

Confirmed Board Minutes

Title of Meeting: NRW Board Meeting (Business)

Date of Meeting: 13th July 2017 **Venue:** Brecon Guild Hall, Brecon Powys

Board Members: Diane McCrea (Chair)
Dr Madeleine Havard (Deputy Chair)
Sir Paul Williams (Chair of People and Remuneration Committee)
Nigel Reader (Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee)
Andy Middleton (Chair of Protected Areas Committee)
Dr Elizabeth Haywood
Howard Davies
Zoë Henderson
Dr Emyr Roberts (Chief Executive)
Dr Ruth Hall
Chris Blake

Executive Team (ET) in attendance: Gareth O'Shea (Executive Director, Operations South)
Catherine Smith (Director for Customer, Communications and Information)
Ceri Davies (Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting)
Tim Jones (Executive Director, Operations North)
Kevin Ingram (Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Services)
Ashleigh Dunn (Executive Director for Organisational Development and People Management)

Additional Attendees: Howard Davies, Head of Governance and Corporate Planning
Catrin Hornung, Head of Communications and External Relations - Item 2
Simon Neale, Manager Future Regulation – Item 4 NRW B B 32.17
Karl Shepherd, Senior Advisor Future Regulation- Item 4 NRW B B 32.17
Lyn Williams, Welsh Language Policy Officer – Item 6 NRW B B 34.17
Peter Garson, Head of Commercial Services – Item 3 NRW B B 31.17

Secretariat: Geri Mills
Noemi Maria Donigiewicz

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1. Standard Board Business

1. The following Declarations of Interests were noted:
2. Elizabeth Haywood noted the receipt of event tickets from the Motor Sports Association.
3. Sir Paul Williams- wished to register that he will be appointed as Prior for St. John Cymru Wales on 17th June and both organisations had land interests.
4. Zoe Henderson has been elected onto the CLA Environment National Committee.

2. Marketing and Communications Briefing – a year on

5. An update presentation on the delivery of the Marcomms Plan approved by the Board in July 2016 was presented by Catrin Hornung, Head of Communications.
 6. The presentation discussed campaigns and underlined the close involvement with staff. The main points included:
 - Various stories are told daily; social media empowers people to share their views, react and make changes, and NRW created different campaigns to mirror that.
 - #lovepollinators was the first social media campaign to support the Welsh Government's pollinator strategy and to initiate working with other partnerships. social media proved was now an important tool for partnership and customer interaction.
 - #reportit! Was a campaign focusing on a shift from customers calling the 0800 to 0300 number. A 20 percent increase to the 0300 number in 3 months had been noted. The success of the campaign showed large potential.
 - Other social media interactions involved exchanges on disposing of waste and farming waste exemptions, #discover #darganfod in cooperation with the Country Walking magazine, provision of a family backpack used on walks for scenic explorers, internal campaign on the Job Evaluation, organizational design, improving engagement, making the people the heart of the corporate plan, photography competition, an environmental campaign #becarbonpositive, and working with Googletrek.
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7. The Board welcomed the work involved in creating the campaigns. Board discussion centred around the following points:
 - Both positive and negative cases can be handled correctly and promptly when staff work together; social media is key - it brings creative potential to spread positive change, address important issues and influence people through various projects such as: blogs from special places, website updating, improvement in performance based all on user needs. As a result, positive coverage had increased.
 - The need for campaigns to be well thought out and evaluated.
 - There is a need to build up an even more positive 'look' internally and externally through online presence and communication.
 - The recommendations for future development include: a focus on storytelling and proactive planning; using organizational design to ensure a communications focus; using opportunities to engage with partners in Wales, especially in the public sector.
8. The Board thanked Catrin for the insightful presentation and noted the points raised.

Action Point: Secretariat to note forward look for July 2018 for an update, a year on.

3. NRW Enterprise Plan 2017 - 2022 (NRW B B 31.17)

9. Tim Jones presented the draft Enterprise Plan, supported by Peter Garson. Tim explained that there are further updates to the paper with the final paper to be issued immediately following the meeting.
 10. The Board discussed the Plan noting the following points:
 - A need for financial monitoring of income and expenditure - ARAC was asked to exercise scrutiny on project delivery
 - Opportunities for stakeholder engagement/working the ambition as a net positive benefit to the environment
 - Not wanting to restrict the organization by current skills availability
 - The need for clear accountability for project and initiatives
 - A focus on the possibilities of modern technology
 - The structure allowing adaptability
 - Needing to increase income from various sources
 - Being proud of being the leaders in innovative thinking, while managing expectations.
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11. The Board approved the Plan, subject to the final version.

Action Point: Peter Garson to share final version of plan with Board Members for information.

4. Funding Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (NRW B B 32.17)

12. Simon Neal and Karl Shephard joined the meeting and presented the paper seeking endorsement from the Board for the development of NRW's approach to future charging schemes in the wider context of an SMNR Funding Framework.

13. The draft strategy document set out the future charging approach and highlighted the following objectives:

- looking to drive smart behaviours, cost recovery, using other methods to promote sustainability, funding more sustainable use of natural resources, incentivising others to do the right thing, the Enterprise Plan's role in this process, different and innovative ways to drive behaviour.
- Setting a framework and developing it with a wider stakeholder group
- Specific issues around landfill tax, plastic bag budgets, ecosystem payments schemes, intensive farming permits.

