

Minutes from the 4th UK Arctic and Antarctic Partnership (UKAAP) Steering Committee Meeting

Thursday 7th July, 2016, from 13:15 to 17:00, Room TEC 0.01,
The Enterprise Centre, University of East Anglia

Attendees:

Prof Phil Wookey (PW)	Heriot –Watt University, vice-chair
Prof Sheldon Bacon (SB)	National Oceanography Centre, Southampton
Prof Mary Edwards (ME)	University of Southampton
Kyle Mayers (KM)	National Oceanography Centre, Southampton
Dr Clare Robinson (CR)	University of Manchester
Jessica Surma (JS)	NERC
Alex Tate (AT)	BAS
Prof Martyn Tranter (MT)	Bristol Glaciology Centre, University of Bristol
Henry Burgess (HB)	NERC Arctic Office
Nicola Munro (NM)	NERC Arctic Office, Secretary

Invited (and in attendance):

Prof David Pond (DP)	SAMS
Prof Bill Sturges (BS)	UEA

Apologies:

Prof Klaus Dodds (KD)	Royal Holloway, University of London
Prof Julian Dowdeswell (JD)	SPRI
Prof Jane Francis (JF)	BAS
Dr Stephanie Henson (SH)	National Oceanography Centre, Southampton
Dr Anne Jungblut (AJ)	Natural History Museum
Prof Martin Siegert (MS)	Imperial College London
Dr Jeremy Wilkinson (JW)	BAS
Prof Eric Wolff (EW)	University of Cambridge

Minutes:

Welcome and Introductions (PW)

PW opened the meeting and noted the apologies sent from members unable to attend. He welcomed and thanked David Pond, SAMS, who joined the meeting to discuss the plans for the next UK Arctic Science Conference to be hosted by SAMS in 2017. Participants were then asked to introduce themselves. (A list of participant webpages can be found in Annex 1).

Review of Minutes and Actions from SC3 meeting in November 2015 (PW)

PW presented the minutes from the last meeting. No further comments or amendments were made and the minutes were accepted as a true record of the third meeting in November 2015. This will be posted on the UKAAP website.

PW thanked everyone who had completed the actions set at the third meeting, and noted that some of the actions would be discussed later in the meeting.

Arctic Issues: Update from the Arctic Office: actions; priorities and future development:

HB gave a presentation highlighting recent actions and priorities for the Arctic Office. He reported that over the past few months, the Arctic Office has visited several institutions and universities (including SAMS, Edinburgh, Southampton and NOC, Bangor, Leeds, Reading, Bristol) to introduce the team and inform on the key priorities and actions. The Office will continue these visits in the autumn.

As part of the communication plan, the Arctic Office will continue to circulate monthly bulletins, as well as briefing notes for specific events (e.g. the Arctic Science Summit Week – ASSW). The aim is to keep these short (no more than two pages) and to regularly include updates on UK Arctic research from the Community. The Arctic Office has also revitalised the twitter feed (@Arctic_Office) and will aim to use this as another way of keeping the UK community informed.

The Arctic Office has been successful in securing some funds to re-develop the website (www.arctic.ac.uk) to make it more user-friendly and interactive. HB commented that it was clear from the visits that the community are keen for the Arctic Office to provide a database with information on current UK Arctic research, what science is happening and where etc. The Arctic Office will look at developing this but HB commented that this will need to be done in consultation with the community to ensure that the right product is delivered.

The Arctic Office will be commissioning a short film highlighting UK Arctic Science – footage will be collected from across the UK community to produce a five minute film to be used at events such as the upcoming Royal Society event and the international Arctic Circle Assembly in October 2016. HB suggested that the UK Arctic Vision statement would then act as an underlying narrative for this.

In terms of international engagement, HB reported on a recent meeting with David Scott from Polar Knowledge Canada, to review the current UK-Canada MOU. As part of this process, HB commented that there will be a consultation to gain an understanding on what the UK requirements are in terms of accessing Canadian facilities. A bid has also been jointly submitted to BEIS by the Science and Innovation Network (SIN) and the Arctic Office, for implementation funds to help facilitate the MOU.

