



TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

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STEERING GROUP MEETING

Minutes of Meeting held on 10th December 2009 Committee Room 2, 14 City Square, Dundee

Present: Prof Martin Price: Chair (MP) CMS, Perth College
Alison Anderson (AA) Dundee City Council
Carolyn Deasley (CD) Scottish Natural Heritage
Pam Coutts (PC) Angus Council
Carol Littlewood (CLw) Littlewood Land Care
Catherine Lloyd (CL) Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Ian Lorimer (IL) SEPA
Esther Rogers-Nicoll (ERN) Perth & Kinross Council
Iain Campbell: Minute Taker (IC) Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

Apologies: Bruce Anderson RSPB
Tim Barratt Forestry Commission Scotland
Amy Crowther RPSB
Christine Hall SAC
Mark Simmons Perth Museum

Circulated to: Sabine Dey, SRPBA; Bryan Harris, Dundee City Council; Alan Hendry, SGRPID; Martyn Jamieson, Scottish Field Studies Association; Ben Notley, NTS; Jin Park, Perth College; Kate Scott, NFUS; Merrill Smith, Dundee City Council; Paul Ramsay, SRPBA; Stewart Roberts, Angus Council.

1. Apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting on 16th September 2009

The minutes were passed without comment.

3. Matters Arising

MP reported that he had sent the Benefits of Biodiversity to Tayside report to all chief executives, MPs and MSPs, and that Roseanna Cunningham's office had requested a copy be sent to her in her capacity as Minister for Environment.

4. Sub Group Leader' Project Progress Reports

Please see attached Progress Report for compiled updates, as provided by sub-group leaders prior to and during the meeting.

CLw added that she is now the RHET ACI project co-ordinator, and is keen to move work into Dundee.

5. Scottish Rural Development Programme - Update

MP noted that no update had been received from Tim Barratt. **CLw** reported that no information has

been released yet, but it is expected soon. There were approximately 1,900 applications, with a relatively very small number of acceptances likely. Biodiversity schemes have run into problems due to the points system which includes a section on 'minimising impact'. **CD** noted that another round was upcoming, **CLw** noting that the closing date was the 14th of January. **MP** recommended that further discussion take place when more information is available.

6. Tayside Biodiversity Festival 2010

CL reported that a meeting had been held in Sensation Science Centre, Dundee, featuring fifteen organisations and involving proposals being put forward and possible collaborative work being discussed. **AA** noted that Sustain Dundee can sponsor applications.

ACTION: AA to send Sustain Dundee sponsoring information to CL

CL added that a further organisers' meeting was about to take place in Pitlochry, with the potential for another meeting in Angus, although the Angus Ranger Service are already taking a lot forward. All Festival plans will be followed up in January. The target for the Festival is 100 events, with the programme to be pulled together in late January for finalisation in February.

CLw noted that without FWAG there is no funding available for farming-orientated events - **CL** recommended looking into LEADER funding, which is increasing to 90% of total costs, although many areas are not covered by it. **CL** also added that in-kind time is considered for match funding. Event organisers are being encouraged to seek out their own funding, but help is being provided when necessary.

7. Funding - SITA Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund

CL reported that money set aside for 2010 becomes available as of 1st April. The last round featured three applications; Kincarrathie House (Perth) and Keltneyburn Gorge (Perth) were both passed, with a larger emergent project being encouraged for the former, while Dundee City Council's Arklay Street Community Orchard project was deferred pending the inclusion of more biodiversity aspects - John Whyman has been asked if this can be taken forward in time for the March application.

CLw noted that the Linnet Link has gone out to contract, so planting is likely to happen soon. **AA** mentioned that Dundee's Riverside Project would soon be looking for SEPA river restoration funding.

