

Aston University Sustainability Working Group
Action Sheet

Meeting: 19th December 2007

Meeting Date	Action	Who By	By When	Priority	Date Completed
03:10:07	Confirm Student Membership of Group	PH	Jan Meeting	High	
03:10:07	Edit draft and produce final Environmental Policy	GE, RC, BN	Dec Meeting	High	Dec
03:10:07	Produce Catalogue of Taught Sustainable Modules	PH	Jan meeting	Medium	
19:12:07	Organise Sustainability Research Seminar	PH	Jan meeting	Low	
9:12:07	Diagram of structure for delivering sustainability	PH	Jan meeting	High	
19:12:07	Feasibility of Group web site	PH	Jan meeting	High	

Sustainable Aston Working Group

Minutes of Meeting
19th December

Present:	Richard Middleton	RM	Chief Operating Officer
	Dr Robin Clark	RC	SEAS
	Garry East	GE	Estates
	Dr Reiner Grundmann	RG	LSS
	Dr Peter Hedges	PH	SEAS (Chair)
	Breno Nunes	BN	ABS
	Dr Julia Brown	JB	SLHS
	Lynnette Jones	LJ	Estates (New Environmental Manager)
	Dr Peter Quaife	PQ	LSS
In attendance:	Emma Sutton	ES	Secretarial support
Apologies:	Prof Michael West	MW	ABS
	Dr Caroline Witton	CW	SLHS
	Dr Stuart Cooper	SC	ABS

Apologies and Welcome

Apologies received from Professor Michael West, Dr Caroline Witton and Dr Stuart Cooper. Brief welcome given to Lynnette Jones, the new Environmental Manager for Aston University who is due to start work 2nd January.

Action

1. Membership

Confirms that the working group should remain at approximately 12 people, with at least two people representing each school in case of absence. The group will report to the Executive through RM. Since the last meeting on 3rd October, PH has been approached by the Purchasing department who are keen to show their interest and support for the group. However, it has been agreed that the working group should not expand memberships to other departments at this point.

Luke Davies, Guild Chairperson and member of the student People and Planet Society has been approached by PH to be the student representative for the working group. It is hoped that he will be able to attend the next meeting.

PH

2. Minutes of 19th December meeting

Minutes were agreed and accepted.

3. Action points/ Matters Arising

3.1 Action Points

Student Representative, Luke Davies is to be contacted to confirm his attendance to the next meeting.

RM has asked if there could be two student representatives to attend future meetings, one who is a current tenant on the University campus.

PH

RM/PH

3.2 Role of the Working Group

The group's ad hoc status and membership has been agreed.

4. Immediate Goals

4.1 Environmental Manager

Lynnette Jones (present at the meeting) has been appointed Aston University's Environmental Manager and begins her role in the New Year. She has agreed to be part of the Sustainable Working Group and will attend future meetings. This goal has now been achieved.

4.2 Environmental Policy

GE circulates a revised copy of the Environmental Policy. GE asks for advice on the last paragraph; however it is agreed by the rest of the group that for the time being the version in his circulated draft is appropriate. The Environmental Policy is ticked off as completed. RM agrees to take the finished Environmental Policy to the Vice-Chancellor and get it signed off. The next step is to have it circulated around the University

The group thanks RC, BN and GE for their efforts in producing the Environmental Policy.

RM/GE

4.3 Initial Environmental Review

- Paper in/out – ES reports back to the group that in 2006 the University spent £48092 on paper from the approved stationery supplier. £30000 of that figure was spent on Lyreco Budget copier paper which is classed as a green product and only sourced from environmentally responsible suppliers. ES has also begun conducting a survey in how many recycling bins there are in the University. This is still work in progress.
- Fuel consumption – GE reports that the University uses 21m kilowatt hours per year in electricity, costing £1.36 million and 32000 kilowatt hours costing £550,000.
- Water Consumption – 183,000m³, costing £327,000.
- Rubbish/Waste management - The University's existing contract for the removal of waste is £61,000 per year, however the contract is up for now up for renewal. Alternatives are to be considered.

