

ESTATES COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting:
24th October 2016
Title of Paper:
Climate Change and Social Responsibility Policy and Sustainability Performance Update
Purpose of Paper:
As a socially progressive University, it is appropriate for the institution to develop a Climate Change and Social Responsibility Policy. This paper seeks the endorsement of a set of proposed policy themes and the formation of a working group. The paper also presents progress on some of the key strategic environmental and sustainability activities carried out during 2015/16.
Intended Outcome:
EC to note and endorse the proposed approach.
Paper Submitted by:
Roddy Yarr (Assistant Director, Sustainability and Environmental Management)
Any items protected from publication under the Freedom of Information Act, rationale and associated timescale that should be exempt from publication.
Key contact(s):
Roddy Yarr
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1.0 Introduction

Climate change is the most important issue facing humankind and as a University, we recognise this in much of our teaching, research and operations, we also endorse social responsibility with our strategic vision and values. Environmental sustainability reflects the need for socio-economic and environmental aspects to be collectively integrated and this can be best achieved by developing a University-wide policy that embeds these elements within our day to day activities.

This paper sets out four ‘themes’ that would underpin a Climate Change and Social Responsibility Policy and it proposes the establishment of a cross-university working group that can shape these themes into a coherent statement with associated objectives and targets. The note also outlines some of the headline initiatives that have been implemented during the 2015/2016 period.

2.0 Sustainability and Climate Change Policy and Governance

Addressing sustainability and climate change issues is becoming an increasingly important part of the higher education sector’s agenda. In Scotland, these aspects are already a requirement of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and the Climate Change Reporting Duties that are now mandatory. The Duties require details of the University’s policy and governance around the issues of climate change and sustainability. So, while there is a great deal of work already being done on these issues at the University, it is appropriate to develop an overarching policy that is aligned with the University’s Strategic Plan. To address this need, we will develop a simple, clear statement and build on this with the establishment of supporting policies, objectives, targets and a robust governance process.

2.1 Policy Themes

There are four main themes outlined below.

- i. Tackle climate change and reduce resource use
- ii. Be socially responsible
- iii. Collaborate with others to embed sustainability across the institution
- iv. Share learning and knowledge to help ensure continuous improvement

Aim 1 - Tackle climate change and reduce resource use

The University will tackle climate change through a range of measures designed to mitigate and adapt to this challenge. We will efficiently and intelligently manage our resources and seek value from them. We will consider resources as contributing to a circular economy that enables us to do more with less by changing how we manage what we consume. We will do this through adoption of sustainable procurement processes; seeking to reuse or repurpose materials and assets as much as possible and supporting a robust waste hierarchy; using what we have sensibly; and conserving our assets.

Example Actions and Outcomes – responsible carbon emissions management; sustainable resource use and procurement; exemplary building design; demonstrable and visible progress on sustainable infrastructure that mitigates and adapts to climate change.

Aim 2 - Be socially responsible

The University's reputation and influence is global and as a 'place of useful learning', the University positively influences the lives of its students, society and the world. Located in the heart of Glasgow and as a major employer, we have a strong sense of social responsibility. We will proactively manage our relationship with the city's leaders, the local community as well as our national and international stakeholders. We will continue to ensure that our research and teaching is accessible, relevant to the issues facing society and that it has positive impact locally, nationally and far beyond Scotland.

Example Actions and Outcomes: *we will be a good neighbour, actively engaging with the local community through outreach and involvement; we will encourage our students to involve themselves with our community in Glasgow and beyond; providing an inspirational and vibrant campus within the University's grounds; positively influencing policy at local and national levels; sourcing materials and services responsibly; ensuring access to the University for as wide and diverse a population as possible.*

Aim 3 - Collaborate with others to embed sustainability across the institution

The University is committed to collaboration with industry, business, government and the third sector. The University supports the development of sustainable economic growth and the delivery of a wider societal benefit as an outcome. By embedding sustainability across our Faculties, Professional Services and individuals, we further enhance collaboration and innovation which will make a positive impact on our contribution to the sustainability agenda.

