

## **J.17-4: A Motion to for the adoption of a Sustainability Policy by the Student Association**

### **THIS SSC & SRC NOTES:**

1. The Student Association addresses sustainability issues through the existing Environment Subcommittee.
2. A number of sustainable practices are already in place such as the provision of recycling bins; food waste recycling and the adoption of flyerless elections in the 2017 election cycle.
4. The University of St Andrews has a Sustainable Development Policy & Strategy 2012-2022. This policy recognizes and supports the need for an integrated approach to sustainable development and focuses on key areas of improvement such as resource use; waste management; utilities management; environmental management and compliance; and travel and transport among others.
5. The University has a number of sector-specific sustainability policies addressing the above-mentioned key objectives and Guardbridge (the biomass facility) and Kenly (the windfarm) are testament to its commitment to a more sustainable future.
6. The University has had a Sustainable Investment Policy (SIP) since 2006. A central aim of the SIP is the protection of the global environment, its climate and its biodiversity". And more recently the University announced its divestment from fossil-fuel extracting companies within three years.
7. The University won the Times Higher Education Award for Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable Development in 2010, and its Sustainable Development degree programme received the 2009 Green Gown Award for excellence in promoting sustainability.

### **THIS SSC & SRC BELIEVES**

1. How the Student Association conducts business and invests reflects its ethics, principles and worldview.
2. The Student Association pushes the university to be more sustainable. Yet, when it lags behind, the Association should align itself with the University, on issues relating to sustainability.
3. This is not a radical step. It builds upon previous efforts dating back to 2009 and 2012 when Environmental Policies were passed through both SSC & SRC, yet they were never adopted by the Board of Directors.
4. Given the progress made so far, this is the logical next step for the Association.
5. Having a Sustainability Policy minimises uncertainty and allows for better long-term planning when it comes to renovations, large purchases, and investment decisions among others.

### **THIS SSC & SRC RESOLVES**

1. To adopt the proposed Sustainability Policy.
2. To revise said policy annually with next revision scheduled for February 2018 in both SRC and SSC meetings.
3. To recommend Student Association Board of Directors to adopt this policy and ensure its enforcement in all business conducted on behalf of the Student Association, both in-house and as a contractor.
4. For the Association Environment Officer and the SU President to aid the enforcement of this policy.

### **Proposed:**

Mariya Simeonova, Association Environment Officer,  
Student Association Environment Subcommittee

### **Seconded:**

Charlotte Andrew, Association President  
Aine Bennet, Association Community Relations Officer  
Charlotte Flatley, SSC Broadcasting Officer  
Robert Aston, Association Equal Opportunities Officer

## **Supplementary Paper 1: University of St Andrews Students' Association Sustainability Policy (2017)**

### **1. Introduction**

The Sustainability Policy applies to the running of the University of St Andrews Students' Association (henceforth the 'Association'). The policy aims to provide guidelines for Association conduct along environmental and ethical lines in a variety of fields. It is the role for the Environment subcommittee of the Association to advise the Board of Trustees in overseeing the enactment and enforcement of these policies.

### **2. Definition**

Sustainability can be defined as meeting the needs of present generations without jeopardising the needs of future generations. Practically, this can be divided into three main interlinked sections: economic, social and environmental.

### **3. Policy Statement**

The Association is committed to improving its ethical and environmental performance as part of an effort to become more sustainable.

The Association believes that human-influenced climate change and resource depletion are two of the biggest problems facing the current generation. The Association therefore believes in the protection of the natural environment, through policies including but not restricted to the minimisation of waste and the promotion of more environmentally-friendly travel options. The Association also supports and promotes recycling and the minimal expenditure of energy, as well as the use of energy from environmentally friendly sources. The Association also believes that water is a resource which should be conserved.

The Association supports the application of ethical practices to use of our service, facilities and the provision and promotion of wider choice in forms including but not limited to fairly traded (as defined in the Fairtrade Policy), vegetarian, vegan, organic, locally-sources and non-genetically modified products. The Association also believes in ethical fiscal and management practices, including but not restricted to ethical investment.

