

**Minutes of 22nd Directors Meeting - 10.30am Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014**  
**Offices of Ecorecord, 16 Greenfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham**

**Present:** Nicky Court (NC), Mark Willis (MW), Eric Fletcher (EF), Tim Corner (TC), Teresa Frost (TF), Martin Horlock (MH), Steve Hannah (SH), Mark Pollitt (MP), Mandy Rudd (MR), Adam Rowe (AR), Craig Slawson (CS), Simon Wood (SW), Tom Hunt (TH)

**1. Apologies**

Received from Ian Egerton and Darwyn Sumner.

**2. Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising**

- Aisling Carrick (AC) has formally resigned as Director and needs to be removed from circulation lists.

**Action 1: MW**

- Has DS added the 3 newest Director details to Companies House?

**Action 2: NC to check with Darwyn**

**Action Points Remaining From Meeting 17:**

- 10. Wildlife Link – a number of their Working Groups are relevant to ALERC: Biodiversity Working Group (virtual group); Landscape Working Group. We will need an ALERC Rep possibly London based for potential meetings

**Action 3: NC to follow up**

**Action Points from Meeting 21:**

- 5. TH suggested there is little point trying to obtain funding from SNH. NBN is keen to find ways of working with SNH.
- 6. AC has updated the ALERC work plan.
- 8. TH noted LRC webmap needs to be updated periodically with ideal scenario to have all LRCs data in same database. Roy Tapping has been asked to quote to make database searchable, accessible and updatable. Any contract will need to be tightly written to avoid any conflict.

**Action 4: TH to follow up**

- 10. TH and Gary were discussing move to more conventional Annual Report in a simple format to include list of main achievements, case studies, core list of stats (produce survey monkey to acquire these?) and links to other content eg TH report to DEFRA. EF has example of a report and will pass to TH

**Action 5: EF to pass on example report to TH to produce draft over summer**

The Minutes of 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting were formally approved.

**3. Officers Reports**

- a) Chair – NC brief verbal report given:  
 NFBR article written post Lisa Kerslake article  
 DEFRA meeting 2020 Monitoring and Surveillance – LRC Presentation given raising awareness. Meeting draft report published but NC will provide comments as feeling that report not representative of actual meeting **Action 6: NC to circulate**  
 MTS Workshop attended and report circulated via TH
- b) Treasurers Report – EF had circulated Financial Statement and NC will pass all info to accountants, additional points:  
 Payment for Company Secretary work (£1489.20) is showing as Outstanding Debt on Statement 2013-14 this is for last years work  
 EF has applied for Online Banking facility  
 Figure of £190 in Conference Payments still awaiting is not correct and EF will check  
**Action 7: EF to check**
- c) Membership Report  
 No membership payments from Surrey or Nottinghamshire LRCs for 2013-14 despite Surrey attending ALERC Conference as member  
**Action 8: TH double membership bill for Surrey when 2014/15 memberships go out, address details will need altering to RECORD address and include covering email**  
 Shropshire currently not member – may join and TH is following up  
 Suffolk – not interested in joining  
 Target all other non-members to see if they can be persuaded to join or discover what ALERC can do to help convince them of benefits of joining: Additional LRC's not members include Isle of Wight, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Rotherham, Doncaster, NESBREC, CEDER  
 TF suggested a members logo for use by ALERC membership on emails etc should they wish, TH suggested use of one already developed and all agreed  
**Action 9: TH will distribute info on appropriate logo for membership to use**
- d) Companies House – Deadlines and list of achievements for 31<sup>st</sup> July Annual Return  
**Action 10 TH will provide and NC/DS to submit Annual Return**
- e) NBN Trustee – TF circulated report  
 There has been a large turnover of Trustees so the EGM was useful in educating the new members of the group. LRC profile raised, more emphasis on partnership  
 Funding Model across all sectors including LRCs wanted to be looked at by NBNT – MR questioned if this should be NBN Trust business? TF noted - Some members of NBNT have a variable and mixed message approach to LRCs with some members having large amounts of influence within the group, suggestions given that all LRCs are “in trouble” when this is clearly not the case with most LRCs based on multiple partner/funding source approach.  
 MR met with Mark Stevenson – see MR notes circulated with Minutes  
 Suggestion to invite NBNT Chair John Sawyer and/or Rachel Stroud to next ALERC Directors meeting  
**Action 11: TH to investigate**

NC – identified a need to influence Keith Porter *et al* draw together stats that answer questions posed to demonstrate LRC funding contributions eg as % contribution per category.

