

Annual General Meeting Minutes

24 June 2020 – virtually via Zoom

Chair – Janet Haddock-Fraser (JHF – outgoing chair) & Jim Longhurst (JL – incoming chair)

The presentation, papers and video can be found at http://www.eauc.org.uk/eauc_governance.

1. Welcome and Apologies

JHF welcomed Members to the AGM as Chair.

Apologies were received from Eunice Simmons (University of Chester); Zoe Robinson (Keele University); Rosemary Horry (University of Derby) and Mike Bewlock (University of Brighton)

JHF introduced the Board of Trustees.

2. Approval of Minutes of 2019 AGM

JHF will provide an update in this meeting on the diversity of the Board. 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. Diversity of the Board

In June 2019 the EAUC Board approved an Equality and Diversity Policy Statement. Our 2019 Statement recognises that the Board can and must do better to improve diversity. We recognise this is an issue for our Board and for our sector. Research by SOS - with contribution from the EAUC, "has shown that the environment profession is amongst the least diverse occupations in the UK". Other research has pointed to racial inequalities in the sector – such as lack of BAME professors as well as pay gap in senior management.

The recent protests in the UK and around the world sparked by the tragic death of George Floyd in the US have put a lens on current as well as historic and structural racism. Diversity as well as skills and representation from further and higher education are critical parts of our recent recruitment drive for new board members.

At the February EAUC Board People and Performance Sub-Committee, we agreed for diversity to be a standing item at each meeting and in 2020 to review our Diversity Policy and the steps that we can and should be taking. We would welcome input from our membership into this process. We would like to have a session on diversity in the sector at our next Conference to encourage further discussion and shared learning and action on these issues to help improve the sector. Please get in touch with the office if you are interested in being part of this critical work.

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

We had one trustee retirement in between AGMs and this was Tom Yearley, Wales Branch Convenor, from University of Wales Trinity St David resigned as of 18 August 2019.

The following trustees will be retiring from the Board as of this AGM due to serving their maximum term:
Chris Long – Bridgend College and JHF.

We are still seeking a Wales Branch Convenor and invite any interested member to contact us. Branch Conveners also act as Branch Trustees and Directors.

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

5. Resolution Paper AGM20-01 – Election of a Board Member who will act as Company Director and Charity Trustee – FE representation

Due to the 2 retirements from the Board we have 2 vacancies. Educational Member Key Contacts – or their nominated representative – have been voting online for our 2 resolutions. The voting is undertaken by Civica – formerly called Electoral Reform Services – so members can be confident of the process and the voting closed on 16 June.

In order to ensure we have representation from the Further Education sector the Board requested at least one of the Board Members elected is from a Further Education institution. We received 2 applications from a further education institution. I am pleased to announce that Laurence Frewin, Principle and CEO from South Devon College has been elected by our members.

6. Resolution Paper AGM20-02 – Election of a Board Member who will act as Company Director and Charity Trustee

Our second resolution focuses on the 2nd vacancy. The Board are looking for motivated and dynamic Trustees that are:

Sustainability Professional / Practitioner
Emerging leader with enthusiasm
Working in staff and/or student engagement

We received 8 applications in total. I am pleased to announce that Karen Morgan, Vice Chair of Council at University of Gloucestershire has been elected by our members. I would like to thank all those who applied.

JHF will now hand over to CEO, Iain Patton to take us through the Annual Report.

7. Review of the Year – 2019 Annual Trustee Report and Accounts

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

Without a doubt 2019 was a turning point for sustainability and the climate crisis movement on a global scale. With the school strikes inspiring millions of students around the world to the announcement of the UK Government's Net-Zero target of 2050 - the world moved on and so did we. In May 2019 EAUC declared a climate emergency. We put out a call for all post-16 education institutions and support bodies to commit to the Committee on Climate Change's recommendations to set a target of net-zero by 2050 at the latest. And the sector rallied around this.

Of course, we could not have predicted the pandemic that has hit the world in early 2020. This has caused unprecedented change for the sector, our communities and our staff and students. However, the recovery from the crisis offers a historical opportunity to address key public and in particular student concerns and accelerate the transition to a low carbon and an environmentally resilient further and higher sector.

Our Members

Our members are the reason why we exist. We are proud to represent and support 205 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 strategic partners and company members. Overall our retention rates remain high at 91% for educational membership and with unsettling times facing the sector we will have to 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.

Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education Students and Leaders

In November 2019, we took on our biggest challenge to date. In an unprecedented partnership we brought together Universities UK, Guild HE and Association of Colleges to launch the UK Climate Commission for Further and Higher Education for Leaders and Students.

