

Minutes of a meeting of the UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man Stakeholder Partnership Group (UBIOM SPG) held on Wednesday 29th January 2020 at 14:00 in the King Orry Room, Government Offices, Douglas

Present:

Hon H Quayle MHK	Chief Minister – Chair	CM
Hon G Boot MHK	Minister, Department of Environment, Food and Agriculture	GB
Mrs Karen McHarg	Director of Environment, DEFA	KM
Dr Richard Selman	Head of Ecosystem Policy, DEFA	RS
Miss Jo Overty	Biosphere Project Officer, DEFA	JO
Miss Jo Callister	Advisory Teacher for Manx Curriculum, DESC	JC
Miss Rowan Henthorn	Ecosystem Officer, DEFA	RH
Miss Sophie Costain	Ecosystem Policy Officer, DEFA (minutes)	SC
Mrs Muriel Garland	Chair, EcoVannin	MG
Mr Leigh Morris	CEO, Manx Wildlife Trust	LM
Mr Edmund Southworth	Director, Manx National Heritage	ES
Mr David Gawne	Council of Voluntary Organisations	DG
Mrs Janet Bridle	Council of Voluntary Organisations	JB
Ms Liz Aelberry	Head of Communications, Cabinet Office	LA
Ms Aly Lewin	Strategy and Policy Manager, DfE	AL
Mr Paul Fletcher	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	PF
Mr David Beard	Manx Fish Producers’ Organisation	DB
Miss Laura McCoy	Manx National Heritage	LMC
Mrs Viv Davies	Chairman, Manx Wildlife Trust	VD
Mr Tim Johnson	President, Manx NFU	TJ
Mr Brian Brumby	Lands Committee Chairman, Manx NFU	BB
Mr Jon Holden	Workplace Operations Manager, TSG Interactive Services Ltd	JH
Dr Breesha Maddrell	Director, Culture Vannin	BM
Mr Chris Martin	Operations Manager, The Children’s Centre	CMa
Ms Gail Corrin	Higher Education Manager, UCM	GC
Miss Nikole Cervantes	Biosphere Student	NC

1/20/1

Chief Minister’s welcome and opening remarks

Action

CM gave a special welcome to Mr Leigh Morris, the new CEO of the MWT. Congratulations were given on his appointment and CM said he was very pleased to have him here. LM thanked the Chief Minister. Welcome was also given to NC, Biosphere Intern, who will be working with JO in DEFA.

Within the past year, one of the main Government priorities has been responding to the climate emergency. Tynwald last week gave unanimous endorsement to the independent plan and the Government action plan and measures will now be taken to reach net zero carbon emissions. Phase 1 of the plan, which includes a Climate Bill, starts immediately. Phase 2 will take 12-18 months to come up with, as more research is required. Government cannot achieve net zero on its own and will need the support of the business, third and community sector. The hardest part of any journey is the first steps. CM continued that Government is now setting up a board and committee to take the

climate action forward and they will welcome ideas from everyone.

A lot has been achieved within UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man in the past 6 months and the group should recognise JO's hard work. UNESCO Biosphere IoM needs a good firm foundation to build upon, with a strategy and a clear set of policies and principles. The main piece of work for today's meeting is fine-tuning the Biosphere Vision and Strategy. Thank you to everyone for feeding back on this so far.

2/20/1 Meeting apologies

Mr Bill Dale BEM	Beach Buddies Isle of Man
Mrs Angela Byrne	Head of Tourism, Visit Isle of Man
Miss Laura Gill	Marketing Manager, DfE
Mr Leo Wasley	Member, Biosphere Youth Forum

3/20/1 Conflicts of interest with items on the agenda

None.

4/20/1 Minutes of meeting on 24th July 2020 for approval

BM was missed off the attendees list for the last meeting and this will be amended.

Minutes signed.

5/20/1 Matters arising not featured elsewhere on agenda

Item 1/19/9. Research to be a regular agenda item - Research added as an agenda item.

Item 1/19/12. ES to investigate pricing and potential outlets for distributing decanters via MNH outlets – ES said that MNH have identified a UK supplier and inserted a range of bamboo cups and stainless steel decanters into their retail outlets, and there seems to be good demand. Sales are through the outlets but they could do wholesale if numbers are high enough.

Item 1/19/13 Proposal for Big Lunch Event - Biosphere Bash – on agenda (agenda item 9).

