

Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum

8th Advisory Group meeting, 28 June 2018, 11:00-13:00

Barnacle meeting room, RSPB Scotland, Edinburgh Park

Minutes

Present

Ellen Wilson (EW) (RSPB) [Chair]; Andy Ford (CNPA); Gill Dowse (GD) (SWT) – until 11:45; Nick Fraser (NMS); Guy Harewood (Stirling Council); Jo Judge (JJ) (NBN Secretariat); Claire Lacey (CIEEM); Ed Mackey (EM) (SNH); Glenn Roberts (NESBReC); David Roy (BRC); Christine Johnston (CJ) (NBN Secretariat) [Minutes]

Apologies received

Sebastian Howell (Marine Scotland); Craig Macadam (Buglife); Scot Mathieson (SEPA); Sandra Marks (Scot Govt); Joanne Porter (Heriot-Watt University); Jonathan Willet (BRISC)

In attendance

Colin McLeod (SNH) – member of the SBIF Review Working group

1. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (25 April 2018)

The minutes [*SBIF Advisory Group minutes DRAFT 25 April 2018*] were approved for publication on the SBIF web pages of the NBN website.

The notes from the Interim Meeting held on 14 May 2018 [*SBIF Advisory Group notes from interim meeting 14 May 2018*] were also reviewed and passed without further comment.

Actions discharged:

AP AG05-9 *CJ to explore and develop plans for the re-alignment of this group and the NBN Atlas Scotland steering group [in collaboration with JJ and EW]*

It was agreed it is too soon to be considering re-alignment of the groups.

AP AG06-7 *CJ to initiate the application for the Nature of Scotland Awards 2018 [to be submitted by the 11th June]*

The application has been submitted. The shortlist will be announced on 12 September 2018; the award ceremony is on 22 November 2018

AP AG07-1 *CJ to organise a date for the story map sub-group meeting*

An initial meeting was held on 14 May 2018. A rough outline was created but it needs to be simplified and built around the recommendations; to be included in the communications plan.

AP AG07-2 *EW to draft a note about the content of the story map*

AP AG07-3 *EW to circulate a note of the meeting with Joshua Ryan-Saha (Data Lab)*

The innovation event took place at the beginning of June. EW provided some support to one project. There was not enough time or resource to support developing ideas beyond preliminary investigation.

All actions **carried forward** relate to the Review and are listed in section 2 in the minutes below.

2. Update on the Review of the Biological Recording Infrastructure

EW presented an update on the Review focussing on recent meetings, progress with drafting our recommendations and the remaining work to be done. A detailed discussion followed and the key points are listed below.

Meeting to brief the Scottish Government on the Review - 21 June 2018

The presentation to this meeting was well received. There is now an opportunity for the recommendations to be included in the programme for Government funding going forward. We will need to send a letter about the recommendations to the Minister so that she can formally cascade the information to her civil servants.

Meeting attendees: Ellen Wilson, Ed Mackey, Jo Judge, Nick Fraser, Susan Davies (Scottish Wildlife Trust), Sandra Marks, Sally Thomas (Scottish Natural Heritage) and Gordon Watson (Loch Lomond National Park).

Update on the draft recommendations

The draft recommendations (pp 42-48 of the paper) had been circulated in advance of the meeting. They are based on the business changes identified by the workshops and incorporate ideas from later discussions and our evolving business case.

Key points from the discussion

- Concern was expressed that the relationship between the NBN and the Regional Partners is currently described too loosely in the recommendations. There needs to be a direct link between the organisations.
- A step change in the governance would be welcome, such as the NBN being described as the lead organisation. It was agreed that this is a key issue for which we need a collective view.
- DR confirmed he is content with the wording of Recommendation 16.
- It was agreed that GR could circulate the draft recommendations to the LERCs for comment.

Specific changes to the Recommendations were agreed:

- To expand Recommendation 11 to include a challenge fund for organisations to bid to become Regional Hub partners. Also need to describe a fall back position if no organisation comes forward.
- To remove the term 'biodiversity partnerships' from Recommendation 8 as it is misleading.

Remaining work to be done

- Finalise the last section of the business case (the investment appraisal)
- Complete the executive summary; it is hoped that a full draft of the whole business case will be available for comment in the next two weeks.
- Communications materials to be prepared for the next stage: complete the story map; make website changes; create advocacy plan.
- There is an urgency to complete a summary of our needs for the future which will inform the programme for Government funding.

Actions carried forward:

AP AG05-5 EW to draft a short summary pitch(s) of the Review and its recommendations and circulate for input

AP AG05-7 EW and Susan Davies to write a communications and advocacy plan for 2018 onwards [the advocacy plan will be drafted in collaboration with the Advocacy Group]

AP AG05-8 CJ to continue to notify Advisory Group when papers and reports are released

AP AG05-12 CJ to start planning for a Holyrood reception

AP AG06-6 CJ and EW to liaise with Sandra Marks over details for the Holyrood reception

Closing down the Review

Looking ahead the Review should be formally closed down as soon as practical. To do so the following tasks need to be undertaken:

- Write and issue the letter to the Minister.
- Publicise the fact that the Review is closing.
- Housekeeping of documents and papers relating to the Review; ensure compliance with GDPR etc
- Review how well we did and lessons learnt.

SBIF Development Officer role

Funding has been secured from SNH to recruit a Development Officer (8 months funding for this financial year for a part-time position). EW is currently unable to commit to line managing a new start in this role and suggests working with JJ, DR and GR this year to take forward what needs to be done now and to plan needs for next financial year. EW will outline the plans and how the secured funding will be allocated in a note for SNH.

3. Any other business

Museum collections working together with the NBN Atlas

NF advised he is currently advocating increased support for the NBN Atlas from collections. He will be discussing opportunities further with JJ. It was agreed round the table that demonstrating collective support for the NBN Atlas is important.

December issue of CIEEM's In Practice journal

CL advised that she is interested in writing an article about the literature review for this issue (the theme of which is Data Management). CJ has already offered an article on the Review; CJ and CL to collaborate on a joint article (copy date is the end August)

4. Date of next Advisory Group meeting

TBA

Joining by teleconference will be possible - details will be circulated in just before the meeting starts. Please send a deputy if you are unable to attend. Future meeting dates will be discussed at this meeting.