This is a confirmation that we need a sector wide response to the climate crisis and we need to work together to ensure no-one is left behind. We ensured that students were at the very heart of the Climate Commission right from the start - it is their future and their education in our hands. Throughout 2020 we will be launching an ambitious programme of evidence gathering events and bringing key stakeholders within the sector to agree a common approach for the sector. Each institution will need to develop its own path on how to reach their targets but EAUC will be right here to provide the support and resources needed to deliver. You will hear more about the Climate Commission later from our Climate Commissioner Jim Longhurst and Student Climate Commissioner Manveer Gill.

Goal 1: Strategic Alignment

We continued with our flagship leadership programmes. Interface kindly supported the Emerging Leaders Programme and UKRI kindly supported the Leadership Lab. Our next round of programmes will take place in 2021.

In May 2019 we launched the Making the Business Case for Sustainability in partnership with the University of Edinburgh. Designed to help sustainability leaders to make a successful case for sustainability in the education context to bring around real systemic change in the way business decisions are made.

In the summer of 2019 we published 2 climate adaptation guides – working with sustainability and risk professionals from the sector including the Higher Education Business Continuity Network and AECOM.

Goal 2: Advocacy

Our advocacy strategy, created alongside members, captures the key advocacy issues members face and provides the most efficient and effective solutions.

We have developed 18 new blogs within the year, our press coverage has extensively grown both through our regional and our international work. On behalf of members, we responded to 14 consultations including the Environment Bill and low carbon skills. We are committed to ensure the voice of the sector is heard across Governments departments.

We set up a new package specifically aimed at further education with a new email support network, a special advisor and a dedicated newsletter. In our 2019 advocacy survey a third of education key contacts said we had exceeded their expectations with two thirds saying expectations were met in our work gaining

a higher profile within education. 60% of our key strategic partners felt our work is extremely or very influential and 40% felt we were moderately influential in policy development in wider society.

Goal 3: Knowledge Exchange

We harness the wealth of experience and knowledge of our members to ensure on-going creation and dissemination of knowledge. We held 15 webinars and with over 130 attending. 55 face to face events for members. These include our Sustainability Sharing Series and a Cup of tea and an SDG series. We had 101 2019 Green Gown Awards finalists 245 attending the 2019 annual conference.

Goal 4: Maximised Resources

Following the launch of the Sustainability Leadership Scorecard with ARUP and AUDE in 2018, in 2019 we launched our first annual report with 45 institutions taking part and useful case studies to encourage more institutions to adapt a coordinated whole institution approach. Our 2020 Sustainability Leadership Scorecard annual report will be out in the summer.

We are leading the sector – following our call for action on the climate emergency – on developing a response and we developed the Climate Emergency Framework to help members on the tools and resources to support their climate targets. We also present institutional sustainability commitments to show the impact and leadership of the sector. We encourage members to contact us as and when they have any updates.

We are working closely with the Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA) and purchasing consortia on updating the scope 3 reporting tool, HESCET. This is currently being updated and should be ready for use in the next academic year. We are leading in sector wide groups to develop improved guidance, consistency on measuring and reporting. We will keep members informed as this work develops.

Goal 5: Stronger Community

We held 40 regional, branch and community of practice meetings throughout the year – with new groups created for divestment and a dedicated further education network.

This year again we have also recognised members that consistently contribute a great deal of their time and resources to our organisation and the wider membership. These are members that have a formal volunteering role such as regional, branch, topic support networks, community of practice and task and finish group members. This equates to 42 volunteers and equivalent to £88,200 of staff time on an annual basis. Thank you once again to all our members that contribute.

We also work closely with key sector bodies such as HEPA, Wrap and Healthy Universities to ensure we make the most of resources and networks to benefit our members.

Goal 6: Expanded Horizons

The SDG Accord, ran in partnership with the Global Alliance, has gone from strength to strength, gaining support from far and wide, including a powerful show of support from the UN when it was accepted as a formal tool of HESI which is a large collective of UN bodies focused on education and sustainability. This has gained huge amounts of support with 150 endorsing partners and 169 institutions and continues to grow. The annual report will be available in the Autumn.

Powerful collaborations like this have cemented our place as leaders and innovators in the sustainability world. In 2019 in response to the climate emergency, we led on the Global Universities and Colleges for the Climate, in partnership with Second Nature, HESI and the Global Alliance and endorsed by the UN. This has recently been officially recognised by UNFCCC as the education sectors response to the Race to Zero

and we urge all members to sign the letter as this will be presented at COP26 in November 2021. To date 257 institutions have signed the letter with 59 networks representing over 16000 institutions.

