

Draft 1

Minutes of the 7th meeting of ALERC

Thursday 29th July 2010: 10:30a.m. to 4:00p.m.

Offices of EcoRecord

28 Harborne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. B15 3AA

Metadata

Addressee	Directors: ALERC cic U.K.
Coverage.spatial	
Creator	Darwyn Sumner Company Secretary Association of Local Environmental Records Centres cic 122, Link Road, Anstey, Leicestershire LE7 7BX Tel: 0116 212 5075 Email: Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com
Date.issued	September 2010
Format	Adobe portable document (pdf)
Identifier	ALERC 25.30.07M
Mandate	Memorandum and Articles of Association: Association of Local Environmental Records Centres Community Interest Company. Incorporation number 06951023 13: Records to be kept, parts 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 2c 25: General Meetings 30: Minutes parts 1, 2
Publisher	Association of Local Environmental Records Centres cic
Rights.copyright	Association of Local Environmental Records Centres cic
Source	Association of Local Environmental Records Centres cic
Status	Version a
Subject Title	Minutes to General Meeting Minutes to the 7th Meeting of ALERC 29th July 2010
Type	Draft
Digital Signature	

Directors

Chair	Adam Rowe Manager, South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRcC) 13 St. Andrew's Crescent, Cardiff, CF10 3DB. Tel: 029 2064 1110 Email: adam.rowe@sewbrec.org.uk
Treasurer	Nicky Court 9 Lime Road, Alresford, Hampshire SO24 9LD Tel: 01962 832322 Email: nicky.court@hants.gov.uk
Company Secretary	Darwyn Sumner 122, Link Road, Anstey, Leicestershire LE7 7BX Tel: 0116 212 5075 Email: Darwyn.sumner@ntlworld.com
Director	Mark Wills North & East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre Tel: 01904 641631 Email: mark.wills@neyedc.co.uk
Director	Tim Corner Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC) Third Floor, Bristol Central Library College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TL Tel: 0117 9349833 Email: tim.corner@brerc.org.uk
Director	Eric Fletcher rECOrd Oakfield House Chester Zoological Gardens Upton, Chester, Cheshire CH2 1LH Tel: 01244 383749 Email: eric@record-lrc.co.uk
Director	Craig Slawson Staffordshire Ecological Record The Wolseley Centre, Wolseley Bridge, Stafford, ST17 0WT Tel: 01889 880100 Email: craig@salticus.org.uk
Director	Teresa Frost Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre Tel: 01795 532385 teresa.frost@kmbrc.org.uk
Director	Aisling Carrick Cofnod Intec, Ffordd y Parc, Parc Menai, Bangor, Gwynedd. LL57 4FG Tel: (01248) 672603 Aisling.Carrick@cofnod.org.uk
Director	Charles Roper Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre CharlesRoper@sussexwt.org.uk
Director	Gary Lewis ERC for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Tel. 01872 240777 ext 247 gary.lewis@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk

Association of Local Environmental Records Centres

Meeting of Directors

10:30a.m. to 4:00p.m. Thursday 29th July 2010

Offices of EcoRecord

28 Harborne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham. B15 3AA

AGENDA

1. Nomination of Vice-chair

arising from: "I would like to seek a deputy to stand in for me as the lead contact for ALERC for the near future (possibly including chairing the next ALERC Directors meeting)" Adam Rowe

Gary Lewis - nominated by Tim Corner & Charles Roper

2. Apologies

3. Minutes of 5th Meeting

4. Matters arising – not dealt with on agenda

5. Chairman's Report (Adam Rowe)

6. Treasurer's Report (Nicky Court)

- Financial report
- Membership update
- Banking, accounting and accountants

SHORT LUNCH BREAK (circa 12.30 pm)

