

WG PTN Board Paper (20) 011

Board Paper to note



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Minutes of the Board Meeting, 24 January 2020

Present:

Shan Morgan
Ellen Donovan
Ann Keane
Jeff Farrar
Gareth Lynn
Andrew Goodall
Tracey Burke
Andrew Slade
Des Clifford
Peter Kennedy
Natalie Pearson
Gawain Evans
David Richards
Andrew Jeffreys
Helen Lentle

In attendance:

Charlie Thomas
Kate Lloyd Jones
Dylan Hughes
Bethan Griffiths
Jeremy Evas
Yvonne Pawlin

Observer:

Tina Jones

Secretariat:

Charmain Watts

Apologies:

None

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1. Welcome

- 1.1 The Permanent Secretary welcomed all attendees to the Welsh Government Board.

2. Political Development/ EU Exit

- 2.1 The Permanent Secretary updated the Board on the recent political developments, including her meetings in London.
- 2.2 Des Clifford referred to *The Future UK/EU Relationship: Negotiating Priorities for Wales* which was published this week.
- 2.3 The document details the Welsh Government's position on the next phase of EU negotiations based on the Political Declaration which was published alongside the revised Withdrawal Agreement last autumn.

3. Legislative Programme Board – Information for challenge session.

- 3.1 Charlie Thomas and Kate Lloyd Jones attended to provide information on the Legislative Programme which will inform the first Non-Executive Director Challenge Session being held on 4 February.
- 3.2 The Board discussed the challenge sessions further and agreed the importance of inviting the right attendees. The Board also proposed additional briefing meetings between the Non-Executive Directors and the Legislative Programme Team, and Helen Lentle and Dylan Hughes.
- 3.3 Tracey Burke set out her picture of the process of delivering Bills and highlighted the potential issues at each phase. She emphasised the importance of the work associated with stages before a Bill had been introduced and the tasks needing to be done to implement an Act following Royal Assent.

ACTION 1: A list of attendees to be sent to the Non-Executive Directors to review.

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ACTION 2: Briefing meeting to be set up between the Non-Executive Directors and the Legislative Programme team, Helen Lentle and Dylan Hughes.

3.4 The Permanent Secretary advised that a second challenge session on the Legislative Programme may be beneficial.

ACTION 3: After the first challenge sessions on the Legislative Programme, consider whether a second would be beneficial.

3.5 The Non-Executive Directors agreed that it was important that they understood what success looked like and proposed they should feed back to the Permanent Secretary on how they felt that they might have added value to the process.

ACTION 4: Non-Executive Directors to feed back to the Permanent Secretary the outcome of the challenge sessions and how they felt they added value to the process.

4. Welsh Government strategy on the internal use of the Welsh language

4.1 Dylan Hughes and Bethan Griffiths presented the strategy for the internal use of the Welsh language. They advised that the paper sets out the Welsh Government's long term vision for developing the use of the Welsh language within the organisation, a shorter term goal and objectives for the period from 2020 to 2025.

4.2 The Board welcomed the paper and the direction of travel of this work and the Permanent Secretary thanked the team for all of their efforts in moving this work forward to the next level.

4.3 Jeremy Evas from the Welsh Language Division provided a presentation on the Welsh Language Verbal Strategy & Behavioural Insights. The Board found the presentation very interesting, particularly in respect of insight into behaviours, and thanked Jeremy Evas for his contribution.

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5. Finance Report

5.1 Gawain Evans presented the report which covers the period 1 April to 31 December 2019 (month 9). It includes forecast outturn figures set against the 2019-20 budget, which is the First Supplementary Budget 2019-20 which was approved by the Assembly on 9 July.

5.2 Further discussions largely focused on:

- Revenue forecast
- Capital forecast
- Position of current reserves
- Current DEL budget
- Unallocated DEL reserves

5.3 The Board also noted that a new process was being introduced which will allow the organisation to profile more effectively throughout the year.

6. Outline of the People Strategy

6.1 Natalie Pearson and Yvonne Pawlin provided an update on how we might best engage the organisation in developing our People & Workforce Strategy 2020-25, to build a confident, capable and resilient civil service for the future.

6.2 They presented slides which focused on:

- How to align strategy to priorities and purpose
- The principles and goals for a high performing civil service
- What we are trying to achieve
- Engagement and timetable
- What good looks like

6.3 Natalie explained that the Baseline Review will inform the People Strategy along with a two-week intensive engagement campaign with staff to gather views, experiences and ideas across the Welsh Government. The feedback from the people survey will also be key to developing the strategy.

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7. Permanent Secretary’s Items

- 7.1** The Permanent Secretary informed the Board that she had formally requested and received a Ministerial Direction in respect of proposed payments to NHS consultants to offset their tax liabilities. The action proposed by Ministers was not consistent with the requirements of Managing Welsh Public Money in respect of the treatment of tax matters. The action proposed would bring NHS Wales in line with the approach being taken by NHS England and where a Ministerial Direction had also been required.
- 7.2** The Permanent Secretary said that although this was the first Ministerial Direction which had been issued since the start of devolution she understood and appreciated why Ministers felt that they had to take the action that they did, while they for their part understood the position that she was in as Accounting Officer. The conversations with Ministers on this issue had been constructive and amicable.

8. Remuneration Committee

- 8.1** Jeff Farrar updated the Board on the last Remuneration Committee on 6 December, he advised that discussion had focused on Honours nomination, SCS posts and membership, Discussion would take place at the meeting today on whether the Director Generals should become regular members.

Actions arising at Board meeting

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LATEST POSITION
ACTION 1 A list of attendees to be sent to the Non-Executive Directors to review.	Secretariat	Closed
ACTION 2 Briefing meeting to be set up between the Non-Executive Directors and the Legislative Programme team, Helen Lentle and Dylan Hughes.	Secretariat	Closed

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ACTION 3 After the first challenge sessions on the Legislative Programme, consider whether a second would be beneficial.	Non-Executive Directors	Closed
ACTION 4 Non-Executive Directors to feed back to the Permanent Secretary the outcome of the challenge sessions and how they felt they felt that they added might have added value to the process.	Non-Executive Directors	Closed. Meetings arranged between Permanent Secretary and NEDs

Actions brought forward from 6 December 2019

ACTION	LEAD OFFICER	LATEST POSITION
ACTION 1: ToR of all committees to be revised to ensure a streamlined and consistent reporting process for all risk management across the Welsh Government.	Clare Colette/Secretariat	In hand
ACTION 2: Director Generals to inform Non-Executive Directors of key challenges within their area and invite them to Policy Boards.	DG's	In hand
ACTION 3: Add an agenda item on the Annual Report once published in early 2020.	Secretariat	Will be tabled at next Board
ACTION 4: Make arrangements for the Non-Executive Challenge sessions to ensure the meetings are in calendars as soon as possible.	Secretariat	Closed
ACTION 5: Include standard agenda item on feedback from challenge sessions at each Board meeting	Secretariat	Closed