

National Biodiversity Network Trust

Board of Trustees

MINUTES: 24 February 2016 11am – 3.00pm



De La Beche, Natural History Museum, London

Present:

Professor Michael Hassell (Chair)
Paul Rose
Helen Wilkinson
Roddy Fairley
John Davy-Bowker
Mark Diamond
Richard Pywell
Ian Owens
Alan Stewart
Jennifer Ashworth

In attendance:

Rachel Stroud (*Interim Chief Executive*)
Sarah Hyslop (*Minutes*)
Mandy Rudd (Representing ALERC)
Andy Musgrove (in for Andy Clements)
Keith Porter (in for Tim Hill)
Giselle Sterry

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Tim Hill, Andy Clements, Andrew Wood and Tom Webb.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Due to a clash with the Natural England Board Meeting, the Trustees welcomed Andy Musgrove who is substituting for Andy Clements and Keith Porter for Tim Hill. Mandy Rudd from GiGL was also welcomed to the meeting and is representing ALERC as an invited guest and will be attending the Board of Trustees on a meeting by meeting basis due to the forthcoming review of the Board structure. Rachel Stroud was thanked for her efforts in the role of Interim CEO.

3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

2.1 Minutes of the last meeting

1 July 2015

AP2: A session for Board Members be arranged to discuss the uses of the data certificates

ACTION: CARRIED FORWARD – to take this forward at the next available Board mtg

3 November 2015

AP1: Working Group Actions to be formatted in a table form to illustrate priorities and mission critical items. This can be incorporated in to the final Action Plan which has yet to be published.

Action: DISCHARGED – On agenda

AP2: JS to follow up with RS on LERC's access records uploaded via the Consultants Portal.

Action: DISCHARGED – On agenda

AP3: JS to follow up with HW on bulk permission agreements.

Action: CARRIED FORWARD – HW to give details to new CEO

AP4: JS to work with GS on development of membership review paper.

Action: CARRIED FORWARD – AW is leading on this with GS

AP5: AW to lead working group for membership review.

Action: CARRIED FORWARD

AP6: JS/GS to review the risk register.

Action: DISCHARGED – On agenda

There was a noted error with regards to the landowners and Welsh Government in that this should read Countryside Council for Wales and not NRW. See below for detail;

RE Pages 4-5

Item TTE15-03 Paper 06, Improving access to data questionnaire

The last para should be:

“HW advised that NRW's legacy body CCW, obtained advice from the ICO on releasing recorder names and landowner rights. The then CCW was advised to promote their policy of open data to the recording community and offer to remove volunteered records if a recorder did not want them to be released. This enabled CCW to release collations of records en-mass as open data”

The minutes were then signed off as a true record of the meeting.

4. Chairman's remarks

The Chairman shared that the interview panel had been successful in offering the role of CEO to Dr Jo Judge. Jo currently works as Senior Scientist for the Animal and Plant Health Agency. Previous employment includes Defra and Central Science Laboratory. 39 applications in total were received with 5 shortlisted for interview, however due to 2 pulling out only 3 were interviewed on the day. Jo has accepted the role and is likely to have to give 3 months' notice for her current employment.

5. Items of business from the Chief Executive

1.1. Interim Chief Executive Report February 2016 (TTE16-01 Paper 1)

Please refer to the paper for the full detail.

Strategic Aim 1. Record, collect, and mobilise

Consultants portal

The Board agreed that we should charge a small nominal fee for the training of the Consultants Portal. A figure of £25pp was agreed but to note that this should cover any admin time in processing this. It was also noted that items such as this could be dealt with at FMC rather than the Board.

BTO

The BTO data handed to NBN will take six months to load. It is suggested that this should be loaded onto the Atlas platforms. The hosting of this data will cost around £4K.

Working Groups

Two workshops were held on 12 February for the Online Recording and Verification. A total of 15 people have signed up to these groups with a good spread across the various agencies and schemes. The ToR can be shared with the Board should this be required.

Strategic Aim 2: Making use of data

PhD Studentship

This opportunity is now being advertised. Trustees offered to share this via their own channels. The cost to NBN for this post will be £1K per year (3 year post) plus travel. Links to be made with invasive species. There could also be other deals and opportunities similar to this that we can look into.

Data Transfer to GBIF

Follow up to be made with those partners that didn't reply to the questionnaire. The mechanism for transfer via the Atlas platforms should be more automatic than previous transfers.

It was raised that data partners can look on GBIF.org to see who is accessing their data but we should investigate how to show this information via the NBN systems to save people seeking this information from multiple places.

