

Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum
13th Advisory Group Meeting, Friday 14th June 2019, 10:30 – 12:30
Board meeting room, RSPB Scotland, Edinburgh Park & phones
Minutes

Attendees: Ellen Wilson (EW) (RSPB); Gill Dowse (GD) (SWT); Nick Fraser (NF) (NMS); Guy Harewood (GH) (Stirling Council); Jo Judge (JJ) (NBN); Ed Mackey (EM) (SNH); Glenn Roberts (GR) (NESBReC); David Roy (DR) (BRC); Rachel Tierney (RT) (SWT / SBIF) [Minutes]; Scot Mathieson (SM) (SEPA); Claire Lacey (CL) (CIEEM)

Apologies received: Jo Porter (Heriot Watt); Andy Ford (CNPA); Craig Macadam (Buglife); Jonathan Willet (BRISC),

In attendance: Tom McKenna (SNH)

1. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (18 March 2019) - Rachel Tierney

Approval of the minutes

The minutes [*SBIF Advisory Group minutes DRAFT v2 18 March 2019.docx*] were passed without correction and approved for publication on the SBIF Advisory Group pages of the NBN website

Actions and matters arising

Actions discharged:

AP AG11-4 RT to circulate a briefing doc on requirements for the preparation of the road maps
RT reported that this has not been progressed as focus has been on developing the draft business case and we are still not at a stage to develop the road maps. It was agreed that this would be discharged until a later date.

AP AG11-5 RT to set up 1:1 meetings with Advisory Group members to start work on the benefit road maps
As with AP AG11-4, it was agreed that the development of benefit road maps would be paused until the business case has been submitted to Scottish Government and we have a clearer understanding of the implementation plan going forward.

AP AG12-1 RT to continue exploring options for and alternatives to an event at Holyrood
SBIF attended the SE LINK parliamentary reception on 5th June 2019 to promote the SBIF Review and so, until such a time that there is a new message to promote it was agreed that an event at Holyrood was not necessary.

AP AG10-2 CL to investigate potential sponsors for alcohol at the [Holyrood] event
Linked to AP AG12-1, discharged until further consideration of an event at Holyrood.

AP AG12-2 EM to make contact with SG Biodiversity Team
EM reported that he has been in contact with the SG Biodiversity Team. Having considered the strategic arguments put forward in the SBIF Review, they have asked for a business case of delivery options, to deliver an achievable output. The content of the 13th meeting of the SBIF Advisory Group is to discuss this further (see below)

AP AG11-2 DR to supply details of a contact for the NERC data centre (freshwater)
DR has passed these on to RT.

AP AG11-8 RT to provide relevant updates and advanced information to Advisory Group members

Agreed that this should be part of arranging the Advisory Group meetings and so should be removed as a recurring action.

Actions carried forward:

AP AG10-4 CL to advise the name of a possible contact at Marine Scotland

RT reported that Linda Rosborough, SWT Chair has requested a meeting to discuss the SBIF Review. Linda was previously the Director of Marine Scotland and may be a suitable addition to the SBIF Advisory Group. RT and GD to arrange a meeting with Linda via SWT.

AP AG11-3 RT to approach contacts about joining the Advisory Group

As per AG10-4.

AP AG09-4 All to advise EW of their SBIF-related activities (for inclusion in quarterly Highlight Reports) [next report will be published in September 2019]

2. Introduction to SBIF Business Case development process – Ed Mackey

EM introduced the Project Brief – SBIF Business Case 1.1. doc and supporting Cover Note – SBIF Review Business Case.docx. He stressed that, as outlined in the Cover Note, we need to be creative in thinking through the business model of a transformed biological recording infrastructure, potential funding streams and affordability. As a case for investment, the Review sets out the scope and strategic context. The next step is to develop a more explicit business case, considering options (e.g. approach / scale / timing) for delivering outcomes in light of what is achievable in the prevailing circumstances. EM also emphasised that we need to consider phased implementation if we are reach our vision by 2025.

Options appraisal exercise for selected recommendations – All (led by Ed Mackey and Rachel Tierney)

RT introduced the options appraisal exercise, building on EM's introduction. The options appraisal needs to un-pick the analysis in 'Section 5' (Options to achieve the changes needed) and 'Section 7' (Investment Appraisal) from the SBIF Review to present a more transparent appraisal of options and costs for each Recommendation, and then for the Recommendations collectively.

