

Minutes

Meeting of the Board

Wednesday 19 January – 1.30pm

Online via Microsoft Teams

Members

Julie Hill MBE	Board Member
Professor Dan Laffoley	Board Member
Dr Paul Leinster CBE	Board Member
Professor Richard Macrory CBE	Board Member
Natalie Prosser	Interim CEO
Dame Glenys Stacey	Chair

Attendees

Peter Ashford	General Counsel
Alexis Edward	Head of Finance and Corporate Services
Mike Fox	Head of Communications and Strategic Relations
Andy Gill	Interim Head of Environment and Climate Analysis
Tim Graham	Head of Natural Science Analysis
Richard Greenhous	Chief of Staff
REDACTED	Team Leader, Scrutiny and Advice
REDACTED	Principal Officer, Strategy and Governance
Andy Lester	Head of Business Strategy and Planning (acting as Board Secretariat)
REDACTED	Principal Lawyer

22.01 **Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest**

Apologies were received from Neil Emmott, Head of Monitoring Environmental Law and Advice. There were no declarations of interest.

22.02 **The draft strategy of the OEP for consultation**

This section has been redacted as it contains legally privileged advice.

The Board considered the analysis presented on the extent and quality of engagement conducted with stakeholders to date whilst preparing the draft strategy and enforcement

policy for consultation. The Board discussed that stakeholders had been actively engaged in the various discussion forums established, their insight had been valuable, and had been considered by the Board in its review of the draft strategy and enforcement policy in December.

The Board **AGREED** that the consultation be open for a period of eight weeks, closing on Tuesday 22 March.

The Board discussed the approach to consultation in Northern Ireland. It noted the expected time at which the remit of the OEP in Northern Ireland might be approved by the Northern Ireland Assembly, and the sequence of this and the consultation opening and closing. It noted the risks of delay to this approval. It received assurance that the OEP could adopt a strategy for its remit in England if this delay was long. In these circumstances a separate consultation in Northern Ireland would be required.

The Board **AGREED** that the consultation should close a minimum of four weeks after the decision of the NI Assembly in respect of the OEP's NI remit. It further **AGREED** to delegate a decision to extend the consultation for up to two weeks to the Interim CEO in consultation with the Chair to preserve this four week period.

The Board considered the questions proposed for consultation. It judged them appropriate, and sufficiently open to garner the input and range of views sought. It recommended that additional questions be considered to seek views on the strategic objectives as a group, and to seek understanding on confidence in the strategy as a whole. The latter could be a quantitative question. **ACTION** Head of Business Strategy and Planning.

The Board discussed the draft strategy as a whole and made recommendations for improvement. These included to quantify consistently what is meant by the OEP being a small organisation, to review the use of sub-headings in part 2 and to make our references to human health and wellbeing more consistent.

The Board conducted reviewed each section of the strategy in detail, making a number of drafting recommendations. Officers captured specific recommendations for phrasing, grammar and emphasis and undertook to adopt or consider each, as relevant to the Board's discussion. **ACTION** Head of Business Strategy and Planning.

The Board considered the enforcement policy. It commended the policy as a whole, making a small number of specific drafting recommendations. These were captured and Officers undertook to adopt in the final policy presented for consultation. **ACTION** Principal Lawyer.

Having conducted this detailed review and discussion, the Board **AGREED** that a strategy, enforcement policy and consultation document substantially in the form set out to it be published on 25 January, with the final form delegated to the Interim CEO in consultation with the Chair following Officers' reflections on the Board's comments and discussion.

The Board discussed the outline launch event and communications plan presented. The Board recommended that further consideration be given to promotion of the consultation through social media. This may be through a planned series of interactions, through socialisation of some of the infographics depicted in the draft strategy, quotes from the event, or similar activity. The Head of Communications and Strategic Engagement would consider further **ACTION**.

It noted that the event in January is planned as a functional event to launch our consultation to stakeholders, ahead of a launch in April where the Board would be invited to participate. It

noted the non-political nature of invited attendees. The Board sought assurance on the extent to which Officers had set out the brand values and impression that the event was intended to convey. The Head of Communications and Strategic Engagement would consider ahead of the event. **ACTION.**

21.52 **Any other business and publication of papers**

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 3.21pm.