



The James Hutton Institute

BOARD MEETING

The Board Room, Dundee

22nd May 2013, at 09:00

Chair: Ray Perman (RP)

Board members: Laura Meagher (LM)
Brian Clark (BC)
George Thorley (GT)
David Boxer (DB)
Julia Brown (JB)
Wayne Powell (WP)
Allan Stevenson (AS)
Alan Werritty (AW)

Apologies: George Salmond (GS)
Sandy Morrison (SM)

Attendees: Iain Gordon (IG)
Colin Campbell (CC)
Beth Corcoran (BeC)
Bob Ferrier (BF)

Secretariat: Anne Pack (AP)

	Closed session Members of the Board.
1	Apologies Apologies were received from Sandy Morrison and George Salmond.
2	Register of Interests There were none reported.
3	Minutes AS asked for three corrections to be made to the minutes of the Board meeting held on 20 th March. RP said that he would make the amendments with AP following the meeting. Subject to those changes being made, the minutes were approved.
4	Matters arising All action points were completed or dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.
5	Minutes of sub-committee meetings since last Board meeting

	<p>5.1 ACS – 20th March The minutes were received for information. BC provided an additional verbal update.</p> <p>Science reviews The Information and Computational Sciences (ICS) Group will be reviewed 11th – 13th of June. There has been some difficulty getting a panel of four, so, given that this is a small group, it has been agreed to proceed with the three members confirmed: Profess Jane Rodgers, Professor Chris Rawlings, and Professor Andrew Lovett. BC is confident that the required disciplines are covered. The Postgraduate poster session included in each review has proved interesting and stimulating and BC urged Board members to attend that session if possible.</p> <p>Cell and Molecular Sciences (CMS) will be reviewed 5th – 7th of November. The panel membership is complete, and the paperwork is underway.</p> <p>Social, Economic and Geographical Sciences (SEGS) will be reviewed 4th – 6th of December. Professor Ian Hodge has been appointed chair. CC and AP are currently recruiting the rest of the panel.</p> <p>The response to the Ecological Sciences (ES) review report will be presented to the next ACS meeting. The report of the Environmental and Biochemical Sciences (EBS) has gone to the Group for comment. It is hoped that this will be reported to the Board in July.</p> <p>BioSS will be reviewed early in 2014. Professor Chris Rawlings will be invited to chair the panel.</p> <p>KE BC said that at the July and/or September ACS meetings BF will provide an update on KE; open access publishing, publications strategy etc.</p> <p>5.2 Audit & Finance AS said that he was delighted BeC has been appointed Director of Finance and Company Secretary. He urged the Executive Team to ensure the necessary skills and resources are put in place as quickly as possible to support BeC to implement the necessary day to day processes required for a fully functional finance system. The audit process is now in hand, and working to plan. AS praised BeC for putting these things in place.</p> <p>5.3 Nominations and Remuneration The N&R Committee’s recommendation regarding salaries was approved by the Board. The minutes of the N&R committee meeting held on the 21st of May were circulated to Board members only.</p>
6	<p>Minutes of commercial subsidiary meetings & reports</p> <p>6.1 MRS The draft minutes of the MRS Board meeting held on the 21st of March were received for information. RP provided a further verbal update. MRS has had an exceptional year. Of note is the project which Jonathan Snape and Nigel Kerby (NK) negotiated with Agrinos. GT asked if, in relation to the Agrinos contract, the additional land at Berryhill was of benefit. CC said that without Berryhill we would not have been able to negotiate the contract.</p>

	<p>6.2 MSC A note on MSC was received from Bill Donald, Commercial Director, for information.</p>
7	<p>Relationship with MDT and Mylnefield Trust RP gave a verbal update. He said that the Institute has a good relationship with the Mylnefield Trust. As a Trustee, RP said that the Trust had been advised that they would not receive any money in the short term. However, the excellent results from MRS may mean that the company can again make a gift aid donation to MT. RP reported that the relationship with MDT is good. LM is a Trustee. A member of staff is also a Trustee, but their term of office concludes shortly.</p>
8	<p>Regular Reports</p> <p>8.1 Chief Executive's report The Chief Executive's report was received for information. IG highlighted a few points. IG and BF made a presentation to the Partnership for European Environmental Research (PEER) in Copenhagen, on the 22nd of April. PEER has advised us that we were not successful in our application. The reason given for this was that PEER has decided to consolidate the current membership before expanding.</p> <p>IG is currently discussing with Bob McIntosh, RESAS, how to strengthen the alliance of agriculture, crops, livestock and marine, under a banner which sits within Scottish Government. CRAFS will be launched at the Royal Highland Show on 20th of June.</p> <p>Successful visits were made to the Dundee site by NFUS, and John Godfrey, Chairman of AHDB. John was keen to pursue cross-cutting areas of research and is planning a visit to the Aberdeen site.</p> <p>Four PhD students are involved in the Life Sciences Competition for MRPs later in the week.</p> <p>The sale of Lonsdale has been approved by SG. Savills will handle the sale.</p>
	<p>8.2 Finance Report BeC presented the draft accounts to March 2013. The main focus has been on bringing expenditure within budget. BeC said that the outturn compared favourably with the forecast.</p>
	<p>8.3 Media digest This was received for information.</p>
	<p>8.4 Health & Safety This was received for information. A new member of staff joined the Health and Safety team, who will focus on environmental issues amongst other their other tasks. IG added that following the tragic accident in March, the institute was conducting its own internal review of its transport policy.</p>
	<p>Presentation (since the Board meeting, the agreed title with SG is the Scottish Food Security Alliance - Crops) Howard Davies (HD) joined the meeting. HD provided an update on the background, the current status, and future plans. HD explained that food security was agenda key global priority and it was important for the James Hutton</p>