7. Issues for discussion and resolution

a. Establishing priorities and work programme

- ALERC - proactive rather than reactive? (Gary Lewis)
- Annual Return to Companies House (Darwyn Sumner)
- Planning Policy Statement response
- Timetabling - the ALERC year (see year planner below)
- NFBR would like to have an official ALERC representative co-opted to their council (Craig Slawson)
- Caroline Steele would like an update on ALERC for the NFBR Newsletter (Craig Slawson)
- I have had a formal contact from IEEM about establishing a relationship with ALERC (Adam Rowe)

b. Accreditation project and working group

- Status report

c. ALERC Conference

- Branding - badges, notepads, leaflets for 2011

d. Working groups

A. Technical & data management

- Custodianship - Report (Metadata and Archives)
- LRC Database

B. Training & skills

C. Accreditation

D. Communication: Marketing and promotion

- Website
- Forum

E. Business

e. NBN

• **The NBN “LRC model” versus the ALERC “LRCmodel”**

- NBN Habitats workshop (Adam Rowe)
- The Scottish biodiversity funding document
- Regional LRC meetings
- NBN Gateway terms and conditions;

can ALERC help LRCs educate users about them (particularly commercial users) and police them when they are breached. What more can be done to uphold the T&Cs? This idea is prompted by this: <http://forum.lrcs.org.uk/viewtopic.php?id=251> (Charles Roper)

f. Company work

- DPA
- Recruiting Scottish representation on the Board of Directors

8. Any Other Business

9. Date(s) of next meeting(s)

Minutes of the 7th meeting of ALERC

Present: Darwyn Sumner, Craig Slawson, Gary Lewis, Nicky Court, Eric Fletcher, Tim Corner, Teresa Frost, Aisling Carrick, Charles Roper, (Mark Wills)

The Chairman (Gary Lewis) declared the meeting open at 11:10

1. Nomination of Chair

Gary Lewis had been suggested via emails prior to the meeting, Charles Roper formally proposed Gary and this was approved by all present.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Adam Rowe (and apologies for late arrivals from Mark & Tim)

3. Minutes of 5th Meeting

Minutes from the 5th meeting were distributed (Note: the 6th meeting was the AGM)

Action points discussed.

From previous action points:

- . 1. (NC to inform DS about list of LRCs for publishing on website) decided to list LRCs only, not individuals
- . 2. Forum - more threads would be nice
- . 3. DS to investigate and register appropriately - see Annexe DS and NC to work together to complete OCI forms
- . 4. also check FOI in conjunction with TC and LRC FOI rules

From meeting:

- . Publicity:
- . 5. DS to post logo to all Directors with a view to the development of a suite of Word templates
- . Membership
- . 6. NC to tell DS corrections to Membership form
- . 7. NC to put together the membership renewal
- . Annual reports
- . 8. Annual Report: AR to look at and ensure it is completed
- . Affiliations
- . 9. AR to join NBN Trust as a member
- . 10. Persons present at Accreditation project and working group - AR to send DS full list
- . Accreditation
- . 11. ALERC application form should be amended to bring it into line with key eligibility criteria as discussed in Accreditation project - NC
- . 12. AR to ask Bill to provide a definition of aims and purpose of Accreditation
- . Conference (& recruiting)
- . 13. Conference actions (various) NC
- . 14. DS to prepare A4 sheet with logo for each Working Group
- . 15. DS to prepare signage with arrows to direct people to rooms etc
- . 16. DS to amend booking form to make LRC appear on 1 line
- . 17. DS to provide details of "Conference junk" website catalogue
- . 18. Emailing: Directors to send out to their regional mailings done previously
- . 19. DS to send amended Conference Flyer to Nicky & Adam for approval
- . LRC Database
- . 20. Inaction - Craig Slawson and Darwyn Sumner
- . Website
- . 21. Elaine Wright of SEWBREC to contact DS in respect of updating text on website
- . 22. Transfer to CS site: action CS DS
- . 23. PP9 NC to send link to Directors and Directors to respond and NC to compile and respond to consultation
- . 24. Determine length of service for Directors - DS
- . 25. DS to initiate a Doodle for mid to late Jun

4. Matters arising – not dealt with on agenda

Gary went through minutes, outlining the items which were to be prioritised for this meeting

5. Chairman's Report

GL indicated that there was no need for this to be a regular item

6. Treasurer's Report (Nicky Court)

- **Financial report**

See NC's statement circulated at meeting

Income is about £11/12k pa

- **Company Secretary**

Remuneration was discussed, DS was paid up to 31st March, agreed rate of £100/day

1. DS to give an idea of predicted # of days per year

- **Membership update**

NC had distributed a spreadsheet list of membership by LRC, this amounted to 38 LRCs + 1 individual (England had 51, Wales, 4, Northern Ireland 1, Scotland 8-10)

- **Banking, accounting and accountants**

Annual return. Letter only received from Company House by Co Sec. It is a simple return and should normally be dealt with by meetings,

2. in future this will be circulated.