14. Board comments included:

- Being mindful of needing to be efficient and demonstrating this efficiency; where we are charging, the service needs to be good, thus both the environmental and the customer prisms need to be used. The motivation behind actions should be clear.
- Evaluating success and the way forward
- Using positive levers for sustainable management.
- Looking at principles and ways of working to reinforce positive actions
- Working with the Welsh Government to ensure consistency of approach
- Working with others to ensure clear and simple communication
- Involving more industry sectors to support the approach.

15. The Board approved the recommendations of the paper and endorsed further working opportunities between Andy Middleton and the NRW team.

5. Finance Report Paper (NRW B B 33.17)

16. Kevin Ingram introduced the paper, with the Board noting the end of year position and the current in year situation.

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6. Welsh Language Annual Monitoring Report (NRW B B 34.17)

17. Lyn Williams joined the meeting to provide an update on NRW's delivery against the Welsh language standards for the organisation.
18. The Board noted the opportunity for all staff to learn and operate in Welsh within NRW, and the Chair encouraged everyone to consider using more words in Welsh during meetings.
19. The Board emphasised the importance of the Welsh language in terms of identity, place and culture, as well as implementing the legislation itself. It was also agreed that there should be a supportive culture to improve people's confidence to use Welsh.
20. The Board noted the report and endorsed the recommendations.

7. Reports

Paper: Chair's Report – Diane McCrea (NRW B B 35.17)

21. The Chair covered issues which had arisen since the last meeting, including:
 - governance and organisational matters
 - the response to agricultural pollution
 - focusing on the image of a caring employer wanting people to come forward if they need additional support
 - the customer focus group.
22. The Board Members noted the activities undertaken by the Chair on behalf of NRW.

Board Members' Activities – Diane McCrea (NRW B B 36.17)

23. The Board discussed the challenge of recording all the Board Member activities; Board Members were reminded of the need to liaise with the Board Secretariat prior to committing to all engagements, internal and external.

Action Point: Secretariat to develop a template for Board Members to complete in order to record all activities.

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Chief Executive's Report – Emyr Roberts (NRW B B 37.17)

24. The Chief Executive highlighted in particular a meeting with Natural England, whose transformation journey was similar to NRW's.

NRW Board Forward Look (NRW B B 38.17)

25. The Board noted the items for presentation at future Board meetings.

8. Minutes & Matters arising, Committees, Minutes & Matters arising

26. The minutes from the March Business meeting were approved with no changes.

27. Review of Action Point Log (March and May 2017) – updates noted.

28. People and Remuneration Committee - Paul Williams

The Chair of the Committee, Paul Williams provided an update from the meeting on 16th of June, including:

- A briefing on the job evaluation scheme timeline and organization design
- An update on leadership and management training programmes
- The Wellbeing, Health and Safety Update (NRW B B 39.17)
- Sickness absence trends are slightly increasing but remain within acceptable parameters
- Agreement to the recommendations on Executive Team remuneration for 2016-17.
- Still awaiting revisions to the local government pension scheme.

29. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee –

Nigel Reader, Chair of the Committee, provided an update from the meeting 16th June, noting the following points

- Internal Audit Report - The 2016/17 Report's overall assurance level was moderate and supported by underpinning judgements.
- Internal Audit 2017/18 programme – agreed, subject to further discussion around health and safety assurance.
- Minutes from the March meeting were formally noted
- Update on the PAC Report on the Long-Term Timber contracts

30. The Board thanked Nigel Reader for his role Chairing the Committee ahead of the transfer of the Chair position to Karen Balmer.

31. Flood risk advisory group

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Madeleine Havard provided an update from the meeting of 3rd July, minutes to follow at the September Board Meeting for ratification, noting the following points:

- The overall flood risk programme was reviewed and accepted.
- Discussion of the condition of flood assets – explanations given and actions are now in place to achieve targets.
- The Board was happy with the progress on the internal drainage districts.

32. Protected Areas Committee – no update required.

9. Any other Business

33. No other business raised.

10. Meeting closed

Public Forum

- 34. An opportunity for attendees to give feedback on or/comment on any aspect of the meeting in open session and to ask questions of the Board.
- 35. After the meeting, three members of the public raised the following points:

36. Mr. Gareth Wardell stressed the role of the Welsh language as very important not only as a linguistic but a moral issue.

37. He also noted that it is not always easy to look at the website to find a telephone number for a local NRW address or an email address and suggested that both for democracy and transparency reasons making NRW's contact information and availability better known would be beneficial.

38. Rachel Evans, sought clarity on the Shooting review. Rachel Evans discussed her understanding of the importance of shooting to the local community as a sport and a tourist attraction. Ceri Davies confirmed that 36 responses had been received from the call for evidence; some individual letters, some with large amount of supporting information. NRW are looking for an academic institution to peer review their approach, to assess the situation. NRW wants the issue to be resolved with an evidence based approach.

39. The Chair said that the review needed to consider the bigger picture and what shooting brings to the local economy as well as sustainable development, and that it was not solely a firearms review.

40. Jack Hanby – sought to discuss progress on a case of illegal waste. The Chair agreed to provide a formal response. Gareth O'Shea confirmed that NRW is

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working to a regulatory framework that allows exemptions and will respond to the issues raised ahead of the September deadline indicated by the Chair.
