

Agenda

Title of meeting: NRW Board Meeting Day 1 - Public Session

Date of meeting: 24th March 2021 Time of meeting: 9.30-17.05

Venue: Microsoft Teams meeting
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Observers:

Time	Item
9.30 (5 mins)	1. Open Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome• Declaration of Interests• Explain conduct of meeting <p>Sponsor and Presenter: Sir David Henshaw (Chair)</p>
9.35 (5 mins)	2. Review Minutes and Action Log 2A. Review Minutes from Public 20th January meeting 2B. Review Public Action Log <p>Sponsor and Presenter: Sir David Henshaw (Chair)</p>
9.40 (5 mins)	3. Chair's Business <p>Sponsor and Presenter: Sir David Henshaw</p> <p>Summary: The Chair to update the Board</p>
9.45 (30 mins)	4. Chief Executive's Report <p>Sponsor and Presenter: Clare Pillman, Chief Executive</p> <p>Summary: To update the Board on current key activities</p> <p>Presentation Only</p>
10.15 (20 mins)	5. Update Report of Committees <p>Sponsors and presenters: Committee Chairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Audit and Risk Assurance Committee 11th February

Paper ref: 21-03-B01

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2021/21

Paper ref: 21-03-B02

- Evidence Advisory Committee – N/a
- Finance Planning and Performance Committee 9th February

Paper ref: 21-03-B03

- Flood Review Management Committee N/a
- People and Remuneration Committee 11th March
- Protected Areas Committee – On Private Day

Summary: To update the Board on recent committee activities

**10.35
(20 mins)**

6. Commercial Strategy

Sponsor: Sarah Jennings, Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial

Presenter: Elsie Grace, Commercial Business Development Manager

Summary: For Board approval

Paper ref: 21-03-B04

**10.55
(20 mins)**

7. Timber Sales Marketing Delivery Plan

Sponsor: Sarah Jennings, Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial

Presenter: Victoria Rose-Piper, Head of Business Support Services, Neil Stoddart, Sales and Marketing Manager

Summary: For Board approval

Paper ref: 21-03-B05

**11.15
(15 mins)**

Break

**11.30
(45 mins)**

8. Place Presentation

Sponsor: Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations

Presenter: Lyndsey Rawlinson, Head of North East Operations, Dave Powell, Operations Manager North East, Paula Harley, Operations Manager (Land and Assets), Keith Ivens, Operations Manager (Flood Water Management), Nick Thomas, Principle Advisor (Strategic Projects) and Mark Hughes, Team Leader, People and Places

Summary: To provide an overview of key activities in the North East Wales region

12.15
(45 mins)

9. Evidence Presentation
Sponsor: Ceri Davies, Executive Director Evidence Policy and Permitting
Presenter: Andrew Lucas, Environmental Assessment Officer

Summary: Presentation ‘Don’t treat soil like dirt: using soil eDNA to monitor grassland fungi’

13.00
(60 mins)

Lunch

14.00
(60 mins)

10. Renewal Programme
Sponsor: Rachael Cunningham, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Presenter: Ben Wilson, Senior Programme Manager - Covid Renewal

Summary: To update the Board on the Renewal Programme and for approval for next steps

Paper ref: 21-03-B06

15.00
(20 mins)

11. Business Plan Performance Dashboard 2020/21 - Q3 Report
Sponsor: Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Presenter: Executive Team Members

Summary: For Board to scrutinise the Q3 Report

Paper ref: 21-03-B07

15.20
(10 mins)

12. Statutory and Legal Scheme
Sponsor: Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development
Presenter: Colette Fletcher, Head of Governance and Board Secretary

Summary: For Board approval of additions to the Statutory and Legal Scheme (SaLS)

Paper ref: 21-03-B08

15.30
(15 mins)

Break

15.45
(20 mins)

13. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report: Gender Pay Gap Reporting
Sponsor: Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development

Presenter: Steve Burton, Head of People Management,
Racheal Holbrook, Lead Specialist Advisor, Human Resources,

**Summary: For Board to approve gender gap pay reporting
for publication in April, and an update on the EDI project**

Paper ref: 21-03-B09

**16.05
(30 mins)**

**14. Learning Lessons from Flood Risk Management
Projects**

Sponsor: Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations
Presenter: Michael Evans, Head of Operations South Wales
Central, Gavin T Jones, Team Leader - Projects & Programme
Delivery

**Summary: How NRW now approach flood management
schemes in light of community and stakeholder
engagement on flood risk management projects**

