



Scottish Consortium
for Rural Research

MINUTE OF THE 136TH MEETING OF THE SCRR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON 29TH AUGUST 2018 AT THE GLOBAL ACADEMY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY, THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH, THE ROYAL (DICK) SCHOOL OF VETERINARY STUDIES AND THE ROSLIN INSTITUTE, EASTER BUSH CAMPUS, MIDLOTHIAN, EH25 9RG.

Present:

Prof Stuart K Monro (Scientific Director, Acting Chair)
Prof Willie Donachie (Secretary/Treasurer)
Prof David Miller (JHI)
Dr Kathy Velandar (Edinburgh Napier University)
Prof Sarah Skerratt

Apologies:

Prof Steve Yearley
Dr Nick Fraser (NMS)
Prof Pete Hollingsworth (RBGE)
Prof Martin Price (UHI)
Prof Alastair Stott (SRUC)
Prof Lee Innes (MRI)
Prof Des Thompson (SNH)
Dr Ed Mackey (SNH)

1. Welcome & Apologies: SKM welcomed those present, especially the new Scientific Director, Professor Sarah Skerratt, and noted thanks to the Global Academy of Agriculture and Food Security for hosting the meeting.

2. Minutes and matters arising from 135th Executive meeting:
No matters arising.

3. Update, Members, Centres of Excellence and Networks

3.1. SRUC (SS) Sarah is now Director of Policy Engagement at SRUC. One aim as new Scientific Director of SCRR is to mobilise the immense experience and knowledge within the SCRR to enhance its visibility in the policy context.

3.2. JHI: (DM) SEFARI – The Gateway contract has now been signed off by the Scottish Government for its second term. However Graeme Cook has gone back to SPICE at Scottish Parliament and a new Director will be appointed.

A number of events are upcoming

- Land Use Conference, November 2018. Dynamic Earth, 27-28th November
- McCauley Lecture: Dynamic Earth, 4th October 2018. Jackie McGlade is the Lecturer.

Three significant Government consultations are currently out for responses:

- Council for Rural Advisors
- Plans for Agriculture post Brexit
- Draft Environment Strategy for the Scottish Government

Any of the above might be a basis for a Newsletter article.

Conference on EU Land Use and Soils is being planned for late 2019.

Advanced Plant Growth Centre now open at Invergowrie. This would make an interesting article for the Newsletter.

Consultations for the New Government Strategic Research Programmes 2021-26 will commence in 2019.

There was discussion about the roles that SEFARI and SCRR play in providing Rural Research advice to the Scottish Government. SCRR represents a wider group of organisations and agencies and can be seen as independent of Government influence.

3.3. Edinburgh Napier University: (KV) There are eight main Innovation Centres in Scotland: Stratified Medicine Scotland, Digital Health & Care Institute, Sensor and Imaging Systems (CENSIS), Industrial Biotechnology (IBioIC), The Oil and Gas Innovation Centre (OGIC), Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (CSiC), The Data Lab, Aquaculture (SAIC).

None are directly connected with SCRR but perhaps they should be. A conference is being organised for all centres to attend and the potential for connection to SCRR will be raised by KV.

A "Design Thinking" workshop will be arranged for SCRR (KV, WD).

3.4. SSAC: (SKM) The following pieces of work are being finalised:

- A briefing note on 'Open Science'.
- Horizon-scanning project on Cyber Resilience, commissioned by the Scottish Government (SG) Cyber Resilience Unit.
- Draft recommendations from a project on 'The Future of Human Genomic Medicine' (commissioned by the Chief Scientist (Health) Office) were presented at a conference on Precision Medicine on 10 September. The final report is expected to be published by the end of October.
- The report on 'Scotland's Science Landscape', commissioned from Elsevier is being finalised.

There has been no announcement so far on the appointment Government's new Chief Scientific Adviser for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

(Added post meeting: Professor Andrew Millar of the University of Edinburgh was announced on 28 September as the Scottish Government's new Chief Scientific Adviser for Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture - ex officio member of the SSAC)

4. Events

4.1 Peter Wilson Lecture 2019: (SKM) - Francesca Osowska, CEO Scottish Natural Heritage, has agreed to give the lecture in 2019. The format is likely to be changed to one that is more interactive than a traditional lecture.

4.2 Biological Collections Workshop: The meeting has been further delayed due to renovation work at RBGE. A new date in Spring 2019 will be looked for.

4.3 Coastal Event Workshop: The Coastal Research meeting will now take place as one of the parallel sessions at MASTS Annual Science Meeting in Glasgow on Friday 2nd November 2018

4.4 Scotia/SCRR Essay competition: As there was a very disappointing response from the call the initiative will be reviewed with Scotia representatives. A different approach may be required. Various options could include targeting primary school children, targeting schools with rural skills in their curriculum such as eco-schools, making it a project based exercise rather than an essay.

To take this forward a workshop to discuss and identify possible approaches should be arranged. WD to arrange this seminar.

4.5 Treeline Conference: This has been postponed until 2019.

4.6 Interdisciplinary Learning, RSE, 30th January 2019: SKM was asked to take part in this event and SCRR will co sponsor it. All members of SCRR engage in interdisciplinary learning. Pete Higgins is contact for this. This follows on from a workshop on public engagement.

5. Membership

5.1. Membership: St Andrews is still considering retaining membership. Dundee University have been in touch about joining.

5.2. Executive Membership: Alastair Stott has resigned from the Committee and been replaced by David Hopkins from SRUC. Still looking for replacement for Ruth Wolstenholme.

6. Finances

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

7. Publicity & communications

7.1. SCRR Website: WD reported that the website still needed work to update it.

7.2. SCRR Newsletter: The Autumn/Winter issue is planned for a December print run.

8. Any other business: SCRR has 2 pull up poster systems but they are not utilised enough by member organizations. However they are outdated and should be overhauled. As it is more economical to make new ones that is the course we should take.

9. Date and place of next Executive meeting: The next meeting is the 57th Main Board Meeting and AGM on the 14th November at Forest Research Edinburgh.

KEY	Prof Stuart K Monro	SM	Prof David Miller	DM
	Prof Willie Donachie	WD	Dr Kathy Velander	KV
	Prof Sarah Skerratt	SS		

Appendix 1

Scottish Consortium for Rural Research

Income & Expenditure Account Year to date 23/08/2018

	Actual	Balance in
	£	Bank
		£
Balance brought forward 30/05/2018	40,053.99	40,053.99
Income		
Subscription	2135	42,188.99
	<hr/>	
Total Income	2135	
Expenditure		
Salaries & Honoraria	7,326.48	34,862.51
Travel	0	34,862.51
Meetings & Hospitality	1,503	33,359.49
Office Rent, Rates, Heat & Light	0	33,359.49
Office Expenses & Telephone		33,359.49
SCRR Newsletter publication	4,131.05	29,228.44
Publicity, Posters, Website		29,228.44
Miscellaneous		29,228.44
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Total Expenditure	12960.55	
Balance 23/08/2018		<u>29,228.44</u>