



## Minutes of a LINK Board meeting held on 22 June 2010 at the LINK office, Shore Road, Perth

### PRESENT

President: Helen Zealley

Trustees: Ian McCall (LINK Chair), David Downie (LINK Treasurer), Andrew Fairbairn, Eila Macqueen, Lloyd Austin, Vicky Junik

Staff: Andy Myles (Parliamentary Officer), Alice Walsh (Development Officer), Hugh Green (Finance Officer).

### 1. APOLOGIES

Received from Deborah Long (LINK Vice Chair), Jonny Hughes, Dan Barlow, Paul Ritchie (Treasurer designate) Mike Robinson, Ian Findlay (Observer)

### 2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING ON 22 APRIL

The draft minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING (PAPER CIRCULATED)

#### 3.1 April minutes item 4.2

Andy indicated that he would draft the paper on agency structure as part of the autumn political strategy report. With regard to the Board's discussion on local government work he had agreed with the SOATF Convenor to hold a telecon ahead of the next SOATF meeting, or have discussion there, with several trustees involved, to consider whether the role of overseeing local government work should be separate from or part of the TF's work. **Action: ABM**

#### 3.2 April minutes items 6.1 and 6.2

Hugh reported that the Board's April proposal to add £30,000 to contingency now had the Auditor's approval. Hugh had also added as suggested a new metric on climate emissions by staff to the carbon accounting report for 2009/10 and the report was now on the website.

#### 3.3 SNH liaison

Re LINK Board's proposal for more liaison with SNH senior staff, the meeting felt a first step was for Deborah Long (in her anticipated capacity as Chair) to attend the G6 meeting with Ian Jardine during the summer to discuss spending cuts. Liaison with senior staff would be as important as liaison with the SNH Board.

#### **Action: DL**

On Board liaison, LINK's suggestion of both boards meeting had been declined but Simon Pepper (SNH) was now to be involved along with Andrew Thin. LINK Board were pleased and agreed in due course to suggest lunch with Simon Pepper for informal exchanges. **Action: future Board**

The Board commented on the agenda provided by Simon, noting the desirability of a more vocal SNH in relation to policy issues and of the Agency not taking offence at eNGO criticism of Government where such criticism is in fact a defence of SNH's right to criticise. Whilst this had been an issue for many years the perception amongst NGOs was that it had increased recently. The meeting noted that SNH and LINK share a desire to see peat conservation and talk jointly through IUCN. LINK wishes to see SNH support peat restoration as a route



towards meeting Scotland's climate targets and put resources into delivery of that restoration. **Action: HZ, IM**

The meeting noted current concerns in government and parliament about the cost of contracts for PR and lobbying on behalf of non-NGOs; the meeting felt this confirmed the problems caused by the blurring of distinction about government and non-government roles and responsibilities.

Andrew Thin had been informed of the date for LINK Congress and knew to expect changes amongst LINK officer bearers.

### 3.2 Organisational Supporter

Alice reported that the focus was on polishing the detail of benefits and small print before circulating letters of invitation during the summer. Andy had been discussing the OS opportunity with a few of the potential target audience.

**Action: AW, HG**

### 3.3 Fred Edwards Trust

The interim steering group had confirmation that OSCR accepted the proposed articles of association. Incorporation would follow soon. Literature and website were in prep. Trustees were asked to commit 25 October (eve, Edinburgh) to their diaries as the date of the launch of the Trust and of the first Fred Edwards Lecture, and to share this with others in their organisations and beyond. **Action: Trustees**

## 4. AGM PREPARATION / BOARD SUCCESSION (PAPER CIRCULATED)

This was a standing item ahead of the AGM.

The meeting noted the table of rotation of trustees which indicated dates at which serving trustees would be due to retire. The other circulated paper carried the suggestion that the Board maintain a plan of succession for office bearers and the meeting noted that Jonny Hughes indicated that he would be willing to serve as Chair at a later date, and that action to identify someone to take over as Vice Chair would be useful also in the next couple of years. **Action: future Board**

Also noted was the suggestion for a brief Board meeting immediately after the AGM to approve proposed co-options; as there might not be sufficient trustees present the decision could be made by email correspondence in the next few days. **Action: JA**

Helen Zealley had indicated that she would expect to stand down some time during 2011 and it was agreed that a search be organised from autumn 2010. **Action: Board in October**

## 5. OPERATIONS

### 5.1 Operating Plan 2010/11 as a forward plan - for approval

The meeting had wanted another opportunity to discuss the Plan before signing it off. The draft had been completed with all information available to the drafters.

The meeting considered several areas of proposed work, noting:

Economics – The first two actions were achieved/being pursued. It was agreed that the third action outlined was important given the impact our other reports have (SLUS, marine renewables). FoES, RSPB, SWT and WWFS would be asked to discuss whether they have capacity to create a mechanism to assess measures (eg via consultancy), and if so the goal would be retained.