8. Perth & Kinross Biodiversity Officer

ERN reported on the Perth & Kinross Biodiversity Officer post, held by David Williamson, noting that his role is largely helping Development Control on biodiversity issues, whilst also being involved with other departments. The role is not considered to involve community work. **MP** asked if it would be possible to take over some of **CL**'s current tasks, such as organising training - **ERN** noted that this is a possibility. **CD** added that David had attended one-to-one training sessions with SNH which is offering important support; the same training will not be available to LBAP Officers. It is possible that 2010 will see a wider programme of SNH capacity building training for planning staff. **MP** noted that there is no need to keep this agenda point for future meetings.

9. Way Forward for Partnership 2010 and Beyond

PC and **ERN** reported that Angus and Perth & Kinross Councils continue to make progress in this area, while **MP** agreed to get in touch with Merrill Smith at Dundee City Council. **CL** added that Peter Sandwell had provisionally agreed to TBP continuing to use the DCC office over the Festival period.

10. Finance

CL distributed the budget summary (to September 2009); Bryan Harris had provided no further update. **CLw** noted the concern that carry over to the next financial year will again not be accounted for.

CL suggested using available Farmland & Upland funds to put funds towards RPAC advisory sheets for Tayside, **CLw** adding that one major use for these sheets is that farmers often don't use computers and will prefer to have a printout. **MP** recommended that rather than funding the printing of external advisory sheets, information be made available on the website and printed by advisors as necessary. **CL** added that the Edinburgh LBAP was leading on this, but that many LBAP areas are keen to do something similar. She had approached Syd House (Forestry Commission Scotland) regarding funding and would report back on possibilities for the advisory sheets when more information is available.

ACTION: CL to report back

AA noted that £3,000 of ZOOM In2 funding appears to be absent (it was accrued over two financial years: 2008-09 and 2009-10). **CL** said that DCC Finance had said that information cannot be added to a previous year's budget. **MP** added that the DCC finance representative, Christine Campbell, was invited to the previous Management Team meeting to clear up these issues, but did not attend, even though the meeting was held in Dundee for this purpose. **MP** recommended that **ERN** and **PC** compose an e-mail looking for information on where PKC and Angus Council funds have gone, which **MP** can then send in his capacity as Chair. **AA** recommended speaking to the most senior person possible, and suggested asking the directors of Sustain Dundee to perhaps invoice DCC and for funds to be ring-fenced there instead. **MP** asked that **CL** draft the correspondence with Merrill Smith and confirmed how essential it is for the matter to be sorted out before the end of the financial year.

ACTION: PC and ERN to provide council requests for DCC
ACTION: CL to compile information for MP e-mail by 18th of December

11. Website / Publications

CL noted that no November update of the website was available, but that information continues to be added and more will be forthcoming. No public feedback has been received on the website as yet. The biodiversity exhibition tour has begun, taking in Dundee and Broughty Ferry and now Arbroath. After this it will continue until March 2010 in Perth, Monifieth, Montrose, and Forfar.

There is a possibility of funding the printing of a series of bookmarks in time for the Festival, with further reprints of pens and pencils also planned. **MP** asked if any funding would be available from the Perth Quality of Life Trust, **CL** noted that there should be £1,000 in the budget. **CLw** added that some of the Farmland & Upland budget could go towards part of the pencil order, to be used at the Estate Day next May.

CL suggested putting together a new Summit to Sand newsletter for the Festival; **MP** recommended including a report about the Festival in the newsletter and to delay publication until the autumn.

12. AOCB

CL proposed reducing Steering Group meetings to three times per year and circulated a paper showing the extent of meetings held by the Partnership. **MP** noted that while the Steering Group meetings currently correspond to the quarterly Management Team meetings, this is not important, and **AA** added that the Steering Group meeting is more for reporting than decision-making. **PC** further noted that it would be possible to arrange virtual meetings in emergency situations if necessary. The group agreed to move from quarterly Steering Group meetings to meetings every four months.

13. Dates of Future Meetings

The next meeting is to be held at 10:30am on Thursday the 22nd of April, 2010, in the Board Room at County Buildings, Forfar. The 26th of August was provisionally agreed as the date for the following meeting. **MP** thanked Dundee City Council for hosting the current meeting and Iain Campbell for taking the minutes.