Item 1/19/15. GC to provide an update about 'Be the Spark' – GC said that UCM held its first Research Festival in 2019, which was opened by Skype by Dr Enny Sudarmonowati, global chair of Biosphere, with environment as one of the key themes. The aim of the festival was to establish an ongoing community for researchers and launch Research Vannin, a hub to connect, promote and inform IOM research and researchers. The 2020 festival is scheduled for 18th September 2020 with the theme of 'sustainability'. In April 2021 the event will be working with Professor Dave Quirk to create a problem-solving conference to come up with solutions to climate conundrums.

Item 1/19/16. AB to provide update on the 'Dark Skies Nation' accreditation for next meeting – JO said that AB has sent her apologies but advised she was in initial contact about getting dark skies accreditation.

6/20/1 General progress report – paper and verbal update by JO

JO emailed her written update to the group but wanted to highlight two things from the update, one positive and one less so.

JO will be attending a meeting next week to take part in a Chamber of Commerce charity forum, bringing together charities and businesses in order to harness volunteering, corporate social responsibility and to connect them together. We hope the charities will benefit, and they are looking at it as a Biosphere project.

We had a protestor at our UNESCO Biosphere awards. Unfortunately, this led to an initiative with a private sector business, aimed at encouraging business to develop more sustainable practices, falling through, as that organisation did not want its name associated with protesting. CM said that at the time Government were already working on our strategy for tackling climate change, with a commitment to net zero, but the protest put a taint on the private event and had now, unfortunately, led to the loss of an opportunity. GB said the protestor was factually incorrect.

BM highlighted and gave credit to JO for the great current Biosphere social media.

ES wanted it noted that Manx Wildlife Week runs from the 7th - 17th May, not from the 8th as is written. The week will be starting with a talk from Simon Webb about rewilding.

CM told the group that his diary has been and will continue to be very busy because of Brexit but if any deal is done, there would be a July deadline to agree a basic framework and therefore CM will have to do a lot of travelling on and off Island. He may not be able to get to Biosphere events, so gives his apologies. CM will make sure that the negotiators are aware of Isle of Man concerns.

7/20/1 Vision and Strategy – paper and discussion led by RS

RS reminded the group that we had two workshops last year that resulted in the structure of the 5Es and all SPG comments were brought together to create the Vision and Strategy as presented. All members have had a chance to comment on it now and we have supplied a table of all the comments. The group is now asked to agree the changes in order to finalise it, noting that the design is not yet completed and more time is needed from Cabinet Office to get this finished.

Overall Appearance

- Text replaced for infographics – RS asked if there are specific things better dealt with as infographics? LM said that he suggested this and he thought there were some headlines or key statistics which could be used. GC said that it is not clear how strategies such as the Programme for Government and concepts such as the sustainable development goals, link together. An infographic on how they are interconnected would be an improvement.

LA said she was happy with this. If members want to pull out any key statistics it's something she and her team can have a look at. CM said keeping it simple is key, people only have a limited time and usually only take the key points, unless they are passionate. We need to make sure our key message gets out to the message skimmers.

JO said what has been provided is a 'design light' version of what the final strategy will look like, to give everyone a sense of what it will read like and how it will look. The Government's graphic designer has limited time but he can include more pictures and ideas.

- Back cover – It was agreed that stakeholders would provide their logos for use on the back cover.

ACTION POINT – All SPG to send organisations logos to JO by Tuesday 11th February. 3MB EPS or PDF format.

ALL SPG

CM clarified that everyone will be sent an updated version of the strategy before next steps towards publication are taken.

Content

- Make 'The Isle of Man is not immune' the second sentence. RS said we proposed to keep the wording as is. BM said that she thinks the second and third paragraphs need to be changed as line 3 refers to something in the 1st paragraph so it doesn't make sense. LA and JO to discuss the wording in more detail after the meeting.
- 2nd para: use 'strong' instead of 'unaverring' – amendment agreed.
- Delete 'which has never been more important'. RS proposed not to change the sentence. JO said that this sentence was recognition of the growing realisation that people's connection to the world around them is very important. BM responded that she liked the newly proposed sentence better 'This recognises the pressing issues facing us and importance of finding solutions' and this could be followed with 'this has never been more important'. This change was agreed.
- Simplify 'collaborate and learn from' – no amendment made.
- Re-word 'we are now ready to set out our local vision and strategy' – BM said that this is a national vision and strategy, not a local one. RS proposed 'we are now ready to set out our vision and strategy'. Amendment agreed.

