

Natural England Board



Title: **Confirmed minutes of the seventy seventh Natural England Board meeting on 21 February 2018**

Members attending	Senior Leadership Team
Andrew Sells (Chairman)	Tim Hill, Chief Scientist
Julia Aglionby	Paul Lambert, Chief Transformation Officer
Will Cockbain	Alan Law, Chief Strategy and Reform Officer
Andy Clements	Julie Lunt, Chief Officer Legal and Governance
Teresa Dent	Amanda Craig, Operations Director
Joe Horwood	Guests
Simon Lyster	Rob Cathcart, (item 6)
Nigel Reader	Ian Gambles, Head of the Forestry Commission (item 10)
Michael Winter	Abdul Razaq (item 11)
James Cross, Chief Executive and ex-officio Board member	Caroline Cotterell, Director, Strategy Implementation, Strategy and Reform (item 15)
	Secretariat
	Lidia Hingle. Board and Executive Services (Legal and Governance)

Welcome from the Chairman and Declaration of Interests

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular Amanda Craig who, with James Diamond, will be providing interim cover for Guy Thompson following his departure from the organisation.

In addition to the usual declarations of interest, declarations were received from:

- The Chairman in relation to the campaign for Churnet Valley to be made into an AONB
- Julia Aglionby for the Chief Execs Report in relation to her standing declarations on her various roles outlined in her Register of Interest (ROI) pro-forma. The Board noted that all Board members would check their ROI to make sure they reflect the range of their interests.
- Simon Lyster for the Chief Execs Report who is a long standing friend of the individual in the bTB Judicial Review.

- Andy Clements for item 4 as CEO of the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) who provided most of the data used.
- Teresa Dent as CEO of Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust (GWCT) for item 4 who responded to the consultation.
- Nigel Reader who reminded the Board of his non-Natural England portfolio but confirmed there were no conflicts with the agenda.

The Board were reminded that any declarations of interest, extends to both actual and perceived conflicts in relation to loyalty as well as any financial or other interests.

The suggestion was made that all board member ROIs be included in the board paper pack or otherwise published on-line, in line with some other organisations and Local Authorities.

Action: Julie Lunt to consider inserting ROIs in Board packs or to publish ROIs on-line in the interests of transparency.

1. Confirmation of the January Minutes and Matters Arising (NEB M76 01)

1.1 The minutes of the January Board meeting were confirmed.
In response to the query about the staff survey and the perceived lack of confidence amongst more junior members of staff in raising bullying and harassment, it was clarified for the Board that it was covered in the finding of the Culture Review discussion and will be examined further under item 11.

1.1.2 The Board noted actions from the last meeting were completed or in progress.

Action: Legal and Governance to produce confirmed January Board minutes

2. Countryside Stewardship (CS) update (NE 77 02)

2.1 Kirsty Shaw provided an update on scheme delivery and improvement programme. In discussion, the Board noted:

2.1.1 Performance had moved on since the paper was drafted and good progress is being made on all the detailed actions and milestones set out in the paper.

2.1.2 The Board acknowledged the pressure to get 2017 payments out but were pleased that the work is still on track to complete by end of March. It was also noted that experienced staff are dealing with the more complex applications in relation to legal and disallowance issues and that these could cause further delays.

2.1.3 2019 arable package applications went live in on 20 February and noted that the majority of recent applications were for regular CS agreements. The reasons for this are being explored to inform planning for next year.

2.1.4 Acknowledged the current concerns with mapping and capital works, and were assured risks are being managed, noting these are policy decisions for Defra and RPA, however, we should aim to minimise any impact on customers.

2.1.5 Noted that the team will be at full complement in the next few weeks and additional resources has helped to get the majority of applications onto the system.

2.1.6 The Board noted the full business case on the transfer of the transaction hub has been developed with a range of options and will be submitted to the Permanent Secretary imminently. The Board were supportive of Option 2 set out in the paper, that is, to transfer responsibility for ES and CS transactions to the RPA from 1 March 2018 whilst transferring staff from summer 2018.

