakeholders. Vision statements for SLSG and for the labs sustainability programme had been merged into a single document. Advising caution around use of terms such as 'world leading', SLSG agreed that the essence of the statement was correct, but suggested that it be expressed more succinctly, and that a follow-up implementation statement be provided outlining how the vision was going to be achieved.

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Action – All members to send any further comments to AA.

**5 Sustainable Labs Programme: 3 Year Plan**

The Engagement Manager presented on plans to map activity and work more effectively on sustainability in labs across the University, setting goals and identifying risks and indicators such as awards, carbon emissions, supply chain data, design guidelines, and management practices.

Key outcomes included contributing to a 10% reduction in energy consumption, increase in equipment sharing, reuse and correct disposal of waste, and reduction in overall consumption, particularly of hazardous materials.

Planned activities included: peer learning, campus meetings, SLSG meetings, the labs design guide, testing the sustainability credentials of equipment, promoting collaborative working and communication between labs to save on mechanical plant and avoid duplication, supporting projects (DNA, lighting, freezers) and lab technical staff, publishing results, developing criteria to guide best practice, recognition of good practice and fostering competition to spread positive behaviours, continuing to gather a body of evidence and supporting development of a chemical management system. The Group recognised that most labs shared equipment to some degree, but this was not currently being captured, and an incentivised approach was needed. Work on supply chains was ongoing, building on the existing SPPT process, and a simple chart had been produced to break down items in labs.

Action – CO & AA to review and update the Plan, giving members further opportunities to feed in.

## **6 Lab Equipment Resale Options**

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Potential opportunities were being investigated around UniGreenScheme, who provide an asset resale service for universities, storing excess equipment and splitting the profit when it sells. This would allow the University to reclaim space and value which could be diverted into other costs of research. Moving ahead would require a procurement process, inviting other organisations to tender, including CCL North and Mitie. The precise detail of the tender would be influenced by the value of the equipment involved. SRS, Procurement and Waste were discussing options. Though the resale value of equipment involved a significant drop, lab users attending workshops frequently advocated for alternatives to throwing away functioning equipment.

UoE would continue to seek opportunities for internal reuse in the first instance, then pathways for resale through existing University networks such as EAUC. There were legislative obligations around reuse built in to the current contract with CCL North, and it may be preferable for external partnerships to operate through them. These partnership opportunities would be raised with CCL North at a meeting in October.

SLSG noted concerns that there was still no internal system to flag available equipment before it left the University, though Warp-it could be further developed to serve this function. More work was needed to understand barriers to reuse and what could be done to improve it and increase uptake. Internal reuse had no additional health and safety implications. Members agreed on another push to promote Warp-it, and that it would be included in the University Waste Policy. The Group recognised that storage was a massive issue. It was proposed that a recycling channel on MyEd be investigated.

Action – CO & AP to look into promoting or potentially relaunching Warp-it, and potential for a lab-specific sub grouping in the system, as well as establishing a list of contacts at the right level, and report back on next steps in December.

## **7 Estates Development Guidance**

The Labs Sustainability Coordinator updated the Group on work with Estate Development and ECCI over the last 6 to 9 months to develop guidelines on how the University should approach new builds and refurbishments, distilling down global best practice and clarifying relevant rating schemes.

On 23 August staff from Estates and SRS met with Peter James of S-Lab to look at 12 priority areas, distilled down to 5 principles, to include in these guidelines. A small number of KPIs were identified, including CO<sub>2</sub> per m<sup>2</sup> per year. The T46 Sustainability Strategy form needed to be updated as it currently referenced an old version of the building standards and needed to reflect new legal structures and guidelines.

A range of stakeholders would be consulted to ensure building design was appropriate for users, easy to maintain, and that the basics were right, including use of passive ventilation systems where possible. Much of this was already covered under Section 6 of the Scottish building regulations. The guidelines would dovetail with current procedures. The Labs Coordinator would present interim

findings at the S-Lab Conference, seek input from attendees, and update the document.

Action – AA to circulate the latest version of the guidelines to the Group.

Action – All members to send their feedback on the document to AA.

SLSG stressed the need to ensure that all work ongoing to deliver sustainable buildings was aligned.

