

Minutes of 26th Directors Meeting - 10.45am Thursday 4th June 2015
Offices of Ecorecord, 16 Greenfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham

Present: Nicky Court (Chair), Simon Wood (Mins), Mark Wills, Eric Fletcher, Ian Egerton, Teresa Frost, Steve Hannah, Mark Pollitt, Mandy Rudd, Tom Hunt

Actions carried forward from previous meetings

Meeting	Action	Action item <i>Full description of carried action</i>	Status <i>This column updated as a result of this meeting</i>	Who
22	3	Associate membership of Wildlife link to be progressed	Carried forward	NC
22	14	TH to approach Mike Oxford to gauge ALGE opinion on BCT project re usefulness to LAs & find main contact	Carried forward	TH
22	16	NC to establish DCLG contact re possible new Defra Guidance on LWS and 'introduce' ALERC	Carried forward	NC
22	21	Offsetting project: request for information on chosen areas and for progress reports	See 24:2	TH
24	2	To attempt to obtain a clear answer from Bill Butcher to the question of access to the Offsetting Project	Ask BB to write for forum	MR
24	5	Take "rebranding" ideas and suggested changes to the definition from this meeting back to the Forum discussion group expressing the recommendations of the	Carried forward and ongoing	MR
24	6	Update the Working Groups page on website to reflect this change in working group structure	Carried forward	MW
24	22	Pursue the Herefordshire issue via email and other means and offer support and help where appropriate.	Carry forward	West Mid LERCs
24	23	Find out more from the CEO of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust who now sits on AR's Board and speak to Phil Burton at HWT	Carry forward	AR
24	25	Add the telephone number of the meeting venue to future agendas.	Completed	DS
25	1	Draft note to Company Secretary DS with reference to minutes – DS requested retraction of sections noting 5 year strategy incomplete	Needs investigation	NC/All
25	2	Draft paper detailing requirements and costs to allow online card payments for ALERC membership and conference fees	Carry forward	TH/MW
25	3	HBRC issue: Speak to Phil Burton at HWT	Carry forward	AR
25	4	Accreditation Criteria re-amend to mention statutory obligations and remove all mention of BAP	Carry forward	TH/MW
25	5	Add note on forum that ambition is to make Accreditation	Completed	TH

		tyed to ALERC Membership and put additional note on 2015-6 Membership form asking for estimate of when Accreditation is being planned by each Member		
25	6	Website refresh front page and remove “blobby” UK LERC map	Completed	MW
25	7	Circulate ALERC Strategy	Completed	MW
25	8	Pull together summary document of comments to proposed change from LRC to LERC	Completed	TH
25	9	Position Statement on working with DEFRA and BMSS present to DEFRA as a letter response from ALERC additional comments to TH by 20 th Feb	Add to Strategy	TH
25	10	Produce brief guidance on use of email titles	Completed informally	MW
25	11	Amend the use of Not for Profit in Esmee Fairbairn Foundation application	Completed	TH
25	12	Cost up specific examples of Technical Assistance with Andy Foy	Carry forward	TH
25	13	Comments on Esmee Fairbairn application to TH for finalisation on 27 th Feb	Completed	All Directors
25	14	Speak to Lindsay Whitley at Chester Zoo who has experience of Esmee Fairbairn applications and would give assistance if required	Completed	TH
25	15	Send any available Urban Biodiversity images to IE	Completed	All Directors
25	16	Advertise TH presentation at Ecobuild event on ALERC website	Completed	TH
25	17	Draft response refusing Essex Field Club ALERC membership status	Completed	NC
25	18	NBN Strategy pull together broad comments received by 20 th Feb	Completed	NC
25	19	Add Terms of Ref, Member ship and Main Achievements in correct formats when paragraphs submitted	Completed	MR
25	20	Add Terms of Ref, Member ship and Main Achievements in correct formats when paragraphs submitted	Completed	TH
25	21	Add standing Agenda point to all future meetings to monitor work undertaken for ALERC	Carry forward	NC/ALL

Actions from this (26th) meeting

Action #	Action item	Who
1	TH to send summary of LA involvement in LERCs	TH
2	MW&DS to review Role of Comp Sec Document	MW & DS
3	Circulate request for volunteers to take on: ALERC Work Prog, ANC Work Plan	MW/NC
4	Paper on time limited Directorships	MW/NC
5	Draft membership covering letter	TH
6	Draft paper explaining the accreditation process	MW/TH
7	Draft a section for inclusion into ALERC Strategy	NC

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Adam Rowe, Martin Horlock, Craig Slawson

2. Minutes of previous meetings and outstanding actions

Minutes of previous meeting had been circulated.

