



**Trinity College Dublin**

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

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The University of Dublin**

**Environment and Sustainability Committee**

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025**

**Room 2026, Arts Block**

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**Present:** Chair, Mary Kelly, VP Biodiversity and Climate Action & Secretary (Jane Stout), Chief Operating Officer (Orla Cunningham), Vice Provost (Orla Sheils), Librarian and College Archivist (Helen Shenton), Dean of STEM (Sylvia Draper), Deputy CFO (Patrick Moore), Dean of Research (Sinead Ryan), Bursar (Eleanor Denny), PG Student Rep (Luke Gibbons), UG Student Rep (Sam Brooks), Chief Technical Officer & Unite Rep. (Maurice Sweeney),

**Apologies:** Mr. M. O'Kinneide, Staff Representatives (Dr. Conor O'Kelly and Colm Ennis).

**In Attendance:** Sustainability Manager and minute-taker (Jane Hackett).

**Left early:** Dean of Research, Sinead Ryan and Dean of Stem, Sylvia Draper.

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**ESC/24-25/46 No statements of Interest declared.**

No conflicts of interest

**ESC/24-25/47 Minutes from last meeting**

Share the draft minutes from the November 2024 meeting on decision time and then approve.

**ESC/24-25/47 Annual Review of the E&S Committee**

The Chair outlined the survey results of the annual review of the Committee which took place in December 2024. The survey sought to gain feedback from members about how the committee operates, its context, overall governance as well as membership and admin. The feedback was largely positive with the majority agreeing that it operates well, has appropriate terms of reference and is necessary to ensure compliance with national targets and reporting. There were some concerns relating to communication with, and overlapping responsibilities of, other committees as well as general issues relating to the maturity of the committee and its functions. Overall, the members agreed that it is necessary to have a Principal Committee focusing on environment and sustainability as well as a Chair who is a Board member.

**ESC/24-25/48 2025-26 work programme**

The Vice President and Secretary, Prof. Jane Stout, presented the proposed work programme for 2025 – 2026. The work programme will focus on two key areas, the Sustainability Strategy and Climate Action Roadmap. The work programme was agreed by the committee.

**Actions 48.1**

- Edit the work programme to include the word climate action plan in item 5 – legislation/regulation.
- Add another column for meeting in 2023.
- Add work plan as a standing item to every meeting agenda.

**ESC/24-25/49 Trinity Sustainability & Sustainability Strategy Updates**

The Vice President and Secretary, Prof. Jane Stout updated the committee about key areas of progress within her office, Trinity Sustainability, focusing mainly on recruitment and reporting. A high-level aggregated summary update relating to the Sustainability Strategy's action plan (2024-2026) was circulated to members, but VPBCA explained that a detailed report was in preparation to demonstrate which actions have been progressed or where supports are required, to enable the committee to properly monitor progress. The actions are continuously monitored by the Sustainability Management Group and some actions may be revised/ amended if necessary.

Action 49.1 – Draft a comprehensive report about the Sustainability Strategy's action plan for EOG.

**ESC/24-25/50 Key updates from other principal committees.**

No updates as meetings have yet to take place.

**ESC/24-25/51 Trinity East and Trinity South Updates**

The Bursar presented updates about two key projects Trinity East & Trinity South. The Trinity East project is moving into the next phase which will run until 2028, and three options were proposed; yellow (research led focusing on refurbishment of existing space & better space utilisation), red (new build comprising student accommodation) and blue (increasing density by adding floors to existing buildings). The yellow option was supported by the Research Committee and will focus on refurbishment and space utilisation. The E&S committee was supportive of this approach.

The Trinity South Project includes the decarbonisation of the Arts Block, new Law School and new Student Centre. There have been several iterations of this project due to funding availability/lack of, space utilisation and timescale. It has now been decided that the Science Gallery will become the student

centre, and this will save time, carbon and cost. The Board has approved this in Dec 24, but the project is still in stage 1. The Energy Reduction Manager, Peter Breen, gave an update about the decarbonisation plans for the Arts Block which includes a feasibility study to determine the options for renewable energy sources and an air tightness test. Funding is still outstanding, and a grant has been sought from the HEA. Discussions regarding the Law School are ongoing.

It was noted that embodied carbon assessments will be required to calculate the carbon emitted from all capital projects.

#### **ESC/24-25/52 Gift Acceptance & Ethics Process**

David O'Shea (Director of Operations, TDA) and Linda Hogan (Prof of Ecumenics) presented about the gift acceptance and ethics process. The college has a Gift Acceptance & Ethics committee (GAEC) which was established in 2020 to assess key donations for the college. The timeline for receiving gifts can be between 5-7 years and the first years of the Committee were concerned legacy donations but now they are looking at new gifts/donations. There are 9 members on the committee ranging from internal members as well as two external members (one has an ESG background). The committee operates within the policies of the college but the specifications/parameters for administering these policies is less prescribed. There is a solid due diligence and risk assessment process to gather data relating to: ESG scores, criminal activity, incidents relating to a specific behaviour of a person etc. The GAEC seeks more guidance from the E&S committee around sustainability thresholds in terms of gift acceptance from potential donors as well as stronger ESG reporting structures.

Action 52.1 – Support the Gift Acceptance & Ethics Committee by exploring possible sustainability thresholds for funding

#### **ESC/24-25/52 Risk review**

Deferred to the next meeting.

#### **AOB**

- Next meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> April
- Location Arts Conference Room