



Scottish Consortium
for Rural Research

MINUTE OF THE 134TH MEETING OF THE SCRR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON 18TH APRIL 2018 IN THE BOARDROOM, CENTRE FOR ECOLOGY & HYDROLOGY, BUSH ESTATE, PENICUIK, MIDLOTHIAN, EH26 0QB

Present:

Prof Steve Yearley (Chair)
Prof Stuart K Monro (Scientific Director)
Prof Willie Donachie (Secretary/Treasurer) – by phone
Prof David Miller (JHI) Prof Martin Price (UHI)
Prof Alastair Stott (SRUC)
Dr Kathy Velandar (Edinburgh Napier University)
Dr Ed Mackey (SNH)

Apologies:

Dr Nick Fraser (NMS)
Prof Pete Hollingsworth (RBGE)
Prof Lee Innes (MRI)
Prof Des Thompson (SNH)

1. **Welcome & Apologies:** SY welcomed those present particularly Dr Ed Mackey deputising for Des Thompson. SY also noted thanks to CEH for hosting the meeting.

2. **Minutes and matters arising from 133rd Executive meeting:**

2.1 New SCRR Director: The search for a new Scientific Director is continuing with potential new candidates being assessed.

2.2 MP raised the request for funding for the Symposium: “Treeline woodland and scrub: Where next?” being held in Perth and Bergen on 3-4th September 2018. This was discussed at previous meetings but and although it was supported in principle no amount had been agreed. Following discussion a sum of £1000 was agreed. SCRR would receive free registration for two representatives to attend.

3. **Centres of Excellence and Networks: update on all networks**

3.1. **Edinburgh Napier University:** Scenic Routes and the Mountain Biking Centre for Scotland. Scottish Transport is offering support for extending this initiative.

3.2. **James Hutton Institute and SEFARI:** DM reported on new events

1) SEFARI 2nd Annual Showcase at Scottish Parliament, 30th May 2018. Strategic Research programme

2) RHS 18th June 2018. SEFARI has a slot in the Ministerial Programme.

3) Land Use and Environment Conference: 28-29th November 2018. “Rewarding the Delivery of Public Goods, in Theory and Practice” SEFARI members will be well represented. There is an opportunity to display the SCRR banner.

4) Three JHI Events. Potatoes in Practice, Cereals in practice and Fruits for the Future.

5) OECD Conference recently took place in Edinburgh in March. Agricultural policies were discussed and Scottish research was much to the fore.

6) Gender Pay Gap. JHI has conducted a review of pay grades. This showed a 13% gap between male and female pay in the relevant grades. Is this an issue which could be made more available for discussion in SCRR, perhaps by a survey of those SCRR members who have conducted reviews and published in the Newsletter.

7) Woman in Agriculture initiative was highlighted by AS. This considers aspects such as entry to the industry and would be a good article for the Autumn Newsletter.

3.3. Social Science: SY reported that there were no new grants awarded. Also there is no news on the new Head of School

3.4. SSAC: SKM reported that there is still no Chief Scientist for Rural Affairs appointed as yet.

3.5. SNH: EM distributed a hand out note (see attachment) to describe the new SNH Corporate Plan and the new brand name which is now Nature.Scot. For key outcome areas identified

- 1) More people from across Scotland are enjoying and benefitting from nature
- 2) The health and resilience of Scotland's nature is improved
- 3) There is more investment in the management of Scotland's natural capital to improve prosperity and wellbeing
- 4) SNH have transformed how they work

A national monitoring strategy utilising modern technologies will be established.

A review undertaken by Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (established by e-petition in 2010) is seeking to pull together data flow pathways and content. It was noted this fits well with the proposed SCRR symposium on Biological Collections.

AS noted that the Natural Capital Pilot Project in England and Wales looks similar to SBIF.

The recent recommendations from the SNH Scientific Advisory Committee were:

- a) Adapt and grow our biological recording infrastructure. What might a new national biodiversity hub look like?
- b) Promote scientific advance, engagement and outreach. How might stakeholders become more engaged?
- c) Champion and amplify the SBIF ambition. Big Step for 2030?

3.6 UHI: (MP) A new VP for Research and Impact has been appointed - Neil Simco.

3.7 SRUC: (AS)

- The Global Genetic Gains Event - Roslin Institute, animal breeding and genomics 19 May
- Big Data in Agriculture Meeting - 14-15th May Roslin Institute.
- Closer ties between SRUC and MRI. Trans Disciplinary Research Centres are being set up which will follow particular themes and be more holistic in their approach e.g. Biosecurity, Smart Farming, Productivity in the Food Chain.

4. Events

4.1 Peter Wilson Lecture 2019: (SKM) A number of names were suggested for 2019. There is no theme as yet but the Brexit situation is an obvious choice.

4.2 Biological Collections Workshop: The meeting is being taken forward by PH and NF in collaboration with SKM and WD. A teleconference has been arranged for 23 April to discuss the arrangements.

4.3 Coastal Event Workshop: WD reported that progress on slow but a possible date and venue had been discussed with collaborators.

4.1. Scotia/SCRR Essay Competition and Lecture: SKM and WD reported that there had been no response from schools to this initiative and as discussed previously moving forward would involve collaboration with SEFARI through Prof Innes and with RHET. No progress since last meeting.

5. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR): WD reported that SCRR held a substantial amount of data in terms of names and addresses associated with contact list for Directors' lunches and distribution of the Newsletter. The Newsletter list is the least complicated and a letter included in the next issue indicating that we only hold postal addresses should be adequate. The Mailing list for Directors and other senior staff in member organisations is more complicated and needs a directed email contact. However we are not a repository of very sensitive personal data and our policy should reflect this.

6. Membership

6.1. Consortium membership: SKM reported that Biological Sciences at St Andrews University have retained their membership.

6.2. Executive membership: There is presently one vacancy on the Committee due to the resignation of Ruth Wolstenholme. The Committee is also light on representation from the University of Edinburgh. Any suggestions for replacements should be notified to SY,SKM or WD.

7. Finances

7.1. Accounts and current financial position: WD presented the current financial position which was very healthy (see Appx 1).

8. Publicity & communications

8.1. SCRR Website: WD reported that the website was still needing some updating but getting better.

8.2. SCRR Newsletter: WD reported that we were on track for a good-sized edition of the Spring Newsletter and early May was the target time for posting.

9. Any other business: None

10. Date and place of next Executive meeting: UHI May 30th 2018

KEY	Prof Steve Yearley	SY
	Prof Stuart K Monro	SM
	Prof Willie Donachie	WD
	Prof David Miller	DM
	Dr Ed Mackey	EM
	Prof Martin Price	MP
	Dr Kathy Velandar	KV

Appendix 1

Scottish Consortium for Rural Research

Income & Expenditure Account Year to date 31/03/18

	Actual	Balance in Bank
	£	£
Balance brought forward 31/03/2017	35,152.04	35,152.04
Income		
Subscription	24960	60,112.04
Total Income	<hr/> 24960	
Expenditure		
Salaries & Honoraria	14,598.24	45,513.80
Travel	0	45,513.80
Meetings & Hospitality	957	44,556.38
Office Rent, Rates, Heat & Light	0	44,556.38
Office Expenses & Telephone	5.81	44,550.57
SCRR Newsletter publication	4,017.98	40,532.59
Publicity, Posters, Website	453.60	40,078.99
Miscellaneous	25	40,053.99
Total Expenditure	<hr/> 20058.05	
Balance 31/03/18		<hr/> 40,053.99