- 2.1.7 Welcomed the high level review and subsequent report and close working with Defra policy to improve customer experience.
- 2.1.8 Were hopeful that given the improving trajectory next year's KPI would not be red
- 2.1.9 Noted the replacement for Kirsty's role is being communicated and that the role will be split between *operational* and *programme* using RPA Governance structures.
- 2.1.10 Acknowledged the improving picture on last year is good for staff morale but stressed the challenges of improving the IT systems, getting hubs up and running and additional resources will improve it further and help to get the team on the front foot.
- 2.1.11 The Board recognised this was Kirsty's last NE Board meeting and warmly thanked her for her hard work, acknowledging the role she has played in gaining the confidence of Ministers and her diligence in keeping the Board informed of progress in a challenging area of work.

3. Uplands Delivery Programme (NEB 77 02)

- 3.1 Amanda Craig introduced the item describing the progress being made in the delivery of Natural England's Uplands Delivery Programme including details of the Ministerial Blanket Bog round table meeting on 1 February, the delivery of long term plans, the new quality assurance plans and evidence requirements and delivery. In discussion, the Board
 - 3.1.1 Extended their thanks to Amanda Craig, Julia Aglionby, National Teams and Area Managers and their teams for the good progress made to date but stressed the importance of maintaining momentum and pressure along with careful stakeholder management and to continue working closely with the Chief Scientist's Division.
 - 3.1.2 Were assured by the quality assurance process for long term plans and that the team have the solid scientific and evidential support required to speak with confidence to others about their plans in delivering biodiversity and other outcomes.
 - 3.1.3 Noted that the approach is designed to allow maximum flexibility and provides a framework in which land managers are able to work towards the best outcome whilst also acknowledging the risks.
 - 3.1.4 Welcomed the need for sufficient monitoring in order to take action if needed and noted satellite monitoring is being used for this purpose.
 - 3.1.5 Were keen to apply any learning from this exercise to other areas and noted the multiple threads which underpinned it's progress; particularly the ability to engage with landowners in a familiar language to enable them to take ownership; positive relationships with NGOs; good communications with Defra and our own open minded staff. Board noted that we need to capture those lessons and to tell a good story.
 - 3.1.6 Noted and accepted the Chief Scientist's advice on the particular circumstances in which burning for restoration purposes might be appropriate and agreed the importance of all of our advisors being clear on this. The Board were assured that there is legal oversight in the quality assurance process and that the long term management plans are all in the public domain.
 - 3.1.7 Concluded that uplands updates should now be scheduled on a quarterly basis and that the future of the Uplands Working Group should be considered as part of the wider Board effectiveness review.

Action: Legal and Governance to schedule a regular Uplands update quarterly going

forward.

4. Consenting and Wildfowling on designated sites (NEB 77 03)

- 4.1 Alan Law provided an update on the review of guidance for consenting of wildfowling on designated sites. The Board were invited to consider Natural England's role and the risks and benefits relating to the options outlined in the paper to take forward the current review. In discussion the Board:
 - 4.1.2 Suggested a Chief Executive meeting with the Chief Executive of BASC and one or two representative stakeholders with a view to building Natural England's relationship with the shooting industry and developing greater trust and understanding with the sector. It was noted that lessons should be learned from the uplands approach. Teresa Dent offered to suggest some names and the Board were interested to see the summary of the response to the wildfowling consultation.