7. Issues for discussion & resolution

a. Establishing priorities

1. Year plan

3. All, via email

2. Identification of tasks

Various generic tasks were discussed, for example, the website. GL asked for Directors to think about topics which need to be addressed.

4. All, via email

NC said we need to identify tasks, perhaps the working groups are not necessarily the most appropriate headings, but we retain them in any case (see below)

Teresa suggested a list on website that people could add to.

5. Task list to be added (to Forum?)

Lead co-ordinators

A Data management - Mark (note new name of this workgroup)

B Training - Tim

C Accreditation - Gary

D Communications - Eric

(includes Conference)

E Business - Chair

It was suggested that this structure be reflected in the ALERC Forum.

6. CR - restructure forum topics

CR suggested we have an email list of people to notify about important issues so that the forum could be used to provide details.

7. CR

3. Timetabling - see calendar

The consensus was that there were considerable benefits to having the conference back to back with NFBR's

4. Representation

Official ALERC rep on NFBR (currently Craig & Darwyn are on NFBR Council).

8. GL happy to be put forward as ALERC rep on NFBR. Next meeting is Oct 19

9. GL to give a paragraph to Caroline Steele (NFBR Newsletter editor) for ALERC update

Affiliation with IEEM

10. we need to discuss with Adam as it arose from and email AR sent around

b. Accreditation project

This section had been delayed throughout lunch as Tim (who had attended recent Accreditation meetings) still absent from this meeting. We began without him:

Gary Lewis: Bill is in the process of finishing the final report. Down to 16 items.

Natural England now says that there is no further money to implement it - that's for ALERC to do. We therefore discussed the following:

- Are we going to implement it
- How are we going to implement it
- How are we going to finance it

Who are the assessors? LERC could employ an assessor

(Aisling asked if the responses from all LRCs would be made available)

GL gave an example of IIP where organisations paid a fee to become assessed (and pay for assessor) at a rate of £300 per day (ish)

How often would this fee be payable?

Richard Alexander (NE coordinator on Accreditation) confirms that Defra have £30,000 (for England only), earmarked for an Accreditation pilot.

TF raised an issue regarding the perception of ALERC in its role of Accreditation. GL reminded us that Accreditation would be mandatory in due course, ALERC had become involved because if we hadn't, NE would have imposed Accreditation in any case (part of ALERC's *raison d'être*, LRC professionals setting our own standards rather than having them imposed by customers)

Tim arrived

EF raised the issue of "signpost" LRCs in which LRC did not have all data but had agreements wherein they could access "copies". Consequently, LRCs of this nature were not excluded.

GL indicated that Accreditation was an attempt to establish "commonality" rather than "uniformity". In support of this concept, TC informed us that Richard Alexander had demonstrated that LRC service users all had broadly similar requirements.

Proposed ALERC approach to implementing an Accreditation system:

Proposed that (6) LRCs be included in the first tranche (one for each region) - these LRCs would benefit by not having to pay, but would subsequently be required to act as mentor for their region.

Who? - suggestions included Bill Butcher, Phillippa Burrell, Mike Weideli, Sally Rankin or a reasonably competent but less experienced person who had a good grasp of Local Records Centres.

- a single assessor: We need to write a Job Description, advertise it and interview.
- a pool of assessors: NC suggested that this would have some advantages

Objective is to produce a workbook

Proposal that we go to NE and say that we use underspend to employ an individual for 12 months who will trial the criteria in a selected number of LRCs and produce an accreditation workbook.

Although Tim had been asked to approach NE regarding the proposals for a project officer this was superseded by Gary making the approach with more detailed proposals.

11. Gary Lewis to approach NE

Selection of LRCs to participate:

1. avoid those who have been involved in major LRC projects before,
2. no more than 1 per region

12. GL/all

c. ALERC Conference

Branding deferred, theme deferred until next meeting

d. Working groups

see above

Website - can be hosted on same site as database - content management system to be used so that more than 1 person can access it. Hosting needs to be shifted to Craig's site.