Paper ref: 21-03-B10

End of Board meeting

**16.35
(30 mins)**

15. Public Q&A Session

17.05

End Meeting

Unconfirmed Minutes

Title of meeting: **NRW Board Meeting – Public Session**
All Attendees via Skype

Date of meeting: 20th January 2021

Present Board Members: Sir David Henshaw, (Chair)
Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Prof Steve Ormerod, Deputy Chair
Karen Balmer
Chris Blake
Catherine Brown
Julia Cherrett
Geraint Davies
Howard Davies
Dr Elizabeth Haywood
Zoë Henderson
Dr Rosie Plummer
Prof Peter Rigby

Present Executive Team Members: Prys Davies, Executive Director of Corporate Strategy and Development
Ceri Davies, Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting (Absent 11-12)
Rachael Cunningham, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services
Martyn P Evans, Head of South West Wales Operations (Deputising for Gareth O’Shea, Executive Director of Operations)
Sarah Jennings, Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial

Additional Attendees Present: Colette Fletcher, Head of Governance & Board Secretary (all items)
Naomi Lawrence, Head of Customer Experience Item 6
Catrin Hornung, Head of Communications Item 6
Kate Evans, Public Affairs/Private Secretary to CEO Item 6
Steve Morgan, Head of South East Wales Operations Item 7
Jon Goldsworthy, Operations Manager Item 7
David Letellier, Operations Manager Land and Assets Item 7

Observers: Berry Jordan (Vattenfall)
Gareth Wardell

Declarations: There were no declarations.

Apologies: Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations.

Secretariat: Natalie Williams
Rhiannon Spencer

Item 1. Open Meeting

1. The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. There were no declarations of interest.

Item 2. Review Minutes and Action Log

2A. Review Minutes from Public 26th November meeting

2. The minutes from the public November meeting were reviewed and agreed.

2B. Review Action Log

3. The action log was reviewed and agreed.

Item 3: Chair's Business

4. The Chair updated the Board on the Ministerial meeting that had taken place on 18th January; a range of issues had been discussed including flooding. The River Special Areas of Conservation Report was due to be published this week.
5. The Auditor General had commented on the positive progress made on timber sales compliance at the Public Accounts Committee. Funding had been made available to support Green Recovery initiatives and there would be a request for a second round of schemes in February.

Item 4: Chief Executive's Report

6. The Chief Executive noted that this had been a challenging period for NRW. The report focussed on the three areas of incidents: flooding, Covid and the EU Exit.
7. There was an update on flooding from the Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting, who was acting as the Duty Strategic Manager. There were 58 flood warnings currently in place around the country and modelling and information was being shared with partners. Welsh Government was being briefed in advance of the COBRA meeting.
8. The challenges of the EU Exit were outlined. Current activity was focused on ensuring that partners and stakeholders understood the changed landscape, supporting Welsh Government with the necessary legislative changes, and considering long term implications. The two main areas of risk were the consequences of the Internal Market Act for the devolved settlement, and the Office for Environmental Protection because, unlike the rest of the UK, Wales had no temporary measures in place.
9. The latest Covid update was relayed to the Board. Due to the move into tier four restrictions just before Christmas there had been issues over land use for the general public. There had been an increase in NRW staff impacted by Covid and many were

home schooling. NRW's priority was ensuring staff, partners and the public remained safe.

10. NRW had received a formal request for mutual aid from Gwent and was expecting further requests from elsewhere. A process had been established to facilitate volunteers and the first staff had been transferred to assist with track and trace last week. This was being managed using a risk-based approach to ensure that NRW could still maintain its category one responder capability. Covid-19 was also affecting contractors, for example those undertaking tree planting. NRW was having to prioritise, like many other stakeholders, based on protecting the public and the economy. Some areas of work would need to pause, for example follow up discussions around the Area Statements.
11. Despite all the challenges, a number of significant projects had been completed. Cwmcarn Forest Drive would reopen in Spring and the Crindau Flood Scheme had been finished. The Judicial Review on species licencing concluded last week and found that the licences were lawful. The SoNaRR Report would launch next week.
12. Board members raised queries about adequate capacity to provide local authorities with planning advance and updated flood maps and queried how prepared NRW were for upcoming flooding events. The Board were assured that there was ongoing proactive work to give advice to local authorities. The learning from the recent Flood Review was being utilised and this could be seen in the change in tone and frequency of the flood warnings, which now alerted people sooner and clarified what appropriate action should be taken within the three categories. Other preparations had included holding conversations with partners to help them be prepared and double-staffing rotas.
13. Board members asked for assurance that long-term issues were being considered alongside short-term incident management on the EU Exit. The Chief Executive explained that there were two strands of concurrent work happening that covered both issues. NRW would continue to communicate clarity of operations and any changes to stakeholders and staff.
14. Board members raised that they would appreciate some consideration of the balance of risk and resource and governance implications of ensuring appropriate oversight of mutual aid.