HB reported that Norway recently produced a White Paper on the future of Svalbard that states that, from 1st January 2017, all research taking place on Svalbard will be managed by the Norwegian Polar Institute (NPI). The FCO are also currently in the process of finalising the MOU between Norway and the UK.

HB attended the Arctic Science Summit Week (ASSW) in Fairbanks, Alaska, in March 2016 and sat on the IASC Council as the UK representative. The Arctic Office also represents the UK at the Sustaining Arctic Observations Network (SAON) meetings. The Arctic Office also attended the Ny-Ålesund Station Managers Committee (NySMAC) meeting in Stockholm, in April 2016, as well as continuing to attend the Cross-Whitehall meetings. HB is now a member of the recently re-established All Parties Parliamentary Group (APPG) and will aim to continue the flow of information between UKAAP and the APPG.

The Arctic Office also aims to widely promote and disseminate the outcomes from the Arctic Research Programme (ARP) and is currently in the process of finalising the 'End of Programme' booklet which will summarise the key research from the ARP.

HB reported that the Arctic Office is organising an event at The Royal Society - '*Understanding the Arctic: science, technology and international collaboration*' - which is supported by NERC. It will highlight the key findings from the ARP. Professor Tim Wheeler will open the meeting which will consist of a morning session with all core funded projects presenting their key findings, and an afternoon session which will focus on international collaboration and new technologies and innovative systems. David Scott (Polar Knowledge Canada), Jan-Gunnar Winther (NPI) and Martin Jeffries (White House) have all confirmed attendance. There will also be representation from European partners including Renuka Badhe from the European Polar Board (EPB).

The Arctic Office is also keen to continue to promote the UK Arctic Station as much as possible in the lead up to the NERC NC commissioning process.

UKAAP thanked HB for the report and endorsed the work that has been done so far.

UK Arctic Vision – action since SC3; discussion; and next steps (PW, SB, JD, HB)

It was reported that there had been some initial discussions in previous meetings about the Arctic Vision document, however it had not yet been finalised. SB commented that the UKAAP ToR should be used as a starting point and that the Arctic Vision document should remain open and flexible and be made available to a wide audience. HB commented that it would be useful to have this document ready in time for the upcoming autumn conferences such as the Arctic Circle assembly and Royal Society events in October. The comment was made that having this document will enable people engaged in UK Arctic research to have a general overview of the direction in which UK Arctic science is heading, which can then be promoted and used to potentially access key stakeholders and funders. PW commented that the Vision document must also include input from social scientists.

ACTION: SB and HB to produce the first draft, this will then be circulated to the UKAAP SC for further comment and then out to the wider community. The aim is to have this document finalised by the beginning of October.

IASC – update from 2016 Council meeting; Strategic Review process; potential changes to UK representation (HB. Paper: UKAAP 4/03)

HB explained that the paper submitted to the UKAAP 4 meeting was a summary of thoughts from his attendance at the IASC Council meeting in Fairbanks in March 2016. HB commented that it was clear that there needs to be greater awareness of IASC across the UK and more representation on the working groups. At present, for example, there is no UK representation on the Atmospheric working group. HB made the comment that further work needs to be done on making the connection between the UK community and IASC working groups and on how best to support UK engagement within these groups. In the past, the Arctic Office has been able to provide limited support to working group members and HB reported that the Office has recently been successful in securing some initial money in the very short term to continue to support attendance; however, it is important to identify mechanisms to sustain longer-term attendance. HB suggested that the Arctic

Office lead on finding representatives to attend the IASC Working group meetings, and review the process to ensure long term attendance. PW commented that there has been some frustration in the research community due to a lack of clarity in the past regarding how these nominations have been made. Usually, it is the funding bodies that tend to nominate individuals to sit on these groups. The other issue has been the lack of feedback from these meetings back to the national groups. HB suggested that members of these working groups should also sit on the UKAAP steering committee to ensure the flow of information.

ACTION: Arctic Office to ensure wider promotion of IASC, and IASC Fellows, and to start the process of ensuring UK representation on the IASC Working Groups and report back at the next UKAAP meeting in November/December 2016.