Action: Alan Law to circulate the summary of the responses to the wildfowling consultation

5. EU Exit Update (NEB 77 04). Environmental Principles and Governance after EU Exit (04a) and Fisheries White Paper (04b)

- 5.1 Rob Cooke introduced a general update on the proposals for the forthcoming consultations on the new environmental governance and the Fisheries White Paper, and their possible timelines.
 - 5.1.1 Noted that the Future of Farming consultation is due to be published early next week and the Board will receive a briefing on the content.
 - 5.1.2 Supported Natural England's involvement on the forthcoming consultations, were pleased that our submitted comments had been largely taken account of and stressed the importance of developing the Net Gain principle as far as we are able.
 - 5.1.3 Noted the proposed new environmental body's purpose is to have a scrutiny role rather than a delivery role and we should be supportive and positive in our responses.
 - 5.1.4 Noted the challenge for the new environmental body in how it describes its role particularly on access to environmental justice and ensuring adherence to high level environmental principles and the obligations to ensure others stick to them.
 - 5.1.5 Noted its jurisdiction will cover England only but were assured that account is being taken in relation to recent legislation in Wales with discussions being held with the devolved administrations. In relation to this, the Board recognised that there will be concern about how to address the governance gaps and how similar situations will have different approaches.
 - 5.1.6 Requested sight of the detail of both our responses to the new environment body and to the agriculture consultation and to have the opportunity to agree them. The Board took the decision to defer the strategy session scheduled for March to May and hold a regular Board meeting in March to discuss these time critical issues.
 - 5.1.7 The Board thanked Rob for his update and were content with the current activity.

Action: Legal and Governance to arrange March as a regular Board meeting to scope our response to the agriculture consultation and to defer the Strategy meeting to May.

6 Species Recovery progress and next steps (NEB 77 05)

6.1 Alan Law was joined by Rob Cathcart who presented recommendation for the Boards steer for a future species recovery framework and priority investment programme. The Board were asked to approve the package of proposals to be taken forward with Defra to help deliver the species goals in the 25 Year Plan and to inform the planned post 2020 Strategy for Nature. In discussion the Board:

6.1.1 Agreed that leading and championing biodiversity conservation is fundamental to Natural England's remit and reputation.

6.1.2 Noted that Bio2020 Programme of work does not currently sit under any governance programme and agreed this is a good opportunity to reconfigure how species work is delivered as part of the component of the 25 Year Plan via a new bespoke programme.

6.1.3 Agreed that we require a steer from Defra on the scale of ambition and the resources necessary to achieve it namely;

- A strong structural/ investment programme for priority actions
- An explicit restoration recovery plan as part of the Strategy for Nature
- To ensure that the New Environmental Land Management Scheme (NELMS) delivers appropriately

6.1.4 Agreed a good case should be made in the context of the wider budgetary settlement giving examples of where money is needed and how the current budget has been spent. The Board's steer was to start with bringing people together to align and co-ordinate activity and bring in Climate Change adaptation findings. The Board suggested a briefing note be drafted for the SoS from James Cross and Chairman.

6.1.5 Noted the perception that biodiversity/wildlife is not part of the concept of ecosystem services and the challenge in changing the language to get species into the debate. Michael Winter offered to help to get species into NERC funding discussions.

6.1.6 Agreed that species recovery should be part of the strategic discussion at May Board

7. Chief Executive Report (NE 77 06)

7.1 James Cross introduced his Chief Executive's report.

7.2 Financial Performance to end of December 2017: The Board noted the report on financial performance at Annex 1 and were reassured by the update provided.

7.3 March Board Strategy Session: Given some Board members unable to attend the March strategy meeting and some key time critical discussions were needed in the coming weeks, the Board confirmed the strategy meeting should be deferred until May.

7.4 Hen Harriers: Noted the latest intelligence on the timing and sourcing of birds for release and continue to pursue other donor locations. The Board suggested considering sourcing birds from the Eastern European population and approaching Jemima Parry Jones to act as broker with France and Spain.

7.5 Net Gain: The Board welcomed the acceleration of activity in building on Net Gain's prominence in Defra's 25 Year Plan and live discussions about potential adoption of mandatory Net Gain requirements with the Department of Housing Communities and Local Government (HCLG).

