



Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin

Environment and Sustainability Committee

Thursday 27th November, 2025

Dining Room, Provost's House, House 1

Present: VP Biodiversity and Climate Action & Secretary (Jane Stout), Vice Provost (Orla Sheils) *attending online*, Dean of STEM (Sylvia Draper), Dean of Research (Sinead Ryan), Deputy CFO (Patrick Moore), Mr. M. O'Connell, Bursar /Acting Chair (Eleanor Denny), Chief Technical Officer & Unite Rep. (Maurice Sweeney, Professional Staff Representative (Aisling Hurley), College Archivist (Helen Shenton), Commercial Director CRU (Garrett Byrne – attending on behalf of COO)

Apologies: Chair (Mary Kelly), Chief Operating Officer (Noel O'Gorman), Staff Representative (Conor O'Kelly), PG Student Rep (Luke Gibbons), UG Student Rep (Amelia Flanagan)

In Attendance: Sustainability Manager (Jane Hackett), Administration Lead, Trinity Sustainability (Laetitia Deering) – minute taker

Late Arrival:

New Member:

In the absence of the Chair, the Secretary proposed the Bursar to chair the meeting.

ESC/24-25/80 No statements of Interest declared.
No conflicts of interest

ESC/24-25/81 Minutes from last meeting
Minutes from 25th September 2025 were approved.

ESC/24-25/82 Matters Arising - Updates on Actions from Previous Meeting
None

ESC/24-25/83 National / International Policy
Sustainability Manager presented update of COP 30 participation by TCD.

Feedback from the committee on Trinity's engagement with COP 30 was very positive, with the suggestion that funding could be sought for future participation, potentially in collaboration with other universities. Clarification of "adaptation finance" was provided – this is specific credit put in place for developed countries to access finance for infrastructure projects so that communities can adapt to climate change. It was

suggested that further communication with Faculty Deans is sought, with a view to securing participation of specific experts at COP 31.

It was confirmed that Sustainability has been suggested as a potential theme for the EU Council Presidency.

ESC/24-25/84 Annual Committee Review

The committee was reminded that it is obliged to submit an annual review, which will be reported to the Board by the Chair. This will be informed by a survey sent to all committee members. It was agreed that in future, a survey template that other Principal Committees use should be employed for consistency among committees.

Action 84.1

All members should fill out the survey before the next meeting

Action 84.2

Meeting administrator should liaise with other principal committee admins on survey template for future reviews

ESC/24-25/85 Key Updates from other Principal Committees

Verbal updates included:

Audit Committee – no overlap with this committee membership.

Risk & Compliance Committee – Member update: VPBCA gave a presentation on Sustainability to this committee at its most recent sitting in the context of environmental risks facing the university.

Finance Committee – Member update: Annual budget was approved. A number of capital projects approved including OLRP and Dartry.

People & Culture Committee – Member update: Very large People Projects ongoing and each strand has a working group. This is relevant to sustainability in the context of wellbeing.

Critical Infrastructure Committee – Member update: government discussion is still underway in terms of funding new accommodation at Trinity Halls in Dartry. Updates were received on AI and Campus Infrastructure. Work is ongoing on decarbonisation strategy and draft is due before the end of this year. Decarbonisation of the grid is essential, and key internal steps are consolidating our estate. Suggestion that Director of Campus Infrastructure could be invited to present on this matter at the next committee meeting.

Electrification of the SNIAM building has reduced carbon emissions considerably. A good case study of decarbonisation of a building. Project lead could come and present to the committee.

A discussion regarding various aspects of decarbonisation ensued.

Action 85.1

The Director of Campus Infrastructure should be asked to present on decarbonisation strategy at the next committee meeting.

Action 85.2

Project Lead on decarbonisation of SNIAM building should be asked to present at the next committee meeting

ESC/24-25/86 Campus Travel Plan

Sustainability Manager presented on the work that has taken place in the last year to get the transport study completed and to finalise the Campus Travel Plan. Commitment to develop this is part of the Sustainability strategy.

A discussion followed, including questions around potential changes to car parking, the availability of public transport and impacts of blended working on staff travel. Sustainability manager confirmed that wide consultation with college community was undertaken, and that all these issues have been flagged and will be reviewed in collaboration with key stakeholders via the implementation working group before changes are made.

Discussion ensued on whether incremental nature of the recommendations will lead to significant change needed, but it was noted that Trinity already has a high rate of people using active/public transport, and this needs maintaining. The timing and reliability of travel surveys was discussed and engagement with relevant academic expertise was confirmed. Confirmation was provided that engagement with Dublin City Council is ongoing in regard to changes to Pearse Street Traffic and Trinity East, Lincoln Place, and College Green.

ESC/24-25/87 Biodiversity Action Plan

Presentation from VPBCA.

The Committee welcomed the plan. Feedback included a comment that some of the technical aspects were potentially challenging for a lay-audience. It was noted that realistic KPIs will be developed.

ESC/24-25/88 Wellbeing Framework

Presentation from Healthy Campus Manager.

The Committee commended the approach. Comments included importance of incentives for making healthy choices, and surveying participants following initiatives (such as stop smoking courses). Healthy Campus Manager confirmed that surveys were taken following courses, and that based on research they expect a certain level of failure. She also confirmed that a member of People & Culture is involved in Healthy Trinity, and that Ethics approval will be sought for the Wellbeing Survey.

ESC/24-25/89 Tobacco & E-cigarettes Policy

Presentation from Healthy Campus Manager.

There were positive responses from the Committee who welcomed the policy. Discussion included whether a complete ban on smoking on campus (i.e. no designated smoking areas) was considered and it was confirmed that one of the key compromises was designated smoking areas. In terms of implementation, Healthy Trinity Ambassadors remind college community of the policy, and the ethos is that we are all adults, so are obliged to comply.

Decision: Policy approved

ESC/24-25/90 Sustainable Procurement Policy

Presentation from Procurement.

The Committee were in favour of the proposed policy. Attention was brought to an updated survey of research equipment from DoR office, which could help with implementation. In addition, it was noted that the new Research Ireland infrastructure funding call could make funding available, taking into account existing and end-of-life equipment.

In terms of bulk purchasing, TBSI has a pilot programme that is working well.

Vendors now have to tie in with net positive futures as part of tender for contract, which enables measurement of scope 3 emissions.

Decision: Policy approved

AOB

- **COO to present on Digital Transformation at next meeting**
- **'Library's Sustainability Framework and Plan' at next meeting – pres. by Sarah VanSnick (Head of Preservation & Conservation in the Library).**
- **Next meeting – Thursday 22nd January 2026 in Trinity Boardroom, TBS**