



Marine Management Organisation

Board Meeting Minutes: 2 July 2020 Held in Microsoft Teams video conference

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
Michelle Willis (MW) – Director of Finance and Resources
Phil Haslam (PH) – Director of Operations
Trudi Wakelin (TW) – Director of Licensing, Marine Planning and Blue Belt
Andrew Wareing (AW) – Director of Digital and Analysis
Selina Stead (SS) – Chief Scientific Advisor
Jenny Stewart (JS) – Director of Planning and Change
James Roff, Head of Strategic Planning and Portfolio Management, item 4 only
Indy Gill, Project Manager – CCP, item 4 only
Susan Wear (SW) – Strategic Communication Lead (MMO Story – item 5 only
Garry Dando (GD) – Head of Communications - item 5 only
Claire Scutt (CS) – Board Secretariat
Sarah Cullen (SC) – Board Support

Defra – By Invitation

Neil Hornby - Defra Director, Marine and Fisheries

Apologies

None

Minutes

1. Welcome and introductory remarks: Hilary Florek

1.1 The Chair, Hilary Florek (HF) welcomed attendees to the meeting, welcoming Jenny Stewart (JS), the Director of Planning and Change to her first meeting since taking up post on 1 June 2020 and Neil Hornby, Defra Director, Marine and Fisheries.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1 The Chair invited attendees to declare any new interests, noting those previously declared.

2.2 HF noted that Rob Wilson (RW) had indicated out of committee that he was providing consultancy advice to a number of companies in relation to Covid 19 responses.

3. Minutes of 20 May 2020 meeting and actions arising from the meeting

3.1 The Chair noted the draft Minutes from 20 May Board meeting inviting attendees to raise any minor points of accuracy out of Committee, following which the Minutes would be recirculated.

3.2 Regarding an action from the previous Board meeting, HF asked for an update on the meeting to discuss the organisational approach to managing a prospering, sustainable and climate friendly fishing industry. Andrew Wareing (AW) and Belinda Howell (BH) agreed that the meeting had made some good progress and had helped to draw out that the overall evidence strategy aligned with the MMO Story ambitions would help to support the sustainability ambitions.

3.3 Selina Stead (SS) reminded attendees that the MMO Story links to the Fisheries Bill and Environmental and UN sustainability and development goals. Tom McCormack (TMc) noted that there would be a session on sustainability at the September Board meeting which would detail how MMO use evidence and link the results to key performance indicators (KPI's).

3.4 HF also noted the previous action to circulate the Stakeholder Relationship Framework out of committee and queried when this would be completed and ready to share. AW advised that good progress had been made with a 'grid' created and that would continue to be iterated over the course of the next month to play a role at the MMO Story launch. TMc noted that the framework would set out groups of stakeholders with details of account leaders at Executive level and would outline where the non-executive Directors' could play an ambassadorial role. HF asked that the details of the grid were shared out of committee with the Framework to be shared as soon as possible.

4. Control Capability Programme – Mobile Working Group Project

4.1 Jenny Stewart (JS) introduced a revised business case to ratify the recommendation of the CCP Programme Board to secure funding to reduce on-going costs to continue project delivery.

4.2 AW outlined the assurance steps that had been undertaken during the development pause to assess the build to date, evaluate the technology choice, and estimate the work required to deliver MVP based on detailed requirements. AW highlighted the fact that Defra DDTS have now embraced PowerApps as a core part of their technology platform and are developing a Centre of Excellence.

4.3 William Roberts (WR) noted that both RW and David Lyall (DL) sat on the CCP Programme Board which had resulted in greater assurance that it was on track and therefore the assurance risk had diminished. WR further noted that the business case implied that efficiency gains in control and enforcement were the main justification for the investment. He pointed out that the overwhelming priority was in fact the need to ensure effective management of fisheries activity in order to sustain a £1bn+ sector and assure the UK position in respect of quota allocations. TMc agreed with WR and advised that a business case should be built and that support from the Non-Executive Directors would be welcomed to enable this.

4.4 Decision: The Board endorsed the decision of the CCP Programme Board to secure funding of £1.75m in capital costs and up to 0.49m in on-going costs to continue project delivery.

5. Strategy

Defra organisational strategy project update

5.1 MW updated the Board on work led by the Defra Strategy Directorate to review the effectiveness of the existing organisational model. MW advised that an external organisation, Boston Consulting Group, (BCG) had undertaken a 'belief audit' with TMc, which MW had circulated with the papers, as well as collecting a range of data on aspects such as people and finance. This work would be key to the spending review which is likely to be launched by the end of July and continue throughout the summer.

5.2 HF asked whether there were any questions or comments. No questions or comments were made.

Defra perspective

5.3 Neil Hornby (NH) confirmed that BCG would be inputting into the spending review process during w/c 6 August. NH advised that the spending review would be launched at the end of July and would continue into the autumn and that while it was likely to be a multi-year review this may change. NH advised that the Covid 19 work had developed into considering how to support the fishing industry at a critical time of the year.

