



**TAYSIDE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP
MANAGEMENT TEAM MEETING**

Friday 16th April, 2010

Braham Building, Perth College

DRAFT MINUTES OF MEETING

Present:

Martin Price (Chair) (MP)	CMS, Perth College
Pam Coutts (PC)	Angus Council
Carolyn Deasley (CD)	Scottish Natural Heritage
Dennis Dick (DD)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Esther Rogers-Nicoll (ERN)	Perth & Kinross Council
Catherine Lloyd (CL)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership
Chris Stark (CS)	Forestry Commission (Item 1 & 2 only)
Douglas Calderwood (DC)	Perth Quality of Life Trust (Item 1 & 2 only)
Iain Campbell (minute-taker) (IC)	Tayside Biodiversity Partnership

Apologies:

Bryan Harris Dundee City Council

		Action
1	<p><u>Introduction and Apologies</u></p> <p>MP introduced DD as incoming TBP Chairman. Apologies as above.</p>	
2	<p><u>SITA Tayside Biodiversity Action Fund</u></p> <p>a) <u>Project Assessment Panel</u></p> <p>MP and DC described the assessment process to DD.</p> <p><u>10077. Bridgend Biodiversity Garden</u></p> <p>DC noted that this application, made by Crieff in Leaf, did not go to CL first - there was no opportunity to suggest changes. CS suggested that there was a lack of details; DC added that no maps had been provided. CS noted that it was not clear who owned the land, DD suggested that as it is by the River Earn it could be prone to flooding - DC noted that it is part of the flood plain for the Earn. CS asked what the biodiversity value of the project would be - CL noted that it appeared to be part of a biodiversity corridor, but none of the required species or habitat information had been provided.</p> <p>DD added that there are no access issues and it could be a good project for community or school involvement, although this had not been specified. PC noted that few people had been targeted for events, despite the good potential. DC suggested that funding should not be used to provide new tools, that the compost requested may not be required, and that guidance on which plants will be required is necessary.</p> <p>Recommendation: MEDIUM priority, MP adding that this is on the condition of clarification of ownership and species focus in particular - if this information is provided to DC/CL the project can be passed without further discussion from the Management Team.</p> <p><u>10157. Tayside Lochs Recovery Project</u></p> <p>CL informed the group that this project, taken forward by Lockett Agri-Environmental, is Phase II of a bigger project, and part of a national SEPA project for the UK Lakes Action Plan - Phase 1 of the project provided funding for improvement to two lochs near Blairgowrie.</p>	DC/ CL

	<p>There were some problems with farmers in Blairgowrie, but work was done with septic tank owners and schools, and the loch is now being monitored with the hope of reporting significant changes nationally. CL further noted that SEPA is taking forward their work in addition to main duties - working with a list of lochs that fall below the 'essential' line. This project will have the involvement of one farmer and the local golf course, with opportunities for eco-tourism.</p> <p>CD suggested that the listed species for Phase II of the project may not yet be present on the site - CL recommended checking with SEPA. DD suggested that if the habitat was improved, listed species could return.</p> <p>DC recommended £4,000 of funding (some figures appear to be double counted). MP recommended seeking clarification on the owner of the loch - CD noted that Karen Rintoul at SNH Airlie would be able to assist with this. CD further suggested confirming that Richard Lockett has been in touch with the local farmer.</p> <p>Recommendation: HIGH priority, with £4,000 of funding, on the condition of clarifying key species and information on ownership of the loch, obtaining a statement from the landowner, and providing a map.</p> <p><u>b) Other reporting</u></p> <p>PC reported that the Linnet Link planting is now going ahead, with almost 5,500 plants, leading towards 28,000 and 310 trees to extend links of green corridor.</p> <p>DC reported that the Perth & Kinross Council's Swift Project Officer application had been withdrawn as staff had not been able to secure confirmation in time that the part-time 2 year post would be back-filled. It is hoped they will re-apply in the winter to ensure the post could go ahead in early 2011.</p> <p>CD and CS left the meeting here (Item 1 & 2 only).</p>	DC/CL
3	<p><u>Minutes of Last Management Team Meeting</u></p> <p>The group passed the minutes, agreeing to discuss the Tayside Biodiversity Festival as part of the work programme.</p>	
4	<p><u>Matters Arising, including Future of Partnership</u></p> <p>MP requested information on the status of the Partnership moving into the new financial year. ERN reported on the February 23rd meeting at which the three local authorities met to discuss the Partnership's future - Dundee City Council (DCC) announced that they could not provide equal funding and requested to be a junior partner, asking Perth & Kinross (PKC) and Angus Councils (AC) to organise this. Neither PKC nor AC felt that this was the best way forward, and have requested that DCC reconsider. ERN further noted that PKC can provide admin support gratis, and a new budget taking this into consideration means that the amount DCC have pledged to provide is approximately £4,000 below the budget for an equal partnership. A request to form this equal partnership will be put forward to DCC. DC asked about the status of previously ring-fenced SNH funds - ERN noted this money now goes straight to the local authorities, with no ring-fencing. DD added that under Single Outcome Agreements the councils are being left to identify their own priorities.</p> <p>MP suggested DD, in his new role as TBP Chairman, write a letter to DCC. DD agreed to take this forward after discussing matters with Jim Valentine at PKC. DD added that written information from DCC regarding redundancy support, if necessary, will be required, to ensure this can be equally shared between authorities.</p> <p><i>Post-meeting, after consultation with Jim Valentine (PKC), DD wrote to the Chief Executive</i></p>	DD

