



Scottish Consortium
for Rural Research

MINUTE OF THE 140TH MEETING OF THE SCRR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 28 AUGUST 2019, AT THE BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, THE LYELL CENTRE, RESEARCH AVENUE SOUTH, EDINBURGH, EH14 4AP.

Present:

Prof Geoff Simm (Chair)
Prof Sarah Skerratt (Scientific Director)
Prof Willie Donachie (Secretary/Treasurer)
Dr Nick Fraser (NMS)
Prof Pete Hollingsworth (RBGE)
Prof David Miller (JHI)
Prof Martin Price (UHI)

Apologies:

Prof Lee Innes (MRI)
Dr Kathy Velander (Edinburgh Napier University)
Prof Des Thompson (SNH)
Prof Karen Halliday (UoE)
Prof David Hopkins (SRUC)
Mr Ed Mackey (SNH)

- 1. Welcome & Apologies:** Professor Geoff Simm welcomed those present The Chair noted thanks to the British Geological Survey for hosting the meeting.
- 2. Minutes and matters arising from 139th Executive meeting:** The minutes were accepted with no matters arising.
 - 2.1 - Correction to Item 3.8 where it should read "Scotland's Year of Coasts and Waters 2020"
 - 2.2 - In discussions between MP and WD a sum of £2000 was suggested as support for the above conference. The Committee approved this sum.

3. Update, Members, Centres of Excellence and Networks

3.1. RBGE (PH)

- Scottish Science for Nature Conference will be held at RBGE in November. This is aimed to be an energising conference covering a range of fascinating science topics. Andrew Miller will be there.
- COP Conference will be coming to Glasgow in 2020. May offer opportunities for SCRR members to contribute. There is a Land Use conference also planned for Scotland at this time and it might be possible to align a COP like session. To be further discussed at next Executive Meeting. A Newsletter compiling SSCR members contributions to addressing the climate emergency may be well received.

3.2 UHI (MP)

- SRUC/UHI initiative on strengthening the Highlands and Islands Blue/Green economy is being worked on
- Centre for Mountain Studies anniversary event “Challenging Upland Futures” being planned for 2020. SCRR agreed to support this conference for a sum to be decided by the Executive Committee. Year of Mountainous Regions and Coasts of Scotland 2020 is a good fit for this.

3.3 SEFARI (DM)

- The website is now up and running. BBC report on what farming is doing to address climate change included A SEFARI document detailing Scottish research in this area (Five ways UK farmers are tackling climate change, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-49044072>)
- Arable Scotland Events going well.
- EPIC Conference September 2019
- EU Forestry conference involving Forest Research September 2019
- 2020 Edinburgh Science Festival: SEFARI want to organise
- Science and Parliament in November: SCRR could be involved with a pull up poster.
There was a discussion on the complicated nature of science research funding in Scotland and whether this could be mapped out to provide greater understanding. SS to look into this.

3.4 University of Edinburgh, Global Academy for Agriculture and Food Security. (GS).

- New cohort of students due in two weeks.
- Easter Bush is leading on the Agri-Tech part of the City Deal where data and Innovation is an important part. There are five strands associated with the initiative under the title TRADE (talent, research, adoption, data and entrepreneurship). The Academy is taking on the talent aspect.

3.5 SRUC (SS)

- Capacity for Impact study launched in SRUC. Will aim to capture the full range of expertise and skills within the organisation and the harness and exploit this expertise.

3.8

4. Events

4.1 Peter Wilson Lecture 2020: The possible format the next Peter Wilson Lecture was discussed by the Committee. The suggestion most favoured was to hand over the organization of the event to youth as this was an important aspect of the 2019 event. The RSE will be approached to find out if they would support this. Three youth groups were identified, RSE Youth Academy, Youth Parliament, Youth Chapter and Young Farmers Scotland. . SCRR would aim to bring the parties together for the first meeting and leave it up the youth groups to devise the format.

A request from SRUC to host all future PW lectures at an SRUC venue was discussed by the Committee. The rationale for this request was that Peter Wilson was a previous Scientific Director of SRUC (then SAC) and that it would be fitting for SRUC to host all future Lectures. After presenting the request Prof Skerratt left the room . The Committee understood the reasoning behind the request but felt that both the SCRR and the RSE had a long standing relationship around the lecture, including financial and organisational aspects, and had developed the lecture into a significant

annual event in the RSE and SCRR calendars. To remove it to another venue would probably harm its reputation in the scientific community. Prof Skerratt was invited back into the room and informed of the Committee's decision.