Item 5: Update Reports of Committees

15. Evidence Advisory Committee (EAC) – The Chair of EAC reported back on the committee's inaugural meeting and noted it had been well attended by external members. The attendees had been advised how the knowledge and evidence function worked and presentations had provided an overview of what work was being done at NRW.
16. Flood Review Management Committee (FRMC) - The Chair of FRMC reported back to the Board from the last two meetings. The Flood Programme Board would continue with the Executive Director of Evidence, Policy and Permitting as Senior Reporting Officer and were pleased with the progress being made. Not all activity could be delivered without additional resources and FRMC have made a recommendation for seven additional members of staff. NRW had successfully secured an additional £3.5m of flood funding.
17. The Committee did a deep dive on the Effective Incident Management risk. A paper on Capital Flood Schemes would come to March Board. The Board complimented all the staff involved. It was noted that the new Welsh Government strategy on flood required NRW to lead a number of new areas, which would need extra resources. NRW could not undertake this work alone and would need to be clear about what was possible.

18. People and Remuneration Committee (PaRC) – It was noted that only two out of four Board members were present at the meeting which had highlighted a need to review quoracy requirements. PaRC had been pleased with the support to employees provided through the Pulse Survey and Wellbeing Health & Safety work. Succession planning had also been discussed.

Item 6: Customer Experience and Engagement Strategy

Naomi Lawrence, Head of Customer Experience, Catrin Hornung, Head of Communications, Kate Evans, Public Affairs/Private Secretary to CEO

19. The Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial provided context for the Strategy, which was articulated, and the Board was asked to approve the high-level Strategy implementation and agree to support progress and development through PaRC.
20. The Head of Customer Experience presented the background and overview of the Strategy to the Board.
21. The Board supported the Strategy and the next steps, which would be external engagement and consideration of metrics. There were plans to gain external benchmarking through the Institute of Customer Service, and NRW would be enrolling for the next UK benchmarking and accreditation exercise.
22. There was a discussion about the benefits of a strong Strategy. Board members commented that they would like to see something more explicit about the Welsh language and involvement in stakeholder mapping and management, which was welcomed by the team.
23. It was suggested that in parts the balance between stakeholders' objectives and NRW's needed to be reviewed to ensure that there was sufficient flexibility.
24. The Board welcomed the Strategy and praised the approach taken. It was noted that in future the Board would need to debate the balance of its role as regulator versus campaigner.

DECISION: The Board endorsed the Customer Experience and Engagement Strategy.

Item 7: Place Presentation: South East Wales

Steve Morgan, Head of South East Wales Operations Jon Goldsworthy, Operations Manager and David Letellier, Operations Manager Land and Assets

25. The Head of South East Wales Operations introduced the Place presentation to the Board. It reflected the aspirations and then the progress made over the last two years since presenting at Board in January 2019.
26. The Operations Manager described some incidents and events that the team had responded to over the past year, including pollution incidents, unauthorised river works, and waste regulation issues. There were more than 1,000 incidents in South East Wales last year and there were 109 permitted waste sites. The team looked after 47 industry regulated sites in the region.
27. The Operations Manager Land and Assets described water management activity in the region and flood defence maintenance. Land management was an important part of the

team's activity, including forest operations. Successful projects this year included Cwmcarn Forest Drive, which was due to reopen in Spring.

28. The Chair commented that the presentation reflected the complexity of what NRW dealt with and the challenges, and that all aspects of work were connected. The Board discussed what could be done to help landowners and farmers deal with water quality and quantity issues. The Board showed interest in visiting the Gwent Levels during a Board meeting in the near future.

ACTION: Secretariat to arrange a Board visit to the Gwent levels in the future once current restrictions lift.

ACTION: Head of South East Wales Operations to respond outside of the meeting to Zoe Henderson's question regarding what might be driving the increase in unauthorised river alterations.

Close of Board Meeting

Item 8. Public Q&A Session

29. The Chair introduced the public session and the Head of Governance and Board Secretary invited the members of the public to read their questions to the Board.

30. The Board received a question from Gareth Wardell:

"The neutral NRW budget for 2021-2022 is understandable in light of the Government's funding priorities for the NHS, our Social Care services and our Educational system. Does the Board accept that the unintended consequence of this continuous annual underfunding undervalues the long-term benefits that flow from our environmental infrastructure, thereby frustrating the capacity of NRW to deliver the targets that are specified in the Remit Letter from the Environment Minister?"

31. The Chief Executive highlighted that although it is technically a neutral budget, NRW would in effect see a £15m (£10m revenue and £5m capital) gap as a result of a technical accounting change. NRW was in daily discussions with Welsh Government and the Chair had raised the issue with the Minister on Monday.

