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## Summary Minutes of the Board Meeting, 31 March 2017

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**Present:**

Permanent Secretary (Chair)  
 Gillian Baranski  
 Gawain Evans (Items 1-3)  
 Owen Evans  
 Andrew Goodall  
 Peter Kennedy  
 Natalie Pearson  
 David Richards  
 Elan Closs Stephens  
 James Turner  
 Ann Keane  
 James Price  
 Sioned Evans  
 Lynne Schofield  
 Toby Mason (Item 1)

**In attendance:**

Katie Antippas (Items 1-7)  
 Gwenllian Roberts (Item 1)  
 Peredur John (Item 1)  
 Des Clifford (Item 3)  
 Piers Bisson (Item 3)  
 Peta Davies (Item 4)  
 Jo Glenn (Item 5)

**Apologies:**

Jeff Godfrey  
 Adrian Webb

**Secretariat:**

Emma Alexander  
 Sarita Marshall

The Permanent Secretary informed Board members that, following the Board Effectiveness discussion at the Board Development Day, the agenda for the meeting was shorter and more focused. Further work would be undertaken to review the Board's Terms of Reference by the end of April in order to facilitate an increased focus on the four Cross-cutting Strategies underpinning the Programme for Government.

**Welsh Government Performance****1. Monitoring Delivery Progress – Wylfa Newydd [Board(17)007]**

- 1.1 Gwenllian Roberts, Deputy Director, Energy Wales Unit presented proposals on the governance of the high-profile, cross-Government Wylfa Newydd Programme, which sought to maximise the benefits of the project to Wales. The Board heard that key decisions pertaining to Wylfa Newydd would need to be made before the end of August and sought the Board's agreement to reprioritise resources to service the Programme.

- 1.2 It was suggested that Hinkley Point and other large infrastructure projects could be useful comparators in terms of good practice.
- 1.3 The Board agreed that, given the limited period available to influence this work, further items on Wylfa Newydd should be scheduled for the May and July Board meetings, and that the focus for the May item should be the Action Plan including milestones and associated resource requirements.
- 1.4 The Programme team were congratulated on their work so far.

## **2. Finance Report [Board(17)008]**

- 2.1 Gawain Evans, Director of Finance, presented a paper outlining the Welsh Government's financial position as well as the key pressures and opportunities. An early indication of pressures for 2017/18 would be sought and reported to the Board in April.
- 2.2 An explanation of the non cash variance noted in the paper was provided. It was noted that a conversation on the potential for variances going forward would be helpful.

## **3. EU Transition [Oral]**

- 3.1 An update on the latest developments around EU Transition was provided by Des Clifford, Director of the Office of the First Minister, and Piers Bisson, Deputy Director – EU Transition, including the triggering of Article 50 and the publication of the Great Repeal Bill White Paper. Welsh Ministers had brought influence to bear in discussion thus far, but questions remained around how areas currently operated within an EU regulatory framework would be dealt with going forward, the impact on the Welsh Government's legislative programme and resources, and the impact on trade and investment.
- 3.2 The importance of co-ordinating activity around this work was noted, and it was agreed that resources and skills in the context of EU Transition should be considered once the draft Great Repeal Bill had been published.

## **Corporate**

### **4. Flexible Posting Evaluation [Board(17)009]**

- 4.1 The Board heard that the Flexible Posting Scheme had been introduced to deploy people to priority posts, decrease the number of posts appointed on promotion, improve fairness, and simplify the process. Although it had resulted in an increase in lateral appointments, following the findings of the evaluation, a move to a simplified, CV-based approach was proposed.
- 4.2 The Board agreed to close the current Flexible Posting Scheme (once a revised scheme was in place) but recognised that it was important to be able to move people into priority posts and that, in considering the proposals, Operations Committee should discuss how the managed

moves process could ensure consistency and fairness as well as encourage staff to work across boundaries.

- 4.3 It also agreed that, following the discussion at Operations Committee, Operations Leads should brief Senior Team members on the detail of the new scheme in order to gain their buy-in and that the scheme should be presented to Business Group by the end of May.
- 4.4 The Board agreed to a 'light touch' limiting of internal promotion activity while the severance scheme was in progress.

## **5 Equality and Diversity Update [Board(17)010]**

- 5.1 An update on Equality and Diversity work was provided, including progress against the 50/50 by 2020 target around women in the Senior Civil Service (SCS). The Board heard that a number of other Government departments deal with maternity pay/cover via central funding in order to reduce the risk of discrimination against women in terms of appointments to posts. It was agreed that, using a simple mechanism, central funding should be established for maternity pay/cover.
- 5.2 Line management and performance management were also discussed, and the reinstatement of a corporate diversity objective for line managers was agreed, although it was noted that messaging around this would need to take place quickly given the timing in terms of the new reporting year.
- 5.3 The Board also agreed that:
- the Remuneration Committee should consider the proposal to advertise SCS posts across the Civil Service in order to help achieve diversity targets.
  - the Reverse Mentoring pilot should be rolled out as a two-year programme.
- 5.4 The Permanent Secretary thanked Gillian and her team for their leadership and for an impressive range of action taken.

## **Regular Items**

### **6 Draft Minutes of 17 February and Matters Arising [Board(17)011]**

- 6.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 February were agreed as an accurate record.

### **7 Permanent Secretary's Items and Exception reports [Oral]**

#### *Permanent Secretary's Items*

- 7.1 The Permanent Secretary stated that, with the Cross-cutting Strategies due to be published at the end of May, she would be looking for the headline messages and action plans to be translated into business planning and individual objectives.

- 7.2 The Permanent Secretary had met the Well-being and Future Generations Commissioner and underlined the importance of the organisation using the five ways of working set out in the Act.

*Exception Reports*

- 7.3 The Permanent Secretary invited Board members to share key issues from within their areas. These included updates on rail; the Parliamentary Review of Health and Social Care in Wales; and the success of the Train, Work Live Campaign, which had led to an increase in filled GP training places.
- 7.4 The Board also heard that a Voluntary Exit Scheme had been published, with a number of applications coming forward. Group leads would be provided with the numbers for their Groups.
- 7.5 Security considerations and the UEFA Champions League Final in Cardiff were also discussed. The Permanent Secretary would be provided with further detail on this.

**8 Sub-committee Updates**

- 8.1 The Board received an update from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARC), with the Chair reporting that the inclusion of the Chairs of the Group ARCs was working well, with appropriate items being escalated to the main ARC. The Committee had also considered governance arrangements in OFMCO as well as the governance of Arm's-length Bodies.
- 8.2 The Board heard that the Operations Committee had received a presentation from the Information Commissioner's Office ahead of the changes to the General Data Protection Regulation, and had also discussed the Flexible Working Pilot, ESNR's response to the People Survey results on bullying and harassment, as well as an update on business planning. The next meeting would take place in Carmarthen. It was noted that Operations Committee agendas were extremely tight and that the situation was being kept under review.
- 8.3 The common approach to business planning was noted as a powerful tool to track progress and to assist with the work of aligning staff and budgets. An item to explore how this was embedding in the organisation was requested for a future meeting.
- 8.4 An update from the SCS Remuneration Committee was provided, and it was reported that SCS numbers were at their lowest since 2013

**9 Any other business**

- 9.1 The Permanent Secretary drew Board members' attention to the papers to note.

**Board Secretariat, 4 April 2017**