Minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 December 2017 at The Garden Museum, London.

Present
Emma Howard Boyd Chair
James Bevan Chief Executive
Richard Macdonald Deputy Chair
Peter Ainsworth Board Members
John Varley
Gill Weeks
Joanne Segars
Karen Burrows
Maria Adebowale-Schwarte
Lynne Frostick

In attendance
Harvey Bradshaw Executive Director Environment and Business
Toby Willison Executive Director Operations
John Leyland Chief of Staff
Peter Kellett Director of Legal Services
Bob Branson Director of Finance
Catherine Wright Deputy Director Corporate Finance
Sam Lumb Deputy Director Governance and Engagement
Rob Creed Engagement Manager
Beth Axtell Board and Executive Secretariat Adviser
Mark Funnell Deputy Director for Communications
Toby Nation Group Director of Communications for the Defra Group
Andy Croxford Deputy Director, Europe Unit
Charlie Corbishley Manager, Europe Unit

Item 1 Apologies for absence
1.2 Bob Branson and Lynne Frostick sent apologies that they would arrive late, John Curtin sent apologies for absence, Catherine Wright (Deputy Director Corporate Finance) was welcomed to the meeting as deputy.

Item 2 Declarations of Interest
2.1 No Declarations of Interest were received.
Item 3  Minutes of the Board Meeting on 19 September 2017 and matters arising

3.1 The Board approved the minutes of the 19 September meeting.

3.2 The Board noted the action list and completed actions.

3.3 Matters arising included Harvey Bradshaw giving an update on Navigation as requested pertaining to item 4.4 in the September Board meeting minutes. Harvey informed the Board that Navigation users have been made aware that longer term proposals will be produced in future.

Item 4  Guest Toby Nation, Group Director of Communications for the Defra group

4.1 The Board welcomed Toby Nation and Mark Funnell and congratulated Toby on his new appointment.

4.2 Toby Nation assured the journey and vision for communications of the Defra group operational model, explaining that the 180 people who transferred to the Defra group will bring resilience and breadth of experience, differing values and cultures.

4.3 Toby Nation informed the Board that there is great value in the Environment Agency brand and that the Environment Agency’s national voice and its operational voice will be protected.

4.4 The Board thanked Toby Nation for coming to the Board meeting and suggested that they welcome all the Defra heads of function at future Board meetings.

Item 5  Chief Executive’s Update

5.1 James Bevan updated the Board on;
- The recent EFRA Committee hearing,
- The Strategic Review of Charges (SRC) consultation had been launched,
- The 25 Year Environment Plan which was nearing its launch and
- Transfer of Corporate Services staff to the Defra group had gone well and it is now time to shape future transformation.

5.2 The Board noted the China waste imports restrictions project and the plastics chain. The Board requested that the Waste and Resources Strategy be shared with the Environment and Business Committee.

Action: Harvey Bradshaw

Item 6  EU Exit

6.1 James Bevan introduced Charlie Corbishley and Andy Croxford and explained to the Board that EDT had discussed EU Exit a few days prior.

6.2 The Board discussed day 1 readiness for EU exit, Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), and waste exports.
6.3 The Board asked that their skills be used to support the work in these areas where appropriate.

Item 7 Progress and reflections since the Board visit

7.1 The Board reflected on a discussion they had and the waste sites they visited during the Board visit to Stoke-on-Trent.

7.2 Harvey Bradshaw informed the Board about potential changes to the waste regime such as the use of bonds, changes to the most abused waste permit exemptions and gaining the power to close sites. The Board will be kept informed of this work.

Item 8 Committee meetings – oral updates and forward look

Pensions
8.1 Joanne Segars informed the Board that, in addition to the items outlined in the paper, the Pensions Committee and ISC, had discussed the annual benefits statement and policy to combat climate change.

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Committee
8.2 Lynne Frostick updated the Board on flood prevention funds, work with natural flood risk management Stakeholders and the role of the Coastal Groups.

8.3 Lynne informed the Board that following a visit to the US John Curtin had presented lessons learnt from his trip to the Committee, who then discussed the way the US look at long term planning.

Environment and Business Committee
8.4 Gill Weeks informed the Board that the Committee had discussed Declarations of Interested and asked that this be discussed further with the Board at a later date.

Action: Secretariat

8.5 Gill informed the Board that hot topics had filled a large part of the November Committee meeting and that the Committee had also discussed at length the recent ban of plastic waste imports to China.

8.6 The Board noted that the Committee had received presentations on fracking, installations (including derogations) and Salmon fishing.

Remuneration Committee
8.7 Rob Creed updated the Board on behalf of Emma Howard Boyd. He informed the Board that the Committee had undertaken its annual self evaluation (including input from Executive attendees). This year the Committee assessed itself against the requirements of the Greenbury Report. They also discussed what had gone well and what could be improved more generally. The Committee concluded that it is well set up and that it provides an appropriate strategic level of oversight on HR issues as well as its role in assessing Executive performance.
The Committee recommended no changes to its Terms of Reference as part of its review. Over the coming year the Committee will be looking at retention of skills and succession planning.

**Item 9  Financial Scheme of Delegation**

9.1 The Board discussed and noted the items in the Financial Scheme of Delegation paper.

**Item 10  Finance Report**

10.1 Bob Branson presented the Finance Report. The Board noted the report.

10.2 The Board commented that they had received feedback from the RFCC Chairs that there was confusion regarding adjusted forecasting Lynne Frostick said she would make this clear at the following RFCC Chairs meeting.

*Action: Lynne Frostick*

**Item 11  Corporate Scorecard**

11.1 Bob Branson presented the paper, highlighting the areas where targets are not being met. In particular Bob Branson highlighted the impact that illegal waste sites have on the targets.

11.2 The Board noted the paper and discussed the issues.

**Item 12  Reconstitution of Somerset Internal Drainage Boards**

12.1 Toby Willison presented the paper to the Board, informing the Board of the need for reconstitution of the Somerset Internal Drainage Board’s (IDBs) to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. He assured the Board that this recommendation was in line with the findings of the recent National Audit Office report (March 2017), and recent concerns raised by both Sedgemoor District Council and the Wessex Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (WRFCC), and that all groups involved had been consulted and were in support of the proposed Scheme.

12.2 The Board approved the reconstitution of both the Parrett/Tone and the Brue/Axe (IDBs) to a membership size of 25 each, which will comprise 12 elected and 13 appointed Members.
Item 13  Update on Corporate Services transfer

13.1 John Leyland informed the Board that transfer had gone well and reiterated James Bevan’s earlier message that it is now time to shape the future.

Item 14  AOB and date of next meeting

14.1 The Board noted that the next meeting would be a Stakeholder event on 1 February 2018 in London

14.2 The Board wished congratulations be passed to Craig Martin on his appointment as Chief Pensions Officer.

14.3 The Board were updated on storm Caroline and the overtoppings it would likely cause on the East Coast and in Cumbria.

Item 15  Review of the meeting

15.1 The Board reflected that they appreciate receiving items that are not fully formed in order that they can add value.