

## CSGN Regional Advisory Forum Meeting – 18 August 2011

---

### Present

Keith Wishart, FCS and meeting chair  
Amanda McFarlane, FCCT  
Geoff Mather, L&FGNP  
Chris Lewis, E&LGT  
Bruce Davidson, EAW  
Mark Smillie, CSFT  
Ross Woodside, L&FGNP and note taker  
Caitlin Hamlett, L&FGNP

Neil Langhorn, FCS  
Tom Hobbs, FCS  
John Esslemont, AJPU  
Max Hislop, G&CVGNP  
Simon Rennie, CSFT/CSGN SU  
Sue Evans, CSGN SU  
Ross Johnston, SNH

### Apologies

Chris Nevin, SNH

James Ogilvie, FCS

---

### Meeting Note

#### 1. Welcome, Apologies and Introductions completed

**KW** welcomed Caitlin Hamlett and Amanda McFarlane to their first meeting of the CSGN Regional Advisory Forum.

#### 2. Note of Previous Meeting

**GM** advised that point 11. AOCB should read that Caitlin Hamlett was previously with SEPA, seconded to Orkney Isles Council for one year before taking up the post of Partnership Manager as Ian Whitehead's replacement.

Minute accepted.

#### 3. Finalised Terms of Reference for the Group [Paper 1]

The meeting discussed Paper 1 tabled by **SE** on the terms of reference for the CSGN Regional Advisory Forum. This included the proposed purpose, the proposed membership, the proposed outcomes including 1. Information and communications 2. Coordination and collaboration 3. Innovation and ideas and the proposed terms of reference. This was agreed.

**MH** raised a point about the proposed membership of the regional forum and suggested there was a slight inequity in representation, for example more than one representative from some organisations had attended in the past and some other NGOs fell through the gaps.

Other comments included:

- The forum should not be seen as a board.
- The membership as it stands has a bit of inequity in representation in terms of those delivery bodies in the west not being part of it as yet.
- There should be a mechanism in place to ensure that the gaps in membership should be picked up.
- The forum should be inclusive and open to all. Their participation should be invited.
- Concerns were raised over the forum becoming too large and unworkable.
- The forum should be at the regional partnership tier level.

It was thought that the Forum should operate on an inclusive basis, normally involve one representative from each organisation and that any suggestions for other partners to attend should be routed through the Chair.

**ACTION: ALL**

**CL** made a comment that the secretariat for the Forum should be provided by the CSGN Support Unit.

**SE** advised that this was a one-off and that the CSGN Support Unit would be provided support for other meetings.

#### **4. Updated CSGN Organisation Structure [Paper 2]**

The meeting discussed Paper 2 tabled and presented by **MH** on the CSGN Organisational Structure. This included an initial review of the original structural diagram which was provided by Ian Whitehead (formerly LFGNP) which showed the organisation as a 'family tree'. The original structure was generally well received, but on further review **MH** identified a number of deficiencies in it as there is no organisational structure, there should be no hierarchical structure, issues over the remit, geographical boundaries and influence of the structure. Therefore, **MH** provided a new diagram made up of concentric circles based on geography and remit, whether strategic or delivery. This highlighted the missing Forth Valley area regional partnership and also there being no representation for the 3 delivery bodies that work within the GCVGNP area. A further development of the diagram was provided showing influence within the CSGN area. Due to time constraints **MH** provided maps for all the partners and asked for comments and/or the partners to illustrate the diagram in terms of how the organisations influence each other.

Comments included:

- Worry about remits that need to be changed due to financial issues. Better to have a simple message.
- Working in a crowded landscape, operating in a wilderness without complete coverage.
- Difficult to draw down into a simple message to deliver the CSGN.
- We need both, a simple message and things that we need to focus on.
- Some strategic and some delivery, others that are 50:50 in terms of strategy and delivery.
- The focus for regional partnerships should be on delivering green networks.
- There is a lack of information coming through. It is at a strategic level, but not at a local, regional level which it should be.
- There maybe should be two different groups, one more strategic the other with delivery bodies.

**KW** thanked Max for his work on this and advised that it was an excellent attempt at summarising the current Green Network operating environment. It usefully highlighted minor areas of overlap, but more importantly key gaps in Green Network delivery within the CSGN. Whilst some held the view that current GN organisational structures were complex and crowded, this was often a result of a lack of real understanding of the different roles, functions and governance arrangements of the different organisations and partnerships throughout the CSGN. In fact the opposite was the case, in that the structures seeking to deliver the CSGN did not offer complete coverage, there were important gaps and that many were operating with minimal budgets.

**ACTION: Partners to provide comments and return completed diagrams to MH asap.**

#### **5. CSGN Development Fund Round 2 and future**

**NL** provided a presentation on CSGN Development Fund round 2. FCS are awaiting the spending review to assess the financial position. FCS are hopeful of a development fund for next year 2012-13. A paper to be presented for the CSGN Board in September.

