

Present:

Samantha Boyes (**SB**), Ed Byers (**EB**), Bill Colwell (**BC**), Dolan Conway (**DC**), Moira Conway (**MC**), Vivienne Dawson (**VD**), Aidan Doyle (**AD**), Caspar Hewett (**CH**), Rich Hurst (**RH**), Lucy Latham (**LL**), Elisa Lopez Capel (**ELC**), Paul Ruane (**PR**), Sue Smith (**SS**), Oscar Watson (**OW**), Paul Younger (**PY**)

Apologies:

Ian Ground, NECLL / Sunderland University, Robert Hull, RCE North East, Douglas Hunter, Equal Arts, Shruti Jain, SustainE, Alex Lockwood, Sunderland University, Krista McKinzey, Science Learning Centre North East, Oliver Moss, Northumbria University, Munmum KC, Pakistan Cultural Society, Sharon Paterson, Teesside University, David Parsons, Teesside University, David Ridley, Vidya Sarangapani

In the absence of the Chair, Robert Hull, **AD** asked Dolan Conway (**DC**) of RIBA to chair the meeting.

It was formerly announced that Robert Hull, Chair of RCE North East and Paul Younger (**PY**), academic lead, were stepping down from their positions and that Aidan Doyle (**AD**) was no longer co-ordinator of RCE North East.

Robert Hull sent the following statement to AD and CH: "I have to give my apologies for absence for tomorrow's AGM as I have a longstanding commitment in London which predates the fixing of the date of the AGM ... given the changes which are about to take place in the RCE I think it is appropriate for me to stand down as Chair and leave the way open for someone else to be elected to guide the RCE on to the next stage of its existence. I have enjoyed being Chair for the last few years since the RCE began and I think we have achieved a great deal. I hope my successor enjoys himself as much as I have. I want to remain involved and I look forward to continuing to support the RCE in its future development."

AD explained that the purpose of the meeting was to agree a constitution for the RCE providing it with legal statues, primarily to enable it to apply for funds to sustain itself. A draft constitution was put before the meeting for discussion, amendment and agreement.

The main points of discussion were:

1. The name of the group. **CH** proposed a new name for the RCE that is easier to say and remember – the meeting agreed and after some discussion the name NECTER (North East Centre for Transformative Education and Research) was agreed by majority vote. It was agreed that it would still be the Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development (EfSD) for the North East of England, but this would become a description of the group rather than its name. **BC** noted that there had been a transport pressure group with a similar acronym and **CH** agreed to check.
2. Whether the geographical scope of the Centre should include Cumbria and the Scottish Borders. A majority agreed that Cumbria should be included but that the Scottish borders should not.
3. Section 3b of the draft constitution 'area and scope of work' to be incorporated into section 5 'objectives and project membership'
4. Section 4, powers was agreed with some minor changes to the wording.
5. The paragraph opening 'Upon submission of statement ...' referring to projects applying for RCE recognition to be rewritten as its meaning was unclear – **CH** agreed to do this.
6. Some rewording of section 7 'Responsibilities of members and officers' was discussed to improve clarity and a section to be added on the responsibility of the committee to review projects within three months of receipt and to send to UNAIIS for ratification – **CH** agreed to make these changes.
7. The quorum for a general meeting to be changed from seven to five members in section 8.

AD raised the point that many partners in the network have benefited from the work of the RCE to date and that it would be a useful exercise to ask existing partners and owners of both current and past projects to make short statements about how they have benefited from their association with the RCE. The meeting agreed. **CH** proposed that such statements could be put on the website and that this would greatly strengthen NECTER's chances of successfully obtaining funds to ensure its continued existence.

The meeting went on to nominate and appoint officers to the newly constituted RCE.

CH had previously approached **Oliver Moss** to ask if he was willing to take the role of secretary and he agreed to be nominated in his absence (he was running an RCE launch event in Northumbria University while the meeting was taking place). The meeting unanimously agreed to his taking that appointment.

Who would be suitable for the role of treasurer was discussed at some length and **Lucy Latham** agreed to be nominated for the role at the encouragement of the meeting. She was duly appointed by majority vote to that post.

CH proposed **OW** as a candidate for co-ordinator, but he declined to accept the nomination. The meeting recognised the necessity of finding someone to take that role as soon as possible, preferably someone with experience of running a network and of fundraising.

The role of Chair was also discussed and those present at the meeting agreed to consider who would be best for the role and to forward suggestions to **CH** within the next two weeks. **CH** mentioned that he was having informal conversations with Northumbria University about giving the RCE 'a new home' and proposed someone from Northumbria University such as Professor Keith Shaw might be a good choice – the meeting agreed that **CH** should approach him. Other candidates to approach include **Sharon Paterson**, Assistant Dean, Curriculum Development and Innovation, Educational Partnerships and Opportunities, Teesside University.

AD proposed that individuals be nominated or put themselves forward to champion particular areas of the RCE's work and the meeting agreed. Champions would become ex officio members of the managing committee. The following champions were nominated and agreed: **AD** for Urban Art, **CH** for debate, and **PR** for music. It was agreed that others would be nominated and voted upon at the next general meeting.

CH explained that he had been acting as Director of RCE North East (now NECTER) on an unpaid basis at **AD**'s request since 16th September 2011 and that he was prepared to continue to do so for three months at the request of the meeting. The meeting agreed. **CH** added that he hoped to obtain financial support to underpin his role at least part time fairly quickly and that unfortunately he would not be able to continue in this role beyond January without such support.

CH made a brief report on the regional launch of the RCE taking place throughout October and November, which has been a big success, garnering the support of RCE partners across the region. There have been over fifty activities involving over thirty five venues, including festivals, film screenings, lectures, courses, exhibitions, and public discussions. **CH** wanted to express his thanks to the many partners who have contributed to the launch. He stated his view that it has been an exciting climax to the year that demonstrates the robustness of the network, something that provides confidence for making NECTER's first steps into an independent existence. Details of the launch can be found at <http://rcenortheast.eu/Launch.html>

Given the change of name for the RCE it was noted that a new logo would be needed. **CH** suggested organising a school competition to design the logo. **MC** pointed out that Northumbria University has an excellent design school and we could ask one of the lecturers there to set the logo design as a project for the students. **CH** seconded this idea and agreed to discuss it further with **MC**.

CH noted that **Krista McKinzey** and **Ian Ground** had both requested in their absence that dates be set for future meetings to facilitate them being able to attend. The meeting agreed and dates for the next four general meetings were agreed for people to put in their diaries:

1. Tuesday 17 January 2012
2. Tuesday 17 April 2012
3. Tuesday 17 July 2012
4. Tuesday 16 October 2012 (AGM)

DC thanked **AD** for all the work he had done for the RCE since its inception.

CH 31/10/11