



## Note of LINK Network Meeting held 22 June 2010 at LINK office, Perth.

Present: Ian McCall (Chair), John Mayhew (APRS. Landscape TF convenor), Helen McDade (JMT), Robert Maund (SCNP), Helen Zealley (President), Lloyd Austin (RSPB, WANE convenor), Calum Duncan (MCS, MTF Convenor), Eila Macqueen (AS, SOA TF), Helen Todd (RA, SOA TF), Katrina Marsden (ATF Convenor, RSPB), John Rosser (NTS), Aedán Smith (PTF Convenor, RSPB),

Staff: Jen Anderson, Andy Myles, Susan Guest, Kate MacColl, Lindsay Roberts, Alan Wells, Alice Walsh

### 1. Apologies

These were received from Mike Robinson, Andrew Fairbairn, Dan Barlow, David Downie, Jonny Hughes, Craig MacAdam, Vicky Junik, Deborah Long, Bob Dawson, Sarah Dolman, Roger Powell, Keith Irving, Gordon Gray Stevens, Maggie Keegan, Rob Thomas, Jonathan Wordsworth, Alistair Beeley, Juliet Swann, Hebe Carus, Beryl Leatherland, Paul Ritchie, Drennan Watson.

### 2. Actions from & Updates since April discussion.

Calum Duncan asked for the April minute to be amended under point 3.1 that MCS *supported effort by COAST* had got maerl onto a LBAP, which had resulted in refusal of an LBAP application.

#### 2.1 Board discussion points

The Operating Plan had been approved earlier by the Board with some amendments. It was proposed that members working on the mitigation and behaviour change aspects of the climate change act work primarily through SCCS, which does not focus on adaptation. Jim Densham (RSPB) was willing to convene a LINK group with a focus on adaptation. An email inviting views and interest would be circulated to all members shortly to gauge support. On Economy a group would meet to take forward our vision (involving WWF, SWT, RSPB and FoES). Environmental governance vision and governance vision would be merged, thought the tasks remained. On Health, it was agreed we had done all we could practically working with SNH and others, and would continue to flag linkages. Our engagement in the Healthy Environment Network had not been productive for LINK so far; Helen Zealley would discuss with the HEN coordinator and take a watching brief role for LINK.

Task Forces were reminded to review their plans regularly and amend as needed via a member of staff.

**Action: staff, Helen, members**

#### 2.2 Outstanding actions from Jan and April Networking meetings

SEW update: Some suggestions of projects had been received from members though not enough. The theme for 2011 would be on active citizenship for the



environment. It was suggested that the Fred Edwards Trust could be included in some way. Members were encouraged to send further ideas to Andy. **Action: members, Andy**

Living within environmental limits: the need for a short paper had been discussed at January's meeting which had not progressed, a larger piece of work than first envisaged. It would be added to the economy vision group's agenda to take forward. **Action: Lloyd, Dan, Jonny, with FoES**

BIG Lottery engagement: Several SEFF members and Mike Robinson had attended a Lottery focus group on environment 10 June where they were invited to input to the application form and provide guidance on greening operations for successful applicants. SEFF will continue to engage with BIG. **Action SEFF**

### **3. LINK operating plan 2010/11**

3.2 Task force resumés of work to date:

Please see the plan for most updates. Discussion included additionally:

Marine: Lindsay Roberts was welcome to the marine project staff. There was much excellent work in progress including submissions of LINK positions, identification of gaps, meetings with civil servants and marine issues on the ministerial agenda for 23 June. The ACME report very successfully launched with support of Andy and Susan, presenting a united front for a responsible sustainable industry. There would be a LINK response to an offshore wind SEA, which Sarah Dolman was drawing together.

Landscape: SNH has been directed that its top priority is to help enable the marine renewables industry with 6 officers working on it and 6 more to be recruited, with a brief to facilitate. SNH staff were unable to attend the ACME launch due to a marine renewables event in Orkney the same day.

Some members were campaigning on hilltracks with a debate in Parliament (9/6/10) highlighting some of the issues. Case evidence would be needed before the autumn.

The TF will focus on National Scenic Areas shortly, with plans to involve SNH in future meetings.

Helen McDade drew attention to applications for windfarm developments moving away from zone 1 to 2 and 3 (example of an application near Sandwood Bay). John Rosser commented that a report from Leeds University and a recent wildlife tourism report which give prominence to the economic value of the landscape resource were not joined up with windfarm development; it was agreed beneficial to discuss at the joint links meeting, although members needed to sign up for this.

The joint APRS/SCNP project on further national parks did include marine. The report is on the APRS website under projects.

