



This paper was provided to the Joint Committee for decision/discussion or information. Please refer to the minutes of the meeting for Committee's position on the paper.

To view other Joint Committee papers and minutes visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-2671>

To find out more about JNCC visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-1729>

**JNCC 01 N10  
December 2001**

## **JOINT NATURE CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**

### **RESOURCES AND AUDIT SUB GROUP MEETING, FRIDAY 12 OCTOBER 2001**

#### **Information Note by Sue McQueen**

The Sub-group of Committee met on 12 October at Monkstone House. Sir Angus Stirling, Professor Heal, Mr Arnold-Forster and Mr Steer were present at the meeting.

This paper summarises the key areas of discussion and action agreed.

#### **1. Internal Audit**

- 1.1 Reports on the work done by internal audit during 2001/02 and progress on the 2002/3 programme were discussed. There were concerns that the operational audit on international advice was curtailed by PKF (English Nature's internal auditors) and the general progress and standards they had attained. Mr Steer had invited PKF to a meeting to discuss concerns about the standards of delivery and it was agreed to invite a representative to the February meeting of the Audit and Resources Sub-Group to discuss this further.

#### **2. NAO Audit**

- 2.1 The draft Management Letter and JNCC response were discussed. A range of measures had been put in place to overcome problems relating to the Aberdeen office, including increased training, monitoring, improved IT links and management visits, and others were planned. It was agreed that Mr Arnold-Forster, in his capacity as Accounting Officer, would visit the Aberdeen Office

#### **3. Resource Issues**

- 3.1 Funds earmarked for survey work that could not be undertaken due to the foot and mouth outbreak had been redeployed to enable further analysis of data that had been collected in previous years so no impact on the half year financial position was anticipated.

3.2 Two additional senior staff were being appointed to the Support Unit. One post resulted from the increased load relating to the FMPR and the other, which would be based in Brussels, would enable JNCC's to play an enhanced role in Europe under the direction of the inter-agency international network

#### **4. FMPR**

4.1 An update was given about the Steering Committee, Terms of Reference and timetable. Progress made in identifying and investigating a range of options to address funding and staffing issues was discussed and early findings from a staff survey conducted by the Staff Association were given.

#### **5. Role and Composition of Committee**

5.1 The Terms of Reference for stage 2 of the FMPR were considered and views were exchanged about the approach and scale of changes to the size and composition of Committee. It was agreed that the December Committee dinner would provide a useful opportunity to discuss these issues further.

#### **6. JNCC Corporate Plan**

6.1 An update was given about the progress made in developing the Corporate Plan for 2002/02 to 2005/06.

#### **7. Draft Standing Orders for Corporate Governance of the JNCC**

7.1 An early draft of standing orders for corporate governance of the JNCC was considered. An annex showing the Committee's role relating to Corporate Plan targets was felt to be particularly useful and a schedule of delegated authorities would need to be developed. The Group agreed that a revised document should, if possible, be presented to the December meeting as an interim statement.

#### **8. AOB**

8.1 Professor Heal proposed that a series of indicators relating to JNCC's strategy be identified and measured to evaluate the work undertaken. A series of examples in the JNCC were cited to illustrate the types of measures that could be selected.

8.2 Mr Steer advised that he had offered to Wetlands International some of his time and possible financial support to help with a particular issue they had discussed with him.