5.4 NH noted that focus was returning to EU Exit, as the point had now passed whereby, we could seek an extension. NH updated that the UK team were out in Brussels and work was ongoing with negotiations. The Fisheries Bill had passed through the House of Lords and was currently in the Commons, though timing appeared to be critical as it may not be read through the Commons until September. NH advised that the signs were encouraging for the Bill to be in place by the end of the calendar year.

5.5 NH advised that the Benyon Review had been completed with recommendations and the response from the government was to be published in due course.

5.6 NH provided details on the launch of *Project Speed* by the government designed to boost economic growth.

5.7 BH queried which aspects of the Fisheries Bill would be likely to remain following its passage through the House of Lords. NH advised that talks were ongoing with Ministers

Annual Report and Accounts

5.8 MW drew the Board's attention to the paper highlighting the annual report and accounts process. MW confirmed that this incorporated feedback from the previous year to allow the non-Executives adequate time to provide comments in relation to the Annual Report. MW advised that the Accounts would be presented to the ARAC prior to NAO certification.

MMO Story implementation

5.9 Susan Wear (SW) introduced a presentation to the Board on the launch of the MMO Story. SW updated that an all colleague call had taken place earlier in the week to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the MMO and that the launch of the MMO Story to the whole organisation would take place at the next call scheduled for the 15 July 2020.

5.10 SW advised that following the launch of the MMO Story internally, the MMO intranet and external website would be updated with revised branding to begin the process to embed a revised approach and identity for which Garry Dando (GD) had carried out a lot of work on the visualization. The Executive Leadership Team would work on developing plans for driving the work of the Story through the following months with updates would be shared during all colleague calls in October and December.

5.11 Garry Dando (GD) explained that the MMO Story would be operationalised and brought to life for

colleagues. GD shared some examples of the revised branding which included the theme of six 'hero' pictures which reflected the values of the organisation and would be used consistently.

5.12 TMc reassured the Board that the narrative of the Story would establish how the organisation supports the environment and the economy and as the Story evolves, technology would be at the heart of the work. TM further noted that once the narrative was shared it would clearly state how the MMO supports both economy and environment.

MMO Board / Strategic Horizon activities

5.13 Terence Jagger (TJ) raised a proposal which he had circulated to the Board members and CEO which proposed in the context of the MMO Story now being launched (including MMO's "Big Ambitions"), the setting up a small sub-group of Board members to support ELT in its development of the MMO strategy that looks forward over several years and sets out how we are going to get to our future state. TJ explained that HF had suggested that TJ, along with Belinda Howell (BH) and Bill Dickson (BD), worked with the CEO/Directors to devise a coherent strategy which would be adopted and ratified by the Board.

5.14 HF noted that the context of TJ's proposal was viewing the world post Covid 19 and EU Exit and focusing on the big questions and horizon scanning at a strategic level. HF explained that the non-Executive Directors would be able to use their expertise and experience to contribute to the strategy as an interesting future lay ahead with all sorts of opportunities and challenges.

5.15 TMc noted that he was very supportive of the proposal on the basis that it aligned to the MMO Story content, including vision; purpose; values and ambitions of the organisation.

5.16 BH noted her thanks to TJ and gave her full support for the strategic group to be formed. NH agreed and noted that this would help to support the MMO Story in the context of the changing external environment and how the organisation adapted to it.

5.17 HF noted her thanks to TJ for producing the proposal for discussion. TMc confirmed that the ELT would come back with a timescale for the work and re-engage with the Board members out of committee.

6. CEO update

6.1 TMc advised the Board that it was very busy time with a number of competing priorities. He was concerned about colleague wellbeing and had encouraged his direct reports to take a break and this message had been cascaded throughout the organisation.

6.2 Due to Covid 19, recruitment in the organisation had been paused however steps had been taken to address this and recruitment would commence one again in early August with approximately 50 vacancies to be filled across Directorates.

6.3 TMc advised that there would be a renewed focus on areas such as risk, controls, service and MI. ELT had started work on updating KPI's as well as revising the evidence strategy. TM also advised that work had started on a 'total service' initiative which focused on MMO being a customer focused regulator

6.4 TMc offered his thanks to RW regarding a previous suggestion to undertake an interim people survey to check the temperature of the organisation; adding that this was now in development.

MMO Horizon

6.5 Trudi Wakelin introduced the Horizon 2 project which has been set up to interpret Defra guidance through the MMO lens to coordinate the next 6-12-month phase of readiness to return to work outside of the home.

6.6 TJ queried the MMO HR policies given that there had recently been a strong media focus on diversity. TW advised that a review of all HR policies was underway, though acknowledged that diversity issues were more fundamental than the response to Covid 19.