32. A supplementary question followed:

"The Cabinet is about to accept the advice from the Climate Change Committee on actions to address climate change, but Wales can only reach the net zero target if NRW helps to plant 21,000 hectares of trees on the Welsh Government Woodland Estate (WGWE) by 2025. Isn't this unrealistic?"

33. The Chief Executive responded that there was a plan in place to increase the planting of trees on the WGWE, but this would not fully meet the target. Another route would be for NRW to support other land managers to increase the planting of trees.

34. Geraint Davies highlighted that the planting of hedgerows would make a significant contribution to achieving the net zero target, rather than focusing only on tree planting.

35. A further supplementary question followed:

"Of the 21,000 hectares that need to be planted what is the percentage of new planting that will be on the WGWE?"

36. The Chief Executive reported that NRW was seeking to extend the WGWE by 1,700 hectares.

37. The Board received a question from Berry Jordan (Vattenfall):

“Who within Welsh Government will decide on when the Welsh Government Woodland Estate will be put to tender for renewable energy development?”

38. Berry Jordan had already left the meeting, so the Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial would provide a written response. The Welsh Minister would take the decision. There was a clear signal and a desire to look at new models through the Brechfa Dau pilot site and NRW was part of a joint steering group with Welsh Government to develop a coordinated single framework for Wales.

ACTION: Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial to write to Berry Jordan to answer the question.

Board Meetings										
Action No.	Meeting Category	Meeting Date	Item No	Para No	Paper Sponsor	Action	Owner	Due	Status	Notes/Updates
9	Public	26/11/2020	6	20	Prys Davies, Director of Corporate Strategy and Development	ACTION: Executive Director of Operations to discuss with Head of North East Wales Operations having a future discussion with the Board on the 4-hour limit on incidence response.	Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations South	20/12/2020	Ongoing	
10	Public	26/11/2020	8	31	Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations South	ACTION: Head of South West Operations to provide a note to the Board on new innovations/ technologies/ ways of working used that have helped the operations teams during Covid.	Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations South	20/12/2020	Ongoing	
11	Public	26/11/2020	8	29	Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations South	ACTION: Executive Director of operations to share further information regarding Fire & Rescue Service/PSB grant funded Fire break Grazier Project with Geraint Davies offline.	Gareth O'Shea, Executive Director of Operations South	20/12/2020	Completed	
13	Public	20/01/2021	7	29	Clare Pillman CEO	Secretariat to arrange a Board visit to the Gwent levels in the future.	Secretariat	16/06/2021		
14	Public	20/01/2021	7	29	Clare Pillman CEO	Head of South East Wales Operations to respond outside of the meeting to Zoe's question re what might be driving the increased unauthorised river alterations.	Steve Morgan, Head of South East Wales Operations	21/02/2021	Completed	
15	Public	20/01/2021	8	35	Clare Pillman CEO	Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial to write to Berry Jordan to answer question	Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial	05/02/2021	Completed	

Board Paper

Paper Title:	Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Update
Paper Reference:	21-03-B01
Paper Sponsored By:	Catherine Brown - ARAC Chair
Paper Presented By:	Catherine Brown

Purpose of Paper:	Information
Recommendation:	To note the update

Issue

This paper provides an update to the Board following the ARAC meeting on 11 February 2021. The minutes from the meeting can be made available to any Board Member interested.

Issues that in the opinion of the ARAC Chair should be brought to the attention of the whole board are highlighted below.

Update

Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21

1. ARAC were provided with an update on the risks associated with the production of the Annual Report and Accounts (ARA).

Closed Sessions

2. Committee members held two closed sessions on this occasion. One with Audit Wales and another with members of Internal Audit.

Internal Audit Update

3. ARAC reviewed five Internal Audit Reports. Four of the reports offered a moderate internal audit opinion and included: Wellbeing, Health & Safety (Lone Working); Information Asset Owners; Cyber Security and; Budget Management.
4. As cyber resilience continues to be a significant risk area for all public bodies ARAC noted the intention of the Executive Team to do some training and development in this area and asked that something similar be considered for the Board, alongside wider consideration of the data and digital capabilities at Board level.

5. The Welsh Purchasing Card Audit Report offered a limited audit opinion. A good management response had been provided to improve controls in this area.

Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) Assurance Report

6. ARAC welcomed the initiative taken by the SIRO to have an independent external review of risks and controls in this area and welcomed the report which was broadly reassuring. They thanked the team who had been working on this area and noted the importance in common with all central controls of ensuring consistent application across the whole organisation. The Committee requested that any material considerations that had been identified as part of the recent external review that pose significant risk to the organisation be tracked by Internal Audit.

