



The James Hutton Institute
BOARD MEETING
New Seminar Room, Dundee
26 July 2017, 09:00h

MINUTES

Chair: James Curran (JC) (Chair)

Board members: Susan Davies (SD) Deborah Keith (DK)
Ian Gambles (IG) Joan MacNaughton (JM)
Archie Gibson (AG) Iain Reid (IR)
Stephen Hall (SH) Alyson Tobin (AT)
George Lawrie (GL) Elizabeth Wade (EW)

Apologies: Andrew Millar (AM), Marian Scott (MS)

Attendees: Colin Campbell (CC)
Alasdair Cox (AC)
Bob Ferrier (BF)

Deb Roberts (DR)
Lesley Torrance (LT)
Derek Leslie (DL)
Anne Pack (AP) [Minutes]

Closed Session

1 Apologies

Andrew Millar, Marian Scott

2 Register of Interests

No new declarations were made.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2017.

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

4 Matters arising

All actions were either completed or on the agenda.

5 Health and Safety

The H&S Monthly report was provided for information.

A commissioned investigative report by Marsh Consulting was provided. The Chair introduced the item by thanking the Executive for commissioning the work, adding that as former Board H&S champion he had met with Head of H&S three times and also attended a corporate H&S meeting and a routine site inspection. He also witnessed the CEO raising the subject of H&S at every Open House session he has attended. Consequently he was impressed that the Institute had sound H&S procedures. It was noted that the Executive invited Marsh Consulting to do an

in-depth examination of the Institute's H&S focusing especially on culture. The report revealed work was required in certain areas around H&S and the Head of HSQE is developing an Action Plan. The Plan will be discussed by the Executive in early August. Additional H&S training will be arranged for staff, beginning with the Executive.

It was requested that the Board sees a copy of the Action Plan and receives feedback on progress in three months and six months. In order to demonstrate how seriously the Board takes H&S, the update should include a summary of outstanding audit points.

- AC to provide the Action Plan to the Board in September.
- AC to provide a progress report on the Action Plan developed from the Marsh report, in three months and six months. The report is to include a summary of outstanding audit points.

While SMG and Open House have H&S at start of each meeting it was suggested that all Institute management meetings begin with H&S.

- Executive members to advise all appropriate internal management meeting chairs that H&S is to be the first item on every agenda.

6 Strategy Planning and Budget

6.1 Farm Review

DR introduced the item. The last review of the farms was undertaken in 2014. The Institute has a financial analysis that separates the farm costs from the other Institute facilities. It was thought timely to re-examine the contribution of each farm to the Institute's 2016-21 Corporate Strategy.

The farms play an important role in the Institute's science capacity and details of each farm's operation is included in the paper provided. The Board discussed the paper and asked the Executive to continue refining the Farms Review.

- The Executive to continue refining the Farms Review and report back to the Board.

6.2 KPIs

AC presented a paper on KPIs explaining that it was work in progress and would come back to the Board in September. The purpose of KPIs is to provide a warning flag for corrective action to be taken. In terms of benchmarking it was noted that there is a decline in journal outputs. The Board would find it useful to know the rationale behind this.

It was noted that this is an ongoing monitoring tool. The Executive was asked to report back to the Board quarterly.

- KPIs to be reported to the Board quarterly.

6.3 Major Capital Projects updates

CC presented the item saying this is currently a quiet spell as the outcome of the Tay Cities Deal is awaited. The IBH successfully came through the Gateway 2 review and received an Amber rating, the same as for Gateway 1, which is the highest possible achievement for projects with unconfirmed funding. The IBH is at the crucial stage of trying to develop partners and this must be industry led.

Both Risk Registers were approved.

6.4 Public Affairs Strategy

An update on the Public Affairs Strategy was provided for information. Following discussion at the Board meeting in May a section on key messages was added for the benefit of Board members.

In summing up, the Chair said that numbers and stories should be added to the Public Affairs Strategy. He concluded by saying that thanks to this Strategy the Institute now has a significantly higher profile.

It was requested that the SEFARI Strategy be provided to the Board in September.

- The SEFARI Strategy to come to the Board in September.
- AC to add numbers and/or stories to the Public Affairs Strategy.

6.5 People Strategy

The People Strategy was discussed at the N&R the day before. The Strategy is aligned with the Corporate Strategy and has been discussed with the TU, demonstrating the focus is on people and culture.

The Chair of N&R said this had been discussed at length the previous day recognising the Strategy is central to where the culture needs to be. Specific recommendations had been made for revising the paper. A report will go to N&R in November, following a staff survey. It was agreed that this is much improved and that a lot has been achieved in a short time.

7 Regular reports

7.1 CEO Report

CC introduced the report saying he had included some bullet points on key successes as requested last time.

7.2 Risk Register

The Risk Register was received for information.

7.3 Management Accounts

The Management Accounts, which are in a new format, were received for information. The Group summary shows an operating deficit of £384k for the month. Year to date the operating deficit is £787k but is £458k ahead of budget.

Members welcomed the new format saying it was clearer and more helpful.

7.4 Annual Statutory Accounts

DL introduced the item. DL explained there is a need to strengthen the wording around capital to highlight the associated risk. It was agreed the reserves policy should be reviewed annually.

The Chair of the A&F committee said he was happy to recommend the Statutory Accounts for approval, The Board approved the Statutory accounts. They will be signed by JC and IG subject to the revision of the reserves policy and with the addition of reference to ACS.

Accounts to be signed by JC and IG, subject to a check by DL with the auditors regarding the reserves policy.

8 Updates from sub-committee meetings

8.1 ACS

The draft minutes of the ACS meeting held on 31 May were received for information. SH provided a verbal update on the meeting held on 25 July. A revised Terms of Reference (ToR) based on the one used by N&R was discussed. Further refinement was agreed and the final version will come to the Board for sign-off.

- ACS ToR to come to the Board for sign-off.

The bulk of the ACS meeting was made up of presentations by three staff members on using the farms for platform research.

8.2 Audit & Finance

The minutes of the A&F meeting held on 30 May were received for information. Revised ToR for the committee had been approved at the A&F meeting on 25 July, subject to a minor change, and was presented to the Board for their approval. The Board approved the revised ToR, Other business at that meeting included the statutory accounts, and a discussion on the internal audit plan.

8.3 Nominations & Remuneration

The draft minutes of the N&R meeting held on 28 March 2017 were received for information. The N&R committee met on 25 July when it discussed the People Strategy and discussed an update on the pay award for employees.

The Committee discussed establishing employee engagement with the Board. Staff members are currently being identified and a ToR is being developed. An update will be provided to the Board later in the year. The forthcoming all-staff survey will include reference to perceptions of the Board.

9 Other Reports

9.1 Media Digest

This report was received for information.