

# Board Meeting

Wednesday 07 December 2022

**Venue:** Richard Fairclough House, Warrington

**Board meeting:** 9.30-15.35 (Closed Board session 15.35-16.05)

**Quorum:** 7 non-executive Board members

Item		Name	Time
	Welcome	Alan Lovell	9.30 5 mins
	<b>Celebrating Successes: <i>Clywedog reservoir water resources management</i></b>	John Curtin	9.35 15 mins
1.	Declarations of Interest	Alan Lovell	9.50 5 mins
2.	Apologies	Alan Lovell	
3.	<a href="#">Minutes of the Board meetings held on 12 October 2022</a> and matters arising ( <i>for approval</i> )	Alan Lovell	
4.	Board Updates 4.1 Chair's update 4.2 Chief Executive's update		9.55 30 mins
6.	People matters 5.1 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Update 5.2 Employee Relations	Lucy Hunt	10.25 30 mins
7.	Charge scheme approval	John Leyland	10.55 15 mins
	<b>Break</b>		<b>10.45 15 mins</b>
8.	FCRM Innovation Programme	Caroline Douglass	12.10 30 mins
9.	New Government implications	James Bevan	12.40 30 mins
	<b>LUNCH</b>		13.10 30 mins
10.	<a href="#">Quarter 2 Corporate Scorecard</a>		13.40 40 mins

Item		Name	Time
11.	Finance update 11.1 FY21-22 Finance update 11.2 Financial Scheme of Delegation (FSoD)	Pat Bolster	14.20 10 mins
12.	Environment Agency Pension Fund Update 12.1 Employer contribution rate	Lucy Hunt	14.30 20 mins
	<b>BREAK</b>		14.50 20 mins
13.	Committee meetings 13.1 Oral updates 13.2 E&B Committee annual review, updated Terms of Reference	Alan Lovell Mark Suthern	15.10 15 mins
14.	AOB and date of next meeting	Alan Lovell	15.25 5 mins
15.	Review of meeting	Alan Lovell	15.30 5 mins
	<b>CLOSE</b>		

## Board action list

	Meeting Date	Item no and title	Lead	Progress
1	12 October 2022	<b>Item 4.2 Chair's Update</b> The Board noted that the Modern Slavery Statement (MSS) was approved by Judith Batchelar under standing order 4.1 as business between meetings. The Board Governance team will share the link to the MSS once published on Gov.uk.	<b>Board Governance Team</b>	<b>In progress</b> Will be shared once published.
2	12 October 2022	<b>Item 5.4 Health, safety and wellbeing</b> The Board agreed that sub- contractor incidents should form part of our injury record and be reported at future Board meetings.	<b>Chief Operating Officer</b>	<b>Complete</b> Will be reported to ARAC from Q3 & Deputy Director of HSW will provide a summary of performance as part of the regular updates to the Board.
3	12 October 2022	<b>Item 8.3 New Government implications</b> The Board also agreed it would be good to have a discussion on permitting at a future meeting.	<b>Executive Director, Environment and Business</b>	<b>In progress</b> Scheduled for February 2023 Board meeting. Georgina Collins is lead Director for E&B
4.	12 October 2022	<b>Item 10.3 Regular items, FSoD</b> The Board discussed a potential efficiency between FCRM and E&B directorates in relation to approval to the Landscape Recovery Scheme. John Leyland and Caroline Douglass agreed to review the process.	<b>Executive Directors of FCRM and E&amp;B</b>	<b>In progress</b> John Leyland and Caroline Douglass are meeting to discuss a way forward.
5.	12 October 2022	<b>Item 12.3 AOB</b> The Board agreed it would discuss the Corporate Scorecard every quarter going forward.	<b>Chief Operating Officer / Director Finance</b>	<b>Complete</b> Corporate scorecard added to the Board forward look for discussion every quarter.
6.	12 October 2022	<b>Item 15.2 Reflections on Ministerial discussion</b> The Board agreed that the Environment Agency should proactively write to the Secretary of State regarding regulation. Following a similar format to the response regarding acceleration of the Capital Programme, the letter should set out what can be improved and current obstacles to acceleration.	<b>Executive Director E&amp;B</b>	<b>In progress</b> Since the change in government the direction has changed. Further discussion to be held in February