Compliance Action Plan

7. The Committee noted progress on the work to improve the consistency of the application of controls and improve the culture of compliance across the organisation. This will remain a focus of work for the Executive Team and ARAC, who will receive updates on progress at six monthly intervals.

Corporate Risk Review - Strategic Risk Register

8. ARAC reiterated concerns raised at the Board around Strategic Risk SR02 (Failure of Assets) and asked that consideration be given to splitting out risks relating to reservoirs. The Executive Team are considering this suggestion and will revert to the next meeting of ARAC in the first instance.

Board Paper

	Paper Details
Paper title:	ARAC Annual Report 2019/20
Paper Reference:	21-03-B02
Paper sponsored by:	Catherine Brown, Chair of ARAC
Paper Presented by:	Catherine Brown, Chair of ARAC
Purpose of the paper	For information
Recommendation	To review the ARAC Annual Report 2019/20

Issue

1. Following each ARAC meeting, the Chair of ARAC provides an update to the Board summarising the issues that the Committee has discussed.
2. The ARAC terms of reference, agreed by the Board in 2018, state that “The ARAC will provide the Board with an Annual Report summarising the business it has conducted during the year and the conclusions it has drawn therefrom”.
3. This is the seventh annual report of the Committee and it covers the accounting and auditing cycle for 2019/20.

Index of Annex

Annex 1 - Audit and Risk Committee - Annual Report 2019/20

Annex 2 - Overall Internal Audit Opinion

Annex 1: Audit and Risk Assurance Committee – Annual Report 2019/20

Purpose

1. This is the seventh annual report of NRW's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) covering the accounting and auditing cycle for 2019/20 (April 2019 to March 2020). This year production has been delayed and the report was therefore presented to the February 2021 ARAC meeting prior to submission to the March 2021 Board.
2. Following each ARAC meeting, the Chair of ARAC provides an update to the Board summarising the issues that the Committee has discussed. The Annual Report provides a consolidated statement of the main messages included in the in-year updates and presents ARAC's overall opinion on NRW's framework of assurance and control for the Board and the Accounting Officer.
3. ARAC endeavours to comply with best practice as set out in HM Treasury's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook and currently operates under Terms of Reference (ToR) that were last updated and approved by the Board in May 2020. However, the ToR in place during the period covered by this report was a previous version approved in September 2018. Both versions of the ToR state that the primary role of the Committee is to advise the Board and the Accounting Officer on matters of risk, financial stewardship and accountability, the framework of internal controls and governance.
4. The ToR also state that "ARAC will provide the Board with an Annual Report summarising the business it has conducted during the year and the conclusions it has drawn therefrom". This report therefore consists of three sections:
 - a) Summary of business conducted in 2019/20.
 - b) Summary of conclusions drawn and recommendations for 2019/20.
 - c) Report on progress against recommendations from 2018/19.
5. The Board is invited to note and comment on the whole of the report and provide such guidance as it sees fit to the Executive and ARAC as to next steps.

Summary of business conducted in 2019/20

6. Catherine Brown took over as Chair of ARAC at the June 2019 meeting.
7. The Committee received reports and discussed recommendations on a wide range of issues relating to internal controls, risk management, governance, and internal and external audit.
8. It is worth noting that 2019/20 was an extraordinary year due to the outbreak of the global Covid-19 pandemic. The first signs of the virus started emerging in December 2019 and NRW operations and capacity were seriously affected from March 2020 onwards due to UK national lockdowns and a Wales-wide mandate that all staff who were able to do so should work from home. At the time of writing (January 2021), all staff continue to work from home where able to do so and NRW operations and capacity are still being seriously affected.

Internal Audit

9. The Committee received update reports on Internal Audit activity, together with copies of all completed audit reports. During the course of the Internal Audit year (1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020) these were:

Report Title	Opinion*
Counter Fraud & Anti-Bribery	Limited
Accounts Receivable	Limited
Reservoir Safety	Limited
External Complaints Handling	Limited
Contracts Management	Limited
Project Programme and Portfolio Management	Limited
Recruitment	Limited
Area Statements (carried forward from 2018/19)	Limited
Conflict of Interest (carried forward from 2018/19)	Limited
Energy Island (carried forward from 2018/19)	Moderate
Accounts Payable	Moderate
Single Tender Actions	Moderate
Landfill Disposal Tax	Moderate
Timber Direct Production	Moderate
Flood Capital Programme	Moderate
Risk Management Improvement Plan	Moderate
Payroll	Substantial

*See Annex 2 for definitions of audit opinions. NRW adopted the model used by Government Internal Audit Agency, which is seen as best practice for public sector organisations.

