Board Meeting

Minutes of the Board meeting held on 13th December 2018 in London.

Present

Emma Howard Boyd  Chair
James Bevan  Chief Executive
Richard Macdonald  Deputy Chair
Gill Weeks  Board Members
Maria Adebowale-Schwarte
Robert Gould
John Lelliott
Caroline Mason
John Varley

In attendance

John Curtin  Executive Director Flood and Coastal Risk Management
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
Sam Lumb  Deputy Director Governance and Engagement
Rob Creed  Governance and Engagement Manager

Item 5 and 8  Tony Grayling
Item 8  Andy Croxford
Item 8  Dafydd Evans

Item 1  Apologies for absence

1.1  Lynne Frostick and Judith Batchelor gave their apologies for this meeting.

Item 2  Declarations of Interest

2.1  Peter Kellett circulated a copy of and reminded the Board about its existing guidance on:
- Managing conflicts of interest
- The Nolan Principles where Board Members as public office holders are subject to high standards
Propriety in decision making which exists to protect the integrity of Environment Agency decisions particularly for permitting and enforcement

**Item 3  Minutes of the Board Meeting on 18th October and matters arising**

3.1 The Board approved the minutes of the 18th October Board Meeting and noted the ongoing actions.

**Item 4  Lord Deben session**

4.1 Lord Deben, Chair of the Committee on Climate Change, joined the Board, stating that there is much to be celebrated with the 10 year anniversary of the Climate Act. Lord Deben went on to discuss the upcoming challenges, particularly related to achieving net zero emissions.

4.2 There was a discussion about the how the CCC and EA can work together on issues such as:
- The importance of land use in achieving climate targets and the upcoming changes to agricultural support systems
- Using analogies to integrate Climate Change into daily conversations
- Emphasising opportunities such as cleaner air, better jobs and cheaper energy when tackling climate change
- Challenging inaccurate media coverage

**Item 5  Reflections on Lord Deben session**

5.1 The Board reflected on the discussion with Lord Deben.

5.2 The Board agreed a senior representative from the media (such as an editor) should be invited to a future Board meeting, if possible.

**Action:** Mark Funnell/Secretariat

**Item 6  Chair's and Chief Executive's update**

**Chair's Update**

6.1 Emma Howard Boyd presented her paper and updated the Board on her recent work on adaptation and green finance, and her activity at COP24 in Katowice.

6.2 Emma updated the Board on amendments to the membership of the Pensions Committee, ARAC and Remuneration Committee, as outlined in the Chair’s update paper, with Robert Gould appointed Chair of the Pensions Committee.
6.3 James Bevan updated the Board on the 2018 Pay Award and recent consultations with the trade unions which have resulted in the rejection of the pay offer by the unions.

6.4 John Leyland explained that whilst much had been done to meet the unions’ requests on how the award will be implemented, there was no scope to change the quantum of the award which is subject to Treasury Guidance.

6.5 It was proposed that the pay award be implemented despite rejection by the unions.

**Action: John Leyland**

6.6 The Board endorsed this approach and noted that the Remuneration Committee would discuss future staff reward further.

**Action: Secretariat**

6.7 The Board noted that the Farm Inspection and Regulation Review would be published that day, agreeing that it raises some important issues.

6.8 The Board discussed the employee survey, noting that engagement had been at its highest ever level, with a response rate of 72%.

**Item 7  Winter Preparedness**

7.1 Toby Willison updated the Board on the current weather situation and the forecast for the winter.

7.2 The Board discussed winter preparedness, noting that there are more households signed up to receive flood alerts, more households better protected from flooding and more equipment and personnel in place than ever before.

7.3 The Board discussed the legacy of previous flooding events, focusing on the trauma and anxiety which persists in affected communities. The Board agreed that building trust requires ongoing engagement.

**Item 8  EU Exit Update**

8.1 Tony Grayling, Andy Croxford and Dafydd Evans joined the Board to discuss EU Exit and ongoing ‘no deal’ contingency planning, stating that there are large uncertainties.

8.2 The Board noted that statutory instruments are on track to be in place but there are still risks and regulatory position statements are being worked on in preparation.

8.3 Dafydd Evans outlined the main risks from no deal EU Exit around people, procurement, farming supply chains, water resources and waste.
The Board noted that there was a ten point plan and prioritisation guidance.

8.4 The Board discussed IT issues and contingency planning, noting the differences between services which we provide and those that are procured. The Board encouraged the team to look further into resilience in telecommunications.

Item 9 Quarter 2 Corporate Scorecard

9.1 Pat Bolster introduced the Quarter 2 Corporate Scorecard. The Board noted that secondments to support EU Exit and dry weather have affected performance.

9.2 The Board discussed the pollution incident KPI, noting that water companies had been affected by the hot and dry weather which has caused leakages from cracked pipes. All incidents are being investigated and resilience in the water sector is an important part of SR19 and the ongoing Water Resilience Framework project.

9.3 The Board discussed the lost time incident KPI. The Board asked that the title of scorecard measure ‘We Provide a Safe Place to Work’ should include a clear narrative about the measure and what it implies about staff safety, which is generally well managed.

   Action: Pat Bolster

Item 10 Finance

Finance Update

10.1 Pat Bolster updated the Board on the current financial position and the Board noted the items in the paper.

FSoD

10.3 The Board noted the items in the paper which were approved by the Chair under section 4.1 of the Standing Orders.

10.4 The Board asked that the people who have been consulted prior to the Chair’s approval be listed in the Board paper in future.

   Action: Pat Bolster

Item 11 Committee Updates

11.1 The Board noted the committee updates paper.

11.2 The Board reviewed and approved the changes proposed to the ARAC Terms of Reference and Standing Orders set out in the paper.
Item 12  

AOB

12.1 The Board noted that the Salmon Net Duties paper was due to be approved by correspondence but were happy to approve it at the meeting. The Board approved the proposed Salmon Net Duties for 2019/2020. The Board congratulated the team for their hard work.

12.2 The Board noted that Sam Lumb would be undertaking an assignment as Area Director for London and thanked her for her work with the Board.