Environment and Sustainability Sub-Committee

10/01 A meeting of the Environment and Travel Sub-Committee was held on Wednesday 17 February 2010 in Committee Room 1, Whiteknights House.

There were present:

Professor R.H. Ellis (Chair)
Mr F. Beck
Mr I. Cruickshank
Mrs C.A. Derham
Professor D. Malvern
Mrs D. Shearman
Ms L.V. Sharman (secretary)

Apologies were received from Mr Robbins, Mrs Pich, Miss Brennan and Mr Brand.

Mr P. Arnold from Hertz attended the meeting for agenda item 10/04.

10/02 Minutes of the last meeting

The Sub-Committee approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 9 November 2009.

10/03 Matters Arising

09/31 Greenlands car parking – income and expenditure
Mr Beck would arrange for a project to be set up for both income and expenditure.

09/34 Environment and Sustainability Action Plan 2009-10
It was noted that meetings had been held with the environment team at Greenlands; a revised plan would be submitted to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

09/36 Communications
It was noted that Reading Buses would be providing information at their own cost to include in the Freshers’ Packs.
09/37 Change to Reading Buses routes
The new bus route (19 between Whiteknights and Bulmershe) had been introduced on 11 January and had been advertised on the University website. Reading Buses had been advised of who to contact at the University with regard to any future changes to routes.

09/37 SID
It was noted that the speed information device for Queens Drive had been ordered; Campus Services were currently awaiting an installation date.

10/04 Car Club
At its meeting on 10 December 2009 Facilities Management Committee had discussed a proposal to join a car club scheme. The Committee had supported the scheme in principle but had asked that the Environment and Sustainability Committee reflect further on the details of the scheme.

It was noted that the Head of Campus Services in conjunction with Procurement had reviewed the service offered by Hertz ‘Connect by Hertz’. Procurement were content with the scheme and the contract proposed.

The Sub-Committee received a presentation from Hertz on the scheme and were given the opportunity to see one of the cars. It was noted that:

- Connect by Hertz was a self-service fleet of pay as you go vehicles. The scheme was launched in December 2008 and now operated at a number of Universities.
- The scheme was open to both staff and students.
- Members could book cars online or via the phone for an hour a day or up to a week. Access was available on a 24 hour basis. Bookings could be made for 5 minutes ahead or up to six months.
- Three makes of vehicle were available – Fiat 500/Fiesta (£3.95 per hour), Ford Focus (£5.95 per hour) and Mini (£6.95 per hour). The hourly charge covered the first 30 miles. Thereafter each additional mile was charged at 25p per mile. Insurance, fuel, congestion charge were included with each booking at no additional charge.
- Membership for staff and students would be free. Members would need to register online with Hertz in advance and would be issued with a Connect Card (the Connect Card acts a personal key to the car; it is placed against the reader on the windscreen to unlock the door).
- Members simply log onto the Connect by Hertz website select a vehicle and choose when and how long they need it for. Once a booking is made an email or text confirmation would be issued.
- Each car comes with a fuel card that can be used to pay for fuel.
- The vehicles would be maintained on a fortnightly basis by Hertz, but drivers were responsible for the roadworthiness of the vehicle before they set off (the engine will not start until the driver has
confirmed via a touch screen that they were content with the condition of the vehicle).

- The scheme would be a ‘closed’ group (only University of Reading members would be able to use Reading cars) but members would be able to use any ‘open’ groups around the country, Europe and the US.
- The Scheme met Planning 106 requirements for car sharing.

It was noted that there was no financial cost or risk to the University in running the scheme. The University was asked to provide two designated parking spaces, for a specified period. There was no administration required by the University, other than working with Connect by Hertz to advertise the scheme to staff and students.

The Sub-Committee were impressed by the scheme and the ease of accessing the vehicle. It was noted that the scheme would be available at Whiteknights in the first instance, but that there was already interest at Greenlands as well; in time the scheme could also be rolled out to London Road (e.g. for staff in IoE visiting students on teaching practice). Several members of the Sub-Committee asked whether they would be able to use University purchasing cards to pay for the hire. Mr Beck agreed to check with Finance.

**Action: Mr Beck**

Professor Ellis agreed to speak with the President of the Students’ Union (absent from the meeting) about the scheme to ascertain their thoughts.

**Action: Professor Ellis**

It was agreed that Mrs Shearman would speak with her counterpart at Brunel to discuss their experiences of using the scheme.

The Sub-Committee were supportive of the scheme and asked that a paper be submitted to Facilities Management Committee seeking formal approval.

**Action: Ms Shearman**

10/05 **Eco Campus**

The Sub-Committee received a presentation on the Eco Campus initiative.

It was noted that the University had just started the process of obtaining an Environmental Management System (EMS) by signing up with Eco Campus. The scheme was specifically designed to help Higher Education Institutions to develop and implement an EMS in four phases. Currently 37 HEIs were involved in Eco Campus which represented 30% of the sector.

Each phase was completed with an award which was used to validate the progress of the University in its development of an EMS. The awards Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum (Platinum being aligned with ISO 14001) would provide a useful benchmark of achievement for the sector.

The University planned to go for the first assessment of the Bronze award by June 2010 and the Platinum module should be competed during Summer 2011.
Eco Campus would ultimately benchmark the sector linking with indices such as the Green League and Universities that Count.