Vision and Shared Aim

- ES asked if the title of 'Visions and Shared Aim' indicates that we couldn't decide what to call it? It is semantics but one may distract from the other. BM agreed and said it was repetitive. Sentence to be tweaked to avoid repetition.
- The wording of the 5Es seems tentative – GC retracts her concerns.
- Amend sentence under economy to 'Leverage the Biosphere brand to encourage people to live, work in' etc – RS said that he felt this new wording had the potential to be inflammatory and we would prefer not to change it. JO agreed and said we don't want to monetise Biosphere. All agreed, no amendment made.
- Add a sixth E 'Encourage Action and Collaboration' – LM retracts his comments.
- Captioning – RS said that we have discussed captioning some of the items, however we don't want the document to date quickly so it will have to be considerably done.
- Apologies were given to FWAG for the error of their name being missing from the SPG list, this has now been changed.
- Insert measurables – RS said that we are trying to keep this document very high level and strategic, the intent was not to put measurables in. JO said that most things we delivered last year weren't envisaged at the start of the year, things just happened which we were well positioned to deliver on. We don't want to put people off or say no to things just because it's not in the KPIs for the year.

In addition to the vision and strategy we propose the production of an annual report which will be presented to the SPG for approval. RS said that so much of Biosphere is from the ground-up, but how much do we want it to be top-down and have it stated more explicitly what we will be doing? ES said that this is a governance issue. It's the community's plan and we need to record activity and be transparent about what is happening, but the plan can't commit us to deliver using shareholder resources or charity funding. It is a shared commitment to delivering something. Therefore, we need records to show whether we have passed or failed. We need recording but not conventional governance.

JO said that she envisaged the delivery report being presented as a rolling plan, presented in a new way under the 5Es and formatted for public consumption.

- BM said one of the main problems is that it does not say enough about the 5Es. Ideally, it needs a full-page on each, with examples included of projects which have been undertaken, themed under the Es as an example to show others what they could do and how they could get involved. If you are outside of the SPG, the strategy currently doesn't give you enough steer on how to get involved, or

what to hang projects or initiatives on. There needs to be a way to lead people into the document to show that it's owned by everyone.

BM commented that the 'How we will fulfil our strategy' is expanded on well but there has to be some form of reporting mechanism and she agreed with JO, that this could be a rolling report, which summates what has been done and is made available to the public.

- Links with other strategies - TJ said we need to be careful that we don't duplicate ideas and initiatives and thus double resources. There are areas where the Biosphere and climate change aims are similar and we need to have a system to make each other aware of that. CM said that there will be more specific measurables integrated with the climate change action plan. The vision and strategy will be less specific but it can link to climate change. JO explained that the reason we aren't aligning this more closely with strategies such as climate change is that we want the strategy to have a reasonably long shelf life so it was deliberately kept quite broad. GC said that this could be solved by an infographic showing the links and overlaps, this will also give the strategy context and connection early on.

ES said that the Government strategies and policies listed on page 4 have different strengths and powers. Some are substantial, long-term policies based on legislation eg. the Strategic Plan, which has significant island-wide protective force, whereas some are more internal Government strategy with little island power eg. the Locate Isle of Man strategy. By lumping them all together we risk not highlighting the more significant strategies. Additionally, though nature reserves and ASSI are listed on page 5 it does not mention Conservation Areas. JO replied that this is about the Biosphere zoning. ES said that monuments are protected by law therefore there is an inconsistency here.

The three zones listed on page 5 are currently followed by five paragraphs, whereas it should be followed by three paragraphs, one for each zone. RS replied that this page could be restructured and we could add something in about cultural heritage. ES said we had to stress the level of protection and engagement when submitting the Biosphere application. We have a protected historic environment and a strong planning system and it is these legal protections which were important to UNESCO.

ACTION - RS and ES to come up with a form of words to be circulated to the group for comment.

RS and ES

- Should the vision and strategy be accompanied by an action plan? – RS said we are proposing to report back to the SPG each year. There could be a brief action plan containing deliverables for the following year but this depends on how much steer the SPG wants to give us. VD said that in the future the SPG needs to be the enabler to push forward Biosphere actions, it can't hold up or stop JO's progress. JO said that in the future we will hold everything up to the light of the

5Es, to show how projects fit in. We are one of the only Biospheres who are not specific in our efforts and work across all sectors. This increases the volume of things coming in and we don't want to turn projects away, we want to engage with as many people in many different sectors as possible. The updated terms of reference should help us address this.