10. The Annual Opinion for 2019/20 was limited overall assurance. The number of areas where significant control weaknesses were identified by audit had increased when compared to the previous year (seven moderate and six limited opinions). However, good progress was made on the development of a consolidated action log and associated follow up of actions.
11. Covid-19 has significantly affected capacity within the Internal Audit team. There were resourcing issues as a result of long-term sickness and the subsequent departure of one internal auditor from the team, and the failure to successfully recruit a replacement. It was not possible to progress the planned re-structuring of the function at the pace originally intended due to the departure of the previous Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services. These issues were partly mitigated by putting in place a call-off contract with KPMG for bought-in professional audit services, but it was also necessary to review the 2019/20 audit plan and prioritise work accordingly.
12. Two planned audits – ‘Laboratories’ and ‘Consideration of WBFA in permitting decisions’ – were superseded. The following audits were deferred to 2020/21:
- Follow up on Timber Sales (agreed by ARAC in June 2020)
 - Quality and use of Evidence (agreed by ARAC in April 2020)
 - Performance Management (agreed by ARAC in April 2020)
 - Budget Management (agreed by ARAC in April 2020)
 - Whistleblowing (agreed by ARAC in February 2020)
 - Grants and collaborative working

External Audit

13. The Auditor General for Wales is statutorily appointed to conduct the external audit of Natural Resources Wales and in this context, Audit Wales (AW) presented a plan at the March 2019 meeting for the auditing of the 2018/19 NRW financial statement and annual accounts. This document clarified the respective responsibilities of NRW and AW.
14. Progress updates were provided by Audit Wales at the June and July ARAC meetings. The reports were qualified for the fourth year running due to historic issues with Standing Sales Plus contracts. However, the minutes record that for such a large and complex organisation, NRW's accounts and records were considered to be of a good standard.
15. The Management Letter and recommendations stemming from the 2018/19 audit were received at the September 2019 ARAC meeting. Fifteen recommendations were made, of which 13 were of high priority and 11 related to timber sales. Themes included the importance of consulting appropriate teams (finance, procurement, legal) when making decisions; documenting the basis for decisions; and applying NRW's processes and authorisation limits consistently. AW also raised concerns about the coverage of the internal audit function, highlighted delays in the investigation of some fraud and whistleblowing cases because of a lack of resource, and raised concerns about NRW's ability to identify Novel, Contentious and Repercussive (NCR) issues.
16. This year Audit Wales also conducted additional reviews on Timber sales, Internal drainage districts and Implementing the Well Being of Future Generations Act.

Co-operation between Internal and External Audit

17. The Committee periodically reviews the effectiveness of the working relationship between Internal and External Audit. This was last reviewed in March 2019 and was found to be operating well.
18. It is recommended that a further review be conducted before March 2021.

Financial Stewardship

19. The Committee has exercised oversight of the development of NRW's financial management and accounting arrangements, including the review and endorsement of NRW's Annual Report and Accounts (AR&A). Due to Covid-19 and an issue with the Environment Agency's pension scheme, the 2019/20 AR&A were not signed off until the November 2020 Board meeting.
20. Regular reports were made to ARAC on any instances of suspected fraud and any financial losses that were incurred in the period. This year saw a significant reduction in losses and special payments.
21. At the September 2019 meeting ARAC received the counter fraud strategy and a progress update on the action plan. There has been some good progress despite very limited resource and work is now being done to identify how closer joint working with internal audit can increase the impact of counter fraud work.

22. The quinquennial Forest Valuation will take place at the end of 2021.

Risk management

23. The Committee has a key role in challenging the effectiveness of NRW's risk identification and management. The way NRW identifies, manages and escalates risks has historically been recognised as weak and a key area for improvement.

24. There was significant progress in 2019/20. PWC were appointed to provide external consultancy support and a permanent member of staff was appointed to lead on risk work.

25. At the December 2019 meeting ARAC reviewed PWC's initial report on NRW's risk maturity and the first draft of the new Corporate Risk Register. Throughout the rest of 2019/20 ARAC has ensured robust scrutiny of the risk management framework and provided significant feedback to shape its development, contributing to a much-improved position.

Special Areas of Scrutiny during 2019/20

The Committee's agenda for 2019/20 included a number of special areas of scrutiny, including:

- Consideration of NRW's long term timber contracts and Standing Sales Plus contracts and the outcomes of an associated review by Grant Thornton.
- Consideration of the Governance Review and a new Governance Code.
- Review of updated Terms of Reference for all Board committees.
- Review of the whistleblowing policy and establishment of an independent anonymous hotline for whistleblowing.
- Review of the revised financial and non-financial schemes of delegation.
- Consideration of risks associated with off payroll working (IR35).
- Review of SIRO and Information Assurance Annual Report.
- Consideration of the Governance and Risk Improvement Plan (GRIP).

