



**The James Hutton Institute**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
Macaulay A, Aberdeen  
**11 April 2018, 09:00h**

**MINUTES**

<b>Chair:</b>	James Curran (JC) (Chair)	
<b>Board members:</b>	Ian Gambles (IG) Archie Gibson (AG) Stephen Hall (SH) Deborah Keith (DK) George Lawrie (GL)	Iain Reid (IR) Marian Scott (MS) Elizabeth Wade (EW)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Susan Davies (SD) Joan MacNaughton (JM) Andrew Millar (AM) Alyson Tobin (AT)	
<b>Attendees:</b>	Colin Campbell (CC) Alasdair Cox (AC) Bob Ferrier (BF) Deb Roberts (DR) Lesley Torrance (LT) Derek Leslie (DL) Anne Pack (AP) [Minutes]	

**Closed Session**

**Opening remarks**

The Board noted its congratulations to CC on his election to Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

**1 Apologies**

Susan Davies, Joan MacNaughton, Andrew Millar, Alyson Tobin

**2 Register of Interests**

Register of Interest forms were provided for Board members to populate and return to AP.

- **Register of Interest forms to be completed and returned to AP.**

MS advised that she has been appointed to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

**3 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2018.**

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

**4 Matters arising**

**All matters were either completed or were in progress.**

**5 Health and Safety**

An update paper was provided for information. As part of the two recent workshops, the future H&S strategy with actions and milestones was discussed.

It was noted there was no update on measures taken during the extreme weather period the previous month. A verbal update was provided; the Institute was closed during the red weather warning alert, and guidance provided during the yellow weather warning. Thanks were due to the farm staff who did a sterling snow-clearing job.

**5b GDPR notifications**

In compliance with the forthcoming comprehensive legislation the Institute must be seen to be reporting any issues to the highest level in the organisation. It was agreed to reserve a place on the agenda should it be required.

**6 Strategy Planning and Budget**

**6.1 2018/19 budget update**

DL gave a verbal update on the 2018/19 budget.

**6.2 Income Generation Strategy**

A paper outlining income generation activity across the group was provided for approval. It was explained that stretch targets of a 15% increase have been set. The individual Groups are working on how this will be achieved.

It was requested that for future meetings the Board be provided with a Projects table which shows projected income at different stages in the process: applied for/secured *etc.*

In summing up, the Chair said the Board was assured that the Income Generation Strategy was in place and encouraged that multiple funding avenues were being explored.

**6.3 Farms Review**

The paper provided was an update to the review paper discussed by the Board in July 2017. Following discussion at that meeting the Board requested that further analysis be carried out and individual business plans prepared for each of the farm.

Since then a number of investigative and explorative activities have taken place, including individual meetings with the farm managers and a review of the farm leases. A visioning workshop took place, attended by farm staff, research scientists, and several members of the Executive. The workshop brief was to consider current and future science, and the educational and demonstration potential of the farms. Three breakout groups considered key challenges and opportunities facing the farms, and what ideas for research could help address these. There were differing opinions between the groups on the possible use for each farm, but there was general agreement that all were under-utilised, and the workshop identified a number of new areas of research potential for each one. It also discussed the potential for considering the farms together, as a network. These have been included in the individual business cases, along with financial information and recommendations.

#### **6.4 BioSS six-monthly report**

The six-monthly BioSS report was received for information.

#### **6.5 Hutton Foundation**

A paper on the progress on first steps was received for information.

#### **6.6 Public Affairs**

The Institute's public affairs schedule for the next six months was provided for information. Members were encouraged to report any connections with MSPs etc as such engagements are subject to lobbying legislation. The Chair invited Board members to forward suggestions to him on any high-level lobbying opportunities and any key facts they wish to know more about.

### **7 Regular reports**

#### **7.1 CEO Report**

The CEO report was received for information.

#### **7.2 Management Accounts P11**

The Management Accounts for P11 were received for information. Figures are tracking ahead of forecast.

James Hutton Ltd is tracking ahead of budget and reforecast.

### **8 Updates from sub-committee meetings**

#### **8.1 ACS**

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 13 February 2018 were received for information. The Chair provided a verbal update of the meeting which took place on 10 April.

An overview was given on potato research resources and opportunities. A Potato Strategy Group is being developed, bringing together research, breeding and industry.

A presentation was given on reflections of a year on one of the science challenges, by one of the Science Challenge Leaders who talked about the challenges and outcomes, and how the process was a vehicle for engaging scientists in the strategic direction of the Institute.

The June ACS will be devoted to discussion on topics for the Strategy Day.

#### **8.2 Audit & Finance**

Minutes of the A&F committee held on 13 February were received for information. The Chair gave a verbal update of the meeting held on 10 April.

#### **8.3 Nominations & Remuneration**

Minutes of the N&R committee held on 13 February 2018 were received for information. The Chair provided a verbal update on the meeting held on 10 April.

#### **Employee Board relations**

A report prepared by the Employee-Board Relations Working Group (EBRWG) was provided to the Board along with a covering note provided by the N&R Chair.

The report sets out the background to the issue, matters discussed at N&R meetings, and recommendations for the Board to consider. Next step will be to feedback to the Working Group a positive plan of action including some immediate actions over the next six months, such as improving information flow, and enhancing interaction between staff and the Board.

Medium term actions include staff representation at Sub-Committee meetings, collation of staff proposals for consideration by the Executive for presentation to the Board. Longer term options will be considered following feedback on the impact of the short/medium term actions.

#### **8.4 James Hutton Ltd**

The agenda for the meeting held on 20 February was received for information. The Chair provided a verbal update on James Hutton Ltd.

A financial review of James Hutton Ltd is currently being undertaken.

The Risk Register is being harmonised with the James Hutton Institute one.

#### **Other Reports**

##### **9.1 Communications**

The new-style Communications paper was received for information.

##### **Forward Agenda Planner (FAP)**

It was agreed that the Chair and Sub-Committee chairs will meet annually to harmonise the four FAPs.

#### **10 Review of meeting**

The Chair asked for feedback to be sent directly to him.

#### **AOB**

#### **Dates of meetings in 2018:**

June 7<sup>th</sup> Dundee

July 18<sup>th</sup> Treetops Hotel, Aberdeen

October 3<sup>rd</sup> Edinburgh, Apex Grassmarket

December 5<sup>th</sup> Dundee