Actions and Outcomes: *embedding environment and sustainability issues across the institution; joining up our governance with regard to sustainability, social responsibility and climate change; demonstrating excellence in low carbon technology, environmental initiatives, social inclusion and behaviour change through collaborative networks.*

Aim 4 - Share learning and knowledge to help ensure continuous improvement

The University is well known for its excellence in the creation of knowledge and building of capacity within society. Within this sharing of knowledge amongst staff, students and external stakeholders, we will include sustainability, climate change and social responsibility.

Actions and Outcomes: *engage staff and students to influence and change the culture of sustainability; develop our own skills in climate change mitigation and adaptation; develop external links and networks to enhance knowledge and capacity with regard to sustainability; support and promote research on climate change and social responsibility; further integrate sustainability issues into our student curriculum and research areas.*

2.2 Next Steps

EC is asked for comments on the policy themes. It is proposed that the policy themes are discussed with the University Court with a view to creating a short life working group that can develop the themes into a robust policy statement with a set of supporting policies, objectives and targets. The working group will consist of professional and academic staff and students as well as external stakeholders as appropriate. It will also be important to establish the governance processes that support the emerging policy and the University's adherence to it.

3.0 Sustainability Performance Update 2015/2016

3.1 Environmental Compliance

The University is required to comply with environmental legislation. During 2015/16, we have carried out a review of a number of our facilities and work has been carried out to bring certain facilities up to compliant standards. For instance, the fuel storage facility at Ross Priory has been completely replaced with new bunded storage tanks. It is now compliant with modern standards. The reedbed treatment facility at Ross Priory has also been upgraded with additional effluent attenuation, filtration and replacement reeds. Disappointingly, SEPA has notified the University of a failure in the effluent quality standard from the treatment system. This coincided with the upgrade works that have been undertaken. A report has been drafted and sent to SEPA in response and increased monitoring and inspection procedures have been implemented. SEPA has responded that the actions we have taken are satisfactory. We will continue to monitor the discharge quality.



Ross Priory Reedbed with newly installed gravel substrate and reeds.

3.2 Climate Change Reporting Duties

The University successfully submitted its report for the pilot 2014/2015 period and we are currently collating data for the 2015/16 submission. As noted above, this year, the report is mandatory and will be used by the Scottish government to benchmark sector performance. There is an emphasis on policy, strategy and governance under the 'acting sustainably' element, as well as sections on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