- Manx interchangeably with Isle of Man – BM suggested this as a way to stop Isle of Man becoming repetitive, though there was nothing specific she wanted changing. Many of the names contain Isle of Man but partnership organisations use 'Manx', so the document can't be allergic to the word Manx.

MG asked if a video was being made of everything that is happening? RS replied that we will be doing more proud to share videos. JO said that the vision and strategy is not a stand-alone document and we will need to get a website and all additional advertising and promotional materials aligned to it, though Cabinet Office designer has a finite amount of resource to do this. BM commented that she thought a video would be a great idea as it communicates to people where a document wouldn't. JO should speak to Sarah Mercer as she may be able to make one quite quickly.

It was clarified that a public consultation on the strategy will not be required.

CM gave his thanks to JO and Charles for getting us this far and said it was a good step in the right direction.

8/20/1

SPG Terms of Reference review – paper and discussion led by RS

RS explained that the TORs are out of date and therefore changes are proposed. He took the group through these line by line to agree changes where appropriate.

Purpose - All changes agreed.

Roles and Responsibilities - All changes agreed.

Membership - All changes agreed.

Tasks – RS said that the youth forum is currently inactive and this needs resolving. We need to agree and enact a different structure and link it more closely with this group.

RS proposed that C be deleted entirely as we sometimes need to send reports to UK MAB and don't have time to wait for the SPG meeting every half a year. If the group requires sight of these reports then we will have to formulate an email system. Group agreed on deletion.

RS said that the current partnership application process isn't reflective of

what was written in section F. Does the group wish to retain the power of authorisation of the Biosphere name, identity and marks? The group can retain power but delegate this to the Biosphere team, which is effectively what already happens. The group agreed to retain and delegate this power.

JO asked the group to let her know if they see any inappropriate use of UNESCO Biosphere Isle of Man.

Outputs and deliverables - All changes agreed

Working Principles - All changes agreed

Funding

ES said that we might want to seek advice on sections B and C because as a stakeholder or management committee, he doubts whether we could open a bank account or distribute funds. The group does not have a formal constitution as a charity or trading body would. RS to investigate and circulate an email once a response is received.

ACTION: RS to investigate and circulate an email once a response is received.

RS

All other changes agreed.

Meeting Arrangements

In regards to section C, VD asked if the minutes of the SPG meetings were to be made available to the public after being approved? RS replied yes, they could go on the website after all amendments are made and they are signed off.

RS said that it would be useful to fill perceived gaps in the SPG, eg. the Chamber of Commerce, however the room is full and there are two or three representatives of one group around the room. One member from any organisation should be the default position. GB and CM clarified that if people send more than one, then deputies could sit behind, rather than at the table.

Annex 1

In addition to the proposed changes, SPG members pointed out that the Government acronyms within the table needed updating. ES requested that MNH be moved into the NGO section and BM said that the Isle of Man Arts Council should fall under the Isle of Man Government as they are a delegation under the Minister.

CM thanked everyone for their co-operation.

9/20/1

Community event – paper and verbal update by JO

JO has assembled a committee, designed an event and come up with a logo. A decision is required from the group about whether we should proceed with the event, or think of a different format. An additional

decision is required about whether we should launch and run the event this year or whether we should take a long run and launch next year. JO said that if we are asking communities to plan a summer event then we couldn't have a launch later than March. The event still requires considerable design and the development of a toolkit etc. and it is unlikely that this will happen in February. It was agreed that the event be launched in 2021.

CM said that the fee for use of DEFA land will be waived.

JC said that the schools will be having a dedicated Biosphere week in 2021, in the summer term between TT and summer holidays and they could potentially launch the event or run a trial.

JO said that if anyone else wants to help with the event, to please let her know. CM suggested that JO speak to Jen from Year of Our Island so she can learn from the problems and mistakes that they encountered.

10/20/1

Education updates:

JC gave the following updates:

- **Sustainable Development Goals in Schools:** DESC are at the very start of all schools linking their sustainability work to the SDGs. This does not involve changing their curricula, but raising awareness. Wendy Shimmin from the One World Centre and JO have helped with support for this. Any future sustainability initiatives will also now link to the SDGs so everything is much more joined up for schools.
- **Eco Schools:** All IoM schools are in the process of reregistering with the Eco Schools initiative. There is a new bilingual Manx / English logo and JC is due to meet with the UK Eco team before 2021 so we can hopefully adapt their UK programme to fit with specific IoM initiatives. Through Global Eco Schools hopefully all the ten Eco School topics will also include links to the SDGs.
- **UNESCO Biosphere IoM 2021 Focus:** There will be a DESC focus on UNESCO Biosphere IoM in Summer term 2021. All schools will be designated a zone and will produce work around that culminating in a week of activities offered to schools that support their zone. This will also act as a measure to showcase what schools are doing to support their UNESCO Biosphere Pledge.