Science into policy: progress; opportunities; next steps (HB. Paper: UKAAP 4/04)

HB gave a brief overview of the paper submitted to the meeting which highlights current progress, opportunities and next steps which includes identifying and disseminating some of the direct policy implications from the ARP within the scope of the ARP communications plan and the potential opportunities that will arise from the new Changing Arctic Ocean programme. There was also a short discussion on the need for position papers/science papers focussing on key themes and how best to engage with policy makers. HB reported that the Cross-Whitehall network meet twice a year which would offer high level policy and science engagement.

ACTION: HB to suggest an agenda item on 'Arctic science into Arctic policy' at the next Cross-Whitehall meeting later this year with the view of a UK Arctic researcher to attend to present to this group as an initial step.

ACTION: Arctic Office to continue to explore the possibility of producing a short ARP policy related document aimed specifically at relevant policy makers.

Upcoming events: Arctic Circle Assembly; Arctic Science Ministerial; and Royal Society (HB)

HB gave a quick update on upcoming events. The 4th Arctic Circle assembly will be held once again in Reykjavik, 7th to 9th October, and HB commented that these meetings are worth attending as they include a wide range of stakeholders. HB reported that the UK has been successful in securing two breakout sessions, one organised by the Science and Innovation Network in Copenhagen with a focus on western science and local indigenous knowledge. The other breakout session is being organised by the Arctic Office and will have a focus on remote and autonomous vehicles. The Office has also been successful in securing some exhibition space and will look to showcase the UK Arctic research community, including the Arctic Vision statement, the Arctic film, Arctic Research Programme etc. There was also enough money left in the ARP 'End of Programme' communications budget to support some of the ARP scientists to also attend this event and further promote the outcomes from this programme.

HB also gave a quick update on the Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting, due to be held in Washington DC on the 28th of September 2016. This is being led by Martin Jeffries from the Office of Science and Technology Policy; however, it is not a product of the US Arctic Council Chairmanship. The Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation, Jo Johnson MP, has been invited, and it is hoped he will be able to attend. The outcome is likely to be a communiqué on what the US will commit to in future.

UK Polar Conferences

UK Antarctic Science conference:

BS joined the meeting to give an update on the Antarctic Science conference. He reported that the meeting had gone well, with approximately 90 people attending. A public lecture by Dr David Wilson, as recommended by UKAAP, was well attended, as was the invited talk from Amanda Lynnes

from IAATO. BS reported that UEA expected to break even thanks to £2000 surplus from the previous Antarctic conference in Bristol, and sponsorship. The full report will be circulated with the minutes. Further to this, PW thanked BS for his report and also Karen Heywood and UEA for hosting the conference.

UK Arctic Science conference:

DP from SAMS was invited to the meeting and was asked to give an update on the planning for the next UK Arctic Science Conference to be held at SAMS. DP reported that SAMS are currently looking to hold the conference in Corran Halls in Oban (<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/corran-halls-our-rooms>). This venue can hold a maximum of 600 people with room at the back to have the posters. DP reported that the costs to hire the venue are reasonable and he will send further information once confirmed. DP also reported that there is a lot of accommodation in Oban and the benefit being that this is all in close proximity to the venue. SAMS are currently looking to have 6 sessions over the 3 days (lunchtime Tuesday to lunchtime Thursday) and SAMS will also look into potentially organising an excursion during this time.

ACTION: SAMS to confirm dates for Conference as soon as possible. AO to inform the community.

Stakeholder reports:

Update from NERC (CAOP and current opportunities) (Jessica Surma)

JS provided a brief update from NERC and mentioned that there had been a re-organisation within the department, with 'polar' now sitting under Climate and Weather, and Helen Beadman as the Head of this group.

JS reported that the results from the Changing Arctic Ocean Programme panel were due to be released mid-July. There is also potential scope for a Southern Ocean programme, an idea that came through the SPAG process, which will be submitted to NERC Council. It is hoped that a decision on funding will be made shortly thereafter.

JS also commented that NERC are very aware of the concern across the community with regards to H2020 grant applications and, as of the date of this UKAAP meeting, the UK are still in the EU and therefore still able to apply for funding.

JS also reported on the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) and explained that research undertaken as part of this scheme does need to have impact on the UK's Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitment. JS made the comment that this will make it difficult to get funding for polar science through this mechanism, but this is something NERC are aware of and JS reported that core funding will be protected. Further to this, PW thanked JS for the update from NERC.

