

**Date:** 1 August 2018  
**Time:** 14.30 – 16.30  
**Venue:** Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

## MINUTES:

### Scottish Sanitary Product Scheme Discussion Meeting

#### Attendees

##### In Person

Aileen	Douglas	AD	Glasgow Caledonian University
Alison	Lees	AL	Glasgow Kelvin College
Amy	Ritchie	AR	University of Strathclyde
Anastasios	Markopoulos	AM	Glasgow Kelvin College
Andy	Anderson	AA	APUC
Arlene	Sweeney	ASw	Glasgow Kelvin College
Astrid	Smallenbroek	ASm	University of Stirling
Chris	McGeever	CMc	Royal Conservatoire
Dan	Wedgewood	DW	Universities Scotland
Gillian	Gibson	GG	EAUC
Helen	Canning	HC	Ayrshire College
James	Thomson	JaT	Ayrshire College
John	Thorne	JoT	Glasgow School of Art
Lydia	Demaison	LD	Royal Conservatoire
Nora	Nemeth	NN	Glasgow Clyde College
Pat	McCann	PM	West College Scotland
Pauline	Donaldson	PD	Forth Valley College
Rebecca	Petford	RP	EAUC
Rose	Harkness	RH	South Lanarkshire College
Yvonne	Dalgarno	YD	APUC
Linda	Buchanan	LB	New College Lanarkshire

##### Via Zoom

Alexis	Heeren	AH	University of Edinburgh
Bill	Somerville	BS	Robert Gordon University
Ian	Richardson	IR	Dumfries and Galloway College
Jamie	Pearson	JP	Edinburgh Napier University
Ken	Haig	KH	Fife College
Linda	Taylor	LT	North East Scotland College
Tracey-Ann	Don	TAD	University of Stirling
Wendy	Wallace	WW	University of the Highlands and Islands

## Agenda Items

2. Procurement
  - a. Suppliers
  - b. Responsibility
3. Reusable Products
4. System for Access
  - a. Location
  - b. Holiday Supplies
  - c. Rural or Remote Students
5. Process Management (ordering, storage, stock control, replenishment)
6. Resource Management
  - a. Waste
7. Communications (awareness, target audience)
8. Promoting wider well-being
9. Internal Partnerships
10. Monitoring Progress and Reporting
11. Project Budget and Timeframes
12. Further Discussions and Questions

	SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS	ACTIONS
1	<p><b>Welcome, Introductions &amp; Guidelines of the Meeting</b></p> <p>Everyone introduced themselves to the room.</p> <p>JoT noted additional points to cover within agenda items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whose responsibility is the implementation of this scheme</li> <li>• Availability locations – e.g. should include men’s bathrooms etc.</li> <li>• Wider discussions - sexual health</li> <li>• Language used in communications</li> </ul> <p>AA and DW both note that they are on the Scottish Government Working Group for this scheme</p>	
2	<p><b>Procurement</b></p> <p>AA update from Scottish Government Working Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working group started in March</li> <li>• Scottish Government announcement on 22 August 2018 – publicly state the amount of money being allocated</li> <li>• Universities Scotland and Colleges Scotland both act as representatives</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examining existing 'routes to market'</li> <li>• Information should have been passed through your procurement colleagues within the institutions from APUC – let AA know if you have not received procurement information</li> <li>• Framework in evaluation stage will be in place in October 2018 with plans that it will adapt when feedback comes from use in the first year</li> </ul> <p>Option 1: Menstruation products available in bathrooms via dispenser service e.g. vending products (free rather than paid)</p> <p>Option 2: Bunzl supply prepackage items e.g. through vending machines or baskets</p> <p>Range of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tampons</li> <li>• Towels</li> <li>• Menstrual Cups and other reusable products</li> </ul> <p>South Lanarkshire College Trial Scheme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have trialed a sanitary support scheme since 2017</li> <li>• Dispensing products from vending machines which are topped up on daily basis</li> <li>• Holiday packs as well</li> <li>• Single use</li> <li>• No wastage</li> <li>• Full cost analysis £2000</li> </ul> <p><u>Suppliers</u></p> <p>Question: Do '<u>Hey Girls</u>' only tender through Scot Excel (Procurement for Local Authorities)?</p> <p>AA: '<i>Hey Girl</i>' don't have capability to meet whole of Scotland at the moment. May be a possibility in the future, as more suppliers will emerge, and frameworks will be developed.</p> <p><u>Responsibility</u></p> <p>One of the trial institution's Students Association was first involved with dispensing items. CFINE (Community Food Initiatives in North East) were also involved. College now taking it responsibility with drop-in facilities also available at the Students Union.</p> <p>Variations throughout the institutions as to who is leading on the scheme therefore difficult to maintain communications which key contacts from the Scottish Government, Universities Scotland and Colleges Scotland's point of view.</p> <p>Also see 'Internal Partnerships'</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Reusable Products</b></p> <p>Reusable are only an emerging market so options are limited on the framework.</p> <p>Royal Conservatoire for Scotland had interest from students in reusable, biodegradable, organic and vegan/vegetarian friendly products therefore purchased some Moon Cups and looking for reusable pads.</p>	