	Meeting Date	Item no and title	Lead	Progress
7.	26 May 2022	<p><b>Item 6.3 Q4 Corporate Scorecard and KPI performance for FY2021/22</b></p> <p>The Board discussed retention issues relating to diversity, including exit interviews, and noted it would be useful to have more detailed data on this to identify where the problems are. Pat Bolster noted he would follow up on this and suggested a future deep dive session.</p>	Chief Operating Officer	<p><b>In progress</b></p> <p>Awaiting further update.</p>
8.	26 May 2022	<p><b>Item 8.5 Financial Scheme of Delegation</b></p> <p>The Board discussed how lessons learned and systematic trends are captured to inform future major projects whilst also keeping pace. Pat Bolster highlighted that greater risk allowance will be needed going forward and agreed to circulate a paper on the key lessons learned.</p>	Director of Finance	<p><b>Completed</b></p> <p>Pat Bolster circulated paper on lessons learned to Board in October 2022</p>

## Board Meeting

**Wednesday, 07 December 2022**

**Item no. 4.2**

**Sponsor: James Bevan, Chief Executive**

**Title: Chief Executive's Update**

**Please clearly state what decision you are seeking from the meeting**

The Board is asked to note the update on key topics since the last meeting.

**Governance**

**What meetings/groups have already reviewed this item? n/a**

**What meetings/groups need to review this item next? n/a**

**Are there any risks associated with the evidence and analysis in the paper?**

None

**How will the key messages/decisions be communicated?**

This paper will be published on GOV.uk.

**Legal Services have been consulted and confirm no legal annex is required.**

**Legal advice provided by: Estelle Palin**

## 1.0 Water quantity: drought update

- 1.1. Despite the recent wet weather, the drought continues. 11 of the 14 Environment Agency's operational areas remain in drought status and some water companies are still implementing Temporary Use restrictions. The continuing drought is likely to mean that some Environment Agency areas will remain at this status well into 2023, until the cumulative rainfall is sufficient for full recovery in water resource storage and environment resilience. Water company reservoir levels are starting to increase. The focus is on Southwest Water due to exceptionally low reservoir levels in Cornwall. The company is working closely with Defra and the Environment Agency taking both demand and supply actions, including submission of a number of drought permits.
- 1.2. We continue to chair the National Drought Group, which brings together all the key stakeholders involved in managing drought, such as water companies, NGOs and other government agencies. The most recent meeting was on 28 November 2022, chaired by John Leyland and attended by Minister Pow. In that meeting the attendees discussed the current operational picture and looked at how water companies need to start planning to manage potentially significant impacts next year.
- 1.3. The recent rainfall has improved river abstraction availability across most of the country, with many flow constraints now lifted. There are a few exceptions in parts of England, notably Suffolk rivers. The abstraction season for winter refill of reservoirs officially commenced on 1 November and the Environment Agency expects a large proportion of abstractors will have the ability to abstract, subject to local variations in river response. The farm irrigation season has ended, and farmers are now seeking to refill their storage reservoirs early in the season. We are working closely with the agricultural sector to share data on abstraction availability. We have issued 18 drought permits this year and are currently determining another 6 applications. Whilst we are expecting a further 19 drought permits to be submitted by water companies in preparation for winter, the improving rainfall situation has meant some water companies have withdrawn their applications.
- 1.4. It is too soon to understand the implications of the drought this year on the environment. But without a return to average or above average rainfall this winter, it will be another testing summer in 2023.

## 2.0 Winter readiness: Flood Action Campaign 2022 and FloodEx22

- 2.1 Despite the drought, there is also an ever-present risk of flooding this winter. We launched our annual Flood Action Campaign to coincide with [Flood Action Week](#) on 7 November, to encourage people to know their flood risk and what to do if flooding happens. During the week there was particularly good external pick up, including over 130 pieces in the mainstream media carrying our messages. We also had significant engagement through our partner organisations and on social media. This year the messages included an explanation of the overlap of flooding with drought conditions.
- 2.2 We exercise our flood response annually. This year's FloodEx event took place between 14-18 November, with 20 Local Resilience Fora (LRFs) and eight Environment Agency Areas involved. It involved an exercise that was led by the East Coast and Trent Flood Groups with our Incident Management & Resilience team, providing national co-ordination and areas supporting their respective LRFs. The Environment Agency worked hard to

ensure LRFs had all the information and products they needed to run a successful exercise, which provided the opportunity to test Emergency Alerts in a multi-agency environment for the first time. A formal debriefing process is underway, and lessons will inform multi-agency flood plans.