Links to be restored with Kew. They were happy for NBN to take the lead in representing the UK through GBIF

AP1; To follow up restoring NBN links with Kew **ACTION RS/ Kathy Willis**

Strategic Aim 3: Captivate and engage

NBN Website

The Board were taken through the new look NBN website which is currently being developed and is planned to go live next week. The site will be more transparent with details of past and future NBN staff presentations shared via the staff page. The database of wildlife surveys is now more interactive with searchable facilities. The launch is planned to link with the **March** release of eNews. The Board were asked to share this via their social media channels by re-tweeting and sharing NBN posts.

AP2; The Board were asked to share and promote the release of the new NBN website via social media **ACTION All**

NBN Awards

This event was hugely successful with 17 articles covering the story of the awards.

Working Groups

See the CEO report and paper **TTE16-01 Paper 13** for the full detail.

It was noted that there needs to be clear tasks between meetings and to use forums and discussion routes to take matters forward. It was suggested that a mechanism for linking the groups together would be for one group (possibly the data flow group) to take the lead and other groups to feed into these. This needs further thought.

AP3; To put forward any ideas of how to take forward matters from the working groups and how these can be fed back into the strategy **ACTION All**

Recorder Motivation

The Board were asked to note the volume of data collected and the need to continue analysing these data and to advise RS if they know of anyone who could take this on. Discussions are also taking place with York Uni to see if they can make use of our findings. A meeting is also planned with NTU to see if this could be done again in the future.

AP4; To circulate the recorder motivation summary report to the Board **ACTION: RS**

Strategic Aim 4: Data management infrastructure

Atlas Update

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P03** for the detail

- More data needs to be added to the AoLS via Dave Martin and JNCC. The data licenses require further work. This needs to happen when the data is uploaded due to open data.
- Sensitive species needs developer time and there will be a cost to this. Those who do need to see the sensitive species have other mechanisms in place. The Atlas may not be the correct platform to show this.
- The launch for AoLS is planned for the end of May as this has links to the purdah period for the Scottish elections.
- Wales and NI have agreed to take the platform forward and MoU's are in place but due to strict finance system it may be next year before this work is signed off. Some design work may be able to start this FY for Wales.
- NI would like to take the platform further and include the Republic of Ireland and the current CeDAR system.
- It is suggested that there should be a central analytical system so that UK wide analysis can be made at a central point.
- Agencies are on Board for an England Atlas platform as there are benefits for having this rather than continuing with the current Gateway. All data does however need to be loaded before the Gateway is turned off. It may be possible to have a holding site for sensitive species so that this isn't lost in the transfer – this would be limited to access by government *etc.* and not made public.

AP5; Atlas hosting and developer costs and options needs to be explored in this coming year. **ACTION RF/GS/RS**

[REDACTED]

AP6

Strategic Aim 5: Network development

Strategic Action Plan

Please see paper **TTE16-01 Paper 12** for the full detail

The Board were presented with the up to date designed version of the Action Plan. A column has been added to show the priority for each action. *This deals with AP1 from the 3 November; Working Group Actions to be formatted in a table form to illustrate priorities and mission critical items. This can be incorporated in to the final Action Plan which has yet to be published.*

Any comments regarding the layout and design of the action plan to be shared with RS.

There are currently eight working groups with potentially three further ones to be added. These are; Consultants Portal, Atlas platforms and Membership review. There are group members forming for each of these. The Board were asked if they felt that these should be working groups or work streams. The agreement was that the membership review should be classed as a work stream and dealt with differently due to the legal implications.

It was noted that the Action Plan title should say 2016 - 2020 and not 2015 – 2020 as this has now past.

We also need to ensure that we can meet all expectations based on the resources that we have available. It was suggested that we should have a top five of mission critical actions that we are going to focus on.

There will also be a live dashboard on the new NBN website for updates with regards to the progress made on the action plan.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

AP7 [REDACTED]

Growing the NBN team

Please see paper **TTE16-01 Paper 10** for the full detail

There needs to be clear and realistic targets set for the membership development officer role and these need to be reviewed as part of the role. Further discussion is required with the Chairman and Treasurer with regards to the length of the contract.

The Board agreed that the two additional roles should be taken forward.

Communications Report

Please see the paper **TTE16-01 Paper 11** for the full detail

- Further work needs to be done on growing the NBN Facebook profile
- ToR for working group 6 (Captivating and Engaging People) being drafted
- A meeting was held yesterday to plan this year's NBN conference and it was agreed that this will be held in Scotland. Dates will be released soon and we will look to advertise early to ensure good attendance and sponsorship.
- NBN to set up a blog

The Board were asked if they felt that NBN should have a Recorder magazine to promote what our recorders and verifiers are doing.