**Action: joint links agenda**



Agriculture: The mid term evaluation of the SRDP was a good opportunity to feed in. the contractors carrying out the review want to speak to LINK. Interested members not on the ATF should contact Katrina.

Interim report on CAP by Pack, expecting some announcements that week though final report is delayed. LINK's CAP vision document timing is tied to it. ATF would consider wider campaigning to influence change but this would require more involvement from members. Katrina can supply material for staff to circulate more widely. These closely tie in with SLUS discussions. It was also suggested that meeting of relevant TF convenors be arranged to discuss the wider issues. SEPA are also keen to work with LINK on CAP/SLUS.

**Action: Katrina, staff**

Planning: The TF put in a short response to the Cairngorm boundary consultation with some wider sign-up. TF meetings were important for exchange of intelligence on casework, a key reason that members are involved. The TF is keen to progress its SEA agenda.

Robert raised the issue of pressure on local authorities to approve development outwith their current development plans which then become included in subsequent development plans, with plenty of evidence that objections are being ignored, amounting to dismantling of the planning system, and suggesting the TF undertake some analysis of this. There was discussion of particular cases, the gap between rhetoric and reality, the effect of recession, the energy hierarchy as LINK policy, and what practically LINK can do. The conclusion was that we need to box clever on the structural governance side and on cases as they come (eg suggestion of a hill tracks hot line run by one member). Potentially we can highlight the fact that there is no analysis of outputs or outcomes of the planning systems other than the speed of process. The McGill report is helping to chip away establishment complacency wrt marine and climate acts. Other issue is the national and local interface which Planning and SOA TFs would discuss. On others who might be persuaded to speak out, those with connections to RTPi would pursue.

**Action: PTF and SOATF**

Single Outcome Agreements: TF has met SNH, which is working on low cost indicators for the natural environment. SOA's audit work was being amended post discussion with Clive Mitchell, and would include case studies from good and bad ends of the LA spectrum. A useful meeting was held with ScotGov, which agreed this approach was useful. The Improvement Service board is to improve the menu of indicators; HS and SNH are now on this group.

Wildlife & Natural Environment Bill: Now introduced to Parliament and will be over by the end of this Parliament. TF comprises Deer, Biodiversity TFs and some others. Stakeholder forums recently were told what was in the bill, deer measures were weaker than had been agreed in the consultative phase, Deer TF seeking legal advice. TF will meet in summer to discuss priorities, what will be dealt with collectively and what individually. SPICe contacted LINK to organise site visits for the committee. It was noted that Scottish Badgers were applying for membership and would be interested in this work.



Sustainable Land Use Strategy: Conference planned for autumn which will feature about 10 case studies of good examples.

### 3.5 Proposals for Parliamentary Inquiries

Andy had circulated proposals received and got several more suggestions. As there were not many from which to prioritise he would forward all to the committee clerks for consideration. **Action: Andy**

### 3.6 Joint Links Chester Seminar

As per discussion earlier, members were encouraged to sign up for this on 15 and 16 September. **Action: members**

### 3.7 Scottish Parliamentary elections

LINK manifesto; Consultative drafts were being posted as ready onto the members' website for feedback and sign up. Each section would have a list of members supporting it, and suggestions of further contacts for the parties for expertise, by August/September. **Action: Andy, members, task forces.**

Hustings: Andy would start getting people interested in hustings during the summer. Our pack was very good. Partnership with eco-congregations worked well.

SCVO parliamentary updates: Andy had been nominate to the SCVO Policy Committee and was now chairing it, and wanted members feedback on what he should press for (please see OP update). The key issues were that SCVO did not speak for campaigning NGOs who were marginalised by service delivery organisations. Members agreed with Andy's analysis and were encouraged to join the Green Reference Group to help push the agenda forward. It was agreed that LINK should continue membership and that Andy should continue his efforts.

## **5. AOB**

### 5.1 Green awards – Nominations

There were few nominations coming from our sector. Members were encouraged to nominate people from their own or fellow ENGOS for these to gain some profile and recognition of effort rather than leaving the field open for greenwash.

**Action: members**

### 5.2 LINK discretionary funding

TFs were encouraged to propose any bids for this years fund asap.

Carey Coombs would be leaving RSPB shortly to go back to full time farming. He would be much missed. The potential to continue his input to the ATF as an individual was discussed and would be pursued. **Action: Katrina**

## **6. Next LINK Members' meetings**

- 13 July Advocacy training (day, Edinburgh)
- 17 August, Media training (day, Edinburgh)
- 18-19 November – Congress & Strategic Planning
- 7 December – provisional date for Festive Reception