Furthermore, the Association believes in the collection and dissemination of information concerning these criteria to the wider student body. The policy will be available to all parties including the general public, and will be provided to all sabbaticals, staff, subcommittees and affiliated societies.

The following points and divided into broad policy sections:

### **4. Staff and Student Involvement**

The Association shall implement this policy by

- Endeavouring to ensure that all employees in the course of their duties act in accordance with this policy
- Encouraging the student membership to act in accordance with this policy
- Encouraging and influencing the University to continue to provide leadership in environmental and sustainability issues
- Engaging with the University's Environment Team with the view to bring about practical changes needed for the implementation of elements of this policy

- Encouraging permanent staff and student staff in promoting and implementing ethical policies
- Making all new volunteers and employees aware of this policy
- Ensuring that all subcommittees and societies affiliated to the Students' Association act in accordance with the objectives of this policy by incorporating it into the affiliation agreement.

## **5. Waste and Recycling**

The Association shall achieve the best possible level of waste minimisation at all times by ensuring each semester that:

- No use is made whatsoever of disposable crockery or cutlery in order to minimise waste and environmental damage, except in exceptional circumstances, when alternatives should be 100% biodegradable or recyclable
- Electronic communication is encouraged
- Paper (both white and coloured) in the Students' Association is sourced from recycled paper stock, except in exceptional circumstances, with a view to making paper supplies as close to 100% post-consumer recycled as possible, including all internally and externally sourced paper and print for publications
- The use of double-sided printing and photocopying for internal administration is implemented as a standard
- No future purchase shall be made of printing equipment which cannot handle double-sided printing
- All waste cans, bottles (plastic and glass), cardboard and paper are recycled where reasonably possible
- Every effort should be made to ensure that recycling provision is available at Association and external events
- Copies of student publications are recycled
- Awareness of recycling possibilities currently present in St Andrews continues through the publication of maps of recycling locations and information dissemination in conjunction with Estates.

## **6. Energy and Water Conservation**

The Association shall enforce the minimisation of energy expenditure by ensuring each semester that

- It moves as close towards 100% green energy supply as possible, within the constraints of the purchasing consortium
- Energy efficiency is actively promoted to students and staff
- It ensures all lights and computers within the Association building are switched off while the building is vacant, except when required for reasons of security
- Ensures that heating and cooling control systems are optimised and regulated to minimise excessive use of energy
- Ensures that all new white goods purchased are A-grade for energy and water efficiency

## **7. Sustainable and socially responsible catering**

The Association shall provide and promote to students a wider range of sustainable and socially responsible foodstuffs by ensuring each semester that

- There is a provision of sufficient organic, vegetarian, vegan, locally-sourced, non-genetically modified, free range and fairly traded foods in the building, and that these goods are actively promoted (Appendix A)
- No catering produce contains any GM products
- It actively promotes Fairtrade in accordance with the Fairtrade Policy
- Ensures that provision is made for those with religious, political or ethical dietary requirements in the Association building
- Meat should be procured from sources which do not employ farming methods involving unnecessary animal cruelty such as Red Tractor Standard holders (Appendix A)
- Fish should be procured from sustainable sources such as Marine Stewardship Council certified ones (Appendix A)
- It actively promotes free tap water as a sustainable alternative to bottled water, and that where bottled water is available, it is British produced and bottled in recyclable materials.

### **8. Sustainable and socially responsible Fiscal Practice**

The Association shall ensure that it is an example of ethical fiscal practice by ensuring each semester that is

- Continues to invest transparently and ethically in accordance with section 6 from the university “Sustainable & Responsible Investing Policy” (Appendix B) until such a policy is in place in the Student Association
- Does not accept donations from companies who do not meet the above-mentioned criteria
- Ensures that ethical products sold within the Union are given priority advertisement, shelf space and stocking

### **9. Travel**

The Association shall ensure that it promotes sustainable travel options by ensuring each semester that

- The most environmentally-friendly travel options are promoted in accordance with the University Travel Plan