4.2 Biological Collections Workshop: Two big conferences are coming up which both cover the same areas as the SCRR proposed event and will probably define the formats for digitising and making data available. Agreed to keep the event on the Agenda as there are important issues arising in the future which the Committee should be aware of.

4.3. Design Thinking: This will be held over until K. Velander is back.

4.4 SCRR AGM 2019. SS circulated a proposal for the 2019 AGM (Appx 1). This is a move away from previous AGMs as it will be followed by a mini-conference and a poster showing. There are issues around the practicalities of the location in Inverness and about how posters will be requested. The aim is to attract ECRs to present the posters. There will be costs such as travel and subsistence involved for some attendees and £2000 will be set aside for bursaries.

Feedback from all Committee members is requested and should be sent to SS and WD.

5. Membership

5.1. Membership: Scottish Land Commission suggested.

5.2. Executive Committee Membership. There was further discussion on the possible appointment of an early career researcher to the Committee.

6. Finances

6.1. **Accounts and current financial position:** WD presented the current financial position which was healthy (see Appx 2).

7. Publicity & communications

7.1. **SCRR Website:**

7.2. **SCRR Newsletter:** The next Newsletter is planned for October/November. Please send articles to WD

8. AOB:

9. Date and place of next Executive meetings:

- a) 4th October 2019, Royal Dick Veterinary School, University of Edinburgh, Easter Bush Campus.
- a) 13th November 2019: 58th Main Board Meeting and AGM, SRUC, An Lochran Building, Inverness Campus, UHI.

KEY	Prof Geoff Simm	GS	Prof Pete Hollingsworth	PH
	Prof Sarah Skerratt	SS	Prof David Miller	DM
	Prof Willie Donachie	WD	Prof Martin Price	MP
	Prof Nick Fraserr	NF		

Appendix 1

SCRR AGM and Mini-Conference, November 13th, An Lochran, Inverness: Proposal from Scientific Director, Prof Sarah Skerratt

Purpose: to increase awareness of, and excitement around, SCRR, as a network for connecting and mobilising rural scientific knowledge.

Objectives:

1. **Past:** Raise awareness of what SCRR has achieved and how that has been delivered through the activities of its members across rural Scotland.
2. **Future:** Focus on how SCRR can further strengthen its position and “offering” both to its members *and* to Scottish society and influential stakeholders. Do this primarily through presenting and discussing the results from the discussions with SCRR member organisations.
3. **Reach and inclusion:**
 - a. Broaden the reach and relevance of SCRR, with a particular focus on Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and those who may potentially be isolated researchers in remote rural locations, single rural researchers in larger departments etc.
 - b. Scope out the potential for broadening SCRR’s membership to include organisations that may directly benefit from the translation of rural science, e.g. charities, other public bodies.

Outcomes:

1. Greater awareness of SCRR across Scotland.
2. Increased scientific knowledge amongst members and stakeholders.
3. New connections made:
 - a. between academic institutions and researchers;
 - b. across sectors – academic, other public (including policy), third, private.
4. New challenges identified for applications of science for public good.
5. New partnerships created.

Approach:

1. Hold the AGM in room that holds approx. 30 people.
2. Then hold the mini-conference solely based around posters with “elevator-pitch” style presentations of 5 minutes (with a timer) with people moving around the room, networking.
3. Food and soft drinks provided.
4. Travel bursaries provided for those who would otherwise be unable to participate, particularly from remoter rural locations and/or those who are on lower incomes and/or face other participation barriers e.g. disability, carer etc.
5. Use online (email and web) and social media (Twitter and Instagram) to publicise the event and encourage participation from Directors, senior researchers and ECRs, to ensure networking and exposure/exchange of ideas and approaches from across Scotland’s SCRR member institutes.
6. Evaluate the event to build in improvements for 2020.
7. Rotate event to different rural geographical locations each year, hosted by SCRR member organisations.

Appendix 2

Scottish Consortium for Rural Research

Income & Expenditure Account Year to date 28/08/2019

	Actual	Balance in
	£	Bank
	£	£
Balance brought forward 31/03/2019	28,571.5 0	28,571.50
Income		
Subscription	10000	38,571.50
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Total Income	10000	
Expenditure		
Salaries & Honoraria	7,326.48	31245.02
Travel	68.25	31176.77
Meetings & Hospitality	2,335	28841.67
Office Rent, Rates, Heat & Light	0	28841.67
Office Expenses & Telephone	34.99	28806.68
SCRR Newsletter publication	2,135.83	26670.85
Publicity, Posters, Website	0.00	26670.85
Miscellaneous	0	26670.85
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Total Expenditure	11900.65	
Balance 28/08/19		<u>26670.85</u>