	<p><i>AA: Biodegradable would not make any difference at the moment since waste streams do not process menstrual waste in this way – all is incinerated and therefore it would be a waste of product.</i></p> <p>University of Stirling are looking selling Cups at cost price, looking at whether it can be free for interested students.</p> <p>Edinburgh Napier University are concerned about having them in the open access space due to the value of these products. Discussing how they can be offered easily with no stigma to those who want them. Also started to think what services/toilet facilities should be available so that people can wash these reusable products such as cups or equivalent on campus in privacy.</p> <p>Support from people in the room to see more options and supply of reusable products available on the framework</p> <p><i>AA: Please let us know any reusable products if you hear of anything through your Procurement Team.</i></p>	<p><b>All: let AA know of any reusable product supplier that you know of</b></p>
<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>System for Access</b></p> <p><u>Location</u> Products must be available to all students; male, female or other.</p> <p>People should be able to access them without having to ask.</p> <p>Gender neutral toilets are becoming more accessible and would be used.</p> <p>University of Stirling looking at highlighting which toilets they will be in during the trial year – therefore not in every single toilet. Also investigating option for products to be free when ‘purchasing’ them within University chemist or shop.</p> <p>The Robert Gordon University Student Union trial was undertaken in 2017 directly from the Union office – products had to be collected in person but students also had to register(to give statistical data for feedback) which put a lot of students off. Now anticipating providing product in each female toilet and all gender neutral and accessible toilets – using a simple “storage drawer” system – stock will be distributed by the cleaning department and they will also manage stock control.</p> <p>Edinburgh Napier University are debating using student cards for swipe access to products. Could create a barrier for access though. Students already swipe to access the computer centre at Merchiston, campus out with core business hours, labs, bike stores and to buy items from the café’s through the cashless payment system. So this would just be another service that they swipe for. Access will be restricted to students although there is the argument that staff and visitors may also require products therefore if this system is implemented there will still be paid for products in toilets.</p> <p><u>Holiday Supplies</u> Providing products out with term time is very important.</p>	

	<p>New College Lanarkshire Student Guidance Team can be contacted and they will be sent out in the post – though it is noted that students would need to request these and it does not make it as freely available.</p> <p>End of term packs are available in bathrooms with supplies to get through holiday period.</p> <p>Robert Gordon University have set up a confidential e-mail address where students can request “bulk” product if going on vacation or work placement – delivery system is still under final review but they anticipate something similar to an “Amazon” locker capability or an unstaffed central package collection point within one of the larger female toilets and/or gender neutral toilet with a specific reference number (not a name) on the pack. If necessary they will operate a limited postal capability.</p> <p>Edinburgh Napier University to introduce collection boxes for toiletries at each campus with a view of donating the items to ‘Fresh Start’ or any other charities that exist to support people who are in more need of products. Will include hygiene products. Don’t expect people to directly transfer stock from the collection cupboards to the collection boxes but will encourage folk to consider how a wider array of people can be helped with this initiative.</p> <p><u>Remote/rural students</u></p> <p>They may only come to the institution once or twice a year but products must still be available to them.</p> <p>Similar to the ‘C:Cards’ scheme you should be able to pick them up anywhere in wider society.</p> <p><i>AA: There are short, medium and long term plans which the Scottish Government will adapt as the scheme progresses. Make sure you give honest feedback to Scottish Government on how the process is working/not working at your institution.</i></p>	
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Process Management (ordering, storage, stock control, replenishment)</b></p> <p>Cleaning staff will be responsible for restocking the toilet baskets in most institutions.</p> <p>Storage may be an issue. Facilities teams have been storing at the moment with storage needed at all campuses.</p> <p>University of Stirling introducing monitoring as well as suggestion and feedback forms for students on how they found access and products.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Resource Management</b></p> <p>Concern from institutions about not knowing the volume that will be needed currently – very much an estimation at this point.</p> <p>Institutions will need to know how quickly products can be supplied if they run out during busy times on campus.</p> <p>The more awareness and popular the service becomes, the more the demand will be.</p>	