## 3.0 New Strategies and Plans

- 3.1 We will publish the second cycle of the Flood Risk Management Plans (FRMPs) on GOV.UK on 12 December 2022, along with the final Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment reports. The plans set out over 2,000 actions to manage flood risk between 2021-2027. The measures align with the FCERM Strategy and Roadmap. A ‘*You said, we did*’ document will also be published, describing how we will act on the points raised in the consultation.
- 3.2 We are currently consulting our internal colleagues on our first Integrated Asset Management Strategy, which builds upon our previous FCRM and E&B asset management strategies. It will outline our asset management ambition, vision, principles and high-level objectives for all of our infrastructure assets to be delivered over the next 5-10 years. We will be consulting with Regional Flood and Coastal Committees in January 2023 and will launch the final strategy in April 2023.
- 3.3 Our [Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans](#) (DWMPs) are new plans that set out how water companies intend to extend, improve and maintain a robust and resilient drainage and wastewater system, looking 25 years ahead. This first round of DWMPs is due to be completed by March 2023 and will form an important evidence base for water companies’ PR24 Business Plan submissions. In late June/early July 2022, water companies published their draft DWMPs for a 12-week consultation period. The first round of DWMPs is non-statutory, but all the water companies are producing one. They will be updated every five years and with the enactment of the Environment Act in November 2021, cycle 2 and subsequent cycles will be statutory. The Environment Agency’s role in the statutory process has not yet been defined.
- 3.4 On 21 October, we submitted to the Secretary of State the proposed updates to the River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) for approval by December 2022. The plans act as an overarching framework for protecting and improving the water environment in England and supporting local decision making on how to best achieve environmental objectives. The RBMPs are not formally published until they have been approved (expected 22 December 2022) but have been made available on [GOV.UK](#). To help deliver the RBMPs, £5.3 billion worth of action by 2027 is already planned and funded. By 2030, this could increase by another £18 billion depending on future decisions on water industry expenditure.
- 3.5 [The Chalk Streams Implementation Plan](#) launched in October 2022. It sets out the actions government, Natural England, the Environment Agency and its partners are taking to secure the future protection of these precious waters. The Environment Agency’s role is to ensure those who abstract and discharge into chalk streams comply with the strict conditions specified through their permits, and to help protect their future. The Environment Agency is investing £2.8m funding to help deliver on the Chalk Streams Restoration Strategy, which will secure extra staff and help fund partnership projects across the country.

## 4.0 Natural Flood Management Programme Evaluation

- 4.1 The Natural Flood Management (NFM) programme evaluation report is due to be published on 8 December. This follows delivery of the £15 million NFM programme. This will be a qualitative evaluation, exploring the management processes and approaches needed to mainstream NFM and deliver the government's doubling target.
- 4.2 The learning is also being embedded in the Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation (FCRIP) Programme, including FCRIP projects looking at NFM catchment scale innovation.
- 4.3 Cumbria Wildlife Trust, in partnership with the Environment Agency who provided funding, and StudioDOK who provided the film making expertise, have created [four entertaining and engaging Creature Comforts-style animations](#) to highlight how NFM can help protect Cumbria's homes, businesses and farms. These short films explain how different NFM techniques decrease flooding downstream, reduce the impact of drought on land, and reduce pollutants in water, bringing the topic to life.

