



Marine Management Organisation

Board Meeting Minutes: 11 February 2020

Held in: Lancaster House, Newcastle

Board

Hilary Florek (HF) – Chair
Belinda Howell (BH) – Board Member
Bill Dickson (BD) – Board member
David Lyall (DL) – Board Member
Peter Judge (PJ) – Board Member
Robert Wilson (RW) – Board member
Terence Jagger (TJ) – Board member
Tony Delahunty (TD) – Board member
William Roberts (WR) – Board member

In Attendance

Tom McCormack (TMc) – Chief Executive Officer
Neil Hornby (NH) - Director, Marine and Fisheries
Michelle Willis (MW) – Director of Finance EU and Licensing
Phil Haslam (PH) – Director of Operations
Trudi Wakelin (TW) – Director of Marine Planning and Licensing
Selina Stead (SS) – Chief Scientific Advisor
Emma Moir (EM) – MMO EU Exit Director
Gary Saunders (GS) – Head of HR (items 13 only)
Claire Scutt (CS) – Board Secretariat
Sarah Cullen (SC) – Board Support

Defra – By Invitation

Neil Hornby - Defra

Apologies

Andrew Wareing (AW) – Director of Business Development and Transformation

Minutes

1. Welcome and introductory remarks: Hilary Florek

1.1 The Chair, Hilary Florek (HF) welcomed attendees to the meeting, welcoming Neil Hornby, Defra Director, Marine and Fisheries and noting apologies from Andrew Wareing. HF noted that it had been a busy period with a new government and a new approach and gave an update on activity since the last meeting. HF had also attended a Royal Yachting Association event and met with stakeholders.

1.2 HF noted that since the last Board meeting there had been two ‘all-colleague calls’ from which feedback had been very positive and a number of the non-Executives had dialed into these calls.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1 The Chair invited attendees to declare any new interests noting those previously declared.
- 2.2 Peter Judge (PJ) advised that he had been appointed as a Senior Independent Governor at Northumbria University, appointed to the Falkland Islands Association Executive Committee and also as an advisor at First Face to Face.
- 2.3 Bill Dickson (BD) advised that he had become a Director at National Parks, England.

3. Minutes of 10 December 2019 meeting and actions arising from the meeting

- 3.1 The Chair invited attendees to raise any points of accuracy in respect of the minutes of the 10 December meeting minutes. A minor correction was advised. No other points of accuracy were raised and the minutes were confirmed as an accurate record of discussions.
- 3.2 HF noted that the first biennial Defra NED/ALB Chair event was taking place on 20 February and that at her last meeting with the Chair of Natural England they had discussed opportunities to promote joint working between the two organisations with a view to arranging a joint Board event in the future.
- 3.3 William Roberts (WR) raised a query into environmental risk management across Defra and how this would be managed going forward. It was suggested that HF could raise this during the Defra NED/ALB Chair event if the opportunity arose.
- 3.4 Tom McCormack advised that he had commissioned a Stakeholder Relationship Framework and as part of this work the Board members would be fundamental in their role as ambassadors for the MMO. The Board confirmed they were happy to support this approach.

4. Minutes of 9 December ARAC meeting

- 4.1 WR introduced the ARAC minutes from the 9 December ARAC meeting for any points of accuracy. No amendments were advised.
- 4.2 Terence Jagger (TJ) raised the fact that he, and other ARAC members, had requested a specific training course for ARAC members. Michelle Willis (MW) advised that there was currently no provision for NED training within the MMO budget and she was making enquiries within Defra how similar requests were handled in other departments. TMc added that links to on-line training had been made available to ARAC members which KPMG had provided at MMO's request.
- 4.3 HF advised that she would like the request for training to be kept under review while it was explored further and she would also raise this at the NED/ALB event if possible to see if there was a common approach.

5. Notes of the 24 January Remuneration Committee meeting

- 5.1 Robert Wilson (RW) advised that the Remuneration Committee held via telephone conference on the 24 January had a sole focus on recruitment for the replacement of the role vacated by the Director of Strategic Development and Planning. This role profile had been revised to include stakeholder management and the overall management of the Communications team. TMc advised that when creating the new role profile it was clear that the additional responsibilities complemented the pre-existing requirements of the role.
- 5.2 HF and MMOB noted their agreement and shared the view that the role was a demanding one and fundamental to the organisation.