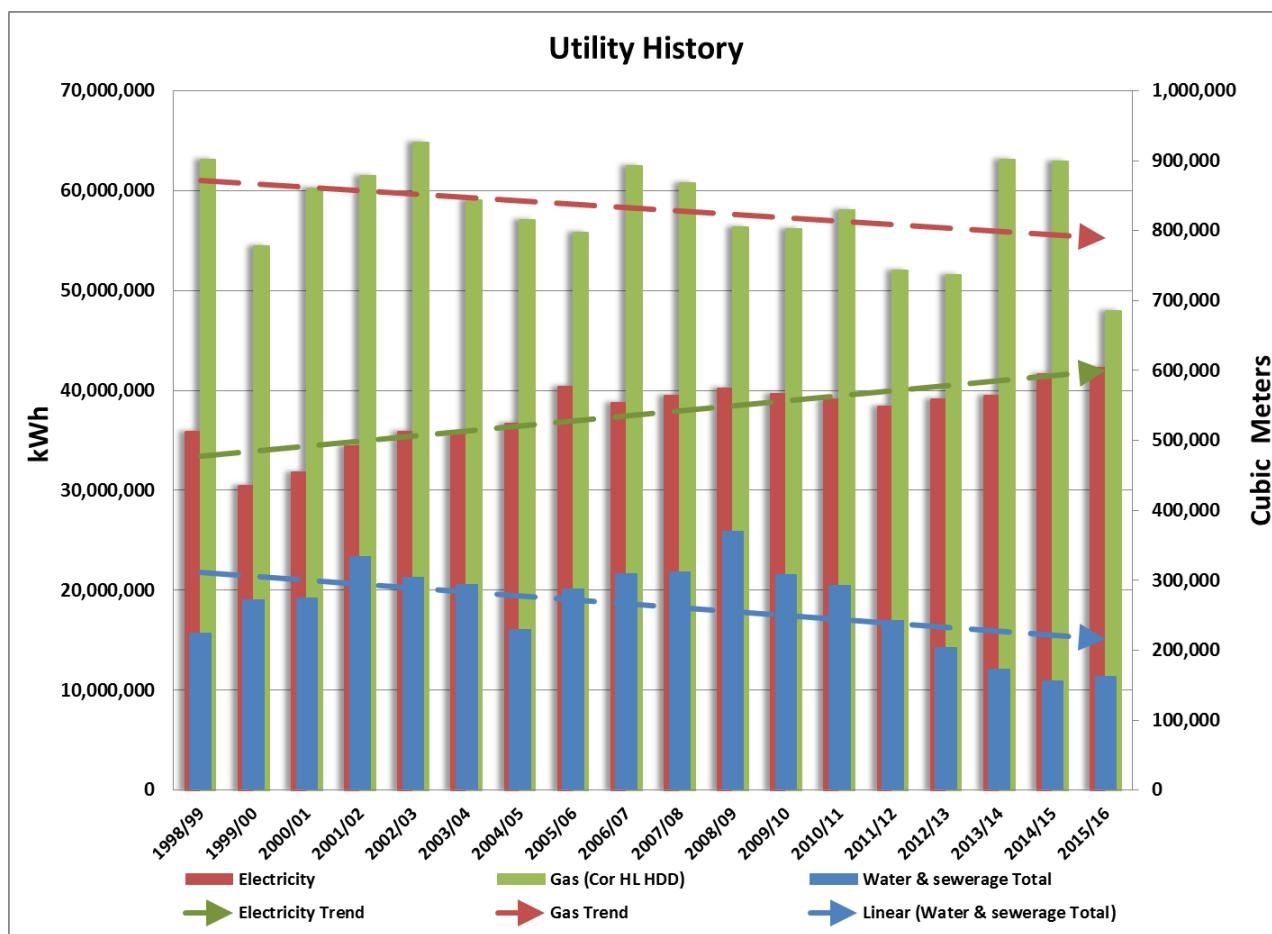
Climate change adaptation is a key theme that we are not yet able to fully answer in the 'Duties' document. For instance, we are required to develop an Adaptation Policy and to begin to implement adaptation solutions as part of the built environment. We will be bringing forward this draft policy in due course. Estates Services will continue to manage the submission of data for this report as well as the management required for effective and responsible governance of climate change issues at the University.

3.3 Carbon Management

The University has agreed a strategic carbon target of a 25% reduction in energy emissions by 2020 against a baseline of 30,000 tonnes. Performance for 15/16 shows that consumption has decreased slightly compared to the previous year but not by enough to meet the required annual reduction of 5%.

To help achieve this carbon reduction, the University Court has recently approved for the installation of a combined heat and power district energy scheme to proceed. This exciting project will deliver a significant step change of 4,500 tonnes at Phase 1 (15% of the current carbon target) with the capacity to achieve 5,300 when Phase 2 proceeds and up to 6,000 at Phase 3 (based on current carbon factors). Clearly the focus now is on the delivery of Phase 1 and future phases of extension of the network are presumptive so there remains a major imperative to ensure that we also achieve the maximum carbon savings from other sources and opportunities if we are to meet the 25% carbon reduction target. These include using low carbon heat and power generation, improving existing building efficiencies, fabric improvements to reduce heat loss, controlling our I.T. and high

performance computing energy loads, improving space utilisation to reduce the need for heat and power and ensuring that the design of new and refurbished buildings maximises the opportunity to minimise consumption. In short, every effort is needed to help ensure that we meet our carbon target.