At a regional level, we worked closely with UKSSD to respond to the UK Government's first Voluntary National Review. We continue this work and engage with our partners to ensure the Government's and the sector are held accountable.

We continue to represent and engage with members in the build up to COP26, including representation on COP26 Cabinet Office Team roundtables and working closely with the UK Research Group. We will keep members informed of this work as we progress but do get in touch if you wish to know more.

Catalysing Transformative Leadership for Sustainability Programme - Scotland

We are delighted to announce the achievements of our third and final year of the Catalysing Transformative Leadership for Sustainability Programme in Scotland that is funded by the Scottish Funding Council. Highlights from the year include over 100 new resources, a new college learning for sustainability champions programme and through a RUGS (Responsible University Group Scotland) internship developed the amazing Travel Better Package as well as being the sector delivery partner for sector reporting.

We are also pleased to announce that SFC have confirmed funding for a further 3 years from April this year for our exciting new project - [Accelerating action and leadership in Scotland's colleges and universities to respond to the climate emergency](#). You can find out more about all of the activity we do in Scotland in the Annual Report and on our website.

Sustainability Report

We are pleased to present our annual sustainability report for 2019. Our carbon footprint for 2019 was 16 tonnes which we offset. This has increased by 9% which is mostly due to a higher full time equivalent of staff from 9.37 to 11.09. Our UK office also relocated to a bigger office which resulted in higher energy usage. However, our average carbon emissions per FTE staff has reduced by 8%. Less than 7% of our waste goes to landfill. You can view the full details on our website - <https://www.eauc.org.uk/sustainability>.

IP handed over to David Duncan, our Treasurer to take us through our Annual Accounts.

Annual Accounts

We made an overall loss of £27,537 which includes our project funding. We made an unrestricted loss of £7,537 for the year which excludes our project funding. The Board approved £7,904 spend from the reserves to invest in new resources for members. Therefore, excluding the approved spend from reserves the year's activity saw a small surplus of £367.

We had a 7.74% increase on our unrestricted income with a 7.23% increase on our unrestricted expenditure. In 2019 we had 11.09 full time equivalent staff of which 4.01 were funded through our restricted externally funded projects. Our non project related staff costs represent 56% of our total unrestricted expenditure which is up from 47% from last year.

A breakdown of our income sources show that 31% of our income comes from membership fees – both educational and company Members. 18% of our income comes from the Annual Conference and 18% comes from products and services such as the Green Gown Awards and Sustainability Exchange. We continue to receive funding from the Scottish Funding Council and this makes up 27% of total income received.

The years ahead will be challenging both for the sector and us as an organisation as we recover from the impacts of the pandemic. With our major sources of income coming from our conference (18%) and products and services (18%) we are mitigating risks from reductions in these areas in 2020. We will be holding our conference virtually to ensure we continue to support members. The Green Gown Awards application period has been extended to allow institutions more time to apply - however, this means the Awards Ceremony will now take place in 2021 so will not feature within our next financial year.

Expenditure budgets will be reduced mainly due to a portion of staff costs being recovered through the HMRC Job Retention Scheme as well as reduced spending due to less travel. We are reliant upon our members to continue supporting our work.

We have a total available fund of £185,078 to carry forward into 2020. With unsettling times facing the sector we will have to continue to be prudent with our finances and maintain an excellent value for money offer for our members. We thank you – our members – for continuing to support us – without you we would not exist.

7. Questions

The floor was opened for questions and comments on the Annual Report and Accounts:

- David Chapman, University of Warwick asked to clarify the deadline for the SDG Accord reporting which is 3rd July.
- Liz Harris, University of Winchester, asked how do we interact with other organisations such as UUK, BUFDG, HEPA etc. and are they listening? IP responded that they are listening more now thanks to the student strikes raising the profile and the work with the Climate Commission has made our connections never stronger and higher.

8. Any other business and close

JL took over as Chair and he noted that he was delighted to be appointed as the new Chair of the Board. JL thanked Chris and in particular Janet who are both retiring from the Board today. Janet has served as Chair of the Board for the past 4 years and we are hugely grateful for her passion, excellent chairing and keeping all the trustees in check. Many thanks Janet.

No other business has been raised and therefore I close this AGM.

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.

A presentation then followed from JL and Manveer Gill, who is a maths undergraduate at University of Warwick and is the EAUC's Student Climate Commissioner.