

For Information

Purpose

A brief summary of current issues and activities affecting the EAUC's Wales Branch.

EAUC-Wales Branch Developments

Since the last EAUC Board meeting there has been one Regional meeting held. This report details key items from this meeting (25th January 2012).

Communicating the Sustainability Message

The meeting concentrated on two subject areas, the first of which related to communicating the sustainability message. We were lucky enough to have Jane Davidson who until last year was the Welsh Government minister for Sustainability and who now works within the HE sector. She talked about the Sustainable Development Commission's five principles of sustainable development (sustainable economy, promoting good governance, using sound science responsibly, living within environmental limits and ensuring a strong, healthy and just society) and although the Welsh Government thought that the principles were good, they did however, 'tweak' them and brought them into One Wales: One Planet. Jane talked about legislating for sustainable development within Wales and SD as the 'central organising principle'

Jane suggested that there were many words used in treaties which have no resonance with the general public. Sustainability is still recognised as a positive word but sustainable 'development' is in danger of being misused in planning as the planning system allows sustainable development to go through the process without much opposition. In fact, sustainable development as a term could change in England leading to the use of two different terms within the UK! The term sustainability was however, seen as being able to survive 'short term-ism'.

Jane closed by stating that better decision-making is made through taking a longer-term approach and suggested that the EAUC Cymru group lends its support to the Welsh Government re: legislating for ESDG

Sustainable Development Charter

A brief introduction was given to the SD Charter. A small number of institutions are already signatories to the Sustainable Development Charter. It was mentioned that the voluntary aspect and resource constraints (sometimes only one person 'steering the ship') sometimes could make this low priority. A meeting has been set up for signatories to discuss the way forward.

The Charter was designed to give organisations the opportunity to plan and to report. The critical issue here is that organisations share what works. At this point ¹¹Hay on Earth was mentioned as an excellent opportunity to share. The Charter is closely related to One Wales; One Planet.

It was suggested that the Charter should be an agenda item at a future meeting and that perhaps Simon Billsborough or Huw Charles could be invited from the Welsh Government – all agreed.

EAUC Wales Objectives and Targets

The team is really keen to look at where improvements can be made for our current members, and what we may need to consider to attract new members. Our key aim has always been to share problems (and hopefully solutions) to the wide range of challenges that face us in the HE/FE sector. We would also like to develop a more strategic approach to our branch reflecting the Strategic plan of the EAUC as a whole.

The Objectives and targets document (attached) was discussed and agreed as a way forward.

The next meeting will be: 7th March 2012 – University of Wales, Newport – Sustainable Procurement

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*EAUC-Wales Branch Convener
21/02/12*

EAUC Welsh Region Objectives 2011-2013

Objective	Target	Timescale
Increase EAUC membership of Welsh region	HE 90% (10) (currently 73% (8)) FE 50% (currently 30% (6))	October 2013
Reduce travel to meetings by increasing video conferencing & telephone conferencing for pre-meetings	At least 1 meeting a year done by video conferencing clusters At least 2 Pre-meetings a year done by teleconferencing	October 2012
All members to sign up to Welsh Sustainable Development Charter	Identify who has already signed encourage other members to sign up	October 2012
Increase academic presence and themes of meetings	At least 1 theme a year to cover academic/research from Institutions Encourage regular attendance of academics	October 2012
Set up HE/FE best practice Group to look at Sustainable procurement issues	Improve sharing of sustainable procurement best practice amongst HE/FE in Wales	March 2012