GE

GE also looks into the amount of photocopiers which are currently being used within the University. Financial records suggest there are only 12; however this is unlikely to be accurate and therefore more investigation is to be done.

5. Short Term Initiatives

5.1 Teaching and Learning Workshop

RC has devised a preliminary programme (circulated in the meeting) for a half-day seminar concerning teaching Sustainability in Higher Education. The seminar aims to explore sustainability in the educational offerings at Aston University and showcase its current position. RC wants to bring all four schools together to discuss their practice and asks the sustainable working group for a speaker to represent each school.

RC

The teaching and learning workshop is due to take place 13th March 2008.

Whilst on the subject of teaching, JB suggests that a baseline is formed by looking at the research currently taking place within each school. To do this she suggests that a small group is formed from existing Sustainability group members, one from each school who can undertake the necessary research and then report back to the larger group.

JB

Agreed members were: Julia Brown - SLHS

Robin Clark- SEAS

Peter Quaife is going to look for a member for SLSS

Stuart Cooper- ABS (not confirmed)

5.2 Campus Development Seminar

GE

GE has suggested that the campus development seminar take place in April so it follows on from the teaching and learning workshop.

5.3 Sustainability Research Seminar

PH

PH suggests that the sustainability research seminar should take place around June, towards the end of the academic year. The purpose of the seminar is to find out if there are any areas of research which overlap and which can be developed to incorporate Aston's environmental policy.

6. Sustainability in the School of Life and Health Sciences

JB

JB and CW have set up a small group in SLHS to feed back information from the Sustainability group to the various departments within the school and also to discuss how sustainability can be integrated within LHS. The first meeting produced positive feedback from the school, with ideas to increase sustainability in teaching and also within the school on a daily basis.

7. The Way Forward?

7.1 Procurement initiative

PH had a meeting with Shirley O'Reilly and Sandra Bloodworth from the Procurement office to find out more about the environmental policy which exists in terms of purchasing. Any contractor which has business with the University above £50,000 a year must have an environmental policy.

PH has suggested that the Procurement department is encouraged to set up their own working group to look at and discuss the appointment of suppliers of sustainable products.

The Purchasing Office has also arranged for Lyreco, the University's main stationery supplier, to come to Aston for an Environmental Policy day, where staff can sample environmentally friendly products. This will take place on Monday 21st January 2008, room MBG6/8.

7.2 Engaging with the University

PH/RC

RC presented a possible structure for expanding sustainability activities across the University. This would enable all sectors of the University including those which are not academic, such as ISA and Finance to become involved. The Group would remain the main focus of communication. The proposal was accepted as a good model for implementation and a diagram would be drawn up.

7.3 Web pages

PH

PH suggests that a Sustainable Aston Working Group website should be constructed, with a link to the University home web page so that its profile can be raised. The home page would have links to a series of individual pages, to include minutes from meetings, the policy, Fairtrade and also where any activity days organized by the Sustainable Group can be advertised. Agreed with PH to explore further

8. Any other business

PH asks the group what the sustainability at Aston document (circulated 12th July 2007) should be called. Several titles were played with, however it was decided that it will be named 'The aims of Aston sustainability'.

ES

RG suggests that the group read 'Degrees that Matter, Climate Change and the University' by Ann Rappaport and Sarah Hammond Creighton. PH suggests that the

VC is asked to purchase a book on behalf of the group. ES is to ask.

ES

PH brings up the Big Green Challenge which was put to the group by the VC as a possible competition to enter, however it was decided that due to the workload of the group that it will be put on hold.

9. Next Meeting

PH

Thursday 17th January 2008, 14:30-16:30, Room to be confirmed.

10. Introduction to ISO 14001

PH gives a brief PowerPoint presentation to the rest of the group about the guiding principles of ISO 14001.