- 7.5.1 Cautioned against running ahead of the evidence but would like to hear the outcomes of the upcoming meeting with the SoS to ensure safeguards are in place and to manage risk. The Board offered to help on the detail.
- 7.6 bTB low risk areas: Noted the update on Natural England's potential role in bTB licensing in low risk areas.
- 7.7 Governance: The Board noted the intention to commission UKGI to conduct the NE Board effectiveness review which featured in the Management Response to the Safe Payments Audit Report.
- 7.1.1 In advance of the effectiveness review James Cross will initiate a review of Board sub-groups, with change proposals to be brought for the consideration and approval of the Board at its strategy meeting. Nigel Reader offered his assistance with both the Board effectiveness review and the review of Board sub groups.
- 7.8 Legal Update: The Board noted the update on issues at Annex 5 in the pack.
- 7.9 Performance Report: The Board recognised that the near hit KPI is a lead cross cutting indicator which should be retained. However, it remains low and more focus and consideration must be given to how a sea-change in performance can be delivered.
- 7.10 Risk Register: The Board noted the Species Extinction risk.
- 7.11 Lynx update: The Board suggested giving the Lynx Trust a clear deadline by which to supply the outstanding information required allowing sufficient time for the SoS to respond and to wait for any feedback from the meeting with SoS and the Lynx Trust.

8. New Board members

The Chairman took the opportunity to confirm the names of the five new Board Members and noted the diverse range of skills and talent they will bring to the Board.

9. Ian Gambles, Head of the Forestry Commission (Verbal)

- 9.1 The Chairman welcomed Ian Gambles, Head of the Forestry Commission (FC) to the meeting who was invited to share the priorities and challenges facing his organisation and explore ways in which we could work more closely together. Ian gave a presentation covering a wide range of issues. In discussion, the Board
- 9.2 Noted that FC's impressive commercial success in access and recreation is driven by both its statutory purpose and because access is a critical source of revenue. FC are looking at different ways to increase its commercial activity but acknowledged that monetising natural capital continues to be challenging.
- 9.3 In response to a query about the ratio of coniferous and native trees and the effect on the local biodiversity, noted there is an inaccurate historic perception of forests and woodland still being mainly conifer and therefore having a negative impact on biodiversity. The FC employ ecologists who work on protecting and improving biodiversity and is a key part of people's expectations. The FC have also been involved in a number of species re-introduction programmes.

- 9.5 Noted that the lack of take up of CS schemes has been a factor in the lack of progress with the Government's aim to plant 11 million trees with uncertainty on funding, and the perceived drop in land values.
- 9.6 Discussed the differing structural solutions with regard to forestry in the devolved nations and noted that there remains close co-operation and collaboration, and the UK relationship is undamaged.
- 9.7 The Board agreed that close working between the two organisations is deepening despite being separate entities with separate statutory objectives and that the whole of the Defra group is working better with natural capital expressed in local plans.
- 9.8 One of the challenges is the cross border function of forestry research which is limited and has implications for sustainability. A very complex agreement is in place to continue to co-operate on a UK basis but acknowledged that research needs to get smarter in understanding its different customers in the longer term.
- 9.9 Biosecurity and plant health is a critical area and part of cross border discussions, with inspections at the border the main risk area. FC have an expert function on tree health and works with the plant health strategy more widely. The building of a state of the art seed orchard where their own stock is grown is helping but acknowledged that alongside this, imports need to be better managed.
- 9.10 The Board thanked Ian for his insights and concluded that there is strong evidence in increasing collaboration between us on the changes agreed and many opportunities to work together and offered a reciprocal arrangement to present at an FC Board meeting if welcome.

Action: James Cross to offer a reciprocal presentation at a future Forestry Commission Board meeting.

