

Aston University

Sustainable Aston Working Group

Notes of the meeting held on 2 May 2012

Present:	David Aboukheir	Professor Helen Higson (item 5)
	John Blewitt	Kathy Hopkin
	Andrew Bryers	Victoria Johnsen
	Stuart Cooper (Chair)	Carole Parkes
	Jake Delaney	Elena Schad
	Peter Hedges	Peter Shearer
	Rebekka Heitmar	

In attendance: Julie Ottley (Secretary)

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Lucy Bastin, Alan Charters and Helen Pattison.

2. Membership

Jake Delaney was welcomed to the group as the Guild's Equalities and Ethics Officer.

3. Notes of last meeting

The notes of the previous meeting, held on 18 January 2012, were confirmed.

4. Matters arising

(i) Go Green Week

The week had gone well with higher visibility this year.

There had been good coverage in the local press and good attendance at some events, particularly Rob Newman which had an audience of 70 people.

Academic content was lacking and this must be improved next year.

ALL

The Outlet map created by the MSc students was very popular. It was agreed that this should be maintained and made available on-line via sustainability pages.

The MSc students were thanked for their great work and getting people involved.

(ii) EcoCampus

The Platinum audit was taking place on 14/15 May. It was expected that the University would fail to meet the standard but the audit would provide useful feedback.

Currently 12 people were trained as auditors, however, this needed to increase. It was suggested that it may be of interest to the next cohort of MSc students.

(iii) Birmingham Centre for Business Ethics (BCBE)

Confirmation had been received from the Charities Commission that the BCBE was now transferred to the University.

It was noted that a launch event would be held later in the year.

5. LIFE and sustainability in the curriculum

Professor Helen Higson in attendance for this item.

Professor Higson confirmed that, in line with Aston 2020, sustainability would be further embedded into the Teaching and Learning strategy. Professor Higson would be the lead and would work with SAWG to achieve this.

There was not a specific KPI for this as Council felt there would be too many.

A cross-University event to map the Teaching and Learning agenda and identify an action plan was being held on 17 July. Stuart Cooper and Carole Parkes would represent SAWG at this event.

SC/CP

There would be a similar event on 19 July for Schools to establish their action plans.

It was agreed that John Blewitt would represent SAWG on the Joint Honours Programmes Development Group as the development of a specialist programme would create commitment.

JB

It was suggested that the internal six-year Programme Review process should look at sustainability content. It was agreed that Carole Parkes would contact the Quality Team about this.

CP

It was noted that the next QAA guidance would require that sustainability was part of the curriculum.

It was suggested that sustainability be included in the PG Certificate so that staff have a better understanding. John Blewitt would contact CLIPP.

JB

6. School Reports

ABS – MSc developments were underway including DL which had now gone through PASC. Consideration was being given to a first year long thin skills development module.

EAS – Power Engineering programme was being integrated with energy on campus.

LHS – Optometry students had raised money by having a stall at Go Green Week and would use this to plant a tree. Consideration was being given to issuing all students with a water bottle at the start of the year. There was a BB page with green activities and information. It was unclear what had happened to the wider LHS group which had previously been very active.

7. Chair and membership

It was noted that a new Chair was required for the next academic year and also that Peter Hedges and Helen Pattison would be stepping down from the group.

Executive Deans would be asked to encourage more members to join the group.

SC

8. Other business

Energy

PV panels had been installed on the roof. Electricity consumption was up by 2%, gas down by 12% and water down by 15%.

Green League scorecard indicated that the overall score was likely to drop mainly because the figures for waste and water had gone up because they were now more accurate.

The composter does not work and responsibility for this needed to be addressed.

The Chair expressed thanks to the student reps for their contribution to the Group and activities.

9. Date of next meeting

The next meeting would be in the next academic year.

JO