And by ensuring in the short term that

- When travelling on Association business, sabbaticals, staff and officers use environmentally-friendly travel options, and specifically do not fly, out-with exceptional circumstances
- It encourages affiliated societies to use more environmentally-friendly travel options such as E-car
- It provides and promotes video-conferencing as an alternative to travel where appropriate

### **10. Additional Procurement and Practice**

The Association shall further improve its sustainability by ensuring that:

- The University shop provides ethically-sourced and Fairtrade University-branded clothing

And by ensuring in the short term that it

- Seeks and compiles statements from suppliers on their environmental and ethical procedures and records
- Investigates cleaning products and other goods sold within the Union for animal testing
- Moves towards the complete use of environmentally-sound maintenance products in accordance with the Green tourism criteria (Appendix C)
- Seeks to procure and sell products within the minimum environmental and ethical impact in all its outlets

## 11. Wider Community

The Association shall promote sustainability within the wider community by ensuring each semester that it:

- Lobbies institutions including but not limited to Fife Council, the Scottish Government and the UK Government on sustainability issues where appropriate
- Engages with local representatives such as Councillors, MSPs, MPs, MEPs where appropriate in order to bring about change to environmental policy at higher levels

## 12. Closing Points

An action plan will be developed for the implementation of this policy, including a set of internal targets to ensure improvement, and monitoring and reporting progress against these.

This policy shall be reviewed and updated annually.

Therefore, the next review shall take place at SRC in February 2018 and the following Board Meeting.

### Appendix A

Food Standards:

Sustainable & socially responsible meat and dairy - <http://assurance.redtractor.org.uk>

Sustainable fisheries - <https://www.msc.org/>

Fairtrade - <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk>

### Appendix B

St Andrews University “Sustainable & Responsible Investing Policy”

Section 6 - Investment Criteria

In making investment decisions the University expects its appointed managers to consider, the following areas (this list should not be considered as exhaustive):

- Promotion of human rights, including but not limited to the equality of gender, race and sexuality;

- Promotion of good business ethics and good employment practices;

- Protection of the global environment, its climate and its biodiversity;

- Promotion of community investment;

- Promotion of international co-operation and an end to international conflict including a prohibition of companies which produce armaments;

- Sustainable provision and procurement of essential resources and services (utilities for example);

- Prohibition of companies which test on animals purely for cosmetic purposes.

While operating within these criteria, appointed investment managers are left at their discretion to select individual stocks and to operate within their own Socially Responsible Investment Policy. The appointed manager will be accountable to the University in terms of

financial performance and adherence to commitments made on issues of social responsibility and sustainability. The appointed manager will also be expected to discuss issues around social responsibility and sustainability with the investments advisory committee. The University shall seek enforcement of the ESG elements of this policy through the investment practice of its appointed Investment Managers.

## Appendix C

The **Green Tourism** Business Scheme

Section 5 – Using water wisely

### **5.13 PHOSPHATE-FREE SOAPS AND DETERGENTS: AVOIDING NUTRIENT ENRICHMENT**

- **Business uses or supplies phosphate free cleaning products – details should be available on constituent chemicals, information on why phosphate use should be minimised.**
- **Sites that do not provide cleaning products to customers such as self-catering should provide guidance to customers on alternatives to phosphate**
- **Where appropriate sites with retail outlets should offer phosphate free cleaners for sale**

Phosphate in the environment is responsible for nutrient enrichment of watercourses causing excessive algal growth and sometimes 'blooms', which harm fish and other aquatic life. The main source of phosphate is from agriculture but significant quantities are released from washing and cleaning, particularly in rural drainage systems where a soakaway is present. Full credit will be given where sites can demonstrate that all cleaning products are phosphate free. Where business does not provide cleaners such as in self-catering – clear guidance should be provided to encourage guests to use phosphate free options. Where sites have a retail outlet it should sell phosphate free options. Details of chemical make up of all cleaners should be available at grading visit.

