Board Meeting

Minutes of the Board meeting held on 18 October 2018 at the Garden Museum, London.

Present
Emma Howard Boyd Chair
James Bevan Chief Executive
Richard Macdonald Deputy Chair
Gill Weeks Board Members
Joanne Segars
Maria Adebowale-Schwarte
Robert Gould
John Lelliott
Caroline Mason
Judith Batchelar
Lynne Frostick
John Varley

In attendance
John Curtin Executive Director Flood and Coastal Risk Management
Harvey Bradshaw Executive Director Environment and Business
Sarah Chare Director of Operations, South and East (deputy for Toby Willison)
John Leyland Chief of Staff
Peter Kellett Director of Legal Services
Bob Branson Director of Finance
Sam Lumb Deputy Director, Governance and Engagement
Mark Funnell Deputy Director, Communications, Items 1-10
Rob Creed Governance and Engagement Manager
Kathryn McDonald Board Governance Adviser

Item 5
Neil Davies Director of Future Funding
Claire Johnstone Future Funding and Economics Manager

Item 6
Tony Grayling Director Sustainable Business and Development

Item 6
Andy Croxford Deputy Director, EU Exit

Item 9
Henry Dimbleby Defra, Non-executive Director
Item 1  Apologies for absence
1.1  Apologies were received from Toby Willison, Sarah Chare attended as his deputy.
1.2  It was noted that Caroline Mason and Mark Funnell would need to leave before the close of the meeting.

Item 2  Declarations of Interest
2.1  Emma Howard Boyd informed the Board she had been appointed as the UK Commissioner to the Global Commission on Adaptation. The Board gave their congratulations on her appointment and offered their ongoing support.
2.2  Emma Howard Boyd noted she has stepped down as Chair of ShareAction, but she remains on its Board.

Item 3  Minutes of the Board Meeting on 12 July 2018 and matters arising
3.1  The Board approved the minutes of the 12 July 2018 meeting and noted the action list and completed actions.
3.2  In follow up to action 1 regarding educational material, the Board requested a presentation giving an overview of the Environment Agency for use as educational material in their local areas. Mark Funnell agreed to action this, and additionally share the link to a video produced to give an overview of the Environment Agency.

   Action: Mark Funnell

Item 4  Chair and Chief Executive’s Updates
Chair’s Update
4.1  Emma Howard Boyd updated the Board on her activity since the last Board meeting. This included: a note the Secretary of State highlighting risks and issues that the Board discussed during their recent visit to the Lincolnshire coast; a focus this on climate change and adaptation, including involvement in Green Great Britain week; and a meeting the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government to discuss the mis-description of construction waste.

4.2  Emma Howard Boyd reported to the Board that, following consultation with James Bevan and all Board members via correspondence, she had approved the recommendation not to transfer the Environment Agency Internal Audit team to the Government Internal Audit Agency on 1 April 2019.

4.3  Following consultation with the Board and James Bevan via correspondence, the changes to charges for navigation for the period 2019-21 were approved.
4.4 Emma Howard Boyd updated the Board on a response letter to the trade unions, she would send on behalf of the full Board.

Chief Executive’s Update

4.5 James Bevan updated the Board on the Environment Agency’s response to an ongoing clinical waste incident. The Environment Agency is working to bring the six sites into compliance, taking enforcement action to clear excess waste at the sites and has launched a criminal investigation. James Bevan noted his thanks to all staff who been active on this issue.

4.6 The Board were updated on a number of reports that have been carried out over the summer, including the Multi Agency Flood Plan review; Waste Crime review; and Farm Inspection & Regulation review.

4.7 It was noted that the Regulating for People, Environment and Growth report had been published, Mark Funnell agreed to issue a summary of coverage to the Board.

Action: Mark Funnell

Item 5  Mobilising More Money

5.1 Neil Davies and Claire Johnstone shared progress on this project, looking at innovative funding options, with the Board. The team trialled a scheme in Somerset using a market platform to allow farmers to bid to carry out land management actions. The trial was successful and plans are in place to carry out a further trial in a different region.

5.2 There was discussion about further areas the team should explore including how to consider social value and place making as part of this work.

5.3 The Board thanked the team for their work and asked for a further progress update to return to a Board meeting next year.

Action: Harvey Bradshaw

Item 6  EU Exit

6.1 Tony Grayling and Andy Croxford updated the Board on preparations for EU Exit. In addition to day one readiness work streams, the organisation has begun to look at contingency plans for a no deal exit.

6.2 The Board was advised that there is currently work ongoing to engage with stakeholders and contractors to identify potential risks within our supply chains. The importance of the Environment Agency’s role within Local Resilience Forums was also noted.

6.3 There was further discussion of the risks being considered as part of contingency plans, and any further risks that should also be reviewed.
Item 7  Schemes of Delegation

Financial Scheme of Delegation
7.1 The Board noted the items in the paper on the Financial Scheme of Delegation.

Non-financial Scheme of Delegation
7.3 The Board approved the proposed changes, with one amendment. The Chief of Staff role will be added as an approver alongside Executive Directors, given that post’s role in approving Quality Management System documents for transferred corporate services.

Item 8  Committee Updates

Recent Committee meeting updates
8.1 The Board noted the paper on recent Committee meetings.

8.2 The Board approved the appointment of Robert Gould as a Committee member for Pensions, as recommended by the Pensions Committee.

Flood and Coastal Risk Management Committee (FCRM) annual summary report
8.4 Lynne Frostick presented the FCRM Committee annual summary report. She commended the FCRM team for the strong collaborative relationship with the Committee.

Item 9  Henry Dimbleby – Guest

9.1 Emma Howard Boyd welcomed Henry Dimbleby, Defra Non-executive Director to the meeting. There was discussion about how to ensure there are appropriate resources for EU Exit; how Defra may need to adapt post EU Exit; and the future of food strategy.

9.2 The Board thanked Henry for joining the meeting and for his contributions to the meeting.

Item 10  AOB and Date of Next Meeting

10.1 Emma Howard Boyd thanked Bob Branson on behalf of the Board for his significant contributions at Board meetings and wished him the best of luck in his new role as the Defra Director of Finance Operations.

Item 11  Meeting Review

11.1 The Board reviewed the meeting.