



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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National Infrastructure Commission for Wales meeting notes: 26 March 2024

Notes from the meeting of the commission on 26 March 2024,
Bute Park, Cardiff.

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Present

NICW

Dr David Clubb, Chair
Jenifer Baxter Deputy Chair
Eurgain Powell Commissioner
Steve Brooks, Commissioner
Nick Tune, Commissioner

Secretariat/Welsh Government

Stuart Ingram, NICW Secretariat
Nicola Britton, NICW Secretariat

Apologies

Eluned Parrott, Commissioner
Aleena Khan, Commissioner
Helen Armstrong Commissioner

1. Welcome and declarations of interest.

The Chair welcomed commissioners to the meeting with a check-in, celebration of success, declarations and invitations. Commissioners congratulated Nick Tune on his Tech Start Up award from the Wales Technology Awards 2024.

Commissioners also discussed the relevance of current health and safety

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concerns signposting future major infrastructure fails. Examples discussed were Boeing's safety record and the collapse of the Baltimore Bridge. The Deputy Chair noted she was in touch with the chief engineer at NIC who was developing a project to look at new build v maintenance of existing infrastructure. It was agreed a future meeting would consider aspects of how to identify and amplify concerns and consider the merits of a mini project on infrastructure collapse: maintenance v new build.

Reflecting on the last meeting and meeting in mid Wales it was agreed the further consideration of rural matters should prioritise grid connectivity and what sustainability looks like in the rural context, where a watching brief will be implemented with a view to a future collaboration with a rural partner, such as [Arsyllfa Cymru](#).

The Deputy Chair had recently met with the NIC. One topic covered was waste recycling and the example of the Welsh experience. This led to wider discussion on the circular economy and recycling infrastructure in Wales. It was agreed a meeting with the Welsh Government policy lead would be a starting point for this.

Declarations of Interest

The Chair declared a new interest as part of a framework delivering advice and training on governance to Sports Wales.

Eurgain Powell will be a judge for the Welsh Construction Excellence Awards next month.

The Deputy Chair attended the Wales Tech Awards under the auspices of Industry Wales

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Action

- Add standing 'Futures Moments' to future agendas: Secretariat
- Arrange meeting with Head of Circular Economy and Resource efficiency team: Secretariat.

2. Housekeeping

The action tracker was noted and updated. The Deputy Chair spoke about her latest thought on grid and it was agreed an opinion piece and letter to relevant Minister are to be drafted focusing on lack of a clear pathway for Wales.

Minutes of previous meeting were approved.

The Secretariat report was noted.

Nick Tune gave a report back from an event about the Crown Estate that was held in St Davids.

Nick Tune met with the Energy Systems Catapult to try to understand more about the development of the Local Area Energy Plans.

Action

- Opinion piece and letter to be drafted on Grid in Wales: Deputy Chair.

3. Consultation responses/ policy updates

The Future Generation Commissioner's focus on how the Act is implemented and impact of delivery was noted.

4. Future Work Programme Updates

a. Year 1 Renewable Energy Report

It was noted a formal response had still not been received from the Welsh Government. A letter will be sent to the new Minister when announced.

b. Year 2 Flood Research

Eurgain Powell updated the group on progress noting all reports had been delivered in draft and comments were being compiled. The next step will be implementing a work plan to digest, amalgamate and develop a final report. Engagement of stakeholders in developing the final report was discussed. It was agreed the Chair would discuss with Eurgain and Eluned and bring a proposal to the April meeting.

c. Year 3 Development Of Approach To Existential Risk.

The presentation from Cynnal Cymru on their report was discussed. It was noted the psychological barriers to action are significant.

We will hold a meeting to decide what research should be undertaken for the

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Year 3 project

Action

- Arrange a meeting/planning session: Secretariat

d. IWA Infrastructure Futures Essay Collection

Submissions are still being compiled but an early draft product should be available for the April meeting.

5. 2024/25 Work Programme and Operational Budget

A 5% reduction in running costs was noted. Some areas for spend such as a launch event for the flood report and a video for the annual report were identified. The chair and Nick Tune are developing a future mapping mini project and plan to circulate prior to the April meeting.

The relevance of the year 3 project was discussed, with the importance of political buy-in and a need for NICW to use year 3 to challenge and push organisations to take radical steps. The capability and capacity of public bodies to respond to future risk is an important consideration. Exploring partnership working with the FGC and a separate session to finalise a workplan were identified as the next steps.

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Action

- Arrange a work programme/planning session: Secretariat

6. General Discussion

Discussion focused on the new First Minister and possible new direction for Welsh Government and NICW.

7. AOB

Nil.

The next meeting will take place 23 April in Cardiff

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