## **ROUTINE ITEMS**

### **8 Sustainable Campus Fund**

Estates Committee had approved the Fund as an internal investment vehicle to implement energy efficiency projects that generated cost savings. SRS were working with Estates to develop an online paperless system to manage the pipeline of projects coming forward. Projects were pre-screened via the Utilities Working Group. Following a soft launch in August there had been 17 expressions of interest, resulting in 11 applications, 9 of which went forward to the Directors of Estates and SRS for sign off. A few were micro projects and a portion of the fund would be set aside to cover these. Sustainable Campus Fund Roadshows were planned across the University estate in October.

Action – All members with ideas for projects to get in touch with CO.

### **9 Expansion of Engagement**

The number of people regularly in touch on lab sustainability was fairly constant, and SRS were always looking for more active participants to engage with on a regular basis to push sustainable behaviours and expand their network. There had been fewer applicants for the lab awards, raising concerns that the process was too time-consuming, and as a result it had been deliberately streamlined. SRS regularly had a stall at new staff events. A bespoke engagement project was ongoing with Louise Horsfall, PI at Roger Land, to monitor and meter three lab space over 3 months, with a face-to-face presentation in the third month sharing the energy data (discussed under item 12).

Action – All members with other labs to nominate, particularly if they had not been the subject of much engagement to date, to proposed them to AA, and share any further ideas on how to promote sustainable behaviours in labs.

It was suggested that School Forums or inductions be targeted to increase engagement, and that the Labs Sustainability Coordinator could present at routine lab meetings. Be Sustainable online training could be offered on Learn, and the physical guide could be used to produce posters. Workshop numbers meant that these were not always viable. Engagement with postdocs offered a good in-road into buildings, including engagement through postdoc societies. It was anticipated that funding bodies would soon start to look into the sustainability of labs.

Action – All members with meetings SRS could present at to get in touch with AA.

### **10 Energy Audits**

The Engagement Manager updated the Group on a number of interlinking energy projects. There were 115 Energy Coordinators across the University estate. Quarterly workshops were held and other support was provided. SRS were working with Estates to take a deeper dive into 17 locations identified for energy savings, including walkarounds, stimulating activity, and getting teams to participate in the

Sustainability Awards where it would add value. Initial engagements were underway at Teviot quad, Hugh Robson, Roslin, QMRI, SCRM and Joseph Black. There were challenges around the energy data for Joseph Black. Most initial walkarounds were complete and potential links to the Sustainable Campus Fund had been identified. The Engagement team were also looking beyond the 17 locations for energy saving ideas. A series of lighting projects had been identified and further insulating and draft-proofing work was needed.

The Group discussed the use of intelligent systems that could protect the fabric of buildings at 10 degrees (which could be reduced to 8). It may be worth carrying out a check on all buildings. In some the issue was installation of equipment that the building had not been designed for.

Further analysis of the BEMS is being carried out with actions which should result in energy savings.

Action – CO to provide a further update at the next meeting.

#### **11 The Sustainable Public Procurement Prioritisation Tool**

The tool was currently being tested by the University, along with other public sector bodies, to better understand risks and opportunities. Procurement had prioritised certain categories and were working with SRS on an initial scan. A small group was being put together to develop initial thoughts on the main environmental and social impacts of lab purchases, including equipment, solvents, sharps, and biological agents, down supply chains and up to the point of disposal. Outcomes would be recorded in the Scottish Government spreadsheet and would be available to share with the Group by the end of the year. There would also be a briefing output, which Procurement would use as part of purchasing guidance.

#### **12 Lab Energy Monitoring Project**

Energy usage in Louise Horsfall's lab in Biology was being monitored using clip-on power meters. Initial results had been very interesting, and final consumption figures would be available at the end of September. It would be useful to have another lab to compare. The HGU, which had been refurbished 5 years ago, would be one option.

Action – AA to follow up with Stewart McKay at HGU.

The monitored lab spaces at Roger Land were quite small. For bigger labs distribution boards could be used to measure what staff were trying to change, either on the basis of one lab or a whole floor, depending on how the unit was organised, to see the impact engagement was having. The unit would be given tips on energy saving behaviours, backed up by quality data, with any impact on consumption monitored.

Action – AA to present the findings back to the Group.

There would be an Enhance project running over one year working with a UoE building, probably a lab, providing an opportunity to carry out a living lab project in that space designing some sort of digital innovation to help reduce energy use.

Action – All members with ideas to follow up with Evan Morgan.