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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

MINUTE OF A MEETING *of the Sustainability Strategy Advisory Group held in Room 1.208, 7 Bristo Square on Monday 30 October 2017.*

Members:	Dave Gorman, (Convener) Director of Social Responsibility & Sustainability
	Graham Bell, Depute Director – Estate Development
	Michelle Brown, Head of SRS Programmes
	Michelle Christian, Senior Accommodation Manager
	Grant Ferguson, Head of Estates Operations
	Ollie Glick, Students' Association Vice President Community
	Lee Hamill, Deputy Director of Finance
	George Sked, Assistant Director of Procurement
	Hugh Edmiston, Director of Corporate Services (ex officio)
	Gary Jebb, Director of Estates (ex officio)
Apologies:	Hugh Edmiston; Gary Jebb

1 The Convener welcomed members to the revised group. **A**

The minute of the meeting held on 1 February 2017 was approved as a correct record.

2 Matters Arising
There were no matters arising not covered on the agenda or in post-meeting notes.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

3 Introduction, Welcome and Remit of the Group **B**
Members noted the new remit and membership as approved by SRS Committee in June. While SOAG's large membership was useful in securing buy-in, a good deal of the former group's discussions could have been resolved offline. SSAG was intended to be more strategic, with membership largely restricted to colleagues with responsibility for operational sustainability (including those aspects of broader social responsibility falling under Procurement). SSAG was an advisory group, with responsibility for sign off, its reporting line coming through SRSC, CMG and Court, as required. Members would aim to give forward sight of issues anticipated over the next six months.

Action – DG to think about changing the Group's acronym.

Action – All to decide offline who would sit on the sub-groups and what their respective outputs should be.

4 Suggested High Level Sustainability Priorities for 2017-2020 **C**
SSAG discussed and broadly agreed this initial think piece proposing potential priorities for the next three years.

Procurement were engaged in building fair working practices (modern slavery, living wage) into tenders. Once fully developed it would be brought to this group for feedback.

Action – DG to add the community benefits requirement under regulated procurement to section 7.

With integrated reporting cutting across all areas, it was agreed that the Group would adopt the International <IR> Framework - an agenda driven by sustainability topics. The Climate Strategy Implementation Plan would come to this Group for review before going on to SRS Committee. Issues around the student experience and awareness of SRS

would go directly to SRSC, though this group could discuss practical linkages and opportunities. Student behaviour in particular aligned with work currently ongoing in ACE.

Action – GF & DG to decide which issues would be assigned to the sub-groups to take forward.

Action – DG to produce a matrix mapping the responsibilities outlined in the table in Paper B section 3 against anticipated timelines.

Action – All members to send any further thoughts to DG.

5   Waste, Reuse & Recycling Quarterly Report   **D**
SSAG noted this paper which provided a snapshot of waste performance in 2016/17 compared with the two previous years, broken down by streams. The Waste and Resources Sustainability Subgroup would be responsible for working through the detail and providing the report in future, including RAG status, a summary of key challenges and overall trajectory, though how the information would be captured and the frequency of reporting was yet to be agreed. A performance framework would be developed and passed on to the sub-groups for implementation. A standard performance dashboard template would then be completed by each sub-group.

It was possible to benchmark performance against other institutions. The Waste & Recycling Manager had carried out a similar exercise with the SRS Projects Coordinator in 2017, and waste was included in the HESA return. There were currently no cost-related targets for waste. Including information on cost helped to communicate the importance of reduction and reuse to staff and students. It was valuable to be able to communicate where savings were being made to the public purse. SSAG noted the £350K per annum saving made by the Furniture Office – these figures were useful for future inclusion in the Annual Report & Accounts.

6   Energy & Climate Quarterly Report   **E**
The Assistant Director of Estates reported on 2016/17 energy and water figures for the combined academic and accommodation estates, compared with previous years. Figure 1 illustrated how CHP fed in to overall energy flow. The contribution of CHP was around £3.5M p.a. but the carbon benefit was negligible, due to greening of the grid.

The key challenge was to reduce consumption while the estate and throughput were growing. The Utilities Working Group would be responsible in future for quarterly energy reporting to SSAG, including per capita performance. Per head/per m^2 figures were generated in February, but peer comparisons were always one year behind. It was important to have the local context – e.g. for water used in research. There were water efficiency projects that could be done, which were positive from a cost perspective, as utilities were only going to grow more expensive, though the carbon savings were negligible.

7   SRS Department Programmes Quarterly Report   **F**
SSAG noted this annual report on SRS Programmes to the end of 2016/17, approved by SRS Committee on 31 August 2017. Working in partnership with Estates, Procurement, and ACE, progress continued across the seven priority areas: carbon and energy savings; resource efficiency; supply chain SRS; responsible investment; localised advice and projects; community / public engagement; and links to learning and teaching. The Head of SRS Programmes outlined highlights within each area.

