



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

MEETING

# Welsh Revenue Authority Board minutes: April 2018

Minutes from the Welsh Revenue Authority Board (WRA) meeting held on 18 April 2018 at 10.30am, Trefforest.

First published: 18 April 2018

Last updated: 18 April 2018

# Contents

## Present

---

### Meeting opening

---

### Reports, approval and decisions

---

### Board discussion

---

## Present

### Members

- Kathryn Bishop - Chair
- Jocelyn Davies - Non-Executive
- Dyfed Edwards - Non-Executive
- David Jones - Non-Executive
- Lakshmi Narain - Non-Executive
- Martin Warren - Non-Executive
- Dyfed Alsop - Chief Executive Officer
- Sean Bradley - Chief Legal and Policy Officer
- Rebecca Godfrey - Chief Strategy Officer

### Ymgynghorwyr (advisors)

- Andrew Jeffreys - Director, Welsh Treasury
- Dave Matthews - Head of Policy
- Sam Cairns - Head of Operations
- Melissa Quignon-Finch - Head of HR

This document was downloaded from GOV.WALES and may not be the latest version.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-revenue-authority-board-minutes-april-2018-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

- Teresa Platt - Chief Finance Officer

## **Presenting or attending**

Head of Strategic Relationships and Change  
Head of Data Analysis

## **Secretariat**

Ceri Sullivan - Board Secretariat

## **Meeting opening**

### **1. Welcome and introductions, conflicts of interest and apologies**

- Minutes of the last Meeting.
  - Matters Arising.
1. The Chair welcomed Board members and ymgynghorwyr to the meeting. A new conflict of interest was declared by one member which was unrelated to any of the items on the agenda.
  2. Apologies were received from Jo Ryder.
  3. All members and ymgynghorwyr confirmed that they had completed the necessary confidentiality training.
  4. Comments on the minutes had been received prior to the meeting, which had therefore been amended and recirculated. The actions of the last meeting were discussed and it was agreed that five actions would remain open.

5. The Board were informed that the team had recently met with a number of Third-Party Software Integration (TPSI) providers to gain an understanding of the cost and labour involved. Research has indicated that the usage of this software interface may be low. It was also thought that there might be some nervousness from software suppliers around how much time may be required of their developers to integrate with the API, which would remain unknown until it was developed. Therefore at this stage the providers could not commit to use TPSI if it were developed by WRA. Together, these factors did not form the basis of a strong business case.
6. The Board were informed that where a third-party software interface was not available, users would submit paper returns. Based on the low number of paper returns that had been received to date this may be a further indication of likely take-up, but this would continue to be monitored. The team proposed that further work be done on this, and the Board were content with this proposal and welcomed a further discussion at a later date. In the meantime, careful communications to stakeholders would be done around the issue.
7. The Chair noted that the Standing Orders had been circulated and agreed virtually. However, following discussion, it was felt that further changes were required, which would be worked through and circulated to the Board for agreement before the next meeting.
8. An extensive discussion took place about the publication of Board agendas in advance of meetings, given that it had already been agreed to publish minutes of Board meetings, which therefore list agenda items. The discussion noted that some information from the Board discussion may indicate that the item is confidential and cannot therefore be published. The Board concluded that at present the agenda would not be published, with the assumption that the decision would be reviewed at a later date.

# Reports, approval and decisions

## 2. Chair report

1. The Chair noted that no comments had been received on the final versions of the Corporate Plan and Charter and Consultation responses document, following circulation to the Board in March. Therefore, both documents had been taken as agreed. The Board were informed that the Corporate Plan had also been agreed by the Cabinet Secretary for Finance.
2. The Chair congratulated the team on a successful 'go live' and noted that the WRA was open for business on the 1st April, as planned. A message of congratulation had also been received from the Cabinet Secretary.
3. The Chair informed the Board that, as set out in the Framework Document, she would have quarterly meetings with the Cabinet Secretary, the first of which would take place in May. There was also a requirement for the Cabinet Secretary to meet with the full Board on an annual basis, and arrangements for the first such meeting were underway.

## 3. Chief Executive report

1. The Chief Executive informed the Board that the Executive Committee (ExCom) had met for the first time the previous week to discuss and agree its terms of reference; the executive committee structure and reporting and information sharing arrangements; and, the format and standing items for its future meetings. He noted that in future, the ExCom would provide the Board with a monthly report, which would cover operational reporting, an update on risk and a general update on progress.
2. The Board were informed that 'go live' had gone well and that roughly 2500 registrations had been completed. There had been some delays with staff recruitment due to changes to the Welsh Government (WG) security vetting process but this was now complete and the final stages of recruitment were

underway. The WRA payroll system was live and working and an agreement had been put in place for the WRA with PCS and FDA unions.

3. A discussion took place around the ratio of permanent members of staff and those on loan; the Board stressed the importance of ensuring that the end dates for the loans were staggered to ensure the organisation is not left with significant gaps. It was noted that this would be a matter for the People Committee to discuss once established.

