Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum
13ᵗʰ Advisory Group Meeting, Thursday 4ᵗʰ Sept 2019, 13:00 – 16:00
Board meeting room, RSPB Scotland, Edinburgh Park & phones
Minutes DRAFT

Attendees: Ellen Wilson [EW] (RSPB); Rachel Tierney [RT] (SWT / SBIF); Andy Ford [AF] (CNPA); Jo Porter [JP] (Heriot Watt); Scot Mathieson [SM] (SEPA); Ed Mackey [EM] (SNH); Jo Judge [JJ] (NBN),

Apologies received: Claire Lacey (CIEEM); Craig Macadam (Buglife); David Roy (BRC); Nick Fraser (NMS), Glenn Roberts (NESBReC); Guy Harewood (Stirling Council); Gill Dowse (SWT); Jonathan Willet (BRISC),

1. Minutes and matters arising from the last meeting (14 June 2019)

Approval of the minutes

- Actions and matters arising
- The minutes *[SBIF Advisory Group minutes DRAFT 14 June 2019.docx]* were passed with a minor correction to AP AG09-4 changing the date of publication for the next Highlight Report from 'October' to 'September' 2019. Approved for publication on the SBIF Advisory Group pages of the NBN website.

Actions and matters arising
Actions discharged:
  AP AG13-2 RT to circulate DoodlePoll for further input into Options Appraisal
DISCHARGED - This was overtaken by events following the development of the Options Appraisal development approach and was therefore not needed.

  AP AG13-3 RT to draft and circulate a working version of the business case
DISCHARGED - An interim draft business case was issued on 26th July 2019 for initial consideration by the SBIF Advisory Group and others who they felt are relevant at that stage.

Actions carried forward:
  AP AG10-4 CL to advise the name of a possible contact at Marine Scotland – follow up action for RT to meet with Linda Rosborough, SWT Chair
ONGOING - RT has not yet met with Linda Rosborough, SWT Chair and will follow up to arrange this meeting through SWT.

  AP AG11-3 RT to approach contacts about joining the Advisory Group
ONGOING - 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 October 2019]
ONGOING

  AP AG13-1 RT to draft and circulate a comms plan
ONGOING – to be written with a redrafted business case (to be developed in conjunction with NBN Trust)

SBIF Round up and update

Advocacy for the Review continues with the following meetings attended this quarter:

- RT attended Scottish DNA Hub meeting
- RT, GD, SM, EM all attended the SEFARI Research Theme workshop
- RT in communications with NRW to provide regular updates on progress in Scotland
- EM continues to give updates and invite comment from immediate colleagues in SNH, JNCC and Scottish Government.

Forthcoming meetings include:

- Invitation to give evidence to ECCLR Committee on 17th September. JJ, EW, CM will attend on behalf of SBIF
- Update to ALERC Directors Meeting 26th Sept. ALERC approached SBIF for sight of the draft interim business case. Agreed that until the necessary revisions arising from the consultation are made, this should not be circulated further. Once a new version is available this will be shared with ALERC
- Update to Natural England to share information on progress and potential implications outside of Scotland. JJ, EW, RT will attend on behalf of SBIF
- Update to Fife Nature Records Centre Steering Group
- Update to BRISC (via Christine Johnston)
- Possibility to have a presence at the MASTs Annual Science Meeting at Strathclyde University Innovation Centre, Glasgow in October. Opportunity to raise profile within marine agenda. JP and RT to discuss further
- EM speaking on SBIF at SNH Evidence and Surveillance Monitoring Programme meeting on 17/18th September
- CNP are starting to explore developing a State of Nature report for the CNP as well as a Local Atlas in the next six months. This has increased conversation around the SBIF Review and AF stressed the need for a simple comms plan to ensure consistent language is used when discussing the Review

AP AG14-1 RT *to provide a draft briefing for ECCLR Committee to Advisory Group for their input and contribution, including exploring if there have been previous relevant parliamentary questions and compelling stories from within the Committee member's consistencies.*

AP AG14-2 RT *to speak to JP re. MASTS Annual Science meeting in October*

AP AG14-3 SM *to share Marine Scotland contact with RT*

AP AG14-4 RT *to share briefing notes with EM for Evidence and Surveillance Monitoring Programme meeting*

1   **Feedback on Business Case v1 and next steps**.