5.3 RW advised that the next formal meeting of the Remuneration Committee would take place on 25 February and this meeting would consider reward and allowances

6. Performance, Finance and Risk pack

6.1 Michelle Willis (MW) introduced the Performance Finance and Risk pack setting out the overall financial position at the 31 December 2019 and noting some key movements in the overall budget position during the period.

6.2 The Board discussed the CCP Programme and TMc updated that David Lyall (DL) had been supporting with ICT, particularly in relation with the Mobile Working business case.

6.3 MW advised that there was a new accounting standard in relation to impairment and NAO were supporting the MMO team with this.

6.4 Drawing the Board's attention to organisational performance, MW confirmed that Marine Licensing continued to perform well and that the 13 week target was 'on track'.

6.5 The Board provided feedback that the Balanced Scorecard required more context. TMc agreed and confirmed he would like to step back with a view to building in more transparent and proportionate measures which would add further value to the process and the sorts of measures we would wish to include would be discussed in further detail at the forthcoming Workshop.

6.6 MW introduced the organisational risks and issues and took the Board through the top rated risks detailing on-going work. The Board raised particular concerns in relation to legal costs, 2020/2021 budget settlement, the recent outbreak of Coronavirus and GDPR. PJ noted the timescale in relation to GDPR to have the second round of obligations in place and it was suggested that PJ and Andrew Wareing discuss this matter out of committee. In addition, the Board discussed the landing obligations and Belinda Howell (BH) raised MMO's remote electronic monitoring (REM) policy. TMc and PH agreed to consider this from a risk perspective. The Board discussed the organisational risk (impact / likelihood) of compliance to the EU Landing Obligation, which came into full force from January 2019 and had been the subject of two House of Lords EU Energy and Environment committee enquiries, but does not appear in the top risks.

6.7 Finally, MW highlighted the Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&WB) report providing an update on PPE equipment as well as training and assurance procedures.

6.8 MW outlined a recent wellbeing initiative on mental health which the MMO had supported by holding a *Time to Talk* event. HF confirmed that HS&WB was a key priority for the Board and Tony Delahunty (TD) was the non-Executive lead.

7. Fisheries Bill and Environmental Bill Information session

7.1 Joseph Miller (JM) presented an overview on the Fisheries Bill and the Environment Bill.

7.2 Taking the Fisheries Bill first, JM pointed out that if passed this would be the first significant piece of primary fisheries legislation in over 28 years which would seek to consolidate and modernise the law. JM set out the Bill's journey to date, confirming that Phil Haslam (PH) had given evidence at committee stage where the Bill had received broad cross party support. Key highlights outlined were the introduction of a power for the Secretary of State to set fisheries objectives; a fisheries policy statement and fisheries management plans.

7.3 The Bill additionally creates new legislation for the UK to allocate fishing opportunities, however international law obliges the UK to reach agreement with neighbor states over "straddling stocks". JM

gave further information about how the Bill would address the discard prevention scheme and replace the EMFF scheme.

7.4 The Board discussed the potential to address some current challenges under the new legislation and discussed communications and how we will work with the devolved governments given this was a UK wide Bill.

7.5 Moving on to the Environment Bill, JM described that Part 1 of the Bill made provision for the Government to set environmental targets in areas such as: air quality, water quality, biodiversity and waste reduction advising that these targets will have carry over into MMO's areas of regulatory responsibility. Part 2 would establish a new independent environmental regulator – The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) - which will have powers of monitoring, reporting and investigation in respect of public bodies' (including the MMO) and will also be able to judicially review decisions of public bodies in cases of serious failure to comply with environmental law.

7.6 The Board noted the content and thanked JM for the clear, informative presentation.

8. December Council Information session

8.1 Richard Hoskin (RH) attended the meeting to provide an update on the last December Council Meeting on EU fisheries negotiations for 2020 fishing opportunities.

8.2 RH updated on how quotas are set and the main outcomes for 2020 as well as control and enforcement options to ensure these outcomes are followed.

8.3 The Board discussed the implications and impact on coastal communities. TMc raised the fact that he had been struck by a comment at a previous Board meeting regarding long term sustainable fish stocks and how we must look at all connecting pieces.

