



Confirmed Board Minutes

Title of Meeting: NRW Board Meeting – Public

Date of Meeting: Thursday 17th May 2018;
Catrin Finch Centre, Wrexham

Present Board Members: Diane McCrea (Chair)
Dr Madeleine Havard (Deputy Chair)
Andy Middleton (Chair of Protected Areas Committee)
Paul Williams (Chair of People and Remuneration Committee)
Nigel Reader
Zoë Henderson
Dr Ruth Hall
Howard C. Davies
Elizabeth Haywood
Clare Pillman (Chief Executive)

Present Gareth O'Shea (Executive Director, Operations South)
Catherine Love (Director for Customer, Communications and Information)
Ceri Davies (Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting)
Tim Jones (Executive Director, Operations North)
Niall Reynolds (Transformation Portfolio Director)
Howard Davies (Head of Governance and Planning)
Kevin Ingram (Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Services)
Mark Hughes (Performance Manager, Governance)
Bob Vaughan (Manager Sustainable Land Farming and Forest Management) for Item 3
Brian Pawson (Senior Agriculture Advisor) for Item 3
Anthony Randles (Environment Management Team Leader) for Item 2
Sian McGregor-Andrew (Industry Regulation Officer, North Wales) for Item 2
Jenny Rees-Jones (Environment Officer, Water Resources) for Item 2
Annie Payne (Wales Business Planning and Performance Officer)

Secretariat: Noemi Maria Donigiewicz
Rachel Rees

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1. Standard Board Business

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies

2. Apologies for absence were received from Karen Balmer, Chris Blake and Ashleigh Dunn.

Declaration of Interest

3. No new declarations of interest were noted.

2. Local Issues Presentation

4. Anthony Randles, Jenny Rees- Jones, and Sian McGregor-Andrew joined the Board and gave a presentation on local issues and activities, which centred on the vast scope of activities within the Team's remit.

5. Topics presented to the Board included:

- Llay Industrial Estate's non-compliance and fine
- The ways in which NRW focuses on industry regulation
- Protected and Invasive Species with over 800 known sites
- Waste Regulation
- Brymbo Fossil Forest, previously used as a steelworks site, now a world-class visitor attraction
- Conservation of species, development and building sites
- Protecting the environment through consent such as safety and emergency statements, risk assessment, inventory of substances and site and drainage plans

6. The Team also discussed Flood risk management highlighting the alertness and effort with which NRW staff focus on ensuring public safety. NRW staff research has allowed for better understanding of tidal flood risk, which in turn influenced better understanding of floods in local communities, long term flood management and land management planning.

7. The Team talked about the importance of the River Dee Catchment. The catchment stretches between England and Wales and is a source of drinking water for over three million people. The current ecological and conservation status aren't favourable, hence NRW staff are focused on ensuring positive change through work with multiple partners and mutual understanding of environment goals.

8. The Board discussed relevance of the presentation and highlighted the amount of work involved in ensuring smooth running of discussed projects. The Board noted that the public are not always aware of such initiatives and that raising awareness would allow people to see how involved NRW is in protecting the environment.

9. The Board discussed sharing such positive stories as they could be a perfect example of something tangible that shows NRW's attitude and effort.

10. The Board noted that incidents such as the St Asaph flood should not be the main change motivators, but that anticipating possible struggles and being proactive is key to ensuring safety and innovation.

11. The Board thanked the Team for their daily effort as well as the presentation.

3. Strategic Direction of Agricultural Policy and the work of the Wales Land Management Forum sub-group on agricultural pollution NRW B B 17.18

12. Robert Vaughan and Brian Pawson presented the paper to the Board; pointing out that the work of the WLMF sub-group is an excellent example of the new ways of working now being established under the Well-being of Future Generations & Environment Acts. The building of mutual understanding and trust among all WLMF partners has provided a suitable environment within which to develop new thinking around reducing the extent (and ultimately seeking to eliminate) agricultural pollution.

13. An interim report by the WLMF sub-group was submitted to the Cabinet Secretary in early April and published.

14. The Board commended the high quality of the interim report and praised all those involved in its production, including WLMF partner organisations as well as NRW staff. The Board noted the need to continue working with farmers while keeping in mind the need for further advice, incentives, the development of the farmer-led voluntary initiative, underpinning regulation and further collaboration over innovation. Local engagement is key to raising awareness and the level of ambition across Wales.

15. The Board noted that the WLMF's work was still at an early stage and is very resource intensive, but the early indications suggest that it could provide a case-study of good practice.

16. The Board also discussed the broader policy context and how the opportunities arising from Brexit could be used to encourage positive change in the management of natural resources.

4. Performance Reporting Paper NRW B B 18.18 and Presentation

17. Clare Pillman presented the report indicating the overall year end picture along with highlights. The move to quarterly reporting in 2018/2019 was noted and the work to improve targets was mentioned.

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18. Clare Pillman noted the importance of culture change and using SMNR to ensure the step-change.

19. The Board Planning and Performance subgroup would help ensure the right targets, which would be outcome and SMNR focussed as well as integrated with risk management. The planned transition would allow for implementation in 2018/2019.

Action Point: Clare Pillman and the Corporate Planning & Board Subgroup to oversee development and communication with stakeholders.