It was reiterated that some fundamental decisions need resolving before the business case can progress further.

Attention was directed to the *SBIF Business Case v1 response summary_v1.0.docx* which set out the issues and comments in Table 1 below which need resolution in order to progress the development of a business case [and where appropriate, points of explanation / clarification are inserted in blue]

Discussion was had around each of the six fundamental comments which is captured in the *Action* column.

Table 1. Comments and feedback from the interim draft business case consultation, summarised and unattributed

Comment	Implication	Action
1 The Scottish Government suggested the Five Case Model to be developed in three iterations: Strategic Outline Case (SOC) – the **SBIF Review** Outline Business Case (OBC) – ***draft interim business case*** Full Business Case (FBC) – taking the chosen option through procurement, with delivery plans and detailed costing. It is questioned how the current OBC moves forward from the SOC, being to some extent the same information but grouped differently.	[Note that SG asked for SOC options to be disaggregated – hence the approach taken in the OBC] "Status Quo" or "Do Nothing" scenarios were effectively ruled out in the SOC, so shouldn't occur in the OBC. Perhaps better to frame the OBC around the 2 or 3 other options for each of the components to; • look at potential for a form of modular delivery within each of those options and, • include more on the costs of each option or module within those options	It was agreed that we accept the offer – with thanks – of NBN Trust assistance to developing the business case. In was confirmed, in line with the SBIF Review, that 'Do nothing' and 'Status quo' options were discarded by the interim business case. This enables a sharper focus on the options going forward in a clearer and potentially more succinct document. It was agreed that we will make further progress on the business case before approaching stakeholders.
AP AG14-5 JJ to lead on narrowing down and re-expressing the business case by end of September 2019 with support from RT		
2 The options presented could result in fragmented governance across the UK which will lead to inconsistencies of approach, undermine the SBIF business case and, ultimately, not be beneficial to the effective exchange of biodiversity information.	[Note that the approach to governance was intended to be generic and impartial, given that Scotland can't take NBN for granted or determine what's appropriate for the UK] There needs to be more of an explanation of this issue with input from the NBN Trust	It was agreed that concerns re. language, phasing and resourcing should be addressed when further developing the business case.

3 NBN Atlas development towards a commercial service and ability to restrict access to certain records may reduce the quantity of openly available biological records.	Clarity is required as to the NBN Trust plans.	The original statement "Need to clarify the business model for data provision and access" was endorsed – NBN Trust will incorporate this.
AP AG14-6 JJ to provide a briefing of plans on NBN Trust added value services.		
4 Options perhaps ought to be considered, e.g. to "Provide UK central hub services by developing role of NBN Trust" / "Provide UK central hub services by developing role of BRC or another provider"?	There needs to be an open discussion as to whether the SBIF Review is solely backing the NBN Trust as the lead governance body or is there an alternative governance body, e.g. BRC?	It was agreed that all options should focus on NBN Trust as this lead governance body as set out in Recommendation 16.
5 NBN Trust seeks NBN Trust Board member Wilma Harper on the SBIF Advisory Group, in addition to CEO Jo Judge.	Added expertise, but would this imbalance the AG?	It was agreed that Wilma Harper, NBN Trustee be invited to join the Advisory Group
AP AG14-7 EW to contact Wilma Harper to invite onto SBIF Advisory Group		
6 Challenges around Recommendation 18 (BRC – NBN unification), re OBC Component 7. Is it within SBIF's gift to bring this about? (BRC and NBN Trust were consulted to ensure that they were happy that this Recommendation was included in this document). Query as to why and/or if this Recommendation merit's its own subsection	Do NBN Trust and BRC exist as entirely separate entities and so, have different functions and no overlap? Combine Components 6 (governance) and 7 (Super Partners) to bring together the need for a data management strategy and roadmap that works for all of the key UK partners – that includes BRC, NHM, and some of the larger data providers who run their own systems. Link Recommendation 18 (Component 7) to Recommendations 3, 4 and 7 which are also linked to BRC work.	It was agreed that the solution is to stress that this is about developing the technical strategy about how others link in to the NBN. This recommendation should focus on building key relationships with data hubs, such as BRC and marine data and this will be clarified. JP raised an opportunity that NHM are considering changing from their museum collections database (EMU) to a different system. Potentially an opportunity to explore future databases and link with NBN Trust.
AP AG13-7: JP to find out more about the NHM museum plans to transition from EMU.		