10. Medium Term Financial Plan and 2018/19 Business Planning (NEB 77 07)

- 10.1 Julie Lunt reported on the fast moving developments in the 2018/19 business planning round. In discussion, the Board:
- 10.1.2 Noted that we are still waiting for Defra to confirm the 2018/19 budget agreement but the letter is likely be in issued in early March
- 10.1.3 Welcomed the timely action of the finance group in starting to consider the draft budgets ahead of any Ministerial decision and noted that the estimated forecasts are likely to be very similar to what has been predicted.
- 10.1.4 Noted the latest financial methodologies (organisational and Defra group outcome system) brings some complexities but we are proactively working with Defra officials to minimise risk.
- 10.1.5 Noted that plans and options are in place to balance the books in response to the reduction of GiA and headcount and acknowledged that pressure may be created in areas where we want to recruit to such at District Level Licensing.
- 10.1.6 As finance lead for the Board, James Cross welcomed Nigel Reader's offer to support the development of Natural England's business plan for 2018-19.

11. Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) update (NEB 77 08)

- 11.1 Julie Lunt introduced the paper to update the Board on progress made and future plans for EDI. The Board was asked to note the action taken from the last meeting, note the Natural England EDI Delivery Plan and reflect on the responses given in the recent staff survey. In discussion, the Board:
 - 11.1.1 Noted the underpinning themes of EDI Delivery Plan.
 - 11.1.2 Noted Defra Exco are keen to see an increase in the diversity declaration rates and to encourage people to record them on the SOP system.
 - 11.1.3 Noted that the cultural assessment demonstrated that middle management support needs to be stronger and to be seen to be taking a lead.
 - 11.1.4 Agreed that we must not be complacent on wellbeing and the wider health and safety aspects and to continue to promote things we do well.
 - 11.1.5 Noted that the Mind mental health benchmarking survey results were being published in March and that the mental health champion, Simon Humphries and the wellbeing champion, John Holmes, will be looking at the results and identifying actions that can be taken in light of the findings. This will be reported to a future Board meeting.
 - 11.1.6 Requested that EDI continues to promote EDI in a meaningful way and to use current data to benchmark from where we are now.
 - 11.1.7 Noted Defra has set up an independent person who can receive whistleblowing type complaints and feedback appropriately.
 - 11.1.9 Noted the comments section of the staff survey has provided much more detail which has given more insight whilst acknowledging this helped with the identification of symptoms rather than causes. It was part of the challenge to help people get to a point where they were confident in raising concerns and that issues will then be handled differently.
 - 11.1.10 Observed that changes in social norms are never led by evidence alone but by a steady cultural shift.
 - 11.1.11 Acknowledged the lack of confidence about anonymity which had been borne out by the use of the *prefer not to say* option and which gives an insight into the anxiety some people have about the survey itself.
 - 11.1.11 Noted that only 2% of declarations is Black Asian Minority Ethnic in NE. The average is 12% in the conservation sector. The Board acknowledged that a genuine attempt to get NE to represent the wider UK citizenship could be through innovative use of the People at the Heart Change Plan
 - 11.1.12 Were very encouraged by this programme and welcomed the leadership shown by Laura Hodgkisson and Tim Hill in sponsoring the staff survey.

12. Health and Safety Update (NEB 77 09)

- 12.1 Amanda Craig updated the Board on progress made on Volunteer Bat Roost Visitor Health and Safety Policy and Practice and were asked to endorse future actions. In discussion, the Board:
 - 12.1.1 Were struck by the reduction of near hits in 2017 and the subsequent remedial actions taken in partnership with BCTV, particularly in the bringing together of a lot of the training and making it accessible and direct which has resulted in the near hit to accident ratio of 9 – 0.
 - 12.1.2 Acknowledged that this area of H&S has historically been difficult to manage but were very encouraged by the positive direction it is taking.
 - 12.1.3 Suggested that ARAC or the Board receives an update in due course on the actions proposed for 2018.

Action; Amanda Craig to update either ARAC or Board (whichever is appropriate) on the proposed actions for 2018.