Information of the two rounds of development funding included:

2010-11 72 projects £1.4 million 19 LAs covered (1<sup>st</sup> come 1<sup>st</sup> served basis)  
2011-12 31 projects £1.1 million 18 LAs covered (competitive basis)

If the outcome of the spending review is favourable and there is to be a further CSGN Development fund then the process will be put in place over the following months to announce a further year.

Comments included:

- Do we need a development fund?
- Yes, but it would be better if the funds were longer term rather than one year.
- It is a very good fund for projects that cannot be funded elsewhere.
- Big lottery grants are available for longer term projects.
- The value with the development fund is that it is quick.
- The big lottery grants are more community focused rather than strategic based.
- The development fund should be more strategic rather than too delivery focused.
- It's ok for the projects to be strategic but there still needs to be a focus on what's been produced on the ground through delivery.
- There should be more of an emphasis on community base projects.
- Communities are not a priority for the CSGN Board.
- The credibility for CSGN needs to be there in terms of funding as it is 1 of 14 NPF2 priorities.
- The budget for the CSGN is £1 million compared to massive resources from SRDP.
- The CSGN fund does provide good publicity, but it needs to be longer term possibly three years instead of being annual. It should have more money given to it due to its high profile as a national priority.
- The pot of money for CSGN is small and with council budgets shrinking the LAs may see the fund as a way of replacing capital funding.

**ACTION: All – NL requested feedback through email submissions within two weeks for September CSGN Board meeting.**

## 6. CSGN Future Delivery Options presentation

**NL** provided a presentation on the options available for future CSGN delivery considering the current financial position and the spending review. FCS and SHN need to respond to the challenge of fewer resources and how the step change can be delivered. This looked at the planning and policy mechanisms from the NPF2 through to Local Projects and the local level and also the scope for greater joint working and collaboration across the regional delivery partners.

Comments included:

- A big challenge in the current economic climate with fewer resources.
- How do we work together to achieve the CSGN agenda?
- Critical to have the will to do it through finding new and innovative ways of working.
- Need to demonstrate that we are working together.
- There are different issues over funding for each regional area.
- There should be more collaboration with an example being in the west where they are linking in with strategic development teams.
- There are still issues over resources and a discussion with LA partners needs to take place over this.
- There are gaps in funding that need to be addressed, especially as the CSGN is one of the national priorities.
- Need to have input from regional partners.
- Sharing of information, resources, etc.
- It depends on funding as to who can provide resources be it strategic or delivery.
- Although there are pressures over funding, there should be a more positive view as to how to get action off the ground as it is a National Planning priority.

**AMcF** advised of a £1.8 million HLF Living Landscapes project funded through the big lottery that FCCT have secured, however it requires match funding. There should be a review of the rural priorities with CSGN Board taking a lead with regard to this.

RJ advised that a meeting with David Barnes from the Scottish Government has been arranged.

## 7. GN Progress in Ayrshire

JE provided an update on Green Networks in Ayrshire to the meeting. Ayrshire has 30% of the CSGN area, with 10% of the population. Ayrshire is one of the poorest and most deprived areas of the UK based on the SIMD score. 96% of the area is rural, with 20% woodland. The area has a history of coal mining and is still one of the biggest suppliers of open cast coal in the UK. This is a legacy issue that needs to be addressed. Moreover, wind farms and their development are affecting the upland areas and the existing land uses including woodland. The Ayrshire area is a significant carbon storage area of Scotland.

Delivery of projects in Ayrshire is through EAW, URC (Vacant and Derelict land), LEADER, East Ayrshire Coalfield Environment Initiative, etc. Last year the Ayrshire Joint Planning Unit CSGN projects in Ayrshire were for an Audit of the Green Infrastructure and to develop a methodology for identifying land for woodland creation opportunities. There is also the development of a woodland strategy for the area. It was decided to do a woodland strategy as opposed to a green network strategy for a number of reasons, including the rural nature of the area with 96% rural land, etc. This will focus on a number of themes including climate change, economic, biodiversity and communities.

The next process is now to formalise a green network partnership and the structure for that partnership.

## 8. Edinburgh & Lothian's Greenspace Trust – an Overview

CL presented an overview of ELGT to the meeting. This included a brief history of the organisation as a charity/social enterprise up to current day, board details, staffing, finance, fund raising, core funders and trusts, current work, projects, CSGN projects and a detailed description of 4 projects including the flagship project at Hailes Quarry Park which has been on the go for 5 years as a partnership project with the City of Edinburgh Council and has recently been awarded a Green Flag. ELGT also host the Lothians and Fife Green Network Partnership (LFGNP). There is also the Mavisbank Trust which has been undertaking work with a number of different partners, including Historic Scotland to restore the building and grounds as seen on the BBC programme Restoration.

CL advised that ELGT are currently working to capacity and would need extra resources to take on extra work.

