



Minutes of the Estates Policy Committee Meeting of 04 December 2020

Microsoft Teams

Present: Prof. A. Seery (Chair), Bursar & Director of Strategic Innovation – Secretary to the Committee, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), President of the Graduate Students Union, Prof. J. Parnell, Mr C. O’Connor, Mr A. Grainger, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Campus Infrastructure

In Attendance: **For items 5, 6, 7:** Kieron McGovern (Engineering Services Manager).

Apologies: Prof. C. Casey

Statement of Interest: None declared.

EPC/20-21/008 Minutes of 01 September 2020 meeting

The Chair thanked the Committee members for accommodating the change in schedule for this meeting, and extended a warm welcome to external members. The minutes of 01 September 2020 were approved.

EPC/20-21/009 Matters arising

EPC/20-21/002, EPC/19-20/025, EPC/19-20/017 Old Library Redevelopment Project: this project has now received full planning permission approval; this application received positive feedback from the planning authority Dublin City Council.

EPC/20-21/003 Historic Accommodations Buildings Project – update on Rubrics/Chief Steward’s House: this item was considered and discussed at the Board meeting of 18 November 2020 (BD/20-21/067 refers); an application for planning permission was subsequently lodged.

EPC/20-21/004 TTEC Early Activation Space: it was noted that the project team consulted extensively with the Grounds & Gardens Committee in relation to the proposed plantings for this project. As a result of this consultation, significant alterations and improvements were made to the proposed planting, so this was noted as a positive and helpful interaction. This item was brought to Board and approved; an application for planning permission was subsequently lodged.



Section A

EPC/20-21/010 Update on Estates Strategy implementation from Director of Campus Infrastructure

The Director of Campus Infrastructure provided an update. It was noted that this has been a challenging year, but a lot of progress was made notwithstanding.

1.2 Historic Buildings Accommodation Project. It was noted that the approach to the conservation aspects of this project can provide lessons for the rest of the estate, particularly in the context of the Government's Climate Action Plan 2019.

1.3 E3. It was noted that the impact of Brexit is currently unknown but was included in the project risk register.

1.4 Printing House Square. The Project Sponsor and team will advise Board re: the conciliation at their quarterly report to Board on 08 December 2020.

1.5 Trinity Business School. It was noted that Covid 19-related restrictions on campus access have impacted student enjoyment of this building. A query was raised regarding this building's green wall; the Director of Campus Infrastructure will report back.

1.5.1 Long-Term Maintenance Plan. A conditions survey of the entire estate will give a 10-year overview of the project. Covid 19-related restrictions on campus access have heavily impacted this survey, which now has an expected completion date of April 2021. It was noted that internationally there is now some focus on retrofitting existing buildings rather than constructing new buildings.

1.5.2 Annual Maintenance Programme. The Annual Maintenance Programme was agreed at Capital Review Group earlier this week.

1.6 Old Library Redevelopment. This was noted as a significant achievement by the project team.

2.4 Law Building. It was noted that development of the 'Northern Edge' of the campus will enhance the area and allow us to present a more positive image of Trinity out onto Pearse Street (see also 2.9 Masterplan).

2.8 Postgraduate Experience. A query was raised as to whether the upgrade of electrical installations in the 1937 Reading Room will provide capacity for additional PhD desk spaces in the gallery of the building. In response it was noted that this upgrade is in the early stages and the Graduate Students Union will be involved as it progresses. The timeline for completion is currently summer 2021. It was noted that the Graduate Students Union President and the Director of the College Disability Service are coordinating meetings regarding universal access to the 1937 Reading Room.

2.11 Trinity St James's Cancer Institute. It was noted that the Director of Campus Infrastructure will be notified when Estates & Facilities needs to be involved.

2.14 Student Centre. Currently re-engaging with the Students Union on this.



2.15 Professional Services Reorganisation. It was noted that Grounds & Gardens Committee were not consulted regarding the planting at Trinity Central – however this is not a serious issue as the planting involved was relatively small.

2.16 The Printing House Renewal. Noted that this sits outside the Printing House Square and Northern Edge projects.

2.17 TTEC and the Implications for the College Green Campus. It was noted that this has been a productive period for this project. TTEC is now named Trinity East.

3.2 Stack B. This purchase was noted as a positive result.

The Director of Campus Infrastructure gave an update presentation on Trinity Central, House 10, East/West Theatre, West Chapel, and E3 Learning Foundry enabling works. Positive feedback from occupants of House 10 was noted.

The item was opened for comments. The Committee commended the Director of Campus Infrastructure and his team for excellent, high-calibre work – particularly for continuing work on strategic initiatives during the challenges presented by Covid 19.

Action

**EPC/20-
21/010/001**

The Director of Campus Infrastructure will pass on the Committee's compliments to the Estates & Facilities team for their excellent work.

EPC/20-21/011

Energy Policy

Kieron McGovern (Engineering Services Manager) attended to present this item.

An overarching energy policy is important to set a direction for operations and decisions in the university regarding energy consumption. Following discussion with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI), and review of other higher education institutions (HEIs) and large public bodies, a policy was prepared considered by the Provost's Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Sustainable Living on 06 March 2020.

There was discussion on the level of ambition of the policy - whether Trinity aims to meet current government standards, or has ambition to lead in this area. The policy is drafted in the context of the aims and ambitions regarding sustainability within the Strategic Plan 2020-24. It was noted that the university's new-build projects (such as the recently-completed Business School) invoke higher sustainability targets than required under current government standards.



