

WWMF Minutes

Title of meeting: Wales Water Management Forum

Location: Virtual via MS Teams

Date of Meeting: 20th October 2021

Present WWMF Members:

Attendees Present: Professor Steve Ormerod (CHAIR), Mark Charlesworth (Secretary), Ceri Davies (NRW), Mark Squire (NRW), Ruth Johnston (NRW), Sian Williams (NRW), Eifiona Williams (WG), Gail Davies-Walsh (Afonydd Cymru for WEL), Liz Franks (HD), Phil Stone (Canoe Wales), Tony Harrington (DCWW), Bob Gilchrist (CCW), Tom Mills (Coal Authority), Adrian Jones (NWWT), Lia Moutselou (CCW), Richard Blackwell (WRW for United Utilities), Anthony Geddes (Confor), Clare Bullan (UU).

Apologies: Rachel Lewis-Davies (NFU), Bethan Evans (Ofwat), Carl Banton (CA), David Throup (EA)

Correspondence members: Mark Tilling (WG Marine and Fisheries Division Peter Birch (C&RT), Dai Harries (WG Land, Nature and Forestry),

Secretariat: Ceri Jones

Item 1 Open meeting

As Chair, Professor Steve Ormerod opened the meeting setting out logistics for holding the virtual Forum.

Item 2 Review minutes and action log

Minutes were agreed and actions from the last meeting complete with the exception of the action on AO to share paper on the Wye which was carried over. The revised terms of reference were accepted. A final version will be made available on the NRW website page for WWMF <https://naturalresources.wales/guidance-and-advice/business-sectors/water/wales-water-management-forum/?lang=en>

Item 3 Members contributions and Update paper – highlights and open discussion

The chair thanked Canoe Wales for the written update which prompted a discussion on distinguishing between bathing and recreation use of rivers in the context of inland bathing water designation and access to rivers.

Action. PS to distribute report on access to waters for canoeing.

The workshop on SUDs was well received with the main outcomes being potential change in policy approach and the formation of a task and finish group to feed into the Welsh Government review. The plan for government commits to taking SUDs forward. The task and finish group will be hosted by NRW who will draft the terms of reference.

Action. CJ to forward papers from SUDs workshop to AG who was unable to attend.

The workshop on SuDs between WWMF and WLMF was welcomed and as a good example of cross group working. Further opportunities to work across the Water, Land and Fishery Groups should be explored.

Item 3 Water Resources West (WRW), Environmental Destination – Liz Franks and Clare Bullen, HD

RB outlined the geographic scope and members who are involved in WRW. Principles for delivery align well with SMNR principles such as considering appropriate scales, multiple benefits and a collaborative approach to delivery. Following a prioritisation exercise 6 catchments were identified to focus on including Dee, Vyrnwy, Clywedog, SE Valley Rivers, Wye and Usk. WRW are keen to collaborate with stakeholders to bring forward projects that delivery multiple benefits in these areas. It was queried if WRW included the Usk and confirmed that it is as part of wider upstream consideration. It was felt that complementary recreational and educational benefits should also be considered such as installing a canoe pass alongside a fish pass at the Horseshoe Falls. The target to reduce consumption by 30% was felt to be very ambitious by some which had yet to be detailed. Opportunities for beaver introduction was discussed and LF mentioned a Severn Trent initiative in England and recognised the desire for further reintroduction. Leakage from the network remains an issue to address.

AP. G.D-W to discuss further opportunities for collaboration and joint catchment delivery actions with RB and LF

AP. LF to provide further information on plans to reduce leakage to Dennis Matheson

Item 4. Storm Overflow Road Map – Mark Squire, NRW

MS presented on the recent work to address storm overflows. In the last decade progress has been made to understand the extent of discharges of storm overflows by installation of event duration monitoring. Further work with water companies and OFWAT for investment

is ongoing and 'fast track' options being considered. A road map is being developed that will include a communication plan and consideration of integrating the work with Phosphorous in SAC Rivers and River Basin Management Plans. Solutions will include source control measures to strike a balance between citizen responsibility and regulation. The need to engage with the recreation sector and gain their confidence through action and leadership was highlighted. An early warning system like in some coastal water would be felt to be useful to some recreational activities. It was also felt that when considering CSOs the wider impacts such as chemicals, microplastics, nutrients should be considered as well as aesthetic. It was discussed that some aspects such as microplastics are at a research phase at present and further work would be required before regulation could be enforced for discharges.

AP. NRW to update on progress of the storm overflow road map at the next meeting

Item 5. PR24 – Future Ambition – NRW, DCWW and HD

Presentations from DCWW and HD highlighted the broad priorities for Price Review 2024. Hafren Dyfrdwy's focus in the River Dee and River Severn is aligned with the 7 principles of the Well being of Future Generations Act. This includes acting as an engine for local economic activity, growth and the local supply chain. Customer expectation, climate change and affordability will be major considerations in PR24. A practical application of this was provided for Lake Vyrnwy.

Dwyr Cymru outlined the multiple pressures that PR24 will be developed under such as climate change and affordability. New tools to help deliver improvement included multi capital valuations, nutrient offsetting tools and nature-based solutions. The number of CSOs and the improvements and investigations made over successive AMP periods was described with number of spills available to download on the DCWW website. The number and duration of spills per permit has increased since monitoring began. Storm overflows will also be considered in the drainage and water management plans which will identify wastewater and sewerage needs over the next 25 years. Draft plans will be available for consultation in Q2 2022. CSOs are also being considered under a SOAF programme. Solutions include controls of surface water at source, reduce blockages, and support green infrastructure.

Item 6. AOB

The next meeting is planned for March 2022