Annual Assessment of ARAC Effectiveness

26. An effectiveness survey was completed prior to the September 2019 ARAC meeting, in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference and in accordance with HM Treasury's Handbook for ARACs.

27. The committee considered there was scope to improve the transparency of the way in which Board members are appointed to committees, and the training and induction arrangements for new committee members.

Reporting to and from the Board

28. ARAC takes seriously its responsibility to ensure effective communication between the Committee and the Board. The agenda of each Board meeting includes a standing item to receive a report from ARAC providing an overview of the most recent meeting and identifying any issues of significance for the Board.

29. This ARAC annual report for 2019/20 completes the reporting process for the year.

Summary of conclusions drawn and recommendations for 2019/20

30. The following conclusions and recommendations have been drawn from the summary of business conducted in 2019/20:

Recommendation 1: NRW should move ahead as soon as is reasonably practicable with the agreed re-structuring initiative in Internal Audit.

Recommendation 2: NRW should consider its mechanisms for identifying Novel, Contentious or Repercussive (NCR) Issues.

Recommendation 3: NRW should review the effectiveness of the working relationship between Internal and External Audit by March 2021.

Recommendation 4: Training for new and existing ARAC members should be improved.

Report on progress against recommendations from 2018/19

Recommendation 1: ARAC has recommended to the Accounting Officer that she immediately and materially increase the resource available to the Internal Audit Manager to enable the timely completion of an Audit Plan expanded to reflect the need for wider assurance than can be delivered with existing resource.

31. The Internal Audit Plan for 2019/20 had to be scaled back slightly as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, and KPMG were appointed on a call-off contract to provide additional support.

Recommendation 2: ARAC has also recommended that the role of Head of Internal Audit should be established at Leadership Team level, in order to ensure that key considerations of internal control are given sufficient priority at that level.

32. Following the departure of the Head of Internal Audit, NRW is currently advertising to recruit a replacement at Leadership Team level.

Recommendation 3: ARAC recommends the appointment of an experienced and senior Board Secretary tasked to support the Executive and the Board to improve practice in governance.

33. NRW welcomed a new Head of Governance and Board Secretary, who is an experienced Company Secretary, in October 2020.

Recommendation 4: ARAC recommends that the Board and Executive team show leadership in welcoming robust challenge of their own performance; and in demanding an element of independent scrutiny of assurances made by those within the organisation at whatever level.

34. A business assurance review is currently underway to identify areas where further checks and scrutiny of assurance is required, and to identify the new management information required to support this. The work is complementary to

the 3 lines of defence project, that is examining compliance and assurance across the whole of NRW.

Recommendation 5: ARAC welcomes the intention of the Chief Executive to reinforce Programme and Project management disciplines within the organisation, and establish a role for Programme Managers in checking, not just collating progress reports.

35. A new Programme Management Office (PMO) has been established and is now building capacity and capability.

Recommendation 6: ARAC welcomes the review of committee support currently being undertaken by the Executive and looks forward to speedy improvements.

36. Committee support has been transformed by the Secretariat. Further enhancements are planned based on the effectiveness review findings.

Recommendation 7: ARAC has resolved to ensure that, in line with best practice, it has annual closed meetings for Independent Members of the Committee with External Audit and Internal Audit, and the leader of counter-fraud work, to provide an opportunity for any concerns about senior leadership support and engagement to be raised with the committee in a safe environment.

37. Closed meetings were held throughout 2019/20.

Recommendation 8: The Board are invited to request an update on progress towards moving ARAC to open meetings in ARAC's next annual report. It is proposed that a Board decision will be required to support this change of practice.

38. The 2020 Board and Board committee effectiveness reviews highlighted an ambition for all Board committee meetings to be open to the public where appropriate and a recommendation will be made in the final follow up report to the Board. Covid-19 is currently significantly affecting the Secretariat's capacity, but it should be possible to make progress in 2020/21.

Priorities for ARAC's 2020/21 programme

- Supporting the Accounting Officer in establishing an appropriately resourced Internal Audit function to enable the delivery of a robust Audit Plan.
- Continued improvement of governance across NRW.
- Continued review of, and engagement with, the programme to improve the culture of control across the business.
- Continued challenge and support to ensure improvements in the robustness and timeliness of implementing key audit recommendations.
- Continued challenge of the adequacy of the risk management arrangements and disciplines applied across NRW.
- Continued scrutiny of arrangements for implementing improved controls over forestry operations and timber sales governance.
- Continued scrutiny of NRW's whistleblowing arrangements and Cyber Security, as recommended by Treasury's Handbook for ARACs.





- Review of any material instances of deviation from the Scheme of Delegation or agreed governance.