## 5.0 National Infrastructure Commission report on the management of surface water flooding

- 5.1 The Environment Agency has the strategic overview role for the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion, including surface water.
- 5.2 Following the surface water flooding incidents last year, at the 2021 autumn budget HM Treasury commissioned the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) to undertake a study on the effective management of surface water flooding in England. We supported the work on the study, and the NIC reported its findings on 29 November 2022.
- 5.3 The NIC recommends enhanced and new roles for the Environment Agency beyond our current strategic overview role, to provide greater regulation over surface water management. It recommends that we should have a role in reviewing new local targets for reducing flood risk and in allocating public funding to areas at high flood risk. The enhanced role would require government placing new duties on the Environment Agency for which we would need additional resources. We will now work with Defra on their formal government response to the review which is due by May 2023.

## 6.0 Water quality

- 6.1 With the quality of our rivers in the media spotlight, challenges with 'forever chemicals', storm overflows, plastics and bacterial pollution are well recognised. However recent [analyses from our Water Land and Biodiversity Team and the Chief Scientist's Group](#) show the chemical and biological quality of lowland English rivers has significantly improved over the last 30 years. Over three decades there has been a reduction in ammonia (85%), biochemical oxygen demand (40-45%) and phosphorus (80-85%).
- 6.2 These improvements in river quality have occurred largely because pollutants loadings from water company sewage treatment works (STWs) into rivers in England and Wales have fallen dramatically. This is largely a result of our water quality and water industry planning and regulation work and capital expenditure of around £4.4 billion.
- 6.3 On 30 November 2022, Defra will publish the official bathing water quality statistics for



2022 detailing the number of English bathing waters in each class: Excellent, Good, Sufficient and Poor. At the start of season this year, there were two new locations added to the list of bathing waters in England: Wolvercote Mill Stream on the River Thames in Oxford and East Cowes Esplanade on the Isle of Wight.

## **7.0 Joint working on new scheme benefits water quality and economy**

- 7.1** The River Nent is the most metal-polluted river in Northern England. A project developed in partnership between the Environment Agency, the Coal Authority and Defra, aims to clean up this river by stopping three tonnes of cadmium and zinc from polluting 60kms of river.
- 7.2** The project is part of the Water and Abandoned Metal Mines Programme to address a historic mining legacy of metal polluted rivers in the UK, in support of the government's 25 Year Environment Plan and statutory River Basin Management Plans. This [YouTube video](#) explains the issues of water and abandoned metal mines in more detail.
- 7.3** The scheme will capture metal-polluted water from Nent Hags adit and remove metals in treatment ponds before returning the clean water through reed beds back to the River Nent.
- 7.4** A small team of staff in E&B and North East Area have worked tirelessly over the past few years to achieve this, overcoming initial opposition by working with the key stakeholders and the local community. By involving them in shaping the development and design of a scheme it meets the needs of locals and considers the unique and protected landscape in the North Pennines.

## **8.0 National investigation into sewage treatment works – update**

- 8.1** One year ago on 18 November 2021, the Environment Agency and Ofwat announced separate major investigations into possible unauthorised discharges at thousands of wastewater treatment works. It's the largest ever criminal regulatory investigation conducted by the Environment Agency, and it is exploring potential widespread non-compliance of environmental permit conditions at wastewater treatment works by all water and sewerage companies that discharge into English waters.
- 8.2** We are limited in what we can say publicly about the investigation while it progresses but recognise that there is a high level of public and stakeholder interest in this work. To acknowledge this, we recently published an [update blog](#) to explain the scope of the investigation and put it into context alongside the Environment Agency's regulatory and enforcement work. We have also created a [centralised webspace](#) to hold all publicly available information about the investigation in one place.
- 8.3** We are pressing the water companies not to wait for the outcome of the investigation but to tackle known issues at their treatment works now, and to press on with the Environment Agency's requirement that they fit monitors on all their Combined Sewer Overflows by end 2023 (most are already done) and on all Sewage Treatment Works by end 2025.