Report from the All Party Parliamentary Group on the Polar Regions (HB. Paper: UKAAP 4/06)

HB presented the paper from the APPG. He reported that this group has recently re-formed and they now have regular meetings as outlined in the paper. HB reported that he has already made a strong pitch for having a science aspect included in these meetings as well as making this group aware of the education and outreach activities, such as the various websites, polar explorers programme etc. HB also made the comment that this group is very active and is keen to visit the Arctic. The Arctic Office will continue to keep UKAAP informed of the activities of this group and it was recommended that the Director of the Secretariat, Dr Duncan Depledge, is invited to the next UKAAP meeting.

UKPN report – (Kyle Mayers - NOC – UKPN representative)

KM gave a brief update on recent UKPN activities, including the workshop held during the UK Antarctic Science conference. KM also reported that the UKPN had been successful in obtaining a

grant from the Government of the British Antarctic Territory for £9500 for their education and outreach activities.

EU-PolarNet report: This was not discussed at this meeting due to lack of time.

Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting XXXIX (Santiago) (FCO paper: UKAAP 4/07)

The UKAAP SC noted the report received from the FCO on the Antarctic Consultative meeting and thanked the Polar Regions Department for the information.

Data update (AT)

AT reported that all the NERC data centres have gone through a recent commissioning exercise with a view to recommission the environmental data centres in 2017. NERC will also organise a Town Hall meeting on the 13th of October to get a better understanding of the community's requirements regarding defining the services to be commissioned from the environmental data centres.

Recommendation: AT strongly recommends that members of the UK polar research community attend the Town Hall meeting to provide their views and input on future data requirements, for example, data rescue.

Future membership arrangements (PW)

PW explained that membership should be fixed term and that the Committee should look to refresh by 1/3 each year with a view to have 20 members at any one time, as stated in the ToR. However, based on past experience, not everyone is able to attend all meetings. The suggestion was therefore to look at increasing membership to ensure diversity at the committee meetings.

After a short discussion, the UKAAP SC agreed to ask for a total of six people to voluntarily step down from the Committee (four have already done so) and look to recruit 12 new members. The SC also recommended that the ToR are changed to extend the term to three years with the option of a further 3 year term to ensure corporate memory. Initially, those who submitted applications should be contacted again with a view to sending out the request more widely once this initial group has been contacted.

ACTION: Amend the ToR to reflect the change in length of term of membership.

ACTION: AO to check with original applicants as to whether they wish to be considered for membership.

Next meeting (PW)

After a short discussion, it was agreed by the Steering Committee to host the next meeting in Manchester. NM to contact CR and look for available dates to circulate to the SC via Doodle Poll.

Wrap-up and agreed actions (PW)

There was a brief discussion regarding the next host for the Antarctic Science conference. It was agreed that this would be discussed further at the next UKAAP meeting.

PW thanked all who attended the meeting, with special thanks to BS and UEA for hosting the conference and the meeting, and DP for attending to give an update on the conference plans.

Close of meeting

ANNEX 1:

Steering Committee webpages:

Prof Phil Wookey (PW), Heriot –Watt University, Vice-chair:

<http://www.env.hw.ac.uk/people/philip-wookey.html>

Prof Sheldon Bacon (SB), National Oceanography Centre, Southampton

<https://noc.ac.uk/people/shb>

Prof Mary Edwards (ME), University of Southampton:

<http://www.southampton.ac.uk/geography/research/staff/mee.page>

Kyle Mayers, UKPN representative

http://www.southampton.ac.uk/oes/postgraduate/research_students/km1g14.page

Dr Clare Robinson (CR), University of Manchester

<http://www.manchester.ac.uk/research/clare.robinson/>

Jess Surma, NERC Representative

Alex Tate (AT), Polar Data Centre, BAS

<http://www.bas.ac.uk/profile/ajtate>

Prof Martyn Tranter (MT), Bristol Glaciology Centre, University of Bristol

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/geography/people/martyn-tranter/index.html>

Henry Burgess, NERC Arctic Office

<https://www.bas.ac.uk/profile/henrge/>

Nicola Munro (NM), NERC Arctic Office, Secretary

<https://www.bas.ac.uk/profile/nalm/>