



Office for Environmental Protection

Minutes

Extraordinary meeting of the Board

Wednesday 9 November 9am

MS Teams

Members

Malcolm Beatty OBE	Board Member
Julie Hill MBE	Board Member
Professor Dan Laffoley	Board Member
Dr Paul Leinster CBE	Board Member
Professor Richard Macrory CBE	Board Member
Natalie Prosser	Chief Executive
Dame Glenys Stacey	Chair
Helen Venn	Chief Regulatory Officer

Attendees

Peter Ashford	General Counsel
REDACTED	Principal Complaints Manager (item 22.92)
Alexis Edward	Head of Finance and Corporate Services
Mike Fox	Head of Communications and Strategic Relations
Andy Gill	Head of Environment and Climate Analysis (item 22.91)
REDACTED	Principal Analyst (item 22.91)
Richard Greenhous	Chief of Staff
REDACTED	Principal Environmental Analyst (item 22.91)
Andy Lester	Head of Business Strategy and Planning
Professor Robbie McDonald	Chief Insights Officer
Ellie Strike	Head of Complaints and Investigations (item 22.92)
Kate Tandy	Head of Litigation and Casework (item 22.92)
REDACTED	Senior Environment Specialist (item 22.91)
REDACTED	Principal Environmental Analyst (item 22.91)
REDACTED	Business and Governance Officer (Secretariat)

22.90 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

There were no apologies for absence.

22.91 25 YEP monitoring report - draft report and progress update

The Board considered the main opportunities for strengthening the overall narrative and key messages. It commented on the tone of the report, recommending that officers should be clear on the audience of the report, and adjust accordingly. The Board judged the report should appeal to a varied audience, with the Executive Summary pitched to ministers and senior policy makers. The main report should be accessible to a wider audience. It was agreed this should be readable for the average person.

This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs. Where trends are positive, the Board also warned against general statements of improvement where it might not be universal. This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs. The report can be framed against a background of good intent.

The Board provided a steer on the structure of the report. The executive summary should summarise the report, and any wider messaging contained in the foreword. It would also be useful for each chapter to begin with a summary of the key points within it. The chapters themselves should be short and should focus on crystallising the messages. An annex may better provide underpinning methodologies, analysis and detail.

This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs and contains information for future publication. Our approach should be proportionate and should add something. It would be beneficial for the Chair to meet with Baroness Brown of the Climate Change Committee. ACTION Head of Business Strategy and Planning.

The Board was informed that the approach has been discussed with stakeholders and that further discussions are in train.

The Board commented on the underpinning analysis used in the building block performance assessment, and suggested how it can be strengthened to support the key messages. It noted the quality of the analysis, but suggested it could be expanded to include the underlying reasons for failures as well as detailing the failures themselves.

The Board recognised that the analysis is not always straightforward. The text needs to be simple and emphasise the conclusions that we've reached.

The Board commented on the analysis of delivery pathways highlighted in the report. The Board emphasised the need to define the current state of the environment so that delivery arrangements can be made. It needs to be set out in a concrete way, with clear delivery plans with implementation timelines so that progress can be assessed.

The Board noted that, while Defra is responsible for environmental policy, other departments – Department of Health and Social Care, Department for Transport, BEIS, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for example – lead on many aspects of delivery. This makes delivery pathways complex. *This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.*

Board members offered to meet to discuss particular areas of the report. ACTION Chief Insights Officer.

The Board noted that it has high ambition for the impact of the report. It encouraged officers to consider whether particular parts could be a separate report or product, if this distracted from the overall clarity of the report needed under the Environment Act.

22.92 Update on statutory targets

The Chair and Chief Executive updated the Board on their meeting with the Secretary of State. *This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.*

The Board discussed the best way to proceed. *This section has been redacted as its publication would be prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs and it relates to information recorded for the purposes of OEP's functions relating to investigations and enforcement.* A letter will be circulated to senior officials in Defra, as a next step.

There was no other business.

The meeting concluded at 11:06.