

**SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2022**



Members Present:

Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)	Prof Christine Bovis-Crossen (CBC)
Director of Estates & Facilities Division	Stephen Wells (SW)
Head of School of Environmental Sciences	Prof Kevin Hiscock (KH)
Executive Director for the Tyndall Centre	Asher Minns (AM)
Director of Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing	Angelina Bingley (AB)
SU Environment Officer	Sophie Ciurlik Rittenbaum (SCR)

With:

Head of Operational Assets, Charlie Downen (CD)  
Assistant Energy and Utilities Manager, Jeremy Carter (JC)  
Assistant Director of Social Enterprise (Venues, SU), Richard Hunter (RH)  
Lecturer, Education and International Development, Dr Hannah Hoechner (HH)  
Management Information Officer, Dr Hannah Kent-Webb (HKW)  
SUE, Business Support Officer (Minutes), Lee Nairn (LN)

Apologies:

Chief Operating Officer, Jenny Baxter (JB)  
Chief Resource Officer, Ian Callaghan (IC)  
Pro Vice-Chancellor (SCI), Prof Mark Searcy (MS)  
Assistant Head of Internal Communications, Rebecca Holmes (RH)  
Head of Planning, Garrick Fincham (GF)  
Senior Lecturer, Geography and International Development, Dr Jessica Budds (JBu)  
Governor Apprentice of Council, Mei Ren (MR)  
SU Campaigns and Democracy Officer, Serene Shibli (SS)

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**MINUTES**

1. MINUTES AND ACTIONS LOG

To confirm

the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022. **(SUS21M002, enclosed)**

Committee members confirmed the minutes of 27 January 2022.

To consider

the recommendations to close out any completed actions on page 1 in the Sustainability Committee Actions Log – May 2022. **(SUS21D019, enclosed)**

NOT RESOLVED

Katherine Middleton had provided further information on the red RAG ratings in the Environmental Risk and Opportunity Register (EROR). However, SW felt the number of red RAG ratings may not actually need to be red status and felt these needed to be looked at in more depth, offline.

CBC suggested the Actions Log should be left as it is for today with an action point for the Action Log to be looked at again in the next Committee in July.

**ACTION:** LN to add the Action Log item to the next Committee agenda.

**ACTION:** SW, CD and JC to go through the EROR to update and close activities, or update to 'in-progress'.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (IF ANY)

SW will be a Governing member of Petroc (from September) which is the largest FE college in North Devon. They do some work within HE with Plymouth University but it is predominantly FE.

3. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

- On behalf of the Committee, CBC formally thanked Katherine Middleton, formerly the Environmental Management Systems Manager, for all her hard work for this Committee, its predecessor Board and her work within the Estates department. The committee wishes her all the best for her new position.
- This Committee is KH's last meeting after at least seven years of sitting on the Sustainability Board.

KH has seen a lot of changes in that time, at the start we were just auditing the management system but we gradually encompassed sustainability issues across the campus, so this Committee is going in the right direction.

On behalf of the Committee, CBC thanked KH for all his hard work and invaluable advice and input to the evolution of this group and the evolution on how we actually deal with sustainability at UEA. CBC wished KH all the very best for his study leave.

- The planning submission for Phase 1 renovations to the Lasdun Wall has been submitted. It is part of our quest to move towards Net Zero Carbon and it is important for the work to improve how our heat emissions around windows is dealt with, as well as the Science Labs. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century Society has already objected to the proposals from the aesthetics and other points of view. We did concede that the notion to make the building more sustainable from an environmental perspective is an important point which is part of what we have said within our submission.

SW confirmed we should see the outcome by Autumn however, we have the slight challenge of Nutrient Neutrality (includes overnight stays) but Norwich City Council is currently giving legal advice.

CBC's understanding is that Nutrient Neutrality should only affect housing rather than what we are proposing to the Lasdun Wall. The other thing to be noted is, should we not receive approval then we will exhaust every process possible including seeking judicial review if we need to.

CBC thanked the team for pulling that work together and for the understanding and patience from colleagues who will be affected by the various moves.

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## SECTION A: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

### A1. EMS DASHBOARD – MAY 2022

To consider

the recommendations in the report listed below: **(SUS21D020)**

1. Discuss Highlights and Lowlights.
2. Discuss EMS Implementation Team status and actions.
3. Approve the closure of the EMS objectives: EMP54, EMP56, EMP57 and EMP73.
4. Note the Looking Forward section.
5. Discuss the results from the NQA Surveillance Audit and the Transport Audit (p.2).
6. Discuss the carbon emissions reduction graph (p.3).

Minutes (Ref SUS21D020)

- A1.1. SW stated the highlights and lowlights show us in a good light, with some areas as minor non-conformances which we need to look at.
- A1.2. Item not discussed.
- A1.3. The Committee agreed to close out the EMS objectives EMP54, EMP56, EMP57 and EMP73.
- A1.4. SW will be writing a paper for the next Sustainability Committee on the staffing levels within sustainability in Estates and across the institution and will refocus the limited resources within Estates in what he thinks are high priority.
- A1.5. We have just had our external audit and we came out of that very well and were advised to continue with accreditation. We had four minors and one for improvement so nothing major came out of the audit, therefore, we are in a good place and are driving it forward. Regarding the resource, SW, JC and CD are focused on how we drive this forward and how to manage it going onwards.
- A1.6. The graph shows a slight upturn in 2021 which is a little concern but that was likely to happen as we are having to increase ventilation due to Covid regulations. We have had low occupation on campus but carbon emissions have gone up so we need keep an eye on that but we are hoping HSC will be revising the guidance on covid ventilation fairly shortly.