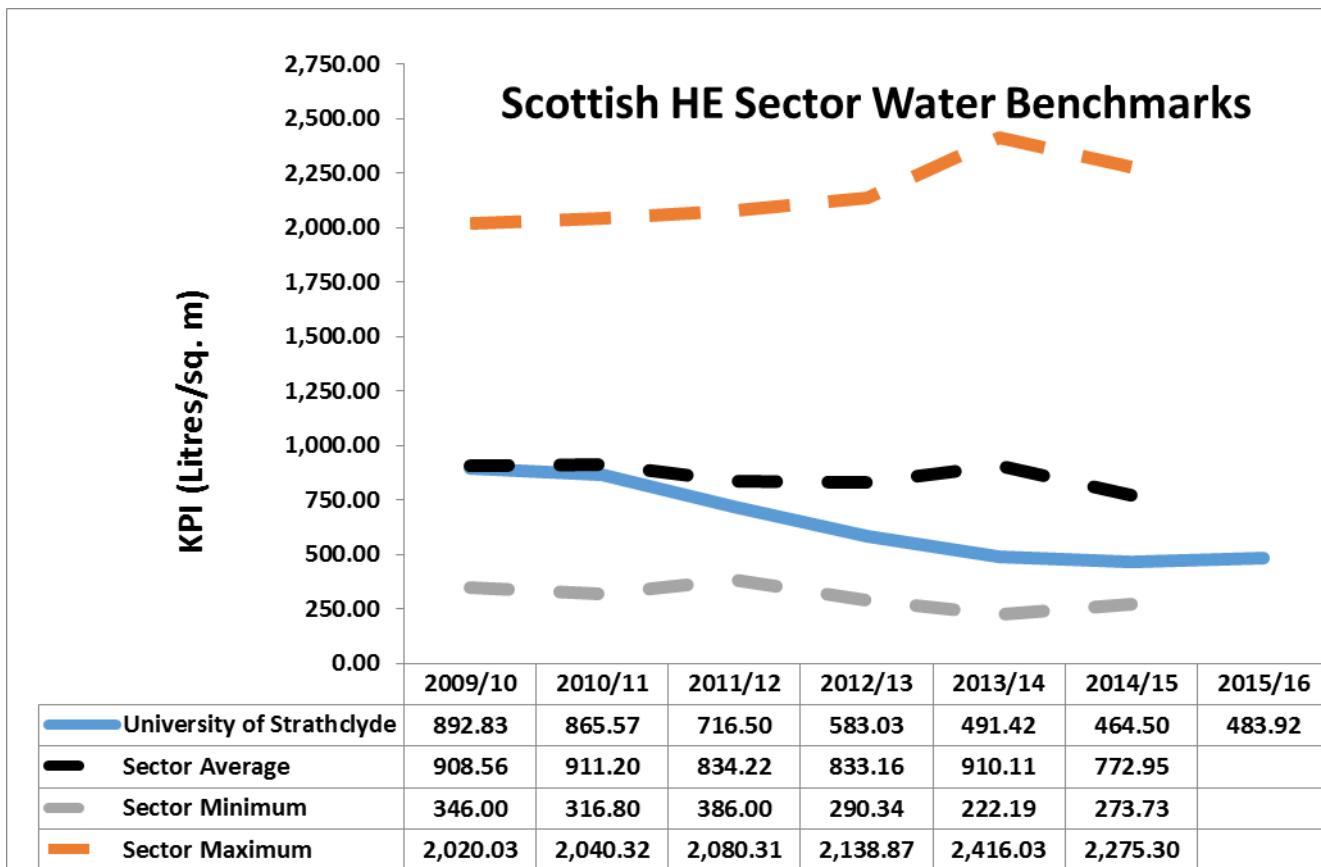


Utility trends at the John Anderson Campus. Arrows indicate general trend.

In 2015/16, the university consumed 1% more electricity and natural gas than 2014/15. This is in spite of the addition of TIC to the university's portfolio of buildings. This slight increase in consumption was mitigated by reductions in the carbon footprints of the Jordanhill campus and Thomas Graham building respectively. The Thomas Graham building in particular contributed a 1% reduction in the university's carbon footprint due to Pure and Applied Chemistry's (PAC) commitment to demonstrable energy efficiency projects and the use of the SALIX energy fund in this building. Given the relatively high utility load of PAC, the department should be commended for their commitment to energy and water reduction.

Despite the marginal increase in utility consumption, the university's overall energy carbon footprint from stationary sources has gone down. This is a direct result of an 11% reduction in the UK electricity grid emissions due to more low and zero carbon generation capacity. This change in grid factors will become an increasingly important factor in the future.