GC gave the following updates:

- Along with colleagues in primary and secondary education, UCM is commencing a review of curriculum to prepare for carbon neutrality, so that sustainability runs through everything.
- As part of the *#UCMtalks* series, Dr Dave Quirk recently gave a talk on 'How Might the IOM be Carbon Neutral?', to a capacity

audience at the Mountain View Innovation Centre. The talk and slides are available at;

<https://www.ucm.ac.im/research/research-events/ucmtalks/listen-again-ucmtalks-2019-2020/>

- UCM are launching a Student Attribute Framework for the 2020/21 cohort, including 'be socially responsible and a leader in making your life sustainable'. This attribute will facilitate focus on the Biosphere, climate change and sustainable business practice.

11/20/1 Beach Buddies update on plans for branches in all Biospheres – presentation by BD

JO said that BD was unable to attend today but had updated that all 701 Biospheres will soon have their own branch of Beach Buddies and BD thinks UNESCO will be putting out a statement about this shortly. In the meantime, BD has been interviewed about his work by the UK MAB on the Wider Value of UNESCO to the UK and this will be published in February.

12/20/1

Research – verbal updates:

JO introduced NC and asked her to give a few sentences about herself and what she will be doing in the coming months. NC told the group that she is a psychologist from Costa Rica, who is currently studying with UCM and is starting a placement with UNESCO Biosphere to create a toolkit to engage business with Biosphere, using a psychosocial approach. NC will be starting next week.

JO has interviewed a student from a French University for a 4 month long placement on the Isle of Man and they are currently just working the arrangement out. RS said that the student is doing a Masters course on Biospheres.

GC wanted to acknowledge DEFA for accepting another Masters student from UCM.

Dr Dave Quirk is linking with UCM with regard to a possible PG Certificate in Global Energy based at UCM, and the creation of an Energy Institute on island to promote research and support other small countries in transitioning.

ES said a PhD student at Swansea University is analysing Manx Shearwater feathers to determine where they are feeding. Additionally, Bangor University are adding GPS tags to Manx Shearwaters to see where they are going in Manx waters.

Bangor University have been piloting a study using sonar along the Welsh coast for the identification of shipwrecks from World War I and II. The project will be going to the MNH Trustees next week, to agree work in Manx waters. MNH will pay for a Manx crew to look for Manx wrecks

using sonar. CM asked ES to keep him updated with this.

- **Leigh Morris/Viv Davies, CEO and Chair, MWT**

Sarah Hickey from the MWT has been undertaking extensive survey work, looking at peat depth, to get an Island baseline. 2600 of 10,000ha has been covered. LM will be having a meeting tomorrow to see how this work could fit in with climate change. Additionally, LM has been talking with Sarah about how it could link to student projects. MWT could tutor research students. Could the SPG as a group have a list of areas or research we are interested in and want done which we could give out to universities to get targeted projects? LM will speak to GC about this. CM asked about carbon capture per tonne? LM replied that it is significant but he would have to ask Sarah.

- **Other**

TJ said that the MNFU are working with DEFA on carbon audits of 10 farms across the Isle of Man. This will give us a better, more accurate understanding of the Island's agricultural emissions, which utilises the Manx context, and which will help inform future policies.

RS said that he would like to bring over a specialist in sustainable farming so if the MNFU have any contacts please let him know.

BM told the group that ES and herself sit on the building conservation forum. Plans are in place for a 3 day training event from the 30th April – 2nd May, which will have sustainability at its core, focussing on old and traditional buildings. There will be speakers from on and off island, with a focus on skills, reskilling the building workforce, new ideas and training.

13/20/1

Any other business

ES attended the 2019 Inter-Island Environment Conference in Alderney and the next one is in Guernsey on the 17th/18th September 2020. It has a lot of Biosphere relevance.

LM said that there are people in the room he would love to have contact with so please reach out to him if he doesn't get in touch.

Date of next meeting.

A Wednesday in July was deemed appropriate. JO will advise on the date soon.

Approval:

Hon Geoffrey Boot MHK, Vice Chair of UBIOM and Minister for DEFA

Signature:

Date: 24th February 2021

After they are formalised, the minutes will appear on www.biosphere.im