13. Mark to co-ordinate the move

14. DS to send a list of pages to CS

e. NBN

1. Model:

NC & AR met and discussed what ALERC wants out of NBNT. There are clearly areas where NBNT are competing with LRCs. Despite comments made by ALERC Directors on NBNT's "development plan", NBNT have sent it to printers without ALERC comments being incorporated.

15. NC + TF to write up ALERC's "statement of intent"

(Some discussion regarding Gateway controls and access)

Tim Corner sees the need for NBNT to have improved contacts with LRCs (through ALERC) in order to develop a relationship which engenders a higher degree of mutual trust.

Quote "We see NBNT as a threat and they view us as a barrier."

We need to have someone to stand-in for Adam Rowe as NBNT Trustee

16. GL to contact NBNT

2. Habitats workshop

There is a plan to release all the PP presentations, not sure about a write-up

3. Scottish issues (relating to an SNH report - what is it called?)

GL says a "weighty document",

17. we need a Scottish Director

4. Regional reviews

The reports are close to completion. There were doubts expressed as to the value of the outcomes from these meetings in view of the opinions given that they covered topics and concepts that overlapped considerably with long-established LRC principles.

TF mentioned the RPS project which was a simultaneous project overlapping much of the same review.

5. NBN terms (relating to Gateway use)

CR stated that users are not allowed to use for commercial purposes, but clearly it is being used commercially (Matt Grose cleared this fact with Oliver Grafton some time ago). NBNT want nothing to do with policing data on the NBN Gateway.

8. Any Other Business

a. DPA

18. NC & others to complete registration process

b. AGM draft

Request from DS for all to study AGM draft to provide amendments and corrections

19. All

c. Scottish representation

There are about 8-10 LRCs in total (of which only 2 are ALERC members), it was suggested that members of Lothian (known to us) be approached in order to represent Scotland, also Patrick Milne-Holme might be a likely candidate.

20. NC to approach Patrick

d. Other missing LRCs

21. EF & NC to contact

e. Funding opportunities?

TC: Bristol University have been given £1.2M to identify insect biodiversity hotspots within cities, related to pollinating insects. Funding has come from some farming interests.

f. Bioblitz

Hopefully the costings will be more appropriate in forthcoming events.

g. Reports from Workgroups

1. Metadata/Archive

This working group had recently been active. Darwyn Sumner had sought interested persons at the Conference and recruited Matt Grose. The initial intention had been to pursue metadata and archival issues as they relate to LRCs - at a somewhat gentle pace given the highly complex nature of this subject. It soon became apparent to us that some form of report was needed in order to address themes contained within the Accreditation document in preparation, in order that we might provide well-informed concepts that might be included. Accordingly we (Darwyn Sumner & Matt Grosse) prepared a paper structured along lines which would address the draft Accreditation under preparation (we also secured additional time from Bill Butcher in order to incorporate our findings). The time available for this work was exceedingly short and only a very small amount of time remained for ALERC Directors to comment. As a result, whilst the document fulfilled the requirements of the Accreditation project adequately, no time was available for ALERC Directors to take an overview and provide an "executive summary" which would turn it into a formal publication from ALERC which ALERC was satisfied was something that we were comfortable in presenting to LRCs.

22. TF offered to do work on executive summary to the Metadata/Archive report by DS and MG, the objective being to produce something that we were comfortable in presenting to LRCs.

2. Other reports from Conference workshops & presentations

DS provided an outline of the reports and materials available from the Conference, indicating the difficulties that may be encountered in providing accounts for each of the talks. The meeting suggested that the PowerPoint presentations from the various speakers might be adequate in some cases.

23. DS to distribute any available reports (including PowerPoint presentations) to Directors

Some of the workshops had prepared their own reports and distribute them already.

Workshop 5 specified the need for a forward plan for ALERC (AC)

h. Geodiversity

DS: a reminder that we deal with this topic too, maybe we should develop links with national organisations dealing with Geodiversity (e.g. UKRIGS & GCUK).

24. TF is currently engaging with Geo interests and will report.

i. Appeal from TF for better communication (probably from Website improvements)

Annual return updated and placed on Forum

9. Date(s) of next meeting(s)

**25. DS to initiate a Doodle for October
 Chairman**