13. Board Sub Group Updates

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (NE 77 10)

- 13.1 Nigel Reader introduced the formal minutes of the 12 December meeting. In addition, the Board:
 - 13.1.2 Were pleased to note that together with Paul Lambert, Nigel Reader gave very positive feedback from the Defra ARAC meeting on 6 Feb at which progress with NE's Safe Payments Action Plan was considered. Nigel congratulated Paul on his excellent presentation of NE's case at the meeting.
 - 13.1.3 Reported that it will be his final ARAC meeting on 1 March, which will focus on moving towards closure of the Safe Payments Action Plan. This will touch upon the Board governance effectiveness review and the potential use of UKGI.
 - 13.1.4 Noted Nigel's intention to document his legacy thoughts as retiring ARAC Chair to inform the ARAC effectiveness workshop on 1 March and propose "end of term" bi-laterals with both the Chair and the Chief Executive/Accounting Officer as well as the induction session with his successor.

14. Remuneration Committee (NE 77 11)

- 14.1 The Board noted the formal minutes of the RemCom meeting held on 16 January and which was reported on orally to the Board on 17 January.

15. NESAC (verbal)

- 15.1 Andy Clements updated the Board on the enjoyable and thought provoking NESAC Science Seminar *Forms of Knowledge in Decision Making for the Natural Environment* held on 7 February, the aim of which was to address issues at the interface of ecological and social science, practical experience and decision-making. In discussion, the Board;

- 15.1.1 Noted the makeup of the audience was largely internal along with some invited guests from other statutory agencies and academics with an interest in the work area.
- 15.1.2 Suggested making more external connections at a future event in order to showcase Natural England's outreach and leadership approach and create a useful opportunity to engage with external contacts but agreed care needs to be taken to get the balance right between internal training events to inform our own staff at the delivery end and an externally focussed event.
- 15.1.3 Agreed to consider holding a larger event to encompass both internal and external interests and welcomed ideas and contributions for topics for discussion at a future seminar.

Action: Tim Hill to consider a larger NESAC conference to incorporate more external guests and to canvass the Board for ideas for future topics

16 Engagement Group (Verbal)

- 16.1 Graham Tibbetts updated the group on progress since the last meeting. In discussion the Board
 - 16.1.1. Noted the reminder for Board member feedback about their stakeholder meetings and for details of future meetings, ad-hoc meetings or telephone calls. The Board undertook to do this in order to fill in any gaps on the engagement planner.
 - 16.1.2 Noted the Engagement Strategy is being refreshed to incorporate the 25 Year Plan and preliminary work will be completed ahead of the May Strategy meeting.

17. Board Innovation Group (NEB 77 12)

- 17.1 Simon Lyster updated the Board on current work being undertaken and noted that much of what BIG have been discussing had been raised in today's meeting. In discussion the Board;
 - 17.1.1 Agreed to re-emphasise that Net Gain principles are distinct from bats and newts licensing issues and to make clear to officials that they should not be conflated.
 - 17.1.2 Noted the contents of the paper on the licensing reform programme for bats (NE 77 12a) which demonstrated the breadth and range of current activity.
 - 17.1.3 Recognised that part of the challenge in communicating the activity on bats is having a simple story that covers 1) the evidence base 2) local conservation plans 3) the package of licence reforms and 4) the setting up of the Expert Panel for advice and guidance.
 - 17.1.4 Noted the Chairman requested regular updates on the progress of the Great Crested Newts national rollout.
- 17.2 As part of Nigel Reader's role in the review of board sub-groups, Nigel offered to develop a proposal for the conduct of an effectiveness review of BIG.

Action: Legal and Governance to ensure regular updates on Great Crested Newts national roll out under Board Innovation Group update at Board

18. **Protected Landscape Designations (NEB 77 13)**

- 18.1 Alan Law was joined by Caroline Cotterell who set out the proposals for streamlining the approach to national landscape designations and variation. The Board were asked to consider the proposals, note next steps and to note the impacts of any changes on outstanding designation requests. In discussion, the Board;
- 18.1.1 Noted that initial proposals have been developed further following consideration by the Landscape Sub Group on 16 January with CS21 principles in mind.
- 18.1.2 Discussed how sites are rated by how they would meet statutory eligibility.
- 18.1.3 Noted the timescales and recognised that there is limited scope for fundamental design change due to statutory requirements and other elements that are outside Natural England's control.
- 18.1.4 Acknowledged the lack of resilience in the team and noted that there is very limited scope for additional resources.
- 18.1.5 Agreed to explore the scope for providing a fast track approach for a discretionary chargeable service to stakeholders and to include this in the communications plan before wider consultation.
- 18.1.6 Set out a range of options with timescales and costings and clear requests for Defra's consideration.

