



EAUC Midlands Meeting, 6th November, Coventry University

Attendees:

Andrew Bryers, Aston University

Monica Guise, University of Birmingham

Jenny Forster, Coventry University

Selina Fletcher, Coventry University

Katy Boom, University of Worcester

Simon Forth, University of Wolverhampton

Seth Kirby, EAUC

Simon Pole, University of Northampton

Pam Stanley, Derby College

Rosemary Horry, University of Derby

David Chapman, Warwick University

Judi Kilgallon, Warwick University

Responsible Futures session additional attendees: Quinn Runkle, Phil Pilkington (CU), Paul Cashian (CU).

Minutes: Rebecca Cottingham, Birmingham City University

Minutes and Actions

EAUC Midlands Group

SF explained that this is the first meeting since Trevor Shields retired from the University of Birmingham and as he previously organised the group it is a good time to discuss what is wanted from the group going forward.

MG suggested it would be useful to have an agenda. She is primarily responsible for transport and so could just come for the relevant section of any meetings.

SK advised that groups in the NW and Wales tend to theme their meetings having a one hour session on a 'hot topic' and then a more general discussion.



AB said that the energy group runs in a similar way having a session on relevant upcoming topics such as changes in legislation.

It was agreed that the frequency of twice a year is about right in terms of time commitment.

KB explained that she has been approached by SWM in relation to a regional universities group. SWM came out of AWM and is now the only regional body left. They have been going about 10 years and support sustainability by running networking groups across a variety of sections.

The advantages to us are that they have resources available to support the group and have good business and local authority links. They are also able to provide admin support similar to that provided by the EAUC.

KB explained that she, SF and RC, along with Iain Patton, had an initial meeting with SWM to find out what they had to offer and then said they would discuss options with the group before getting back to them. She said it was thought there was the potential to maybe bring together businesses and research elements in a beneficial manner as well as providing more support for FE in the Midlands.

It was queried whether SWM would be willing to also support East Midlands FE/HE. KB thought they would but will check.

Action: *check that SWM will also support our East Midlands colleagues.*

It was suggested that we trial or pilot working with them to see whether the arrangement works.

Action: *SF agreed to circulate the information she had from SWM to allow the group to review. We can then go back to SWM with any queries/a proposal for working with them and the EAUC.*

Action All: *Please provide comments/suggests to SF by 27th November so that we can feedback to SWM before Christmas.*

Green League/Balanced Score Card

AUDE have circulated new reporting guidelines for the HESA reporting covering primarily those areas in the control of estates i.e. waste, energy, water etc. The new metrics are somewhat subjective but allow Universities to benchmark against themselves year on year. It is similar to the flexible framework in that universities will be asked to score themselves against a matrix on a scale of 1-5.

The previous league table put together by People and Planet is unlikely to happen this year as the student led group is currently focusing on divesting from fossil fuels.

HEFCE and HESA



KB explained that it was announced today that HEFCE and QAA will be going shortly. HESA is also therefore likely to go/be replaced at some point which may also result in further changes in metrics.

As a result of the changes universities will also be able to increase fees in line with inflation as long as they have met four specified quality standards.

BREEAM

The group was asked whether it thinks this is still the best metric to use? Coventry University is thinking of developing their own to better meet their own requirements.

KB said that AUDE have already done some work in this area that is worth looking at rather than duplicating. Martin Wiles at Bristol is also worth contacting.

AB said that Aston are no longer using BREEAM but work to an EPC rating of A. How does mean there is an energy focus although they do also have a guide for refurbishments.

Warwick also target EPC A but also use BREEAM.

Worcester targets a DEC B.

University Bikes

Warwick has recently installed 50 bikes as a result of sponsorship it has received from a partner organisation.

MG queried how the hire worked particularly in relation to safety and insurance. At Birmingham the agreement with students includes a need to insure the bike. However, when bikes have been stolen they have found that this has not been done.

BCU have insured their bikes as part of their main insurance and cover is subject to the following:

£100 excess

Servicing of the bikes three times a year at the start of each term

Inspections of the bikes to be undertaken prior to releasing the bike for hire with any damage are rectified prior to re-hire

Until recently Aston were planning to have an Urban Cycles pod on site. However, due to an issue with VAT on the invoices they have now pulled out of this arrangement and are likely to work with Cycle Chain in the future instead.

University of Birmingham has a largely positive relationship with Urban Cycles who man their pod from 6am to 7pm weekdays for £6K annually. Their travel plan will be updated in the next 12 months.

Coventry tends to run bike sales with 'Recycle your Cycle'.



Worcester has developed software for managing hires. It uses the library fining systems already in place. A number of the group expressed an interest in this.

Action: KB to follow up in whatever way appropriate.

Leeds has recently subcontracted its internal postal deliveries out to a team of cyclists.

Responsible Futures Session

Quinn Runkle from the NUS presented to the group on the Responsible Futures kitemark. The kitemark was established last year with 13 pilot institutions. Overall, although timescales were tight last year 10 of the institutions were awarded the kitemark and 3 achieved 'working towards'.

The Responsible Futures Kitemark provides criteria, a workbook and support to embed sustainability within the curriculum. The programme was also shortlisted for the UNESCO-Japan award on ESD. Responsible Futures supports student interest sustainability as assessed by the NUS/ HEA Student Attitudes and Skills for Sustainable Development.

The pilot cohort has given positive feedback as have the students from institutions who took part in audits etc.

Phil Pilkington, Paul Cashian and Selina Fletcher from Coventry University and Katy Boom from Worcester University shared their experiences. Coventry University found that having the kitemark provided an opportunity to start conversations with senior management and were successful in gaining support and buy in. It was also important to have a good 'partnership' group covering key areas of the University. The kitemark was timed well in terms of a number of strategic reviews occurring at the time to be able to feed into. Both Coventry and Worcester University found 'swapping' students to carry out the 2 day audit at the end of the year was a valuable experience and feedback from the students has been positive.

A number of other institutions have signed up to the fully launched scheme for this year however there is opportunity to sign up. Contact Quinn for details.