

## **Annual General Meeting Minutes**

**22 June 2023 – virtually via Zoom**

**Chair – Jim Longhurst (JL) & Laurence Frewin (LF)**

The presentation, papers and video can be found at [http://www.eauc.org.uk/eauc\\_governance](http://www.eauc.org.uk/eauc_governance).

### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

JL welcomed Members to the AGM as Chair. FG confirmed we are quorate.

Apologies were received from Christine Calder, John French and Luke Rake.

JL introduced the Board of Trustees and Associate Trustees, whose term will be completed in September and the Board will undertake a review of how we can best support early career and intergenerational voices as guest in the future. We thank all of our trustees and associates for their time and commitment to the Board.

### **2. Approval of Minutes of 2022 AGM**

An update on activities will follow. Any other business was to be raised prior to the meeting and none were raised. No other issues were raised and the minutes were approved.

### **3. Retirement of Board Members between AGMs**

We have had five trustee retirements in between AGMs and this was Damian Dalton as Ireland Branch Convenor and Carolyn Strong as Wales Branch Convenor. As Iain Patton left as CEO in June he also resigned from the Board. 2 further trustees – Lindsey Johnson and Luke Rake resigned early this year due to changes in personal circumstances.

We recognise this is a higher turnover than we're used to, but having discussed reasons for resignation with these trustees, we're confident it's circumstantial rather than indicative of a problem with our board and the role of trustees. We're grateful to those who've served EAUC with a governance role over our lifespan.

### **4. Retirement of Board Members who will act as Company Director and Charity Trustee**

The following trustees will be retiring from the Board as of this AGM due to serving their maximum term: This is myself (Jim Longhurst), John French and David Duncan.

The Board would like to extend thanks to the time, commitment and passion from the trustees retiring in this period.

### **5. Appointment of Board Members who will act as Company Director and Charity Trustee**

We appointed three trustees in between AGMs – this was Neil Glasser as Wales Branch Convenor and Sara Lynch as Scotland Branch Convenor. As Branch Convenor these are appointed by the Branch members and are automatically appointed as Trustees and Directors. And we welcome Charlotte as our new CEO and as per our constitution the CEO is automatically appointed as a Trustee and Director.

### **6. Appointment of auditors**

We have appointed JW Hinks as our auditors for this year. To ensure we continue to receive value for money for this service we assess the market regularly.

JL handed over to CB to present the annual trustee report.

## **7. Review of the Year – 2022 Annual Trustee Report and Accounts**

CB presented the highlights of activities throughout the year in our Annual Trustee Report:

Arguably 2022 was the first year since the pandemic we were able to operate 'as usual' despite continuing to see changes across the sector as we better understand the long-term impacts. The dialogue surrounding the sustainability agenda is changing too. Look back great opportunity to review and celebrate how far we've come in the sector, whilst also using these insights to inform what's to come.

### **Our Members**

Our members are the reason why we exist. We are proud to represent and support 261 universities and colleges across the UK and Ireland. We believe in partnership and collaboration both here in the UK and Ireland and internationally to make our members voice a powerful one through our links with our 196 strategic partners and 11 company members. Overall our retention rates remain high at 95% for educational membership and we are pleased to welcome 33 new members within the year. We will continue to maintain an excellent value for money offer for our members.

### **Our Strategy**

In 2017 we launched our strategy to support the challenges our members are facing today. This strategy is taking us through the steps to ensure we will transition to and remain a future-focused organisation. We created 6 goals under the strategy and I will highlight the activities we have delivered through each goal. We are working on developing our next strategy and we will be involving members and stakeholders throughout this process.

### **Goal 1: Strategic Alignment**

We were delighted to be part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Challenge with the Department for Education in developing the Standardised Carbon Emission Framework. Working with a working group made of our members ensured that we delivered a Framework that was fit for the sector as well as closely working with key strategic partners to help the adoption of the Framework far and wide across the sector.

We also launched the Universities and Colleges Land for Carbon project which is funded by the Environment Agency's Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund. This project is utilising institutions' land to create Woodland Carbon Credits. Involving both staff and students we are maximising the learning potential and utilising academic and scientific expertise to help benefit the sector. We are working closely with our pilot institutions and we will share findings from this project with the sector.