Environmental governance & Governance – these two sections would be merged; the Board supported the goals and measures of progress.

Health and environment – The meeting agreed that LINK has done what it can (esp during 2009) pending more explicit links between the two policy areas by government. In the meantime our SOA work does relate. LINK will raise again the request for an H&E debate with the Minister who has bid for this once already and may be willing to try anew. Helen Zealley will discuss with Sheila Beck at Healthy Environment Network other ways of covering environment in HEN and of our keeping in touch; to date HEN discussions have focussed more on the medical side; the lack of genuinely voluntary health NGOs makes the engagement less straightforward.

Behaviour Change – Andy Fairbairn asked if the Board was content that this had dropped off the LINK agenda after the member gatherings on the issues. The meeting discussed and noted that as a result of our internal discussions LINK had had some impact on subsequent government initiatives on climate change. There had been discussion about organising a BC workshop with experts, though capacity had been limited and not all agreed on the need. In addition, relevant BC work was now being taken forward by SCCS, which route members could choose to pursue. The other focus of our 2007/08 discussions on behaviour change had been on the importance of getting our own houses in order. The meeting noted that the Board could usefully continue to encourage this and to alert members to the dangers for them, and for the movement as a whole, of not following good practice.

Outcomes – The meeting discussed whether outcomes in the OP should be pulled out more clearly but agreed that these are largely covered, though as a network whose goals are to provide the forums for the action, the outcomes are often outputs (providing the forum, having the discussions, submitting responses, etc). This would be reviewed for the 2011/12 OP.

The meeting approved the Plan subject to changes noted above. **Action: JA**

#### 5.2 Operating Plan 2010/11 reports - to note/discuss

The Board was pleased to note all KPIs were being achieved.

Interest amongst members in adaptation work was noted (implementation of the Act/mitigation were now the focus of SCCS). The meeting noted that Jim Densham RSPB was willing to convene an adaptation-focussed TF and asked staff to contact members to ascertain their interest in such a group. The meeting agreed to ensure that FoES and WWFS were aware of the rationale, and asked David and Lloyd to speak with Richard Dixon and Duncan McLaren respectively.

**Action: LWA, DB**

#### 5.3 Updated LINK protocols (revised draft circulated)

Alice had overseen the drafting of amendments to LINK's operating principles which were before the Board for approval; these were all approved. The revised protocols would go on website and in bulletin. **Action: AW, KMcC**

#### 5.4 Risk Review (register circulated)

The meeting approved the updated register, encouraging Jen Anderson to prioritise fire drills. Trustees thought LINK too small for DDA legislation to apply. The Board also noted that update of the risk register had been the one area flagged for action in the recent audit. **Action: JA**

### 6. FINANCIAL (PAPER 6)



### 6.1 Revised financial forecast for 2010/11

Revised first page circulated. LINK was in surplus, spending out funds deferred from last financial year in both restricted and designated areas. The rise in forecast income was due to £4k of SNH's grant for 2009/10 having been deferred for their internal accounting reasons. There were minor changes to the forecast expenditure. With a forecast unrestricted balance of £8k and an overall funds balance of around £35k for the end of 2010/11, LINK was in good shape. With regard to the Restricted and Designated forecast there would be 13 projects running if the Board approved the bids for discretionary funding and allocation to Congress; marine phase 3 would close in early July when phase 4 funds would be open for spending.

The revised budget outturn was approved.

The Board was asked to note that the marine monies were ensuring the total spending level on which SNH's percentage support was based; this had recently dropped to 19% without warning. SNH had recently indicated its timescale for informing LINK about future grantaid was now Feb 2011 for y/b April 2011. SNH was planning to effect at least an 11% cut in grantaid across the board.

### 6.2 Funding subgroup recommendations on DPF bids & Congress

The meeting confirmed support for the bids for discretionary funding from SOA and Deer task forces and for the allocation to Congress.

### 6.3 SEW sponsorship

Trustees indicated in response to staff questions about policy that they were relaxed about the possibility of National Grid funding towards SEW 2011, so long as any funding supported LINK's own objectives for the programme. The meeting advised against approaching Ernst and Young and noted that Brodies (suggested in previous years) might be in the pipeline of approaches for Congress.

## 7. AOB

7.1 Green awards The meeting noted Andy Myles' suggestion that Board and Members in future consider putting up nominations for green awards, given the trend for awards to go to non-environmentalists. It would anyway be useful public relations for environmental champions to be included in nominations.

## 8. LINK Dates

Next LINK core meetings 2010/11:

- 21 October: All day Board
- 18-19 November: Congress & Planning
- 15 December: evening Festive reception

Approved dates for 2011:

- 1-3 March: SEW as now set by Holyrood
- 27 Jan, 21 April, 21 June: Board & Networking
- 20 October: Board
- Date to be determined: AGM
- 17/18 November: Congress & Strategic Planning