## River Thames Scheme – public consultation

- 9.1** Working in partnership, the Environment Agency and Surrey County Council are together delivering the [River Thames Scheme](#) (RTS). The RTS represents a new landscape-based approach to creating healthier, more resilient, and more sustainable communities. The RTS will be an integrated scheme which responds to the challenges of flooding, creates more access to green open spaces and sustainable travel routes, encourages inclusive economic growth, increases biodiversity and responds to the dual challenges of climate change and nature recovery. RTS will be the first Nationally Significant Infrastructure project in the field of water, in this case specifically for flood alleviation and blue green infrastructure.
- 9.2** The RTS team launched a public consultation on proposals on 8 November, which will run until 20 December 2022. The consultation is accessible via [the River Thames Scheme website](#). The team will summarise the consultation feedback early in the New Year. The team has been busy promoting the RTS to ensure we reach a wider audience and communicate the scheme's benefits. A headline feature on [BBC News London](#) on 15 November was seen by millions across the wider London area. The team also trailed a story about a [rare mayfly](#) being discovered around the Thames during environmental surveys for the project, which has been picked up by media including BBC Radio Surrey and That's TV.

## 10.0 Oxford-Cambridge Arc

- 10.1** [The Oxford-Cambridge Arc](#) (OxCam Arc) is a cross-government portfolio designed to unlock the economic and innovation potential of the area between Oxford and Cambridge. The Environment Agency is part of this programme, which supports the planning of the future of the Arc (five ceremonial counties) up until 2050. It balances needed investments in infrastructure, business growth and housing, with the critical need to protect and enhance the natural environment at each stage. The Arc already contributes over 2 million jobs and 110 billion of annual Gross Value Added whilst providing a place to live for over 3.7 million residents.
- 10.2** Within the OxCam programme is a project that seeks to develop and design an approach to natural capital planning that puts nature at the heart of progress. The Local Natural Capital Plan Project led by the Environment Agency team on behalf of Defra group and Highways England seeks to take the first steps to embed 'natural capital' thinking throughout our approach to the Arc.
- 10.3** In 2020 the OxCam Arc Strategic Utilities Review identified significant water pressures (water demand, Water Framework Directive status, fluvial flooding and storm overflow events) in the Arc. To start to address these issues the OxCam Integrated Water Management Framework programme has been established as a 'trial in a place' contributing to the wider Environment Agency emerging water strategy. The project successfully secured £1.6m of funding through our Spending Review process to deliver a 3-year programme in the Arc and create models and guidance to be used more widely.

## 11.0 Insurance and Flood Resilience – Green Finance

- 11.1** Insurance is a major part of the financial response to climate hazards. There are

opportunities for our insurance and green finance sectors to work together to manage climate risks and become a more resilient nation. Opportunities for monetising insurance risk reduction benefits are currently not well understood.

**11.2** The Environment Agency has appointed an external consultant to undertake a study to:

- Quantify the financial value of resilience from flood infrastructure schemes in terms of reduced risk exposure and consequently, insurance premium savings.
- If the value of resilience is material, develop financial mechanisms to capture the financial savings and convert them into a revenue stream to repay investment into e.g. flood schemes.

**11.3** Two real flood schemes are being used as a source of data for the project: the Banbury Flood Alleviation Scheme and the Bridgwater Tidal Barrier. We expect the study to be concluded in Autumn 2023. This project has the potential to introduce an innovative funding source, through the insurance sector, to support future private finance into FCRM schemes.

## **12.0 Net Zero Review**

**12.1** We have responded to the BEIS consultation for the independent Net Zero Review, chaired by Chris Skidmore MP.

**12.2** The review is tasked with looking at the government's approach to net zero so that it can:

1. Deliver maximum economic growth and investment, driving opportunities for private investment, jobs, innovation, exports, and growth right across the UK.
2. Support UK energy security and affordability for consumers and business and the need to rapidly increase and strengthen UK energy production and supply.
3. Minimise costs borne by businesses and consumers, particularly in the short- term.

**12.3** Our response to the review highlighted three key points:

1. Net zero growth also needs to be a sustainable growth – unfettered net zero growth will be at odds with other sustainable development outcomes (e.g water resources). If done well, net zero growth will help us deliver multiple outcomes, including levelling-up and environmental protection.
2. Regulation needs rethinking for net zero – the right kind of regulation helps deliver good outcomes (eg air quality). Often regulation hasn't been designed for new or novel net zero technologies, so we need to make it fit for purpose. That will include investing in the capacity and capabilities of regulators and industry to design better regulation.
3. The Environment Agency is a trusted delivery body – we are already a delivery body for Defra and BEIS on net zero (eg UK Emissions Trading Scheme) and we can work across multiple sectors, from water and land, to business and industry. We are already the principal greenhouse gas regulator and stand ready to work with the government to help deliver net zero.

