

OPM Advisory Group Meeting minutes 11th December 2014, Guildhall, London

Present: Sue Ireland (Chair), Julia Branson (Geodata), Richard Tripett, Mike Robinson, Mark Townsend, Amanda Mitchell, Dave Lofthouse, Mark Parsons, Andrew Hoppit, Craig Harrison, Stewart Snape, Gill Brown (FC)

Apologies: Barry Walsh, Emer O'Connell, Tony Leach, Craig Ruddick, Adam Wallace, Andrew Jones, Charlton Clark

Introduction & Welcome

Sue welcomed Mark Parsons (Butterfly Conservation) and Amanda Mitchell (Defra).

Query whether Mark can share Advisory Group papers with partners he is representing (RSPB, BugLife). Craig will clarify.

Summary of actions from this meeting

<i>Action Point</i>	<i>Details</i>
New Actions	
1	Craig to check if Mark can share AG papers with RSPB and BugLife
2	Stewart to consider sharing final moth report from last year with AG members
3	Jake Morris, Defra to be invited to next meeting to discuss OPM control programme evaluation project
4	Andrew to send email to workshop attendees to assure outputs are being dealt with
5	All - comments on OPM workshop review to Andrew by 22 December 2014
6	All - comments regarding 2015 proposals to Andrew by 22 December 2014

Review of Actions from last meeting

AP	Details	Progress
1	OPM AG members to pass 2014 OPM survey and control information to Andrew Hoppit - and encourage other stakeholders to do so - by the end of October	Ongoing
2	FC will inform Advisory Group members when the preliminary report has been published	Completed
3	FC to draft common messages / lines to take for AG members to complement publication of the 2014 results	Completed
4	FC to share summary of OPM research and AG members to inform Craig of other work to include	Done 12 th Dec 14
5	FC to invite conservation NGO rep to join the Advisory Group	Completed
6	PHE to share report on human health impact 2014 once finalised.	Ongoing

2014 OPM Survey and control information – it was noted that there has been a limited response from stakeholders to pass this information back to Andrew. The group discussed whether to invite a Kew Gardens representative to the next meeting given they aren't members

Sue asked that the Advisory Group's frustrations are noted regarding the time taken to receive information to be communicated and responses to press communications during 2014 and the group agreed regular communication between group members and other OPM stakeholders is essential for effective operational collaboration.

Herridges Copse post spraying monitoring

Stewart referred to Herridges Copse post spraying monitoring document, circulated prior to the meeting (Paper 2b). Stewart gave a brief background as to why the report was undertaken:

- concerns regarding impact of spraying; public perception
- request to monitor impact of spraying re bats, moths and birds.

Bats: Following on from the first survey, Natural England's (NE) advice was not to monitor bats though Mark Parsons suggested this may have been a mistake.

Moths: suggested that moth monitoring should continue but this season's data/results are not available as yet. The group discussed tortrix presence and interpretation re OPM efficacy. Stewart to consider sharing of final moth report from last year with AG members.

Birds: To continue monitoring. Report is not scientifically robust but NE considers information valid enough to draw conclusions.

It was agreed that a workshop should be held in November 2015 to look at all results achieved on monitoring work and non-target impact.

The group supported continuation of the Richmond Park study to trends and longer term impacts. Colin will take this forward and seek agreement whether further monitoring will be done (subject to funding).

OPM control programme evaluation

Amanda gave a brief summary of Defra project to commission an evaluation framework to consider all aspects of the OPM control programme. Tenders will go out in January 2015 with a report target date of May 2015. It is noted that the tender is for the design of an evaluation framework only, not the evaluation itself. Brief discussions followed on potential for AG engagement in the project and it was agreed to invite Jake Morris along to the next meeting to give an overview and discuss further.

OPM Workshop review

Andrew referred to the 'Summary of actions required based on workshop feedback' report circulated prior to the meeting (Paper 3).

The group reviewed the key points that came out of the workshop and agreed they were sensible suggestions that should be taken forward.

A fortnightly progress report was recommended for key points in the 2015 season, noted that it is important that this is a two way process between FC and stakeholders.

The importance of communicating back to the attendees of the workshop was also discussed. Craig explained that when the 2015 proposal plan is finalised it will integrate the 'actions needed' from the workshop report. In the interim a brief email will be sent to the attendees to assure them the workshop outputs are being dealt with.

Any feedback on the OPM workshop review should be emailed to Andrew Hoppit by 22 December 2014.

7. 2015 Proposals

The group were reminded that the 2015 proposal document circulated at the meeting is not to be shared beyond the group.

Andrew summarised the proposals for 2015 and addressed each activity zone as follows:

OPM Activity Everywhere:

Proposals agreed. Comments were:

- Train the trainers a good approach given the extent of OPM
- Consider more public engagement events?

OPM Activity Pangbourne:

Proposals agreed. Comments were:

- Agreed pheromone trapping to continue at Pangbourne;
- Agreed traps through Pangbourne/West London corridor would be a good idea.

OPM Activity Croydon/Bromley: Proposals agreed.

OPM Activity Olympic Park: Proposals agreed.

OPM Activity West London:

Discussions included:

- proposed boundaries may change depending on what is found during winter survey;
- rationale understood regarding FC focus on outer extent and establishing better knowledge of overall OPM extent.
- general acceptance re core zone level of support and that it will impact owners / managers at site level and could raise complaints; more responsibility on landowners to tackle OPM may not be a bad thing?
- Challenge of employing the core zone where it splits ownership e.g. a Borough is part in core zone, part not; agreed minor adjustment of core zone where borough/property boundaries nearly match would help
- as Health Boards develop, this may be an opportunity for OPM to get on their agenda and influence their policies?
- suggestion that a demo section within the core zone could be chosen that FC funds and shows how it should be done (this could be done via buffer zone control)?
- Any risks that core zone control is funded at expense of more strategic work due to election year and owner/manager complaints / political pressures?

All comments regarding the 2015 proposals should be submitted to Andrew Hoppit by 22 December 2015. Comments will inform the final plan which will require a Ministerial/SoS submission and approval in early 2015.

8. AOB

Comments about the control programme by some of the survey contractors to landowners has been a recent concern, notably the effectiveness of the spraying. Andrew Hoppit has spoken to the survey contractors about the professionalism required and will re-iterate this at a meeting on 12th January 2015 when the winter survey programme will be starting in Croydon

Date of next meeting

Next meeting: 12th February 2015 (14:00 – 16:00) at Irish Chamber, Guildhall