## 4. Report from committees

1. The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) provided an overview of the last ARAC meeting. He informed the Board that the committee held a workshop on the 28th March during which they discussed the WRA's operational policies. He noted that although the development of the policies are the responsibility of the Accounting Officer, the Board through the Committee is responsible for assuring that the organisation has clear policies, that they are fit for the WRA, and that they were being implemented properly across the organisation. At the workshop, existing policies were grouped. The next step would be for ARAC to ensure the correct audit processes were in place to test the implementation of these policies.
2. A risk workshop had taken place earlier that week and the Audit and Risk Manager was working to populate risk registers suitable for consideration and management by ARAC, the Board and the ExCom. It was suggested that risk appetite be added to the Board forward look for discussion and agreement.
3. The Chair provided an overview of the Design Authority meeting that took place on the 13 March and reminded the Board that this was a temporary committee which would meet for the final time on the 15 May.
4. Two substantive items were discussed at the meeting. The first was a proposal for a prosecution service for the WRA. The Chair noted that the item was discussed prior to the National Assembly for Wales (NAW)

agreeing the regulations on criminal powers. A decision in principle was required at the committee to allow the team to move forward with the necessary arrangements. Two options were presented:

Option 1 – that the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) as the prosecutor

Option 2 – that the WRA prosecute their own cases.

5. Following an extensive discussion, the committee agreed that given there were still many unknowns as the WRA was a new organisation, option 1 would be most appropriate and provide best value for money.
6. The second item involved group discussions around the lesson learned from the operation of the Shadow Design Authority and the Design Authority, as a committee of the Board. The outcome of these discussions would contribute to the WRA Implementation Programme Lessons Learned documentation. This would be presented to the Board at the next meeting.
7. The Chair noted that in future, oral reports would be provided by Committee Chairs when necessary. The oral updates were welcomed by the Board. However, they requested that where important or complex decisions and discussions have taken place in committee, it would be useful to have sight of the accompanying paper prior to the meeting to provide further context.

## 5. Director Welsh Treasury report

1. The Director, Welsh Treasury (WT) provided an update on recent activity. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance had received assembly questions on WRA matters and it was suggested that a core briefing be produced in partnership with the WT that could be used for such occasions. The Board were informed that the Cabinet Secretary had formally written to HM Treasury regarding vacant land tax, and that a conference was being planned for July and the WRA would be closely involved. The First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance had been briefed on 'go live'.

## 6. Finance update

Redacted information ([Footnote 1](#)).

## Board discussion

## 7. Operational reporting

1. The operational dashboard was presented to the Board. The Chief Executive noted that the performance framework needed further work to link measures and key indicators to what the WRA wants to achieve as an organisation. He noted that the ExCom planned to develop a dashboard which supports executive management and Board oversight and that the data presented would be accompanied by a set of reports to articulate ExCom's interpretation of the data. A discussion took place around the types of data the Board may want to see and some suggestions were received.
2. It was suggested that an item around this be brought to the Board for discussion before July.

## 8. Communications update

1. An overview of recent communications and engagement activity was provided as well as plans for quarters one and two. The Board were informed that work to develop the communications strategy was underway and that this would be brought back to the Board from agreement in June.
2. The Board were informed that pre-release time for statistical data would be 24 hours as opposed to 7 days, as is the practice in Welsh Government. This was because some of the data may potentially be sensitive. The corporate plan would be available in the public domain by the end of April, and the Framework Document and associated document would be published at a later date.



3. A survey was issued to customers earlier in the week to elicit their views of the LTT system and how they would like to engage with the WRA going forward. The Board thanked the team for the work that had been done on communications and engagement and welcomed further information around customer feedback, particularly around their perception of the organisation.
4. The Board were informed that over the next quarter, work would be done to put processes in place for internal communications. The organisation's communications protocol with key partners would also need to be agreed, for example with WT and Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

## **9. Proposals for revised meeting schedule and for virtual meeting participation**

1. The Chair presented the proposal for the frequency of future Board meetings. The Board were advised that they would still be likely to commit the same amount of time to the WRA, as set out in their job descriptions, but that this time would not be wholly devoted to Board meetings.
2. A discussion took place around the need for more virtual meetings. A proposal was put forward to purchase tablet devices for Non-Executive members, in order to provide them with access to secure email and skype for business. The cost of this would be offset by the reduction in travel costs. One Non-Executive member agreed to trial one tablet device before this proposal was implemented, as a pilot.

## **10. Any other business**

1. No other business was raised.

## **11. Forward look**

1. The Chair noted that the forward look was a working document, which gives the Board the opportunity to comment on future planned agendas. The

Board were content with the items for the following meeting.

## 12. Meeting review

Redacted information ([Footnote 1](#)).

[1] There are certain circumstances where it is not appropriate to share all of the information contained within the Board minutes, for example, where it contains personal or commercial data or relates to the formulation of government policy etc. or the effective conduct of public affairs. In such circumstances, the information has been redacted and the text is marked clearly that this has been the case.

## About this document

This document is a copy of the web page [Welsh Revenue Authority Board minutes: April 2018](#) downloaded.

Go to <https://gov.wales/welsh-revenue-authority-board-minutes-april-2018-html> for the latest version.

This document may not be fully accessible, for more information refer to our [accessibility statement](#).

Get [information on copyright](#).