**12.4** The Review is expected to publish its recommendations in December 2022.

## **13.0 Energy Resilience**

**13.0** The UK's energy security continues to be a major focus for the government, with increasing pressure to deliver more energy infrastructure and resilience. This builds on the government's [British Energy Security Strategy](#) (BESS), published on 7 April 2022, and in response to rising energy prices and energy security issues arising from Russia's invasion on Ukraine.

**13.1** The BESS reiterated the three goals of the government's energy policy: that energy be secure, affordable and sustainable. It accelerates ambition for nuclear, renewables and hydrogen, and acknowledges a bigger role for North Sea oil and gas in the transition period. The Environment Agency has a major role to play in permitting and regulating energy installations.

**13.2** We have been working with the government on short term "Winter Readiness" measures to secure energy supply this winter. In the medium to long term, the challenge we face with the increased ambition and accelerated timescales of the BESS is three-fold:

1. We need to secure start-up funding to enable preparedness prior to charge income flowing.
2. We need increased capacity for each type of technology as deployment rates ramp up.
3. As all the technologies are expected to deploy at the same time, mid-2020's, there is limited opportunity to flex resources between technologies. These pressures will be further exacerbated by a need to scale up on other net zero policy delivery and decommissioning of legacy high-carbon infrastructure.

**13.3** There is a good opportunity for the Environment Agency to seek new funding and demonstrate our relevance as a delivery body that enables the energy transition. However, there is also a significant risk of being perceived as a barrier to growth if we aren't successful.

## **14.0 Winter fuel resilience**

**14.1** We are working with Defra, BEIS and the Electricity Supply Operator to enable them to identify where flexible generating capacity is available to improve energy security over the winter, to support businesses and the public, while minimising and preventing harm to human health and the environment from emissions to air. There are three specific areas that we are supporting:

1. We worked with Defra in order to implement a Secretary of State Direction to enable the three remaining coal fire power stations to operate over the winter of 2022/2023. These power stations were optimised to run on Russian coal and have had to procure other stocks which may result in breaches of their emission limit values to air. We have assessed the impact of those emissions to ensure that air quality will be protected.
2. At times of peak energy demand there are generators (known as peaking generators) that are fired on oil and gas that can be called upon to bridge a

short-term gap between demand and supply, however their permitting operating hours are restricted. Due to the anticipated demand this winter, we have worked with Defra on a letter from the SoS and associated Regulatory Position Statement (which has been issued) to allow gas and oil-fired peaking generators to exceed these hourly limits; whilst ensuring there is not a negative impact on local air quality.

3. We are also working with BEIS and Defra to consider various scenarios for non-emergency use by industry of backup fuel, typically more polluting gas oil, in the event of gas shortages this winter again while protecting air quality.

## 15.0 Tackling pollution

- 15.1 Enforcing the rules protecting our waters is an important deterrent. [An Environment Agency prosecution has just resulted in Anglian Water](#) being fined more than £1.2 million after a string of maintenance and operational failures allowed pollution to spill into waterways, killing wildlife.
- 15.2 Residents living near [Banham Poultry Ltd in Attleborough, Norfolk complained](#) about the smell of decaying poultry at an abattoir nearly 350 times between 2019 and 2021. The Environment Agency brought the prosecution and the company pleaded guilty and was fined £300,000 at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court on 15 September for breaching an Environmental Permitting Regulation and was also ordered to pay £67,621 in costs and a victim surcharge.
- 15.3 The Environment Agency has been responding to a large pile of burning waste materials for several weeks at an abandoned illegal waste site in [Kiveton Park Industrial Estate, near Rotherham](#). The fire started on 21 September and was still burning after two weeks whilst emitting acrid fumes. The fire service said deep-seated pockets of waste kept reigniting and crews had to return several times. At its height, six fire engines, an aerial appliance and a pump were deployed to the incident, including crews from as far afield as North Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire. The Environment Agency has brought in excavation equipment to move the waste and has installed an external air quality monitoring unit close to the site. Nearby watercourses are being tested on a daily basis, but so far no pollutants from the waste fire had been detected. The cost of removing all waste from site would be around £20 million + VAT. We are working closely with partners to develop a range of possible options for the site using shared knowledge and experience from other similar situations the Environment Agency has been involved in.