### **Goal 2: Advocacy**

Representing our members continued to strengthen during the year, especially with the Department for Education on supporting their creation and implementation of their sustainability and climate change strategy. We also responded to a variety of consultations with ONS, BEIS, Defra and Advance HE and their professional standards framework review.

### **Goal 3: Knowledge Exchange**

The UK & Ireland Green Gown Awards and the International Green Gown Awards continued to showcase what actions universities and colleges are taking.

We were delighted to finally meet in person again at our 2022 Annual Conference at the University of Loughborough with over 200 delegates.

We started our Carbon Literacy training offer back in 2021 and this has gone from strength to strength with 11 fully booked training courses and 2 bespoke sessions in 2022. Training over 250 learners in over 80 institutions. We are proud that we are a platinum carbon literate organisation with all of our staff trained as well as have 6 team members trained to deliver the training.

#### **Goal 4: Maximised Resources**

The Carbon Coalition – an offsetting initiative for the education sector – has now developed a procurement framework following the successful pilot. This is in partnership with the London Universities Purchasing Consortia and the Energy Consortia on behalf of all UK Purchasing Consortia. We will be launching this in a few weeks' time for institutions to meet any offsetting requirements.

In 2022 we launched a new partnership with SUMS Consulting to deliver a sustainability consultancy service for the sector. We are delighted that we have 11 of our Fellows as our initial cohort of Associate Consultants. We are pleased to offer the sector excellent quality as well as an affordable service. It really is a great example of using the expertise we have in the sector, for the sector.

Also, in 2022 we re-launched the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard, in partnership with AUDE. The portal is easy to use and collaborate with colleagues to develop their self-assessment and develop an action plan. The SDG Mapping is also a critical aspect which is accepted as evidence for Goal 17 for the Times Higher Impact Rankings. We will be resuming our annual reporting in 2023 and institutions have until the end of July to update their scores. We look forward to presenting the annual report in the Autumn.

#### **Goal 5: Stronger Community**

We held 44 regional, branch and community of practice meetings throughout the year with over 575 attendees. We set up two new networks for members on Sustainability Communications and Climate Risk ensuring our groups reflect growing areas for our members to focus on. Thank you to all our members that contribute and all of our convenors. The networking opportunities we provide continue to be highly valued by our members.

#### **Goal 6: Expanded Horizons**

We are proud to continue presenting our SDG Accord annual report to the UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. With 102 signatories contributing to the report we provide an in-depth review of the SDGs whilst raising the profile of the education sector in this global space as well as sharing case studies to help the sector to improve in embedding the SDGs across their operations, teaching and learning

We continue to welcome new signatories to the Race to Zero for Universities and Colleges. We have over 1150 signatories representing nearly 11 million students. We continue supporting the sector with case studies from signatories to provide further support for members to reach their net-zero targets. We look forward to celebrating the strong voice of the education sector at COP28 and beyond. If you have not yet signed then sign today.

In partnership with YEA!, UN Environment Programme and Tongji University we delivered a global summit in July 2022. This brought together nearly 900 delegates from across the world and inspired and shared best practice from our signatories and our International Green Gown Awards finalists and winners.

#### **Scotland Programme**

Our Scottish Funding Council funded programme started in April 2020 and completed in March 2023 and we are delighted to receive a further year of funding until 2024. Highlights to date include supporting the public bodies reporting, launching a business travel guide and we delighted to announce that our

innovative partnership with Border College, Forth Valley College and West Lothian College shared-services framework will continue for a further 18 months to increase their sustainability staffing capacity. You can find out more about all of the activity we do in Scotland in the Annual Report and on our website.

### **Carbon Report**

For the first time we have included our supply chain emission using the HESCET tool (which is also now available for our FE members to use). This means that our carbon footprint has increased by 2414% is now 88 tonnes for the 2022 period, with our supply chain accounting for 88% of total footprint. We also include our home-working estimates, water estimates and business travel. You can see our full report on our website.