6.7 TMc confirmed that the ratio of female and male colleagues was good and added that terms and conditions had been reviewed so that job adverts are fully flexible in terms of location and hours. Recruitment formed part of the People Plan and is therefore central to the drive to be a fully diverse organisation. RW suggested that the organisation explored the Apprenticeship scheme further as he seen this used to positive effect in other organisations. TMc commented that he would be very interested in exploring this further and would look into this further.

6.8 HF enquired about the Operations team given that a strong focus had been placed on them returning to work outdoors. PH advised that the team were cautiously keen and updated that all colleagues were briefed and de-briefed following every event. PH commented that the team were happy to be both on the harbour and at sea; with a full understanding of what they needed to do to remain safe and had the required PPE equipment to do so. At sea, the model had been tested and the team had boarded a 30m vessel last week. Feedback from fishers was that they had been happy to see the MMO on board the vessel. PH noted that evidence suggested that the Covid 19 virus lives longer in cool areas and therefore the team were not entering the cooler areas of the vessels, though this would be reviewed in due course.

EU Exit Update – PEG – outcome of Defra/MMO P-EG

6.15 JS updated the Board on the range of EU Exit focused projects and advised that there had been two workshops held in the previous week to review each current project and challenge ourselves/understanding on readiness for 31 December. These workshops had resulted in papers drafted to ensure that a list of things to do existed for each project with a RAG status allocated to each one.

6.16 JS advised that all projects were noted as being ‘amber’, except for one which was ‘red’. This project relates to future fisheries funding and needs attention however the project is expected to succeed.

6.17 JS also noted that some projects may remain as ‘amber’ as they are dependent on external factors such as the Fisheries Bill being passed. JS advised that she would send a paper out of committee which set out the detail of her verbal update.

6.18 TMc further advised that the Readiness Assurance Statements (RAS) would be utilised again to provide further and ongoing reassurance. While the focus was on day 1, week 1, the longer term implementation of the projects would be considered in due course.

ELT/ARAC Risk Workshop Update

6.20 WR updated the Board on the Risk Workshop which had been held on Monday 29 June. WR advised that there had been a strong agreement on the consensus of strategic risks and an acknowledgement that some risks were beyond MMO’s control.

6.21 WR commented that the KPI’s needed a full review to make sure they are achieving the key objectives. Both TMc and MW agreed, confirming a systematic review of KPI’s is being developed, including developing likely to run rest of this year and through next year.

6.22 WR advised that ARAC would be held on 10 July at which time the Annual report and Accounts would be discussed.

6.23 MW advised that a paper would be issued on the proposed risks for comment by the Board to keep momentum going. Both TJ and BH noted that KPI's need to be output orientated and TMc commented that the process was a journey.

Highly Protected Marine Areas Report

6.24 PH introduced an update on the Highly Protected Marine Areas (HPMA) report which had been launched on the basis of the Richard Benyon report in June 2020. PH explained that a HPMA would be designated in an existing Marine Protected Area and it would be used to undertake an increased focus on the area by taking a 'whole site' approach designed to give nature the best possible chance to thrive.

6.25 BH encouraged the Board to read the Benyon report, which is good reading. However, it highlighted potential impact, resulting in understandable resistance from in-shore fishermen. This would require the most in-depth engagement with affected stakeholders, if all recommendations were to be implemented.

Demersal Landing Obligations

6.26 PH introduced a paper to update the Board on Demersal Landing Obligations (DLO). PH advised that DLO required all catches of regulated commercial species on-board to be landed and counted against a quota to minimise the wasteful practice of discarding unwanted catch.

6.27 PH advised that a report to assess operational experience of the first full year of the regulations had identified that while some progress had been made there was still evidence of the continued practice of discarding. While Remote Electronic Monitoring helped to ensure compliance, a simplification of the landing obligation rules and revised choke solution would help to make a cultural shift towards compliance.

6.29 It was noted that the ARAC would be discussing the DLO in more detail at the October meeting and a report of these discussions would come to a future Board for information.

FRF/DSSS (FRG Closure Summary)

6.30 MW introduced the FRF closure summary and noted that the paper had been shared with Minister Prentis. MW advised that following the government announcement of a £10m financial package to help protect seafood businesses, the three funds had paid out £7m to over 1,200 seafood businesses and payments were still ongoing.

6.31 MW advised that the teams across the organisation, along with policy colleagues, had worked extremely hard to launch the funds and both the Minister and Chancellor had been very impressed. MW added that the fund will deliver real benefit to the fishing industry.

6.32 MW outlined that a dispute process had been launched on 2 July for those applicants who had not been successful, and these concerns would be dealt with over the coming weeks.

6.33 HF congratulated MW and all the teams involved on their fantastic effort and noted that the quick launch of the funds had resulted in strong reputation building for the organisation.

7. AOB and Review of Meeting

7.1 HF advised that the next Board meeting would be held on the 23 September with further details to follow.

7.2 HF thanked attendees for their participation in this meeting and for all the hard work that had been done and closed the meeting.