- f) ANC Work Plan – Reports circulated, additional points:  
2 Year Plan signed off by Steering Group but not yet by DEFRA  
MW had asked DEFRA where they thought the ANC post could go and was directed to pose all questions to Oliver Grafton as funding still channelled via NBN Trust  
MW reported on ANC finances – post extended by 6 months (to Sept 2014) Biodiversity Offsetting Project will bring c.£9,500 hopefully allowing further extension of post  
TH would like for all ANC reporting to be clear and “fit for all”  
NC requested wording of ANC report 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph not infer planners should access data from NBN Gateway web-services **Action 12: TH to amend**

TH met with SW LRCs to further how web-services will develop  
AR is looking at potential of funding stream that could be channelled to ANC post to assist with web-services work at Welsh LRCs  
NC noted that failure to meet web-services targets with Gateway is not highlighted sufficiently in 2 Year Plan (page 13, 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph)

Potential Projects:

- BCT Project investigating data provision to LAs, they have consulted with some LRCs but not all and there was suggestion it may be a flawed project due to lack of funding available from LAs across the country, original proposal did not involve LRCs in consultation. BCT have Phase 1 funding from Esme Fairbairn Trust (see BCT Project description note).

**Action 13 TH will question NBNT involvement of with the BCT Project with Rachel of NBNT**

TH noted Project could still be beneficial if LAs were engaged as a result

**Action 14 TH will approach Mike Oxford to gauge ALGE opinion**

Should ALERC provide letter of support? Discussion by directors on pros and cons, what happens at end of any potential 5 year project? TH is on the Project Steering Group but Pilot report has not been given to TH

**Action 15 TH will request report**

- DCLG – previous attempts by ALERC to contact have not come to anything but as ALERC currently not receiving direct funding for ANC post from DEFRA it is seen as possibly a good time to re-establish line of communication  
New guidance on LWS being investigated by DEFRA – implied funding for Standard Data List 140-00 (previously NI197 - % LWSs in positive management) to maintain new systems. Could this be a direct question for DCLG?

**Action 16: NC will investigate appropriate DCLG contact**

Next steps:

Small group to investigate and develop projects MH and AR volunteered to lead

TH to investigate Esme Fairbairn funding stream

Natural England previously offered assistance from a funding specialist although TC suggested not always helpful

EF suggested CVA to use “Grant Finder”

#### 4. Director's work areas and working groups updates

- a) Business Development Working Group – MR circulated report, additional points:

As ALERC is producing a Position Statement we need to be setting out key visions but also accept that they may not necessarily reflect the views of all LRCs, adoption will be the decision of each LRC. ALERC will have a view on the minimum remit for what constitutes a LRC

MW requested any ANC post extension include within work plan production of draft position statements and information available via website, Annual survey to Membership to include requests for input, Group will work with TH to develop

EcoBuild event 3-5 March 2015 Pitch reserved for ALERC, pros and cons of ALERC attendance discussed, total cost of stand c£1100

Resources such as pop-up banners and other materials will also be required

Directors felt the event would be worthwhile and gave approval for spend

**Directors need to identify a** lead on Promotion/Publicity to investigate and proceed with appropriate materials purchases and what infrastructure can be borrowed eg those with frames for ALERC banners to be inserted

**Action 17: Directors to identify lead of Ecobuild group**

- b) Conference Working Group – MW had reviewed feedback sheets, gave report and led discussion

Discussion on “soap box” sessions and an afternoon Q&A session, how do we breakdown barriers to get individuals to engage? Should be about showcasing projects or raising issues. MR suggested option for members to upload YouTube videos in advance– was seen as a good idea by all, or receive anonymous questions to stimulate debate

2015 Conference Theme – need strong positive theme as John Sawyer is a main external speaker, suggestions: New era of relationships, New era of co-operation, Engagement with NBN?