Next Steps (Questions 2.1 – 2.6 from SBIF Business Case v1 response summary)

2.1 *"Version 1 has generated very useful feedback. It is clear that significant further work is required. NBN Trust has offered their time to support a redraft and SNH have offered some wider economic reasoning."*
- EW thanked JJ for the support NBN Trust has offered and welcomes their input.
- It was agreed that JJ would draft a revised case, for initial comment by the Advisory Group and those directly involved (NBN Trustees, BRC, LERCs, Recording Groups, BRISC).
- Consultation with the funding community should then be sought.
- A communications plan will then be developed.
- It was agreed that a briefing document should be drafted to capture the resolution of the issues above and provide a statement of the next steps. This will act as a prompt, asking for assurance from Scottish Government that they can endorse the approach.

AP AG13-8: JJ and RT write briefing document to capture statement of way forward.

AP AG13-9: RT develop comms plan once business case was been re-drafted

2.2 "Who has the authority to resolve the fundamentals in table 2.1?"
- Resolved in Table 1 above

2.3 *Who can help take this forward, especially given the limited SBIF resource?*
- As per 2.1, JJ to support drafting

2.4 *How do we identify and navigate funding needs and routes for next FY*

- A discussion was had whether there is a fundable product that could be asked for now?
- Discussions were had as to whether key roles for the Scottish Infrastructure (Head of Scottish Services, Regional Hub roles etc) could be established next FY. This would offer 'in-country' leadership. JJ stressed that there needs to be clarity on the ask and for this to be approved by NBN Trust Board.
- It was agreed that the minimum ask would be to maintain the SBIF Development Officer post and once know what the implementation team might look like then this becomes the next ask.
- A phased funding plan will be a key part of the next business case document to show anticipated succession planning and phasing.

AP AG13-10 RT and JJ to include phasing plan for funding in the redrafted business case
AP AG13-11 EW and RT to provide ask to SNH for 0.5 FTE SBIF Development Officer role
AP AG13-12 JJ to develop ask for NBN Trust resource from SNH

2.5 *Is it feasible to have an updated version to be promoted at the NBN Conference (13/14th November) for wider consultation with the recording community? ALERC have already expressed interest so this could be extended to the whole community.*
- It was agreed that the message at the NBN conference should be to update the community and sign post them to more information. A draft may have been completed by the NBN Conference however it is unlikely that this will be for wider circulation at this stage.

- It was agreed that ALERC were important stakeholders in the SBIF Review. This led to the AOB on ALERC joining the advisory group (below)

AOB

- A discussion was had whether ALERC should join the Advisory Group. Debs Muscat (CBRC manager and NBN Trust relationship lead with ALERC) has previously expressed interest in joining the Group. It was agreed that Glenn Roberts should still act as the LERC lead for Scotland on the Advisory Group however there was merit ALERC being involved to be a continuate with LERCs outside from Scotland and to learn from SBIF

AP AG13 – 13 RT and EW *to check with Glenn that he is happy for ALERC to be on the Advisory Group in this capacity.*

- EW, JJ and RT are meeting with Natural England 5th Sept. Part of this meeting includes a comparison of the SBIF position on Open Data compared to the Natural England position. The drafted position was agreed and approved for use in the meeting

Date of next meeting
TBA – (suggested week of 5th – 8th November in advance of NBN Conference)

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.