### **5.14 CHLORINE-FREE CLEANERS: MORE ECO-FRIENDLY**

- **Business uses or supplies chlorine free cleaning products – details should be available on constituent chemicals**
- **Sites that do not provide cleaning products to customers such as self-catering should provide guidance on alternatives to chlorine and why it is damaging**
- **Site with retail outlet should offer chlorine free cleaners for sale**

Chlorine is a powerful toxin and can adversely affect the efficient operation of septic tanks by killing the useful bacteria responsible for sewage digestion. Many cleaners contain chlorine-based chemicals, which can damage animal and plant life. Chlorine-free bleaches and cleaners contain other less-damaging chemicals, such as peroxide, which biodegrade more readily than chlorine-based cleaners. Full credit will be given where sites can demonstrate that all cleaning products are chlorine free. Where business does not provide cleaning products such as in self-catering – clear guidance should be provided to encourage guests to use chlorine free options. Where sites have a retail outlet it should sell chlorine free options. Details of chemical make up of all cleaners should be available at grading visit.

### **5.15 NATURAL BASED SURFACE CLEANERS**

- **Business uses surface cleaner based on natural ingredients – details should be available to support this**
- **Sites that do not provide cleaners to customers should provide guidance on natural based surface cleaners**
- **Site with retail outlet should offer natural based surface cleaners for sale**
- **Use of chemical free methods such as microfibre cloths**

Surface cleaners are used in most hospitality businesses. Most are petroleum derivatives. Credit will be given for use of cleaners based on natural, fully biodegradable ingredients,

such as orange oil and organic acid. Care must be taken to ensure health and safety requirements are met in relation to the cleaning of food preparation and other sensitive surfaces. Sites such as self-catering and holiday parks that may not as a matter of course provide customers with such cleaners should provide clear instruction on what to use and where to get it. Sites with retail should consider selling such products. The use of microfibre cloths is also encouraged, as these do not require any supplementary cleaning chemicals. Full credit will be given where a business can demonstrate it uses ecofriendly surface cleaners and practices in all relevant parts of the business.

#### **5.16 HOME-MADE CLEANERS USING NATURAL INGREDIENTS**

##### **• Business uses home-made eco friendly cleaning methods based on natural ingredients**

Many traditional home-made cleaning products work as well as their shop-bought counterparts and are based on natural ingredients rather than petroleum derivatives. Vinegar, citrus and water, for instance, make an excellent cleaner, as does bicarbonate of soda. Ingredients and recipes should be available at the grading visit and credit will be provided based upon the extent of their use.

### **Supplementary Paper Two: Action Points for the Environment Subcommittee for implementing the SA's Sustainability Policy**

- Ensures the Association installs a water fountain/dispenser on the Union Building top floor
- Ensures that all existing light fittings and light bulbs are low energy, and investigates other energy saving measures, such as dimmer switches
- Ensures a commitment from election candidates to ensure that their election materials are recycled, and recycling facilities are provided at election points
- Ensures a box for recycling printer cartridges is supplied in the Union
  
- Encourages student publications to limit paper wastage
- Encourages the provision of composting facilities in University halls of residence
- Encourages the acceptance by Schools of double-sided printing for coursework
- Encourages societies and subcommittees to switch to sustainable and socially responsible bank accounts
- It promotes the use of walking, cycling and public transport for travel within St Andrews
  
- Investigates current energy supply sources and the potential for moving away from carbon-intensive energy sources
- Explores the potential for use of reusable plastic glasses at external events

The Association shall increase awareness of sustainability by ensuring each semester that

- The Environment subcommittee will be visible at Societies Fayres
- It encourages students to voice concerns and opinions to the Association Environment Officer and Subcommittee
- It encourages all hall committees to elect an environmental representative and supports said representatives in any way it can
- The Environment Subcommittee mailing list, Facebook page and (upcoming) website are used regularly to publicise changes which have been made in the Association

- It increases connections with Sustainability or Environment and Ethics Officers at other universities
- It encourages the Careers Advisory Services to have substantial information on and promote the pursuit of ethical careers
- It develops training and workshops to raise awareness for students and members of staff and others to ensure effectiveness of ethical environmental policy
- The subcommittee uses Association resources in the promotion of its initiatives and events