- HBRC assistance on Business Review. TC asked how many LERCs have LA funding/involvement, TH noted this and will send summary. TC suggested producing Map, TH noted this is possible. NC suggested starting Forum Thread.

Action 1: TH send summary of LA involvement with LERCs.

Additional discussion to Action Points listed in table above

- NC asked about LNP Enquiry – nobody knew if this had been completed.
- MW – uploaded Minutes to website for review by all and approval.

Minutes of 25th Meeting were agreed and signed off.

1. Officers Reports

3.a Chair's Report

- NC presented report previously circulated, NC will step down as Chair at AGM, MH offered to stand for post of Chair. Directors agreed unanimously to appoint MH to position of chair.
Decision: MH appointed to position of Chair as of AGM
- Company Secretary post was discussed. DS to continue as Company Sec to undertake the reporting to Companies House, including the CIC Annual Return and financial return and changes of details notifications to companies house. SW to continue to take minutes of Director.
Action 2 MW&DS to review Company Secretary Role description
- Review of The Board – suggestions for discussion were presented in Chair's report. TC concerned some roles could be done by non-directors and so distributed load. TH noted working groups do have active non-directors with exception of Conference Group. TF noted there had not been a data flow report as not much had been undertaken in last period. DS asked if the non-directors input could be raised at the AGM.
- The question of whether we need to reduce the number of Directors was raised. TC noted not keen on leading a working group but happy to take on other work for ALERC. IE, MW and MR all noted 10 Directors was an ideal – all agreed this would be an aim for the next 2 years, numbers will be reduced to 12 by AGM 2015
- General discussion led to various points as listed:
More non-Directors to be recruited onto Working Groups
Directors to take on more work areas – each Director should review their own input
More presence on forum by Directors – lead by example and show that Directors/ALERC are accessible via the forum.
ANC work plan management/work area – this was previously done by the Chair (Gary Lewis) but latterly was done by Eric, but should this go back to the new Chair?
ALERC work plan has not been updated since Aisling left
Representation of ALERC at meetings – MR does much of this as based in London
NC requested note of each Directors input
Circulate request for volunteers to take on: ALERC Work Programme, ANC Work Plan
Action 3 MW/NC to Circulate request for volunteers to take on: ALERC Work Prog, ANC Work Plan
- IE noted he would be happy to take these on if no positive responses from those not present at meeting.
- TF suggested a time limited role for Directors, EF noted could be done as a rolling programme from current point in time? Will need to be written into Mem&Articles. MR to pass wording of time limited clause of Gigl's Trusteeship to NC
Action 4 MW/NC to put paper together on issue

3.b Treasurers Report

- EF presented accounts.
- Loss of c£7K to end 2014/2015 noted.
- Other large expenditure was Ecobuild event, if this was to be repeated there would be costs on top of the fee (£1.5K) eg travel.
- EF noted most figures are higher as a result of Ecobuild.
- TC asked if there was a way of seeing all items, EF noted all is in excel so available.
- Comp Secretary Fees – DS not invoiced yet so will come out of 2015/16 funds
- 2015-16 – Projected summary does not include potential monies for ANC post
- EF announced his decision to step down as Treasurer and Director. The Board thanked him for all his input over the last 2 years. A replacement Treasurer is needed, NC noted she does not mind undertaking this job as TH is undertaking some of the duties too. EF noted he would be happy to keep role until AGM and possibly beyond if not also a Director, all agreed, EF to remain as Treasurer but will stand down as Director.

Decision: NC to take over as Treasurer at AGM

3.c Membership

- NC noted Membership renewal form is ready for distribution, but needs covering letter
Action 5: TH to draft covering letter and pass to NC.
- TH asked if Annual Report could go to membership with renewals but not at expense of other work load for him. DS noted Annual Report ready for mid June. NC suggested key achievements go into letter accompanying Membership renewal.