	<p>One institution noted that there was drop-off after Easter in products being collected in trial – unsure why.</p> <p><u>Waste</u> Edinburgh Napier University are considering offering the products in larger boxes to limit the number of times students have to access collection points. They only have bins for used sanitary products in toilets, and don't expect people to leave boxes in the toilets nor use the sanitary bins, but they will look at the bin map to ensure there are paper and card bins either close to the collection point or the main toilets used by students.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Communications (awareness, target audience)</b></p> <p>DW: Scottish Government will be providing branded communications – currently working with Young Scot on these. You will be sent an email with more details around the circulation of these resources and any institutional resources you may create.</p> <p>Equality of experience at universities and colleges means that branding will not say who should/should not use the products.</p> <p>Language – opinion put forward that 'periods' and 'menstrual' should be used rather than 'sanitary' to not enhance negative connotations. References to Period Poverty as the reason for the scheme seen to be something to avoid in communications. Often signage in institutions is written by male colleagues and therefore the language does not reflect the users (e.g. wellbeing and health) – should consider this.</p> <p>Internal communications will promote the scheme through Student Associations, social media and student induction process.</p> <p>Royal Conservatoire for Scotland used their survey as the first communication – to see how they can provide for the students, collect views and interest.</p> <p>Signage needs to be clear for all languages and reading levels.</p> <p>The packaging and user pamphlet need to be available and clear for different languages for health and safety reasons (e.g. Toxic Shock Syndrome warnings).</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>Promoting Wider Wellbeing</b></p> <p>Larger campaign on menstruation and female health for students in general could compliment the scheme.</p> <p>Student Services are key as they do a lot of one-to-one support and counselling.</p> <p>HC: Health and well-being is a key issue on campus at Ayrshire College at the moment. It isn't being segregated into 'menstrual' health, all wellbeing is rolled into one and everything that comes under that umbrella.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>Internal Partnerships</b></p> <p>International students and being able to access products when they arrive</p>	

	<p>Question: are there any cultural issues in accessing the products?          Royal Conservatoire noted that they had had feedback that some religious females do not use menstrual products which have been handled by males. They are making sure that dispensing of items is done by female cleaning staff.</p> <p>Other partnerships mentioned throughout the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services</li> <li>• Student Association</li> <li>• Domestic/Cleaning/Facilities Staff</li> <li>• Help Desk Staff</li> </ul>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Monitoring Progress and Reporting</b></p> <p>Communications on reporting arrangements have been shared by Colleges Scotland and Universities Scotland. Expected that a survey to be completed by students and rough statistics of stock usage will help inform the progress of the scheme.</p> <p>Issue flagged that stock usage will <i>not</i> show trends of who is using the products or for what purpose (e.g. full monthly cycle or sporadic use when necessary).          Surveys many also not be completed by the intended users - experience that students needing these products are not the type to do student surveys. Real input from the students that are needing to benefit from the service must be gathered.</p> <p>Royal Conservatoire for Scotland will be circulating another survey to students; the initial one was the most engagement that they have ever had on their surveys (70-80% response rate). Only 5 questions on who is using the scheme and where the access is correct. Keep it simple</p> <p>Campus buildings are often used as public buildings so no way of telling from stock counts if it is students or public using the products. One institution noted a spike in usage on Open Days          Similar situation with staff – though agreement amongst attendees that the products should be open to everyone who needs them.          Although Scottish Government are funding for students who need products due to Period Poverty, it is understood that, due to ease of access through the guidelines, more people will access them.</p> <p>Suggested different institutions trying different approaches for monitoring to see how it works best.</p>	
<b>11</b>	<p><b>Project Budget and Timeframes</b></p> <p>Funding only guaranteed for one year. Monitoring and reporting will feed in to funding going forward. It is expected that some funding will continue, however this is not confirmed at present.</p> <p>20% of funding is assigned for communication - there are national campaign communications which can cover this, therefore potential for more money to go towards the products and availability.</p> <p>How it works in the long term is important, including the continuation of funding from March to the academic year end (and beyond), which is not yet secured.</p>	

	<p>Concerns that there is potential to go over budget when just considering potential student use and there is no internal budget to support this.</p> <p>Question: will Scottish Government pay for storage cost for cupboards?  AA: <i>funding provided this year is for set up costs therefore storage should be included in this round of spending. Set up costs won't likely be covered in the future. There won't be a single way of implementing this, think there is a couple years before we see a full national plan for including community areas (similar to C:Cards).</i></p> <p>Although running to academic year, the current funding is only until March 2019 (end of the financial year). Usually next financial year's budgets in public sector discussed November (2018), with an announcement in January (2019). Would be good to have reporting in early to influence continuation of funding. Once scheme is in place Universities and College will need to make sure it continues. The scheme is still in the development stages, it is expected that there will be more structure and clarity as the scheme develops.</p> <p>Reporting is potentially quarterly and will most likely run on the academic year (August – June)</p>	
<b>12</b>	<p><b>Further Discussions and Questions</b></p> <p>Question: What are the expectations of the students and the Scottish Government and what will be communicated to the students?  Scottish Government have indicated that it should be 35% of the student population who are in need of these products but since you cannot restrict that access to those people only due to the guidelines does that mean that you are providing for every student, for their full monthly cycle for the full year?  Is it expected that institutions will have to provide for full monthly cycles? If someone asked for an entire month supply that should that be provided with no question?  Two different delivery models dependent on which you are supplying for.</p> <p>Agreement in the room that although Scottish Government have estimated a 35% uptake to address Period Poverty, support should be provided for all sanitary product users whether that is in an increase of potential users of the scheme or removal of tax on sanitary products. Not just about addressing the current issues but improving and increasing the scheme.</p> <p>The Group gathered here are a good working group/sounding board for how the scheme is working on site and would be keen to meet again to share notes.</p>	

Minutes prepared by Gillian Gibson, EAUC-Scotland Programme Coordinator, August 2018