

## 1 Million Acre – Strategic Group Meeting

1130-1530, Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2016

St Andrews House, Conference Room E

### MINUTES

#### Present:

- \* Charlie Hogg (Chair, SG)
- \* Linsay Chalmers (CLS)
- \* Ian Cooke (DTAS)
- \* Bob Frost (FCS)
- \* Sandra Holmes (HIE)
- \* Donald Inch (SLE)
- \* Peter Peacock (CLS)
- \* Neil Ritch (BIG Lottery)
- \* Sarah Skerratt (SRUC)
- \* Dave Thomson (SG)

#### Apologies:

Sarah-Jane Laing (SLE)

1. Attendees were welcomed to the first 1m acre strategic group meeting. Donald Inch attended on behalf of Sarah-Jane Laing.
2. **1m acre SLWG report**  
CH informed the meeting of the positive feedback received following publication of the 1m acre SLWG report in December 2015
3. **Activities since SLWG concluded**  
Each person updated the group with activity within their organisation since the conclusion of the 1m acre SLWG. A number of positive collaborative activities were highlighted, particularly around landowner/community engagement protocol development, co-ordinating support services and development of the next Scottish land fund (SLF)
4. **Remit and membership of strategic group**  
It was agreed that the groups focus should be on strategic implementation of the 1m acre strategy and the legacy from the SLWG to continue collaborations. It was also agreed that the immediate group should be kept small to retain focus.

It was agreed that due to the nature of her role Sarah Skerratt would not be a direct member of the strategic implementation group but would continue to have an observation/ advisory role.

The remit of the group was agreed as:

- a) Monitor the implementation of the actions from the 1m acre SLWG strategy report
- b) Develop a strategic approach to raising awareness of community land ownership
- c) Improve co-ordination of existing support activities and identify areas for greater collaboration
- d) Develop a framework of outcomes and indicators that can be used to measure the success of community land ownership and the 1m acre target

#### **5. Update on research and evaluation**

- A consortium including CLS and the SG has been awarded £20k SUII funding to research the benefits of community land ownership. The project has just commenced and is due to complete in the summer (2016)
- An intern has recently started based in RESAS undertaking a rapid evaluation of the impacts of the current SLF. The project commenced in Jan 2016 and will last 3 months.
- CH has been investigating possibilities for mapping the community ownership data gathered by the SLWG. SG GIS team is currently evaluating possibilities and contacting Registers of Scotland to explore data matching possibilities. BF noted that FCS will have boundaries for NFLS transfers. PP also noted other international work looking at globally mapping community ownership.
- SG is developing research proposals to identify potential measures of outcomes and outputs of CLO to develop a set of indicators for the 1m acre target. Currently looking at how to complement recently funded research, rather than duplicate effort.
- SRUC will be following a new strategic research programme from April 2016 which will focus on looking at success/ failure in a community resilience context as well as the legitimacy of local democracy. The next edition of Rural Scotland in Focus is due to be published in June 2016 and will contain a section on community empowerment.
- HIE is presently evaluating its approach to supporting community-led projects, including community asset ownership.
- FCS/RESAS sponsored research project into engagement relating to community empowerment. Plans for potential session with public bodies to highlight research finding.

#### **6. Update on asset transfer**

Jean Waddie from the SG Community Empowerment Team gave an update on activity to the meeting.

- A steering group is in place to look at asset transfer processes. A consultation will be published before Easter on the regulations and guidance accompanying pt5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- A wider SLWG has been set up to look at valuation/ assessment of non-financial benefits in relation to asset transfer requests. Membership includes central and local government finance and estate management representatives, community group representatives, Audit Scotland (observational role), Scottish Funders Forum representative. The first meeting is on 19/2/16.

#### **7. Raising awareness of community land ownership**

The discussion on raising awareness considered the elements required, where responsibilities lie and how it all fits together. It was agreed that the appropriate support services need to be available to meet any additional demand.

Key elements discussed included:

- Identifying what is already happening over the next 12 months and associated gaps

- Basic co-ordinating to events (to avoid duplication/repetition of effort)
- More national level activity (e.g. placed articles, conferences, national events, info literature to community councils etc)
- A programme of engagement to target particular areas of Scotland
- Consider common policy positions (e.g. should all communities be advised to register an interest in land, regardless of advice giver?)
- How do communities move from becoming aware of CLO to taking action? Need to gather intelligence on how to target awareness raising activities
- Once CRTB and Asset Transfer guidance in place need to target urban communities

**ACTION:** CH will collate a list of relevant events over the next 12 months. ALL to provide a list of known activities to CH to compile by end March.

**8. Support services – co-ordination, sign-posting and gaps**

Discussion was clear that adequate and relevant support needs to be in place for publicity and promotion to be successful. Support services directly follows from awareness raising activities.

Agreed that it is important to develop a pattern of support to be commonly used on all websites etc and be cross-referred to by all major support providers. Ideally should be available for use from May 2016.

**ACTION:** COSS and CLS to take forward development of a road map of community ownership support (similar to COSS asset transfer road map) with support from others (particularly HIE and BIG Lottery). Draft to be produced for next strategic group meeting in April.

**9. Future meetings and AOB**

Next meeting of the 1m acre Strategic Implementation Group to be in April 2016.

**ACTION:** CH to circulate date and venue of next meeting.  
**Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April , 1130, St Andrews House, Edinburgh**