	<p>Institute to translate its excellence into international science. The plan is to create a hub that will provide complementary skill bases, in the crop, soil and food systems areas, and which will provide training opportunities. The combination of the three organisations involved will create an impetus for attracting high-quality students and collaborations. The Institute has an existing translational pipeline through the universities. Initial focus will be on our core strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Integrating crop and soil science · Optimise resource use efficiency and yield · Nutritional value of food safety (linking with the Rowett) · Farming systems and environmental security · Climate change <p>The alliance will extend from basic through strategic and into applied areas as it needs to. It is important to note that it is not just about REF and high quality publications, but also about outcomes for improving food security.</p> <p>Initially the three research pillars are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Plant and crop science <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o led by Robbie Waugh, and based on the excellence within the James Hutton Institute, and the relationship it has created with the University of Dundee over the last ten years · Soil interface <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Led by Liz Baggs, University of Aberdeen · Food systems <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Led by Pete Smith, University of Aberdeen <p>The Centre for Environmental Change and Human Resilience (CECHR), based at the University of Dundee, will help to bring in the social dimension.</p> <p>HD will provide an overseeing, integrating role and Emily Swayne will provide administration.</p> <p>Funds will be made available by the Alliance partners for workshops, pump priming and studentships with the studentship scheme scheduled to begin in 2014, (two students in the first instance, for each of the three pillars). An Initial workshop for PIs on June 7th will introduce the Alliance concept and start project discussions.</p> <p>The Alliance will be launched officially at the Royal Highland Show on June 20th.</p>
9	<p>Strategy Planning and Budget</p>
	<p>9.1 External environment – Scottish independence</p> <p>DH set out a paper on the key issues surrounding the vote on Scottish independence, and the key elements in achieving our strategy and how the referendum could affect them. DH asked the Board to consider the Institute’s needs irrespective of the outcome of a referendum, for the next three to five years. The paper represents a starting point which can be developed, on a regular basis as more information emerges.</p> <p>RP said there was uncertainty over the impact of an impending referendum on the business.</p> <p>Action: Members to provide feedback and additional information on the Scottish independence paper to DH.</p>

	<p>9.2 Corporate statement on fracking CC explained that we work on a number and range of contested issues, including GM and wind power, and it was important to provide objective advice. DH will finalise the statement on comments received. Action: Members to provide comments on the fracking statement to DH.</p>
	<p>9.3 Income Generation Review BF made a brief presentation and verbal update. In this phase of the Income Generation Review, BF undertook a mapping exercise that considered future areas to target. Looking across the sectors BF chose 10 areas deemed to be the most commercially viable for further investigation. Those are being ranked in order of importance according to tangible opportunities for income generation. A robust business development model will be required to tap into those areas. Concurrent to this initiative an engagement strategy is being developing in the run up to EU Horizon 2020 in early 2014.</p> <p>BF said that it was planned to complete the first phase of the review within the next few weeks, after which non-executive members of the Board will be invited to join the steering group for phase 2.</p> <p>AS offered to participate in this second phase of income generation review, as he has a lot of experience of this. BF said that he welcomed this support.</p> <p>Action: BF to arrange that AS becomes part of the steering group for Phase 2.</p>
	<p>9.4 2013/14 plan and budget DH presented a combined plan and budget in one document, including SMART targets for key annual objectives.</p>
	<p>9.5 Governance documents AS said that this came under remit of A&F committee, which has reviewed earlier versions. The Board approved the forwarding of the document to the A&F committee. Action: The Governance Document to be passed to the A&F Committee for completion.</p>
	<p>Audit & Finance</p>
	<p>10.1 Internal Audit Plan AS suggested this document is passed to the A&F Committee for approval. Action: The Internal Audit Plan to go to the A&F Committee for approval.</p>
11	<p>AOB GT thanked the chair for the letter which was sent to all staff. He felt it captured the mood of the Board perfectly.</p>
<p>Date of next meeting: 24 July 2013, Dundee</p>	