NL asked how ELGT decide on what they do. Strategic?

CL advised that the work is generally project related, but that it needs to be strategic to ensure that ELGT are aligned with current and future funding streams i.e. CSGN Development Fund, etc.

MH noted that the overall budget for Hailes Quarry Park (approx. £1 million) was similar to the budget for the CSGN Development Fund and emphasised that the CSGN Development Fund should be used for Strategic projects rather than work on the ground.

## 9. CSGN Community Projects Fund

NL advised that FCS have confirmed that a grant of £50k is available for the 4 regional partnerships to use for a community projects fund that will foster some bottom up projects. A two page criteria document has been sent to partners to decide on how the pot of money will be split up which will be decided on either population, land area, local authority area, etc and whether it should be competitive.

MS/SR offered the services of CSFT to act as purse holder and administer the fund. The partnerships all agreed for this to be the case. [N.B. Post Meeting Note: Subsequently it has been agreed that funding will be distributed via 4 regional bodies]

**NL** is seeking to finalise proposals for the Community Projects Fund and welcomed comments from the members.

**RJ** queried the promotion of the fund as the pot of funds available was relatively small.

**NL** advised that FCS would announce it.

**KW** advised that CSFT have been running a similar scheme and this could be used as a template for others.

**ACTION: NL to circulate document.**

**ACTION: All - partners to respond ASAP (end of next week, Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August).**

#### 10. CSGN Local Authority Concordat

**RJ** advised of the CSGN LA Concordat with its commitment to a declaration of CSGN and the LA role within it.

**ACTION: All – Comments to RJ and SE within two weeks with regard to Paper 4 Appendix 1 from the July CSGN Board meeting. The link to the web-site is:**

<http://www.centalscotlandgreennetwork.org/images/stories/CSGN/board/14july2011.pdf>

#### 11. IHN Data

**RJ** advised that SNH is completing a quality assessment of the data prior to it going on the SNH website which should be finalised by the end of September.

**RJ** encouraged partners to contact SNH IHN Officer Deborah Sandals (Clydebank Office) with regard to the help that SNH can provide. Her contact number is 0141 951 4488. **RJ** advised that most of her time is spent dealing with development plans, etc. **CH** enquired whether there would be scope for GIS support. **SE** indicated that Abigail Page can also support IHN / other GIS needs.

#### 12. CSGN Board Activity

**SE** provided an update on the CSGN board activity to the partners. Next CSGN Board meeting is 15/09/11. Further meetings in November 2011, January and March 2012. Agenda for September is:

- Alistair Seaman – Grounds for learning – natural play.
- Learning Spaces audit – Green Networks, including university grounds, schools, etc. 10 schools with the most vacant and derelict land identified. This paper was circulated 17/08/11.
- Strategic priorities – asking the board to consider 7 key areas including funding, identifying the scope of change, strategic gaps (urban greening agenda, community growing), influence and position of board, regional delivery and capacity i.e. capacity in local authority and identification of flagship projects, i.e. the next John Muir Trail.
- FCS to present paper on development fund.
- 3 update papers.

Issues going forward include the spending review in November, funding of CSGN, CSGN Support Unit budget into next year, update report for year 2.

**RJ** advised of a morning site visit to some of the Commonwealth Games Sites in Glasgow. **RJ** to speak to **MH** with regard to this.

**AMcF** queried where the Forum feeds into the CSGN Board, considering the wealth of knowledge and experience in attendance at the meeting. **AMcF** queried whether the Chair of the forum could write to the CSGN Board.

Comments included:

- Couldn't believe that the CSGN Board had no interest in the regional partnerships.
- A number of members of the CSGN Board had limited knowledge of the work of the regional partnerships – which may explain their views to date.
- That the regional partnerships and partners engender good feeling that can be fed into the CSGN Board meetings.
- The regional partnerships should try to influence the CSGN Board via their own 'regional' representatives

**KW** queried whether it might be possible for the CSGN Board to be updated on the work of the regional partnerships and the CSGN RAF in particular. Sue thought this would be possible.

**KW** asked whether there should be further discussion over the proposed terms of reference of the Forum and, if not, whether those present were happy for it go to the Board. Everyone agreed ok to go to the Board.

**ACTION: SE to seek CSGN Board approval to the terms of reference**

The next date for papers to be circulated for the CSGN Board meeting in November is 3/11/11.

The proposal from the meeting is to meet every two months at this stage in the formation of the Forum to tie in with the CSGN Board meetings. This could then be changed to every three months if it was thought that this change would be appropriate.

**KW** proposed to look closely at the agenda for the CSGN Board meetings and tailor the Forum meetings to those items if appropriate.

### **13. AOCB**

There was no AOCB to report.

### **14. Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed. It is proposed to be in mid October 2011.

**ACTION: KW agreed to provide a number of dates via email to confirm the date and location of the next meeting.**