9. EU Exit Information session

9.1 Emma Moir (EM) updated the Board on a number of aspects in relation to EU Exit preparations and noted that with regard to control and enforcement the MMO had secured two commercial vessels, contracted hours from the Royal Navy as well as aerial support. EM advised that there was a balance to be struck between drawing funds, the control and enforcement capability and any resultant risks. The Executive Committee in Defra would ultimately agree the balance.

9.2 EM advised that the focus of Catch Certificate work had moved to comply more closely with Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) regulations and currently the 'minimum viable product' is being investigated. An updated is due by mid-March.

9.3 EM confirmed that the Single Issuing Authority (SIA) IT solution was ready and workshops had been undertaken with Defra and UKFAs this week to discuss the future scope of the project.

9.4 The Marine Support Fund (previously known as the Seafood Crisis Intervention Scheme) would be ready for launch in October 2020.

9.5 The Future Fisheries Scheme design and development was being developed currently in conjunction with Defra colleagues. EM advised that the initial phase would start in January 2021 and this was expected to be fully developed by January 2022.

10. Marine Planning update

10.1 Trudi Wakelin (TW) updated the Board on the progress of key Marine Planning activities following

Secretary of State approval of the draft plans on the 7 January 2020. TW advised that the draft plans for NE, NW, SE and SW were in a consultation period between 14 January and 6 April with social media and webinars being used to encourage feedback. TW advised that the Eastern marine plan was currently undergoing the second three-year review, prior to the Southern marine plan review in due course.

10.3 William Roberts (WR) queried how other organisations had been engaged. TW confirmed that a wide range of organisations including: DfT, MHCLG and the MOD had been engaged through the Marine Planning Programme Board meetings. In addition, specifically in relation to offshore wind, the Marine Planning team had worked closely with The Crown Estate, given that the Government aspires to generate 40Gw of energy by 2030.

11. MMO People Survey Results

11.1 Gary Saunders (GS) attended to provide the Board with the results and analysis of the Civil Service People Survey (CSPS) 2019.

11.2 GS noted that there had been an improvement across the MMO with engagement being slightly above the CSPS average as well as pointing out that more than 80% of questions had been answered more positively than previously.

11.6 RW queried whether it would be Senior Leaders who would be taking any actions forward. TMc advised that it would be for the Senior Leadership Team to drive improvements, though this would be led by the Executive Leadership Team and reviewed on a four-weekly basis. This work is expected to be launched before the all-colleague conference and would also form one of the agenda themes.

11.7 BH queried how we demonstrate that Pay and Benefits are equitable across Defra and other ALB's. TMc advised that work had been undertaken to produce a comparator to highlight pay and benefits in MMO and how this compares with other organisations across the Defra group. This will demonstrate our 'offer' to colleagues on the benefits of working in the MMO.

12. CEO update

12.1 TMc provided an update on his recent engagement with key stakeholders including Marine Scotland, the Crown Estate and IFCA's where he had been in listening and learning mode. In addition, he had been out to sea on the *Ocean Dee*, having successfully completed sea survival training, spent time internally with the Marine Licensing and Planning teams and had also joined the MMO Women's Network. Further coastal visits planned were planned to take place over the course of the next month.

13. Defra update

13.1 Neil Hornby (NH) provided an update on Defra priorities highlighting the new Government's focus on climate/net zero/COP26 and HS2. In addition, NH added that the teams were working on enabling offshore wind, Marine Protected Areas and responding to the biodiversity emergency.

13.2 In Marine and Fisheries specifically, NH gave an update on priorities with the Fisheries Bill, negotiations with the EU planned to commence on 1 March 2020, Future Funding and new arrangements for Northern Ireland. Other items which featured highly on the Marine and Fisheries agenda were **'40 by 30'** and Defra's role within that; the Blue Planet Fund which it was hoped would be launched in 2021 and the Highly Protected Marine Areas Review. Finally, NH updated on some staffing changes within the Defra group.

14. Board Review of Effectiveness follow up

14.1 This item is to be carried forward to a future meeting.

15. Board and Committee Forward Look

15.1 HF advised that the next Board meeting would be held in London on the *19 and 20 May and that Ministers had been invited to attend covid permitting.

15.2 It was agreed that due to the gap between February and May Board meetings there may be a need to revisit dates and review timing. The Board expressed a wish to have an annual forward look to cover business. Secretariat to progress.