Action: Draft a paper to present options for accelerated delivery of protected landscapes designations to secure Ministerial support ahead of any wider consultation, and report back to the board on progress.

19. **Board Diary (NEB 77 14)**

- 19.1 The Board noted the dates and location for future meetings.

20. **Any Other Business**

- 20.1 Teresa Dent enquired as to whether Natural Capital implementation would sit under Natural England or the new statutory body. The Board noted that it may depend on whether it is solely an accounting based methodology.
- 20.2 Michael Winter requested a future discussion about the Pioneer projects and suggested that it might be beneficial to learn some lessons from the North Devon Pioneer.

Action: Legal and Governance to schedule a discussion on the lessons learned from the North Devon Pioneer.

- 20.3 Tim Hill made Board aware of the growing plant health issue of wheat rust and the potential cross contamination of barberry bush planting.
- 20.4 On behalf of the Board, the Chairman extended his warmest thanks to Paul Lambert who he had been delighted to work with, he congratulated him on a superb job and wished him well in his new role.

Safe Payments (closed session)

21 In a private session of the Board from which the Executive were excluded with the exception of Julie Lunt, the Chair of ARAC and the Chief Executive briefed the Board on the conclusions of the whistle-blowing case relating to Safe Payments, as well as on the agreed actions which had been followed-up by the Chief Executive to achieve closure.

21.1 The Board noted the conclusions of the case and the actions taken in consequence.

Actions Log

No	Agenda Item/Paper	Ref	Action	Owner
1	Welcome from the Chair and Declaration to Interests		Consider inserting ROIs in Board packs or to publish ROIs on-line in the interests of transparency.	Julie Lunt
2	Confirmation of the January Minutes and Matters Arising (NEB M76 01)	1.1	Legal and Governance to produce confirmed January Board minutes	Legal and Governance
3	Uplands Delivery Programme (NEB 77 02)	3.1.7	Schedule a regular Uplands update quarterly going forward	Legal and Governance
4	Consenting and Wildfowling on designated sites (NEB 77 03)	4.1.2	Circulate the summary of the responses to the wildfowling consultation	Alan Law
5	EU Exit Update (NEB 77 04). Environmental Principles and Governance after EU Exit (04a) and Fisheries White Paper (04b)	5.1.6	Arrange March as a regular Board meeting to scope our response to the Agriculture consultation and to defer the Strategy meeting to May.	Legal and Governance
6	Ian Gambles, Head of the Forestry Commission (Verbal)	9.10	Offer a reciprocal presentation at a future Forestry Commission Board meeting.	James Cross
7	Health and Safety update (NEB 77 09)	12.1.3	Update either ARAC or Board (whichever is appropriate) on the proposed actions for 2018.	Amanda Craig
8	Board sub Group	15.1.3	Consider holding a larger NESAC conference to	Tim Hill

	updates - NESAC (verbal)		incorporate more external guests and to canvass the Board for ideas for future topics	
9	Board sub Group updates - Board Innovation Group update (NEB 77 12)	17.1.4	Ensure regular updates on Newts roll out under Board Innovation Group update at Board	Legal and Governance
10	Board sub group update - Protected Landscape Designations Group update (NEB 77 13)	18.1.6	Draft a paper to present options for accelerated delivery of protected landscapes designations to secure Ministerial support ahead of any wider consultation, and report back to the board on progress.	Alan Law
11	AOB	20.2	Schedule a discussion on the lessons learned from the North Devon Pioneer.	Legal and Governance