Board Meeting
Tuesday 25 April 2017

Board member only lunch: 12.30pm – 1.30pm
Meeting Time: 1.30pm – 4.10pm
Venue: Ergon House, London
Quorum: 7 non-executive Board members

1. Apologies
   Emma Howard Boyd

2. Declarations of Interest
   Emma Howard Boyd

3. Minutes of the Board meeting held on 23 March 2017 and matters arising
   Emma Howard Boyd

4. EU update
   Harvey Bradshaw

5. Chief Executive’s update
   James Bevan

6. Water Resources update
   Pete Fox

7. Staff Survey
   John Leyland

8. Joint Trade Unions
   Emma Howard Boyd and Betsy Bassis

9. AOB and date of next meeting – Tuesday 23 May 2017, Ergon House
   Emma Howard Boyd

10. Review of meeting
    Emma Howard Boyd
Minutes of the Closed Board meeting held on 23 March 2017 at Ergon House, London.

Present
Emma Howard Boyd  Chair
James Bevan  Chief Executive
Richard Macdonald  Deputy Chair
Peter Ainsworth  Board Members
John Varley
Clive Elphick
Lynne Frostick  (items 1-7)
Gill Weeks
Joanne Segars

In attendance
Bob Branson  Director of Finance
Peter Kellett  Director of Legal Services
Ed Telford  Secretariat Manager
Sam Lumb  Deputy Director Sponsorship and Secretariat

Item 4
Craig Martin  Acting Chief Pensions Officer
Richard Warden  Fund Actuary, Hymans Robertson

Item 8
Harvey Bradshaw  Executive Director of Environment and Business

Item 1  Apologies for absence
1.1 Emma Howard Boyd welcomed Joanne Segars to the Board.

1.2 Karen Burrows, Maria Adebowale-Schwarte, John Leyland, John Curtin and Toby Willison sent apologies. Harvey Bradshaw joined the meeting for item 8 only.

Item 2  Declarations of Interest
2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

Item 3  Minutes of the Board meeting on 6 December 2016 and 7 February 2017 and matters arising
3.1 The minutes were agreed subject to a correction to the title of item 14 - “water resources” on 6 December minutes.

3.2 The Board noted the action list and completed actions.
Item 4  Pension - actuarial valuation and results and recommendation for pension contribution rates

4.1 Craig Martin, Acting Chief Pensions Officer and Richard Warden, Fund Actuary, Hymans Robertson joined the meeting. Clive Elphick summarised the paper and the Board noted that the Environment Agency’s Pension Fund was now ranked joint first amongst LGPS funds, with a 103% funding level.

4.2 The Board discussed the performance of the fund and commended the Pensions team for their work in achieving this valuation.

4.3 Clive Elphick explained the recommendations of the paper which sought the Board’s approval to maintain the employer contribution rate at 18.5%, following prior approval at the Pensions and Remuneration Committees.

4.4 The Board discussed the options and asked for actuarial reassurance that this option was in the long term best interests of the sustainability of the fund, both for beneficiaries and employers.

4.5 Richard Warden reassured the Board that risk based modelling had been conducted on several scenarios and that these projections had shown this funding level to be sustainable. Clive Elphick highlighted that equity investments had also been reduced by 5% to further reduce the levels of risk.

4.6 The Board approved the recommendations of the paper.

Item 5 was taken following item 7.

Item 5  Hot topics

5.1 James Bevan updated the Board on current hot topics including the Thames Water pollution case, progress on EU exit work and an update from the Defra group.

5.2 Thames Water. The Board noted that Thames Water had been fined an unprecedented £20.3m in fines and costs for a series of significant pollution incidents on the River Thames. These offences were caused by negligence and led to the death of wildlife and distress to the public.

5.3 The Board discussed His Honour Judge Sheridan’s remarks noting that he congratulated the Environment Agency for their "painstaking and thorough investigation".

5.4 The Board commended the teams involved in the successful prosecution, noting that it was the biggest freshwater pollution case in the Environment Agency’s 20 year history.

5.5 EU exit work. The Board noted the update on EU exit work and asked that a further paper be presented at the April Board meeting.

Action: Harvey Bradshaw

5.6 Defra group. The Board noted the update from James Bevan regarding his ongoing work as part of the Defra group.
Item 6  
**EA Action Plan**

6.1 Bob Branson asked the Board to approve the updated version of the Environment Agency Action Plan, the budget for 2017/18 and the Corporate Scorecard 2017/18.

6.2 James Bevan highlighted that the Action Plan “Creating a better place; our ambition to 2020” would be published on gov.uk and demonstrated how the Environment Agency is working in partnership with Defra to deliver the Single Departmental Plan.

6.3 The Board approved the Action Plan, budget and scorecard, and asked to review the final version of the Chair’s Foreward, which would be circulated following the meeting.

*Action: Secretariat*

Item 7  
**Committee Membership**

7.1 Ed Telford asked the Board to approve the revised Board Committee membership, following the appointment of Joanne Segars to the Board, from 1 March 2017.

7.2 The Board welcomed Joanne and agreed the revised Board portfolios.

Item 8  
**Review of the Board Nuclear Visit**

8.1 Harvey Bradshaw joined the meeting. The Board reflected on their recent joint visits to the nuclear sites at Sellafield and Hinkley.

8.2 The Board noted that the visits had been useful and informative and were a good opportunity to engage with key local stakeholders.

8.3 Key themes that the Board noted were that the effective regulation of the nuclear industry relies on people with the right skills and capabilities and that the environmental risk, in particular from nuclear storage is due to increase, as waste is moved and reprocessed.

8.4 Harvey Bradshaw agreed to return to a future Board meeting with a paper outlining the priorities for the EA, our role, environmental standards, nuclear new build, hazard reduction and key decisions to be taken in future.

*Action: Harvey Bradshaw*

Item 9  
**Proposals for the June planning meeting**

9.1 Emma Howard Boyd outlined her plans for the Board’s June Planning meeting and asked the Board to feedback any comments or ideas.

*Action: Board members*
Item 10  Any other business and date of next meeting

10.1 There was no other business. The next meeting was confirmed as 25 April 2017 in Ergon House, London.

Item 11  Review of the meeting

11.1 Emma Howard Boyd asked the Board to review the meeting.

11.2 The Board felt the combination of video and audio conference facilities had worked well.