New Technologies/Web Services presentation for 2<sup>nd</sup> slot suggested – Who could do this?

Perhaps something on on-line recording by an LRC?

Pre-event networking ideas: eg Indicia at 2014

NC suggested opening up request for input to the wider membership..

**Action 18 MW to take points back to conference working group**

A discussion was held on the attendance of external (non-LRC) organisations representatives with strong views on both sides of debate. Ideas from exclusion to limiting slots of AM or PM to externals to allow for wholly LRC attendance for part of the day were discussed without full agreement, although agreed to discuss individual booking applications if there was thought to be an issue. Possibly not a problem. Price increases for non-LRCs also discussed as were closer links with NBN Conf and higher LRC attendance at this event.

**Action19: TH to monitor situation but to also increase 2015 Non-ALERC Member Conference rate to £100**

- c) Website working group – MW circulated report.

- d) NSS Liaison / dataflow working group (TF led):  
Need template for standard/national data exchange agreement – an agreement with BCT is currently being looked at  
Data Management and Data Flow will be merged with MH taking lead
- e) ALERC Workplan – AC had submitted last version, TH will take this forward within ANC workplan to allow crossover areas to be assessed in first instance, and then to update and highlight achievements.  
TH work reporting to Geoff Johnson (NBNT) – MW suggested this should be also circulated to Directors

## 5. Items for Discussion

- a) NE MoA:  
MSS Workshop Report circulated  
No major increase in monitoring section  
VAT still an issue for some LRCs but no further mention in current MoA document
- b) EA MoA:  
VAT can be paid if required by individual LRC
- c) Recorder 6:  
With the loss of Recorder 6 Development funding from JNCC that paid for work undertaken by John Van Breda, Sally Rankin and Mike Weideli, where do we go with R6?  
c.35 LRCs using R6 as main database, MR suggested ongoing development could be paid for by these users? Suggest this as an alternative model to JNCC with c£500 per LRC?  
NC noted Hants CC may have stake in R6 as was part of original consortium to redevelop R2000.  
We need much longer transition period if R6 is going to be shelved by JNCC to investigate/develop alternatives. Could ALERC lead on development of R6?  
Urgent clarification is needed and TC suggest pre-emptive reply to JNCC Mary Campling  
**Action 20: SW and TF to draft reply**
- d) Offsetting Project Update – MW led discussion  
Bill Butcher is translating existing habitat data into IHS for Manchester, Greater London, Sussex and Wiltshire LRCs which are the Study Areas and the Project will complete Sept 2014.  
**Action 21 TH will ask for info from BB as to why those areas were chosen, plus any progress reports and if Directors have further Q's for BB he will pass them on.**  
TH and TF discussed copyright waiver – this will be further discussed on the Forum
- e) BCT – already cover previously in meeting
- f) CIEEM Consultants - Data Entry Portal:  
No developments since Paula left NBN.  
**Action 22 TH will meet with CIEEM and NBN (Rachel) to make further progress and report back**

- g) INNS Report  
TH had nothing major to report but will collate case studies (eg Wales) to use to further ability to share these data.
- h) Ecobuild - already covered previously in meeting
- i) GBIF - NC noted that V4 of the Gateway was already on GBIF – which shows species records at better resolution than on V5 – where HBIC asked for 10km resolution now that anyone can download them. NC would therefore not want to see v4 remain on GBIF if copyright was waived.
- j) NE LWS MasterMap:  
CS re-digitised the Staffs LWS layer against this under the new licence and now cannot disseminate to anyone without a licence so advised caution in using the NE maps.  
MH noted PDF dissemination should be fine but not GIS as printing is classed as “single use” whereas GIS use could be interpreted as “consent”.

## **6. Any Other Business**

No other business.

**Meeting closed at 4.30pm**