In terms of implementation of the policy, it was noted that the papers for items EPC/20-21/012 and EPC/20-21/013 at today's meeting outline some elements of the implementation. A comprehensive sustainability report has been presented to the Provost's Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Sustainable Living.

A query was raised regarding the targets being set and it was proposed that the policy cross-reference related policies. The policy refers to national standards, some of which, it was noted, are currently evolving; it was proposed that a side note outlining likely developments in national standards be drafted; Director of Campus Infrastructure and Engineering Services Manager to discuss. It was cautioned that this note may be indicative only.

In response to a query on how energy awareness among building users is promoted, it was noted that sustainability is now within the Dean of Students' remit; there is student representation on Green Campus Committee and Provost's Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Sustainable Living; the Sustainability Advisor and sustainability champions but it was acknowledged that there is always scope for additional awareness activities. The challenges of knowledge retention within the student body (which by its nature has a higher turnover than the staff body) was noted. The work of Trinity students and of the Office of Public Works (OPW) with the SEAI on raising awareness of energy use at work was noted. Green Campus Week is planned for February 2021.

The Committee discussed derogations available for historic buildings, the Climate Action Plan 2019 and carbon reduction targets.

There was discussion regarding the resources that will be required to implement the policy; it was proposed that the third bullet point in the policy be reworded to: 'Provide the necessary information and resources to achieve our objectives, *pending available funding*'. It was further proposed that high-level information on the scale of resources required should be provided to Executive officers Group and Board when the Energy Policy is presented to these committees. It was noted that both new builds and refurbishment of existing buildings present opportunities for improving sustainability; SKA rating provides sustainable refurbishment guidelines on retrofitting historic buildings. The Rubrics project demonstrates the possibilities available to historic buildings.

Support was expressed for a Sustainability and Civic Engagement Office which had been proposed at a meeting of the Provost's Advisory Committee on Sustainability and Sustainable Living.

It was noted that the Higher Education Authority is currently conducting an extensive survey of HEIs. It was proposed that the expertise of Trinity



researchers be harnessed in operational discussions to some degree; there could be an opportunity for Trinity to advise government in this area.

The policy was approved, subject to the comments below. The Chair thanked the Engineering Services Manager and offered the Committee's congratulations on this policy.

Actions

EPC/20-21/011/001 Energy Policy to cross-reference other relevant policies; appendix on other initiatives to be included; an indicative side note outlining likely developments in national standards be drafted - Director of Campus Infrastructure and Engineering Services Manager to discuss.

EPC/20-21/011/002 Third bullet in Energy Policy to be reworded: 'Provide the necessary information and resources to achieve our objectives, **pending available funding**'. High-level information on the scale of resources required to be provided to Executive officers Group and Board when the Energy Policy is presented to these committees.

EPC/20-21/012 Energy Plan during low-occupancy period

Kieron McGovern (Engineering Services Manager) attended for this item.

The Director of Campus Infrastructure presented.

It was noted that some operations of heating-related equipment can be performed remotely. It was emphasised that we can all play a role in reducing energy waste. Comments and questions were welcomed.

It was noted that point 3.2 in the document is a duplication of 3.1; this will be amended.

It was noted that some spaces on campus will be open to students over the Christmas period, facilitated by Graduate Students Union stewards. A request was made that a record be kept of volume of materials required to wipe on and wipe off spaces, for sustainability purposes. A query was raised regarding localising heating of these spaces; in response it was noted that a limited number of local adjustments can be made to the system to ensure only in-use spaces are heated. A list of specific academic functions with heating requirements over the period will be sent to the Technical Services Manager. It was noted that for the last number of years campus managers have consulted with end users of buildings to match the energy plan during low-occupancy periods to the end users' needs; Prof. Parnell to provide feedback to Director of Campus Infrastructure on this point.



The importance of widespread communication to the university community regarding the Energy Plan during low-occupancy periods was noted.

The item was approved.

Actions

EPC/20-21/012/001 Point 3.2 in the document is a duplication of 3.1; this will be amended.

EPC/20-21/012/002 A request was made that a record be kept of volume of materials required to wipe on and wipe off spaces on campus which are open to students over the Christmas period, for sustainability purposes.

EPC/20-21/012/003 Prof. Parnell to provide feedback to Director of Campus Infrastructure regarding end-user consultation on energy requirements during low-occupancy periods.

EPC/20-21/013 College-level strategy for energy and sustainability

Kieron McGovern (Engineering Services Manager) attended for this item.

The Committee members were invited to make observations.

The Committee expressed strong support for the intention outlined, and agreed that it is beneficial to plan at this stage even if the resources are not yet in place to implement. It was noted that implementation could be incremental.

There was discussion on fuel options available.

In response to a query, it was noted that options for renewable energy sources are being considered within particular capital projects.

The Committee thanked the Engineering Services Manager, and he left the meeting.

Action

The Committee expressed strong support for this proposal for a centrally funded set of projects for central environmental infrastructure (CEI).

Section B – no items



Section C

- EPC/20-21/014** **Finance Committee decisions relevant to Estates Policy Committee**
Duly noted.
- EPC/20-21/015** **Proposed dates for next meetings**
Proposed dates for 2020/21:
05 March 2021
04 June 2021
- EPC/20-21/016** **AOB**
No items.
The Chair extended his best greetings of the season to Committee members, and thanked them for their work and participation. Particular thanks were given to the external members, whose input and perspective is so important for the Committee.