



The James Hutton Institute
BOARD MEETING
New Seminar Room, Dundee
7 June 2018, 09:00h

MINUTES

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

Opening remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone.

1 Apologies

Susan Davies, Ian Gambles, Stephen Hall, Archie Gibson, Marian Scott

2 Register of Interests

JM declared that she is a Board member of the Energy Savings Trust.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2018.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 April were approved.

4 Matters arising

All actions were either in progress or complete.

5 Health and Safety

The Health and Safety update paper was received for information.

The Board H&S representative reported on his first walk around the Dundee site. He found each manager in each block to be receptive. He witnessed instances of unsuitable storage and clutter on work surfaces but nothing else of major concern. A walk around the Aberdeen site is planned as well as one of the farms.

5b GDPR notifications

The Institute's Data Protection Officer from Thorntons Law LLP and, and the Institute's Information Governance Officer joined the meeting for this item.

The Board was given an overview of its requirements in relation to GDPR. In particular the Board must be aware of the Data Breach Policy a copy of which was provided to the Board after the meeting.

In broad terms the Board must become aware of its obligations and help keep the Institute compliant.

It was confirmed the Board will receive regular progress reports and be advised of any notifications.

6 Strategy Planning and Budget

6.1 Full year financial forecast

The Director of Finance explained the year end was better than forecast. The Period 12 management accounts reported a full year deficit of £683k compared to a forecast deficit of £2.67m.

External contract income was £461k better than forecast at £7.5m. A stretch target of £7.9m has been set.

The Board accepted the budget.

6.2 Internal Audit Reports with Executive Summary

Last year a cyber security audit was undertaken as part of a planned three-year audit. More recently an audit on travel and expenses was undertaken.

Internal audit comes under the remit of the A&F committee which reported they are pleased with the standard of the reports from the Internal Auditors who were appointed in July 2017. The audit reports for cyber security and travel & expenses to be circulated to Board members.

6.3 Risk Register

The Risk Register was received for information. It was noted that the auditors commented on the risk scoring having exceeded the Institute's risk appetite on certain risks.

The potential loss of key staff under Risk No. 3 was discussed and it was noted that overall turnover was low and the risk of losing key non-UK staff was being managed by the mitigating measures in place.

6.4 Communications Output and Reach

A paper was provided giving an overview of the activities for measuring the impact of the Institute's communications activity.

Recent focus has been on the public affairs area and it is thought we are now reaching the majority of our audiences.

It was acknowledged this is a step-change in communications activity, but some additional market segmentation and focus would be valuable.

In the next steps the Science Strategy Group (SSG) is considering new ways of capturing the impact of scientific work. A lot of work has already been done, *e.g.* for the IRO application and for the RESAS mid-term review.

The Board considered additional measures could be taken. It was noted:

- there was no mention of international targets
- 5/6 key messages to be added
- List of key audiences to be added
- Actual names of NDPBs added
- List of key events to be added
- There is a standard slide set on the Institute which could be incorporated into presentations.

In addition to the slide set there are 'fast fact' cards that Board members can use, though some members prefer instead regular updates on news.

A Board member agreed to act as a sounding board and advisor for public affairs and media output.

A short summary on the Institute's approach to public affairs, internally and externally to be provided for the October Board.

6.5 Employee Board Relations action plan

The Board was invited to review the proposed action plan which has been developed following discussion at the April Board meeting. The action plan details short, medium and long-term actions proposed for the next 18 months. Success of the plan will be examined after nine months then again after eighteen months.

The Chair reported that the last hour of the Board Strategy Day on 18 July will be used as a Board/all staff session from the Macaulay Suite in Aberdeen and linking with the New Seminar Room in Dundee. Also, it is intended the AGM in November will be open to all staff.

6.6 Capital projects

A status update on individual capital projects was provided with recommendations for the Board to consider. An announcement on Tay Cities Deal is expected by September.

The Board approved the recommendations for the Tay Cities Deal projects.

At Craigiebuckler, a feasibility study is underway for a heat recovery system, as a renewables project. At Invergowrie discussions are underway for a community energy project for a solar meadow at North Bullionfield. The Board approved the recommendation to agree 'in principle' to fixed term, 20-year, agreements subject to approval of detailed contractual terms for both renewables projects. The Board asked that they be brought back to the Board for sign-off.

Phase 1 of the International Land Use Study Centre (ILUSC) is complete. The Phase 1 report was provided. Funding has been approved to progress to Phase 2 which will explore a full site proposal. This will be further discussed by the Board at its meeting in July.

The Board gave its approval to progress to Phase 2.

7 Regular reports

7.1 CEO Report & Operational Plan

The CEO report was received for information.

7.2 Management Accounts P12

The Management Accounts for P12 were provided for information. Of note the outcome is significantly better than forecast.

8 Updates from sub-committee meetings

8.1 ACS

The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 April 2018 were received for information. A verbal update of the meeting which took place on 6 June was provided. There had been an in-depth discussion on two papers provided; one on the international strategy and one on a review of science opportunities. The first highlighted the need for visa support for non-UK staff in light of immigration restrictions. The second examined the key areas of strength and future opportunities and that conclusions will come from finer granularity of the mapping exercise. ACS agreed to do deep-dives of specific areas, including opportunities around the soil microbiome.

8.2 Audit & Finance

Minutes of the A&F committee held on 10 April were received for information. A verbal update of the meeting held on 6 June was provided. The meeting reviewed the management accounts and took an in-depth look at the Risk Register. An update on BioSS was provided. A health check of the digital strategy has been undertaken and a recommendation was made to look at aspects of the IT strategy. Some re-prioritisation of IT projects may also be required.

8.3 Nominations & Remuneration

Minutes of the N&R committee held on 10 April 2018 were received for information. A verbal update on the meeting held on 6 June was provided.

The Institute is about to go into negotiations with the union on the pay claim.

Board performance and actions improvement was discussed. An action plan will be prepared and brought back to the October Board.

The Employee Board Working Group implementation plans were discussed and amendments to the document were recommended. The updated document will be shared with action owners.

The Committee learned that the PPDR paper system has been replaced with an electronic one and that all employees must now have a Health & Safety objective, and a values objective.

The second staff survey results will be made available in the next few weeks. Together with the results from the first survey the action plan will be refined and discussed at the N&R in October before coming to the Board in December.

The Committee reviewed and approved the recommendations of the Executive on proposed Fellowships. There was a discussion about increasing the value of the scheme. It was felt there was an opportunity to refresh the scheme and optimise the membership. This will be discussed fully at the January/February meeting.

People Strategy

The People Strategy was formally approved by the Board.

8.4 James Hutton Ltd

The agenda for the meeting to be held on 19 June was received for information. The draft minutes of the meeting held on 20 February were received for information.

Other Reports

9.1 Communications

The Communications paper was received for information.

Forward Agenda Planner (FAP)

The FAP was examined but no changes suggested. It is planned to have a considered discussion along with the sub-committee FAPs at the first meeting of the year.

10 Review of meeting

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

AOB

Strategy Days 17th and 18th July

The day will be on 17th July at Craigiebuckler, with a discussion on the estate. Mid-afternoon the Board will undertake a tour of the grounds and Buildings at Craigiebuckler. On the 18th, dinner discussions and actions from the previous evening will be followed up in the morning session.

Dates of meetings in 2018:

July 18th Aberdeen

October 3rd Edinburgh

December 5th Dundee