The first stage of the process was to set up an Environmental Baseline Review which would document the current position of the University and would highlight what needed to be completed in order to progress. This work would be overseen by an Environmental Management System Review Group. It was agreed that Mr Robbins should propose membership and terms of reference for the Group to Senior Management Board. The Group should report to both the Environment and Sustainability Sub-Committee and Facilities Management Committee.

**Action: Mr Robbins and Mrs Shearman**

The Sub-Committee noted the modular approach taken by the scheme. Professor Ellis agreed to speak with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) with regard to the EMS module (n.b. not a ‘teaching module’) on Sustainable Development in the Curriculum.

**Action: Professor Ellis**

The Sub-Committee discussed at some length how the scheme could be communicated to staff. It was agreed that it would be useful for a diagram and some brief explanatory notes to be produced explaining the scheme, ISO 14001 and the Universities that Count initiatives in order to ensure the overall context was visible. It was suggested that the subject might be a topic for a future Head of Schools/Directorates lunch.

**Action: Mrs Shearman**

The Sub-Committee thanked everyone for the work put into the scheme so far.

10/06 **Digital Signage**

The Sub-Committee received a paper prepared by Ms Shearman on digital signage. It was noted that as part of the planning agreement for the replacement of Childs Hall and Whiteknights Hall the University had a number of conditions placed on it with regard to traffic management. One particular requirement was the display of information on public transport, cycling and walking.

It was proposed that the University adopt a similar IT solution to that used by Reading Borough Council. The system utilises the internet to provide fast-acting, highly functional displays capable of showing any kind of information from simple images to streamlined video. It also linked to external websites to provide facilities to display scrolling text and real time traffic information. The estimated capital cost for such a system was £19,000.

Reading Borough Council were keen for the University to adopt this system and had offered to host the software on their servers saving approximately £2500.

The Sub-Committee noted that there had been interest from other areas of the University, but that some areas already had display screens.
The Sub-Committee discussed at length the proposal. There was some concern over the cost of the scheme in relation to its value; whether the screens themselves would provide enough information to prove useful; how many would be needed and where they would be located to be of most benefit; and whether it would be more effective to stream information via the web.

It was agreed that if this was a planning requirement arising out of the Halls Redevelopment, then some or part of the cost should be met from the Halls Project. Professor Ellis agreed to speak with Mr Robbins and Mrs Hague.

**Action: Professor Ellis**

10/07 **Sustainability Matters**

The Sub-Committee received and noted the latest copy of Sustainability Matters which had been circulated to staff.

It was noted that the next Green Week would take place the week commencing 8 November; details would be advertised in the next issue of Sustainability Matters and the Freshers’ Packs.

10/08 **Proposal to change the name of the Sub-Committee**

The Sub-Committee noted that Facilities Management Committee had approved the recommendation that the Sub-Committee change its title to Environment and Sustainability Sub-Committee. It was agreed that sections 1a and 1b of the remit be amended to cover the University’s academic and residential estate (excluding tenanted areas).

Facilities Management Committee had asked that the Sub-Committee review its membership.

The Sub-Committee discussed at length possible membership. It was agreed that membership be expanded to include:

- A representative from the Environmental Ambassadors
- An additional members from the Students’ Union
- A representative from the EMS Implementation and Review Group
- A representative from Procurement
- A representative from Health and Safety Services
- A representative from the School of Construction Management and Engineering

**Action: Professor Ellis and Ms Sharman**

10/09 **Any other business**

**Accounts**

The Sub-Committee received a tabled copy of the Travel Plan fund for the six month period ending January 2010. To date £53K of income had been received and an amount of £13K spent.
The Sub-Committee noted that Procurement had gone out to tender for a traffic consultant. Once appointed the consultant would undertake surveys on modes of travel. Spend on the surveys would hit the account later in the financial year.

Green Travel Plan
One of the requirements of the Green Travel Plan was to hold a forum to discuss car parking. A recent forum had been held and was well attended by both staff and students.

One problem highlighted in the discussion was the fact that the University couldn’t quantify the scale of parking problems on campus. It had been suggested that the University explore the use of an Automatic Number Plate Recognition system again as a means of capturing the information required. It was noted that Campus services had gone out for a speculative tender and would bring the results to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

10/10 Dates of meetings 2009-10

Friday 11 June at 2.00 pm
**ACTION LIST: Environment and Travel Sub-Committee – 17 February 2010**

**Key:**

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<td>Professor Ellis</td>
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<td>Dr Musson</td>
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<td>RUSU</td>
<td>President Students’ Union</td>
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**Minute** | **Action**                                                                 | **By**  |
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<tr>
<td>10/04</td>
<td>Check whether University Purchasing Cards could be used for payment</td>
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<td>RHE to speak to the Students’ Union re the car club</td>
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<td>A proposal be submitted to FMC seeking approval for the scheme</td>
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<td>10/05</td>
<td>A proposal to establish an EMS Implementation and Review Group be submitted to SMB</td>
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<td>RHE speak to PVC T&amp;L re Sustainable Development in the Curriculum</td>
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<td>Diagram/Explanation for the scheme to be produced. DS to speak with CSTD about possible briefing to HOS/HOD</td>
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<td>10/06</td>
<td>RHE speak with FMD about planning condition and digital signage</td>
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<td>10/08</td>
<td>New members to be invited</td>
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