Water consumption during the year has reduced significantly, largely because of the introduction of the Sustainable Labs programme. For instance, the work that has been carried out in the laboratories of the Thomas Graham building has saved more than 8% of building water consumption compared to the previous year. This is due to the use of more efficient lab condensers and similar equipment and this has contributed to a continuing downward trend in water consumption at the John Anderson Campus. The Sustainable Labs programme clearly delivers tangible energy (and cost) savings and we would encourage more uptake of this scheme by laboratories across our estate.



Water consumption trends at the John Anderson Campus. Note comparison to sector average.

3.4 Waste Resource Management

Progress has been made in shifting our waste management processes towards more sustainable outcomes. For instance, our work on furniture reuse has yielded successful outcomes at the former Jordanhill Campus, where more than 2,000 items of furniture have been rehomed, saving 39 tonnes of carbon in landfill avoidance and with a reuse rate of 94%. Jordanhill School, Douglas Academy, Bankhead Primary and the Duke Street Food Bank were all recipients of furniture. As part of this effort, several hundred items of library shelving, furniture and books were delivered to Mzuzu University in Malawi under the 'Library in a Box' scheme with the help of various University staff. The Mzuzu Library had suffered significant losses during a fire in its library so this seemed like a very fitting solution that helped reuse our former library items, effectively giving them new life.

A new waste management system has been implemented with a new 'fleet' of red general waste receptacles and new green 'drop-front' recycling bins now deployed across the academic and administration buildings on campus. These dedicated recycling bins are picked up separately by a recycling operative from Biffa, our waste contractor. This new regime means that we can be sure that our recycling is kept segregated from source to the point of treatment. This change aligns with government policy on material segregation in the development of a circular economy. It is hoped that this new system will enable better recycling rates and behaviour change.

In 2016/17, there will be a focus on the waste management strategy and facilities for the residences and we will work with Glasgow City Council who provide the waste receptacles in order to improve the current system. Recycling systems are provided at the residences but there is room for improvement in these and in the external storage receptacles provided by the Council.

There is also an opportunity to further change our waste management regime by creating our own bulk consolidation facilities for waste streams that have a residual value and achieve a revenue return for the University. This idea will be developed during the coming year.



Former Jordanhill library furniture being put to good use at Mzuzu University Library

3.5 Censing Project

The mobile 'Sensing the City' proposal from Future Cities continues to be supported by Estates Services. CENSIS have deployed mobile air quality monitoring systems on 3 Estates vehicles that have provided real-time data to help inform the air quality of the city centre. The monitoring is ongoing.

3.6 Sustainable Transport

3.6.1 Transport Planning

The University now has a formal Travel Plan in place that describes the range of activities and initiatives that are being delivered across our facilities.

http://www.strath.ac.uk/media/ps/estatesmanagement/sustainability/University_Travel_Plan_Final.pdf

During 2015/16, a further 93 bicycle parking spaces have been added bring the total to 400. These include covered facilities at Wolfson and 5 'cycle pods' at John Anderson. The recently completed Henry Dyer landscaping works also include new cycle parking facilities.

The new road crossing on Cathedral Street has helped to slow the movement of vehicles along this busy road. We continue to lobby the Council on their transport planning for Cathedral Street and a range of transport aspects in and around the John Anderson Campus and including improved disabled access provision on the city's pavements.

The University has been selected by Transport Scotland to put forward a bid to the ERDF-funded low carbon transport hubs fund. A bid document supported by a Feasibility Study is being prepared and is based around the installation of fast and rapid charge points for electric vehicles at PNDC, AFRC and the John Anderson Campus. The University is the only one in Scotland to secure this funding for this pre-application feasibility stage.

<http://www.strath.ac.uk/whystrathclyde/mediacentre/driveforlowcarbontransportatstrathclyde/>

3.6.2 Car Club

A two week trial of a car club vehicle will be launched in November with HASS who will use the system for visits to schools in and around the Glasgow area. This will help inform the feasibility of deployment of a car club on campus to provide an alternative to taxi usage and to link up with our other facilities.

3.7 Fairtrade

The University has developed a Fairtrade policy and is on target to achieve accreditation in early 2017.

4.0 Summary

EC is asked to note the themes presented and to endorse the development of a University-wide Climate Change and Social Responsibility Policy. EC is also asked to note the achievements made during 2015/16.