RT reiterated that we shouldn't pre-empt the options appraisal, we may come up with updated / new ideas of our own and may decide to amalgamate / disaggregate Recommendations (e.g. # 1 contains two elements – 'Primacy of NBN' & 'Primacy of NBN Atlas')

An exercise was undertaken to draft out options for delivery for:

- Recommendation 1: Primacy of NBN and NBN Atlas,
- Recommendation 6: Recognition and resourcing of a central data management portal
- Recommendation 9: Establishment of an NBN National Hub.

This exercise was supported by a series of templates to capture information (Figure 1).

Recommendation 1: Primacy of NBN and NBN Atlas

The NBN and NBN Atlas platform remain the primary place for the submission, dissemination and discovery of biological records and added-value datasets and services

Option 1 :

Strengths	Weaknesses/Threats	Delivery opportunities	Cost/Investment

Option 2 :

Strengths	Weaknesses/Threats	Delivery opportunities	Cost/Investment

Option 3 :

Strengths	Weaknesses/Threats	Delivery opportunities	Cost/Investment

Figure 1: Example Delivery Options template

Key points discussed:

- Within the Scottish Government 5 Case Model, the SBIF Review represented the Strategic Case. We are now working developing the Outline Business Case.
- Tom McKenna offered to help draft a Logic Chain from SBIF – Scottish Economy – Natural Capital – Business and Social Benefits – Public Goods
- An additional column was added to the template (Figure 1) to describe the scalability (UK or Scotland)
- An additional column was added to show any dependencies between recommendations
- Need to not overstep what is in Scotland’s gift
- Need to consider how we address Scotland vs UK implementation?
- Some of the recommendations may need to be logically grouped together for consideration
- DiSCCO ([Distributed System of Scientific Collections](#)) are currently working on a proposal to aggregate European collections. Currently the UK doesn’t have a hub and the NBN should be part of this hub. There is a strong case to present joined up working to Scottish Government highlighting the international relevance of the SBIF Review, in light of linkages NBN, collections and GBIF
- Recommendation 1: Primacy of NBN and NBN Atlas
 - This should be split into two recommendations
 - Need to refer back to the NBN Atlas Business Case
- Recommendation 9: Establishment of an NBN National Hub
 - This is too presumptuous that the solution is an ‘NBN’ National Hub and so suggestion to reword this to be a Scotland Hub so that all options can be evaluated
- Recommendation 6: Recognition and resourcing of a central data management portal
 - This should be merged with Recommendation 4 and Recommendation 6 to be about data flows. As a recommendation on its own it is perhaps too specific and should be about functional NBN compliant tools for everyone to use

Following this exercise, it was agreed that RT would further this thinking with additional input from the Advisory Group.

- **Next steps (Questions 5.1 – 5.4 presented in Cover Note) - All**

The questions presented in the Cover Note – SBIF Review Business Case.docx were discussed

“5.1 Thoughts, comments and suggestions are sought on the draft Project Brief prepared by SNH (SNH file ref A2947332). If broadly acceptable we may be able to go through this paragraph-by-paragraph. The aim is to clarify a shared position among the Advisory Group.”

- It was agreed that the project brief captures the need to develop a more detailed business case. Once a series of delivery options have been clarified, this will help to make a clear investment case – which need to have sectoral relevance. It was recognized that there will need to be close engagement with JNCC to ensure UK requirements are met where necessary.

“5.2 We especially need input from people with experience in business case and investment appraisal. How should the team be constituted (Section 10)? Do we need any external help?”

- JJ, GS, EW, EM and RT offered to be part of the drafting team. EW stressed that her availability is limited until the 5th July.

“5.3 How can a communications plan be developed (Section 13)?”

AP AG13-1 RT to draft and circulate a comms plan

“5.4 We need to act quickly. What might be a staged delivery timetable? What mechanisms might we employ (e.g. meetings / correspondence / workshops)?”

- It was recognised that we will need to have a workshop with the wider community to discuss options and next steps at the appropriate stage
- It was agreed that it would be ideal to present our business case to Scottish Government within three months (by end Sept 2019) so that it can be considered within the Programme for Government, and budget rounds for 2020.

“5.5 What’s next to get this underway?”

- RT to circulate a DoodlePoll to group members of the Advisory Group to key recommendations for further input and consideration

AP AG13-2 RT to circulate DoodlePoll for further input into Options Appraisal

- It was agreed that RT would circulate a draft case to the Advisory Group by the end of July

AP AG13-3 RT to draft and circulate a working version of the business case

- **Date of next meeting**

TBA – to aim for a longer meeting, spanning over lunch in August (ideally six weekly meetings)

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.