JC: the impact of Covid was that electric power and water consumption went down due to less occupied buildings, however, gas and heat consumption went up as we did not close any buildings at all, over ventilated them and switched off heat recovery because of the Covid risk. If we close the windows then heat consumption will simply go down.

CD: Last year we approached both academic and residences to collaborate buildings but it was felt it was not the right thing to do because somebody could inadvertently go into the buildings. We were asking the Executive Team (ET) to make difficult decisions but it was decided that it was risk versus benefit so we continued to keep buildings open. It has hit us here and our utilities pocket.

CBC: in the Times Higher Impact Rankings (THIR) we are in the top 50 in the world which is fantastic news and we want to be able to continue to develop and work forward.

KH: the THIR is a good result but we are sliding backwards on the ISO14001 as shown on the graph. KH asked if the Aurora Sustainable Campus Action Plan (ASCAP), where the UEA representative is yet to be confirmed, if this was an action yet to be closed out (as shown in the 'Looking forward' section). It would be good to be a part of this because you can share experiences across other campuses.

CBC: the ASCAP UEA representative is to be confirmed and Aurora is reworking itself a little bit. CBC to follow up on where we are with this with the VC who is on the Board of Directors.

**ACTION:** CBC to follow up with the VC on what progress has been made with appointing the ASCAP UEA representative.

KH thanked Estates for keeping the buildings open during Covid to allow the academic activity to continue.

SW believes this committee should be looking ahead and over the next 12 months would like to take EMS out of this committee and provide an annual report and 6-month update. EMS could be dealt with within a working group.

CBC agreed that this committee should be more about strategic level conversations rather than the day-to-day maintenance of operations.

KH has enjoyed seeing the EMS Dashboard reports and we saw them as important for sharing the work with the committee as a good summary of the present activity and is presentable to Council. He would not want to lose the utility of these reports with respect to communication with other parts of the university. We don't want to under value the visual representation in the reports.

SW agreed and will take this on board but reiterated that we were going to still do these reports but to not discuss them at every single committee which we currently do.

A2. ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES EXPLANATION – MAY 2022

To report

that at the last meeting of Sustainability Board on 27 January 2022 the report SUS21D006 was not resolved, as there was a query over the Red (barriers to completion) status of some identified Opportunities on p.9.

To consider

the recommendations in the report listed below: **(SUS21D021)**

- (1) Review summary of changes (p.1).
- (2) Review Opportunities marked as Red status (p.2-4).

Minutes (ref SUS21D021)

SW will take this offline and reassess the red status.

CD agrees for the necessity to review the document.

A5. DISCUSSION ABOUT BUSINESS TRAVEL RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY AND ETHICAL INVESTMENT AND BANKING POLICY

To discuss

Progress updates on the draft Business Travel Risk Management Policy and Ethical Investment and Banking Policy.

Minutes

A5.1. The Business travel Risk Policy is going to be completed for the end of June.

A5.2. The Ethical Investment and Banking (EIB) policy is going forward to the Finance Committee for approval at the 16<sup>th</sup> June meeting. CBC specifically requested that there be enough time to formerly approve the policy because it is an issue that has been raised by several people within the institution and that firmly fits in with the Finance Committee remit.

HH wants to know what completion of the policy is meaning, will it be that the ET will have signed it off again or is it that IC will have completed the minor changes since they were requested in June last year and would the policy need to be approved again?

SCR expressed concern as she received comments from the VC on the policy at the last Student Union Council, who stated that they are considering the policy and keen to do it but if it is more expensive then they won't and that it was a decision for the Finance Team to make anyway.

HH is aware that the problematic investments have been moved to elsewhere so that part is now more ethical but the UEA's banking is not as it is still with Barclays. The concern is whether banking will also be part of the EIB policy or will it be mostly focussed on

investment and are there any plans going forward to rethink our banking with Barclays?

**ACTION:** CBC to ascertain with IC what completion of the policy means at this stage; what will the EIB be focussed on; and will they rethink on not continuing banking with Barclays?

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## SECTION B:

### ITEMS WHICH CONTAIN RECOMMENDATIONS BUT WHERE NO DEBATE IS ANTICIPATED

*Please look under 1. Business of the Agenda for details of how to view these documents.*

#### B1. EMS IMPLEMENTATION TEAM REPORTS – MAY 2022

To report  
the recommendations in the report. **(SUS21D022)**

Minutes (ref SUS21D022)  
No issues were raised.

#### B2. AURORA SUSTAINABLE CAMPUS ACTION PLAN

To report  
the Minutes of the WP5.3 working group on 7 March 2022. **(SUS21D023)**  
the Minutes of the WP5.3 working group at the Biannual on 11 May 2022. **(SUS21D024)**

Minutes  
CBC will be seeking an update from the VC on the progress for an ASCAP UEA representative.

LN confirmed that the minutes of the WP5.3 has yet to be received from AURORA, therefore, will be uploaded to the Committee's SharePoint in due course.

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## SECTION C: ITEMS FOR REPORT

*Please look under 1. Business of the Agenda for details of how to view these documents.*

None reported.

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## SECTION D: RESERVED AGENDA

*Please look under 1. Business of the Agenda for details of how to view these documents.*

None reported.