Work was ongoing, overseen by the Utilities Working Group, to meet the 10% joint energy saving target. The Sustainable Campus Fund, set up to help meet this goal, was proving a positive vehicle for engagement across the University.

Discussions were ongoing with various Schools and Departments to better understand business travel, which accounted for 10% of UoE's carbon footprint and rising, and develop practical guidance.

Progress had been made on the PC Reuse project. On sustainable procurement, the SPPT was being trialled across key areas. On responsible investment, there had been a move away from focus on risk to positive social finance investments. The Programmes Team were supporting the Assistant Principal Community Relations on the Community Engagement Strategy.

This report on projects and programmes, connecting to broader University targets where possible, was intended for CSG and for this group in future. It would be useful to have feedback from members to identify the key areas of interest to this group. For the next meeting, the report would focus more on integrating targets.

Action – MB to select a narrower range of issues to report on for the next meeting, in line with the Group's remit.

The Communications Manager was working on case studies to help generate more interest in the Sustainable Campus Fund.

Action – MB to work more closely with the VP Community to market the Sustainable Campus Fund to students.

SSAG noted an issue securing adequate survey participation numbers now IS blocked mass mailings.

Action – OG to follow up with Philip Graham in Communications & Marketing.

8   Adaptation   **G**
There were two parts to the climate change agenda – mitigation and adaptation. SSAG noted this first draft Adaptation Strategy. The Climate Policy Manager had consulted with University staff and students, and reviewed best practice elsewhere. The aim of the strategy was to demonstrate that UoE had identified the risks and how to address them.

Members found the draft quite long, and queried how much had been agreed with Estates, in particular the timelines set out on p37. As there was no legal driver involved, there was no need to deliver the strategy by a set date. Members agreed that further discussion was needed.

Action – EVM to go back to Estates, go through the proposed strategy again, and agree actions and timelines.

9   Climate Change Implementation Plan   **H**
The Implementation Plan was a requirement from the Director of Corporate Services, to accompany the Climate Strategy agreed in 2016. It was essential to decide how to deal with such a high level University-wide plan, comprising components cutting across dozens of other plans. The Climate Policy Manager had begun to develop KPIs.

Members requested a simpler, streamlined report and format.

Action – EVM to clarify where targets had come from, the rationale for including them, and how they fitted into the existing framework (core KPIs, targets from the strategy, targets arising from group discussion and so forth), and extract from the main paper those parts relevant to this group.

Action – All members spotting any errors to let EVM know.

The Director of SRS would take the revised Plan to SRS Committee for sign off.

Task M3 – Scope 3 Reporting (to develop methodologies for more robust data capture in travel and procurement by 2020) was complex and expected to take some time to complete. The broad brush approach taken to date did not reflect all the good work being done on the ground.

Action – EVM to add metrics per FTE, to demonstrate the scale of the University.

10   Benchmarking Update   I
The Programme Manager updated the Group on progress since October 2017 developing and piloting an internal benchmarking framework to support measuring SRS performance across the University.

The Sustainability Awards programme continued to encourage bottom-up engagement. The Head of SRS Programmes had met with Heads of Professional Services in the Schools who welcomed a means of assessing their performance in comparison with peers.

The Business School had invited SRS to work on a project with them, workshopping what sustainability looked like for the School as one of their key values, moving on to look at organisational change and the Schools Benchmarking project.

MVM had taken a campus-based approach to help identify priorities. The pilot project carried out at Easter Bush was useful in testing the waters. It was useful for Schools to have this kind of management information, in the case of Easter Bush to identify the relative impact of strong leadership, its remote location, and the sense of a fresh canvas that the campus provided, to help prioritise and get a sense of where strengths and weaknesses lay.

It was important to have the same metrics for all if results were going to be presented in the form of a league table. League tables might not be the best approach, compared with just presenting departments with the information – the aim was not to intentionally shame them based on their performance. Members stressed that the framework had to be solid. A decision was needed on whether to show relative change or absolute performance, which had an impact on those units already performing well. Members felt the five headings were broadly right as the key things every School should be focusing on, but a lot would depend on how this was measured and detailed.

Action – All members to send their comments to ML.

Action – ML to bring the original benchmarking paper back to the next meeting in March, as well as feedback from the Business School executive team.

ITEMS FOR FORMAL APPROVAL/NOTING

11   Sustainable Campus Fund & Pathways to 10%
The Director of SRS updated the Group on progress. The first year of the Fund had been successful. Overseen by the Utilities Working Group, the reduction was currently at 6-7% and expected to hit 10% by next summer. More than £750K had been allocated to projects, with a ROI over 20%. Year 2 of the Fund would take it to target delivery. Even relatively small amounts of funding had been shown to open up further engagement on energy issues. The SCF did not currently cover associated staffing costs – an area for exploration and discussion in future.