

## **Aston University**

### **Annual Environmental Management Review**

Notes of the meeting held on 24 September 2012

Present:	Lucy Bastin	Rebekka Heitmar
	John Blewitt	Kathy Hopkin
	Andrew Bryers	Victoria Johnsen
	Alan Charters	Carole Parkes
	Stuart Cooper (Chair)	Peter Quaife
	Jake Delaney	Peter Shearer
	Peter Hedges	

In attendance: Julie Ottley (Secretary)

#### **1. Follow-up actions from previous review**

It was noted that this was not applicable on this occasion as this was the University's first formalised Environmental Management Review encompassing a more comprehensive, auditable approach.

It was noted that the purpose of this annual review process was:

- To ensure the continuing suitability, adequacy and effectiveness of the Environmental Management System (EMS)
- To review and revise sustainability-related policies, objectives and targets and other elements of the EMS
- To identify opportunities for environmental improvement

#### **2. Environmental audits update and corrective and preventive actions status**

Internal environmental audits were carried out during July and August in the following areas:

- Full evaluation of compliance with environmental legislation
- High impact areas – overall environmental credentials
- Library – overall environmental credentials
- Oil storage and spillage procedure
- Furniture reuse scheme
- Sustainable Procurement Policy implementation
- Biodiversity Policy implementation

It was noted that there were no major non-conformities except for identified areas of the legal register and a deadline of 1 December 2012 had been set for addressing these. All other audit recommendations were being addressed. AC would report progress to the Executive in November. The next wave of audits would commence in October/November 2012.

### 3. Environmental performance assessment

#### Carbon Management Plan

It was noted that this year's figures related to 2010/11 and 2011/12.

The 2011/12 target was a reduction of 26% against the base year. A reduction of 18.7% CO<sub>2</sub>e, compared to 2005/6 base year, had been achieved and this was mainly from the Combined Heat and Power Plant (CHP).

The slight emissions increase compared to 2010/11 was due to the following factors:

- Reopening of Woodcock Sports Centre (September 2011)
- Opening of Aston Brain Centre (September 2011)
- Construction works for ASV phase 2 and EBRI (on-going)
- Increase in carbon emission factors by DEFRA
- Increase in electricity consumption from halls of residence

It was noted that 17 projects had been funded through Salix during 2011/12 producing an annual saving of 463,161 kWh, £34,703, 191 CO<sub>2</sub> tonnes.

#### KPIs

It was noted that KPIs for waste, water and carbon were being prepared.

### 4. Review of aspects register (also covering item 6 changing circumstances)

The aspects register was reviewed and it was agreed that it would be maintained in its current format giving consideration to:

Waste management and recycling	Discharges
Energy	Construction
Water	Procurement
Transport	Biodiversity
Emissions	Community

There were no changing circumstances and consequently no major changes to the register. Members were reminded that they should notify the Environment team if there were any issues missing or changes to be incorporated.

### 5. Legal and other requirements

It was noted that there were 11 areas of legal non-compliance around three main areas:

- Waste Regulations – storage and documentation
- Oil Storage and spillage
- Control of Pollution/Buildings – construction consents

A date of 1 December 2012 had been set as the deadline for these issues to be rectified.

## **6. Changing circumstances** (see item 4 above)

## **7. Feedback & communications**

The University was working towards platinum status from EcoCampus.

Aston had achieved first class, 11<sup>th</sup> place in the Green League, with a KPI set to stay in first class/top 20 category. There had been some improvement in relation to sustainable foods but no improvement on renewable energy.

Aston was shortlisted for two Green Gown awards: in the research category for EBRI and in construction/refurbishment for Woodcock Sports Centre.

Aston was also nominated in the Birmingham recycling awards for the furniture reuse scheme.

There had been no complaints and no incidents this year.

## **8. Sustainability policies review**

The following policies were reviewed:

- Biodiversity Policy
- Environmental Policy
- Ethical Investment Policy
- Sustainability Policy
- Sustainable Food Policy
- Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Waste Management Policy

Some changes were suggested for the Sustainable Food Policy and Waste Management Policy and these would be incorporated.

## **9. Other business**

It was noted that the Go Green awards were to be relaunched together with the recruitment of Go Green Champions across Schools and Departments.

## **10. Evaluation of EMS continuing effectiveness/recommendations for improvement**

It was noted that the EMS had been effective overall with improvements in monitoring, a comprehensive internal auditing system and an improved management review.

The effectiveness of the EMS was evidenced by the fact that there had been no complaints and no incidents this year, together with the University's continued first class ranking in the Green League and nominations for Green Gown awards.

## **11. Actions**

It was agreed that in preparation for next year's annual review, all reports and information would be distributed in advance of the meeting and similarly all documentation would be available on the staff intranet.

The next Environmental Management Review would be held during the Sustainable Aston Working Group meeting in September 2013.