	<p><i>of Dundee City Council requesting an additional input of £4,068 to bring the DCC input in line with that of the other two Councils. No acknowledge of this communication was received from the DCC CE. A subsequent 'phone conversation with Merrill Smith confirmed that the matter was under consideration by the CE. No response has been received by 21.05.10.</i></p> <p>DD asked for information on financial years beyond 2010/11 - PC noted that AC would be beginning their process for 2011/12 in August or September - DD added that planning (of, for example, a 2011 festival) would have to be held back until the partnership setup to be taken forward is clear.</p> <p>DC noted that any possible withdrawal from the SITA Trust would be after significant notice. ERN asked if, in the event that DCC refused the offer, if SITA Trust funds would be available to DCC - DC noted that that the biodiversity panel is separate from the Biodiversity Officer post, and so could still be in existence with only two contributing bodies. A possible way of dealing with DCC projects would be charging, either from TBAF money or from DCC, for CL's time. If it were to be charged against TBAF, it would be across all projects rather than against individual projects - the block sum being reduced with compensation going to CL.</p> <p>MP noted that the SITA Trust should be informed of the possibility of a two-way split as soon as possible, to ensure their willingness to continue participation under different conditions. DC suggested updating the Trust in June, prior to their meeting in August - MP asked that a paper be tabled for the meeting. MP asked if it would be possible for money to come from TBAF if DCC do not agree to the proposal. ERN noted that this could be a position PKC and AC would not agree to - they are currently agreed to a three-way partnership.</p> <p>MP thanked ERN, PC, and CL for putting the document together.</p> <p>MP asked for an update on the SNH review of a number of LBAPs (the TBP was one of 10 chosen to report back) - CL noted that she has been interviewed, and, as the consultants wished to speak to her line manager for further details about the Partnership, PC and ERN's details had been forwarded.</p>	DC
5	<p><u>Finances</u></p> <p>CL noted that there was still no financial report from Bryan Harris. ERN reported that a meeting had been held regarding the budget discrepancies - there appears to be money missing and/or misattribution across budget headings - but the information provided by DCC was insufficient to find the problems. It is not currently clear what the overall figures are. It was agreed to have a further internal meeting before meeting with DCC to look into the issues. MP noted that this must be brought up in communication from the chair to DCC.</p> <p>MP asked for an update on LEADER funding - CL reported that £15,000 against match funding from PKC, AC and other sources had been confirmed to take forward the month-long Biodiversity Festival this year. BBC Breathing Places is helping to finance the Dundee BioBlitz event, as well as another event at Dundee Sensation; Hillcrest Housing Association has also contributed £300 towards the BioBlitz. CL was unsure when the LEADER money could be claimed - whether under DCC or with PKC after June. MP suggested that as the LEADER contract is with DCC they can be provided with the information and deal with it as appropriate.</p>	DD CL
6	<p><u>Work Programme / Co-ordinator's Report</u></p> <p>MP suggested that CL need not cover the work programme until the end of June - the ongoing duties of festival etc. are clear. PC suggested simplifying the work programme in future, with ERN recommending working on a new programme when the future is clearer.</p> <p>MP asked if the name of the festival, for which LEADER had requested a change, had been cleared up - CL noted that it will be taken forward as the Tayside Biodiversity Festival. MP</p>	

	<p>additionally asked whether a reception would be taking place - CL reported that it would be held at Carnoustie Golf Hotel on the 14th of May, with PC finalising details (and the SITA TBAF promotions budget paying for it). DD noted that the opening event - marking both the Tulloch Lade and Festival launch - would see Roseanna Cunningham appear in the position of Minister for Environment, which will involve some input from Scottish Government press officers. While Provost John Hulbert will also be in attendance, he and the Minister for Environment will be appearing in different roles, so there will be no clash.</p>	
7	<p><u>Administrative Post</u></p> <p>MP offered the group's thanks for IC's sterling work with the Partnership over the past 18 months. He had proved to be an excellent minute taker and general assistant, taking over the role of bookings officer for the many training events held during the year.</p>	
8	<p><u>Co-ordination with the Cairngorms Biodiversity Partnership</u></p> <p>MP reported that Highland Council has withdrawn funding for the Cairngorms LBAP officer - the Cairngorms National Park area currently includes parts of Angus and Perth & Kinross, and will soon include more. Links and working relationships will need to be clarified following this. PC noted that Angus funding has been reduced but Angus Rangers are currently working on projects with Cairngorms National Park, while ERN added that PKC support is likely to be in kind rather than through funding.</p>	
9	<p><u>AOCB</u></p> <p>CL reported that the Minister for Environment had sent a letter emphasising the International Year of Biodiversity to councillors and Chief Executives. Enquiries regarding this letter and responses to it can be made to Gareth Heavisides.</p> <p>Sub-groups will be looking at and reviewing projects in relation to Stephanie Shaw's BARS report for 2009-10 (which will be presented to the next Steering Group meeting). This will ensure that all project proforma are brought into line with the BARS reporting in time for the next round this autumn.</p> <p>Steering Group meetings have been moved to three times per year - MP noted that a similar move for the Management Team would be possible.</p>	
10	<p><u>Date and Venue of Next Meeting</u></p> <p>The group agreed to meet at 10am on Thursday the 29th of July in Pullar House, with DC to make booking arrangements.</p> <p>DD thanked MP on behalf of the group for his six years with the Partnership and the great contributions he has made.</p>	DC