20. The Board discussed needing to focus on the fact that NRW influence, deliver and enable. NRW targets should be joined up around it whilst monitoring strategic risks, trends and the environment to inform strategy and planning.

Action Point: To inform future business planning rounds the Planning and Performance Team will start to develop an approach that enables the Board to provide a strategic steer into annual business plans.

21. The Board noted that it was good to see successes listed in the report.

22. The Board also noted that using correct wording might be difficult to achieve, but that we need to pay attention to sending the correct message.

23. The Board welcomed quarterly reporting and discussed that the positive examples within NRW are very inspiring.

24. The Board discussed the next step to share this information with the Welsh Government as well as publication within the Annual Report and on the NRW website.

5. Finance Update Paper NRW B B 19.18

25. The Board scrutinised NRW's 2017/18 Financial performance presented by Kevin Ingram.

26. Income totalled £211m and Expenditure totalled £176.3m. Therefore, we have total funds of £34.7m which will be carried-forward into 2018/19. We have had approval from Welsh Government to increase our Grant in Aid carry forward to 22%.

27. The exact figures of the report are subject to audit and may be subject to change. The current figures included in the report are correct at 24th April 2018.

28. Kevin Ingram assured the Board that any changes and a review of the year end outturn will be reported to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in July 2018.



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29. The Board noted the changes to the 2018/19 Budget, as a result of additional Welsh Government funding. These changes were approved by Clare Pillman under delegated authority from the Board.

30. The Board noted approvals submitted to Welsh Government.

31. The Board were asked to review and approve para 18 of the finance report, approve the progression of a procurement exercise for the supply of plants over a 9 year period with an estimated value of £9m. The Board concluded that additional information was required ahead of formal approval and delegated the issue to the Board Enterprise Subgroup for discussion and review of further information working with Kevin Ingram. The Subgroup were asked to present a recommendation to the July Board Meeting for the Board to consider and decide upon.

Action Point: Kevin Ingram and Head of Procurement to convene a meeting of the Enterprise subgroup to review the evidence provided in respect of the procurement exercise for the Supply of Plants. The Sub group to make a formal recommendation to the July Board Meeting for the Board consideration and decision.

6. Governance Matters

Minutes & Matters arising from previous Statutory Sub Committees and other reports

32. The January 2018 Board Meeting Minutes are published on the NRW website and shared with the Board for information.

People and Remuneration Committee

33. No update provided the Committee had not met since the last Board Meeting, next meeting for the Committee noted as 7th of June.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee

34. There was no update from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, as the committee had not met since the last Board Meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for the 7th of June.

Flood Risk Management Group

35. There was a brief update from the Flood Risk Management Group shared by Madeleine Havard, discussing the next scheduled meeting on the 21st of May as the committee had not met since the last Board Meeting.

JNCC

36. Madeleine Havard informed the Board that the JNCC will be meeting on the 6th and 7th of June 2018.

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Public Service Boards

Howard C Davies confirmed that all review letters had been sent by NRW to the Public Bodies across Wales reviewing Wellbeing plans. The Chair confirmed that she had written to the Future Generations Commissioner extending an invitation to a Board Meeting. The Board noted its thanks to the Sub Group involved with reviewing plans and the NRW staff members involved.

7. Any Other Business

37. Annie Payne, NRW Wales Business Planning and Performance Officer, who was attending the Meeting as observer was asked to discuss her involvement with the Dementia Friendly initiative.

38. Annie Payne, confirmed that she had set up NRW's Dementia Friendly network and provided a short update on the initiative.

39. The Board expressed interest in finding out more information and in scheduling a Dementia Friendly Training Session. Annie Payne confirmed that there were opportunities for the Board to have a short training session or for Board Members to attend sessions at Local Offices alongside NRW staff.

Action Point: Secretariat to consider a Dementia Friendly training session for Board Members around Agenda setting for future Board Meetings and share dates of sessions planned at Local Offices with Board Members.

40. The Board Members sought more information on the arrangements for attendance at the Royal Welsh Show and National Eisteddfod.

Action Point: Catherine Love to share current plans with Board Members and commence planning for Board Member attendance at both events, on both the NRW stand and associated stakeholder events.

8. Close of Formal Meeting

40. The meeting closed.

9. Public Review/Comments

41. The Board received a comment from Christine Hugh Jones who is a CPRW Secretary and has worked within areas of medicine and social anthropology.

42. The Board were asked about the type of research and activities NRW engage in that ensure plant biodiversity, tackle excess ammonia and nitrogen and address decline in pollinators.



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43. Ceri Davies on behalf of the Board answered the question and highlighted that she can continue the detailed discussion after the meeting.

44. Ceri Davies discussed how NRW's recognition of changes and issues allows it to address the current biodiversity status around Wales. It also allows for recognition of dangerous chemical levels and pollinator decline.

45. Ceri Davies pointed out that NRW has signed a memorandum of understanding in order to better connect our research with research of various partners and to create a culture where NRW's knowledge and expertise are connected to what staff do on daily basis. NRW is focused on working collaboratively.

46. The Board encouraged members of the public to take advantage of this meeting opportunity and chat with the Team to discuss topics further.