### **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

We know that social justice is a critical part of sustainability. Charity So White has highlighted institutional racism within the charity sector, and ACEVO's Home Truth's report spotlighted the scale of the challenge. our movement can't be successful unless we ensure we're progressing social justice in tandem with achieving environmental sustainability. We have been reflecting on what steps we need to take to see meaningful change. There needs to be a fundamental shift in the way we do things both at the EAUC and indeed across the sector we serve.

CB handed over to David Duncan, our Treasurer to present the Annual Accounts.

### **Annual Accounts**

We made an overall surplus of £210,083 which includes our project funding. We made an unrestricted surplus of £176,708 for the year which excludes our project funding. Due to the easing of covid restrictions meant that we were able to resume key income generation activities such as our annual conference and the Green Gown Awards ceremony. For example, in 2021 we only generated £3,238 for the annual conference due to being virtual but with the return to in-person events we generated £91,359 in 2022.

With the continuing funding from the Scottish Funding Council and the new funding from the Environment Agency and the Department for Education this resulted in an increase of 144% to our restricted income.

In addition to the increase in both our restricted and unrestricted income we also made significant saving in staff costs due to the former CEO reducing the number of days worked and leaving in June 2022 and Charlotte, as our new CEO, starting in February 2023. Whilst Fiona stepped up as interim CEO during the period a saving was made on wages which resulted in an overall 13% decrease in our unrestricted expenditure.

A breakdown of our income sources show that 28% of our income comes from membership fees – both educational and company Members. 15% comes from products and services such as the Green Gown Awards. With 43% coming from restricted funds. With 11% from the annual conference and 3% of income came from training and events.

After some challenging financial years due to the pandemic we were able to generate a healthy surplus in 2022. Much of this will be reinvested into our reserves that were so critical to our survival during the pandemic. We be using our reserves to invest in increasing our staffing capacity to deliver key new income generation activities such as the Carbon Coalition and the EAUC and SUMS sustainability consultancy partnership. With our membership retention remaining strong at 95% and we have already welcome 9 new members in 2023 – we are reliant upon our members to continue supporting our work and we remain dedicated in supporting our members in 2023 and beyond.

DD passed back to our new Chair, LF.

I am pleased to take up the reigns from Jim and please do join me in thanking Jim for his years of service – not only to the EAUC but to the wider sector. And a big thank you David as our Treasurer and John as our Deputy Chair as well. We have appointed Zoe Robinson to take up the Treasurer role from today as an interim until we can appoint a new Treasurer which we will do before September, at which point I am pleased to confirm that myself and Zoe will then take on the role of co-chairs.

### **8. Resolution Paper AGM23-01 – Election of two Board Members who will act as Company Directors and Charity Trustees**

Due to the 3 retirements from the Board and 2 resignations we have 5 vacancies. Educational Member Key Contacts – or their nominated representative – have been voting online for this resolution. The voting is undertaken by Civica so members can be confident of the process and the voting closed on 15 June. For the first resolution we requested that 2 trustees were selected from outside of the education sector.

We received 12 applications and I am pleased to announce that Tsz Lok (Joy) Lam and Sian Thomas have been elected by members.

### **9. Resolution Paper AGM23-02 – Election of three Board Members who will act as Company Directors and Charity Trustees**

We received 11 applications and I am pleased to announce that Jennifer Boyer from TU Dublin, Ian Montgomery from Ulster University and Aida Berhamovic from the Royal College of Music have been elected by members.

Whilst the Board did recommend members to elect at least one from a further education setting so we can retain our balance of FE and HE on the Board unfortunately this has not resulted with all those elected being from higher education. However, we will ensure the FE voice remains high in the Board.

Congratulations to our new 5 trustees and I would like to thank all those who applied.

### **10. Questions**

The floor was opened for questions and comments on the Annual Report and Accounts. No questions were raised.

### **11. Any other business and close**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank again Jim, John and David who are all retiring from the Board today after 5 years passion and support for the EAUC, many thanks.

No other business has been raised and therefore I close this AGM. I look forward to seeing many of our members and supporters at our annual conference next week.

We need to hear from you – our members – on what support, training, services you need to deliver sustainability within your institution. So, let us know – you can do that via the regional and communities of practice groups. Or you can just get in touch directly with us. LF thanked the trustees and all the staff and all our Members.