## 16.0 Chair and Chief Executive take questions from Industry and Regulators Committee

- 16.1 On 11 October, Alan Lovell and James Bevan answered questions from the Industry and Regulators Committee in the House of Lords. The session can be watched [here](#). Although the inquiry was about the work of Ofwat, many of the questions focused on the Environment Agency's work and our role in relation to water.

## 17.0 Regulating for people, the environment and growth, 2021 report

- 17.1 On 1 November the Environment Agency published [Environment Agency 2021 annual report](#) on the environmental performance of regulated businesses in England and the work we do to regulate them. The *Regulating for people, the environment and growth* 2021 report provides the latest information on emissions from the businesses we regulate, the number of serious pollution incidents and sectors responsible, compliance with environmental permits, how we support the businesses we regulate and the enforcement action we take when a business does not comply.
- 17.2 James Bevan did a [speech](#) at the Whitehall and Industry Group to launch the report, which received some national coverage.

## 18.0 Protecting wildlife: eels

- 18.1 Ground-breaking research led by the Environment Agency, published on 13 October, enables us to better understand [the lifecycle of European eels](#). Researchers have produced the first ever direct evidence of this globally important but little-known species navigating to the Sargasso Sea to spawn. Although their final destination has long been suspected, until now there was no direct evidence. By fitting eels with satellite tags, our staff tracked the eels on the final leg of the journey. The information will help in the conservation of this critically endangered species, which have suffered a 95% decline since the 1980s.

James Bevan

Chief Executive December 2022

**Sponsor: Board Governance Team**

**Title: Board Committee Meetings update**

**Please clearly state what decision you are seeking from the meeting**

The Board is asked to:

1. Note the substantive agenda items discussed at Environment and Business Committee, Flood and Coastal Risk Management Committee, People and Pay Committee, Pensions Committee and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee since October 2022

## **Key points for discussion**

Committee Chairs will be asked to highlight particular areas of note for the Board.

### **Governance**

**What meetings/groups have already reviewed this item?** n/a

**What meetings/groups need to review this item next?** n/a

**Are there any risks associated with the evidence and analysis in the paper?**

No

**How will the key messages/decisions be communicated?**

Through an oral update during the Board meeting.

**No legal annex is required.**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This paper provides a summary of substantive agenda items that have been discussed at Committee meetings since the full Board meeting on 12 October 2022

### **2.0 Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Committee**

- 2.1 The FCRM Committee met on 18 October and 1 December 2022. Substantive items discussed were:
- FCRM GiA Indicative Allocations
  - Capital Programme Reprofitting and programme acceleration
  - Mainstreaming Nature Based Solutions
  - The EA's Strategic Overview on Surface Water

### **3.0 Environment and Business (E&B) Committee**

- 3.1 The Environment and Business Committee met on 20 September and 2 November 2022. Substantive items discussed were:
- Nature Based Solutions and Joint work with FCRM
  - Enforcement – review of intervention effectiveness
  - Guest session with Minette Batters, NFU president
  - Agriculture, deep dive on Future Agriculture Programme

### **4.0 People and Pay Committee**

- 4.1 The People and Pay Committee met on 1 November 2022. Substantive items discussed were:
- Employee Relations
  - CEO Recruitment Update

### **5.0 Pensions Committee and Pensions Board**

- 5.1 The Investment Sub-Committee (ISC) met on 19 October and 10 November. Substantive items discussed were:
- EAPF strategy and performance update
  - EAPF Investment Manager Value for Money assessment
  - Investment Strategy Review
- 5.2 The Pensions Committee and Pensions Board have not met since the last Board meeting.

### **6.0 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

- 6.1 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) has not met since the last Board meeting.

### **Board Governance Team**

**December 2022**