- More work needs to be done here to look at the detail and costings. – to then come back to the Board
- Need to ensure there is no crossover with NFBR
- One option is that we could feed into the MBA magazine.
- It was suggested that NBN could ask for a regular slot in the British Wildlife magazine

7. Items from the CEO Continued

Collaborative working Scotland

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P04** for the detail

This paper picks up on past discussions at previous meetings. There is an opportunity for simplifying the framework for Scotland. If agreed, NBN would take over the employment of the SBIF coordinator from TWIC. Scottish Parliament put this post in place following requests from recorders and this post is due to end when funding ceases at the end of 2016/17. This post would come with the funding from SNH and BRISC less the £2220 management fee which will stay with TWIC for 16/17. This funding will cover the salary and some expenses. There may be some costs to NBN for travel.


The following points were noted;

- Ensure TUPE regulations are followed
- Bear in mind any redundancy liability should the post end
- A secondment would be VAT liable and so this seems the right approach to move employment over to NBN

The Board were in agreement that this role should be transferred from TWIC to NBN for the remainder of the contract (16/17) subject to terms and conditions.

Risk Register

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P05** for the detail. The key points are noted below;

- A change column has been added however it was noted that at present these are all  And so is not actually reflective of how the risk has been managed. FMC are asked to review the risk register and add a residual risk column to show the change after the mitigation has taken place.
- A risk that needs to be included is employment of consultants such as Dave Martin who is working on the Atlas platforms. Risk should be change fees/ move roles *etc.* and what impact does this have on NBN and how can this be mitigated. To bring this in line with the JNCC technical discussions. To investigate other options and test the market.

8. Finance and Management Issues

Finance Report for period 3

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P06** for the detail. The key points are noted below;

- The budget for the conference should be cost neutral for this year
- CEH are paying for next years subscriptions in this FY

Cash flow report

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P07** for the detail. The key points are noted below;

These reports are not normally discussed at Board but are sent to FMC each month to ensure that finances are being monitored. This paper also includes a budget V forecast.

Money from NI and Wales for the Atlas are likely to now be received in next years budget

Draft budget for 2016-2017

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P08** for the detail. The key points are noted below;

- This paper assumes Atlas income for 2015-2016 which now needs to be carried over to 16-17. This shouldn't impact on the carry over amount as the Atlas project should be cost neutral
- CEO to start in June not April as in the draft budget

- Income needs to be added for the possible training costs for Consultant Portal
- To review the SBIF Coordinator costs and add any additional costs to NBN
- The Board agreed that FMC should review the amended budget before bringing back to the Board for final approval.

AP8; To review the 16-17 budget and take changes to FMC before taking to the Board for final approval and sign off. **ACTION: SH/FMC**

Honorary Member Nominations

Please see paper **TTE16-01 P09** for the detail. The key points are noted below;

**6. AOB**

It is noted that Jen Ashworth will be going on maternity leave shortly and therefore the MBA would need to be represented by someone else during that time. Matt Frost should be the primary contact for NBN Trust correspondence matfr@MBA.ac.uk

MH read out a card sent from Karlene Hill

Mark papers as confidential

Local Environmental Record Centre update (**TTE16-01 Paper 02**)

Collaborative working in Scotland (**TTE16-01 Paper 04**)

Honorary Member Nominations (**TTE16-01 Paper 09**)

Growing the NBN Secretariat Team (**TTE16-01 Paper 10**)

7. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 06 July 2016

November Board date TBC

Signed:

Chair _____

Date: _____

Action Points

AP2 from 1 July 2015 Meeting

AP2: A session for Board Members be arranged to discuss the uses of the data certificates

ACTION: CARRIED FORWARD – to take this forward at the next available Board mtg

AP3 from 3 November 2016 Meeting

JS to follow up with HW on bulk permission agreements.

Action: JS/HW - CARRIED FORWARD – HW to give details to new CEO

AP4 from 3 November 2016 Meeting

AP4: JS to work with GS on development of membership review paper.

Action: JS/GS - CARRIED FORWARD – AW is leading on this with GS

AP5: AW to lead working group for membership review.

Action: AW – CARRIED OVER

Actions from 24 February 2016 Meeting

AP1; To follow up restoring NBN links with Kew **ACTION RS/ Kathy Willis**

AP2; The Board were asked to share and promote the release of the new NBN website via social media
ACTION All

AP3; To put forward any ideas of how to take forward matters from the working groups and hot these can be fed back into the strategy **ACTION All**

AP4; To circulate the recorder motivation report to the Board **ACTION: RS**

AP5; Atlas hosting and developer costs and options needs to be explored in this coming year. **ACTION RF/GS/RS**

AP6; To take the management costs of the Gateway to the next FMC mtg for discussion. To also find out how long the current Gateway site can continue for before this expires. **ACTION: SH**

AP7; Investigate the withdrawal of the OS survey access for LERC's **ACTION: JJ**

AP8; To review the 16-17 budget and take changes to FMC before taking to the Board for final approval and sign off. **ACTION: SH/FMC**