3.c ALERC National Coordinator

- TH presented report previously circulated

4. ALERC Input into NBN Action Plan

5. John Sawyer – CEO NBN Trust

John gave Directors an update on the draft NBN Strategy which is due to go to the NBN board on 1st July. He also talked about:

- The roles of the Gateway and records centres as sources of data within the Network, with the Gateway providing national aggregation of datasets and LERCs the local/regional aggregation.
- The 6 core steps of data flow which were being defined in the strategy.
- The action plan and how the related groups were going to work.

He also left directors with a couple of questions/challenges

- What do we see LERC 'nodes in the NBN' actually being?
- To ensure LERCs' local leadership was represented in our feedback
- Represent LERC business model compatibility (or lack of) in the 'free and open data for non-commercial use' section
- Make sure there's an LERC-related article in every NBN e-news
- To work with him on improving the reputation of LERCs within the Network

6. Updates from Working Groups

6.a Accreditation

- MW presented paper as circulated, TH emailed revised doc to group 3/6/15
- Mention in previous minutes of production of paper explaining the accreditation process, this was thought to be useful and MW/TH will take forward. Soft launch soon via forum or direct email, hard launch at

Conference 2015. Potentially have sign up sheet at conf to encourage take up. NC asked how many TH can undertake in year – this will need to be worked out.

Action 6 MW/TH Draft Paper explaining the accreditation process

- MW – renewal process of those accredited already, how does this work? Accred Group will discuss. MR suggested putting Accreditation into Position Statement with DEFRA.

6.b Website

- MW presented paper previously circulated
- Unable to recreate NC problem with website but will work on problem to find solution.

6.c Business Development

- MR presented report previously circulated
- MR met with RSWT and Paul Wilkinson. Mapping seminar being held to bring together key principals of Nature and Wellbeing into Government 25year plan. Should ALERC be involved
- IE noted Uni Liverpool invite to be involved with 3 year project NERC bid
- MR attended session with Highways Agency England and gave presentation, would ALERC like to be involved and represent at future meetings? IE noted Highways have lots of data. Generally agreed ALERC voice at this level would be beneficial.

7. Strategy

- IE – need agreement on fees before we can proceed
ANC Post costs c£35K plus aspirational costs – see Financing the Plan Section 8
ALERC will have to increase the number of LERCs to maximum to achieve this, need to target the budget holder of those LERCs who are not independent to persuade them of need to increase costs.
IE explained the RSWT fund and how best to apply for pot of money, c.13-14 LERCs have involvement with local WT so all these would benefit and a submitted bid would highlight this.
- Membership costs were discussed, in letter to members it will need to be highlighted:
 1. Push for funding for ANC post
 2. Highlight need to keep ANC post, highlight what has been achieved and increases are only way to keep post viable.
- Shortfall to e/o March 2016 £14,810
- Other options if RSWT bid not successful:
TC suggested approaching Tridos Bank
Avon WT Chief Exec has in road there?
Use structure of RSWT bid to investigate
IE will circulate the proposal and use if opportunities arise.

Decision: All agreed to propose fees increase as funding for ANC post

- Add more of NBN Strategy into ALERC Strategy – NC happy to draft a section for inclusion

Action 7 NC to draft a section for inclusion into ALERC Strategy

- Funding for ANC post for rest of year 2015/2016:
£16,129.79 - Confirmed
£1,060.00 - NEYDEC Geology project
See summary on ANC report.

8. Annual Report

- Will be done by email

9. Conference

- MW – venue booked for 14th October
- Theme - Planning System
- Invited speakers could include BugLife, BCT could be invited
- Other topics: sharing of best practise
- BCT – Katherine (?), Prof Alistair Scott (influential on Twitter), someone from “process” point of view, Strategic, Development, National.
- Open to ALERC members before external – c.80-90 max capacity

- Symposiums rather than workshops and smaller Q&A with a specific person
- Spread of noise has been raised as an issue
- Working Group needs more input, MW asked if there are any staff from LERCs (not Directors) who would be able to assist? All to consider

10.AOB

None