Acknowledgements

The Committee would like to extend its sincere thanks to the Internal Audit team, KPMG and to Audit Wales for the invaluable support that they have given to the Committee, as well as to all those who have contributed to the spirit of openness and constructive challenge which the Committee continues to espouse in the conduct of its business. The Committee would like to particularly thank the Secretariat for their excellent support of the meetings and members over the past year.

Catherine Brown
Chair, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Natural Resources Wales
January 2021

Annex 2: Overall Internal Audit Opinion

Coverage	Core Definitions for Annual and Engagement Opinions	Optional RAG	Core Definitions for Annual and Engagement Opinions
Governance, risk management and control framework Assurance Opinion on mitigating controls over the risk to the delivery of objectives	Substantial The framework of governance, risk management and control is adequate and effective.	Green 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequacy and Effectiveness of the governance, risk management and control framework Impact of any weakness on delivery of objectives Extent of risk exposure Materiality: by value to the entity, by value in the engagement context and by nature (e.g. irregularity and reputational risk) We may also take account of Management responses to recommendations/ management actions
	Moderate Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control.	Yellow 	
	Limited There are significant weaknesses in the framework of governance, risk management and control such that it could be or could become inadequate and ineffective.	Amber 	
	Unsatisfactory There are fundamental weaknesses in the framework of governance, risk management and control such that it is inadequate and ineffective or is likely to fail.	Red 	

Board Paper

Paper Title:	Finance, Planning and Performance Committee (FPPC) Update
Paper Reference:	21-03-B03
Paper Sponsored By:	Sir David Henshaw - Interim FPPC Chair
Paper Presented By:	Sir David Henshaw

Purpose of Paper:	Information
Recommendation:	To note the update

Issue

This paper provides an update to the Board following the FPPC meeting on 9 February 2021.

Update

Financial and Business Planning (2021/22)

1. The Committee were provided with an update on the uncertainties surrounding the budget for 2021/22 and considered the implications associated with not securing the £214m funding required which would significantly impact current programmes of work and future activities.
2. FPPC will be provided with an update regarding the Business Plan on 9 March 2021. An additional meeting has also been arranged for the Committee to review the performance dashboard measures and targets on 20 April 2021.

Regulatory Fees and Charges Scheme (2021/22)

3. The Committee were generally content to support the proposed changes to the Regulatory Fees and Charges Scheme that would affect abstractors in Wales if implemented on 1 April 2021.
4. FPPC were informed that discussions were underway with Welsh Government to resolve the cross-border abstraction charge issue involving the Dee and Wye catchments and the options to recoup any deficit from abstractors in England were being considered.

Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) - Repatriated (2021/22)

5. The Committee were generally supportive of the proposal, which included undertaking a consultation exercise in relation to the proposed charges for regulating the UK ETS in Wales and sought to fully recover NRW's costs in line with the Managing Welsh Public Money guidance.

2050 Vision

6. The Committee were provided with an overview of the options being considered by the Project Board on how to proceed with the 2050 Vision project in light of ongoing pressures and the pandemic.
7. FPPC will be updated in June on the resources that would be required to support the project going forward and the level of stakeholder engagement that would be achievable.

Commercial Development

8. The Committee were provided with an update on the commercial development projects that had been identified and offered advice around assessing potential projects and partnership work to help ensure appropriate delivery.

Board Paper

	Paper Details
Paper title:	Commercial Strategy 2021-2026
Paper Reference:	21-03-B04
Paper sponsored by:	Sarah Jennings, Executive Director of Customer Communications and Information
Paper Presented by:	Elsie Grace, Manager, Business Development
Purpose of the paper	Decision
Recommendation	That Board agree Commercial Strategy for publication and launch.

Issue

1. The Current Commercial Enterprise Plan runs until 2022, however this document no longer reflects the current thinking around NRW Commercial opportunities and ways of working. The new Commercial Strategy which is designed to be an overarching approach for all commercial activities in NRW will subsequently supersede this document, a year early. We are seeking final Board approval and sign-off.

Background

2. Development of the Commercial Strategy (henceforth strategy) started in January 2020 and was initially due for release and publication in July 2020. The pandemic, the need to focus on green recovery, as well as the inability to consult effectively during lockdown has delayed the strategy for publication and implementation until April 2021. A draft document was presented to Board in January 2021. Since that time, the document has been redrafted to reflect NRW branding and ensure consistency in language with other relevant documentation such as the Timber Sales and Marketing Plan.
3. Presented to Board today is the final document for sign-off and publication.

Assessment

4. The Commercial Strategy offers an overarching set of aspirations, ways of working and outline improvements that are applicable to all parts of the Commercial Function portfolios and is designed to align them to each other so that they are all working towards the same, measurable, outcomes. Although this is already partly delivered by the overall need to deliver to the SMNR principles and feed into the well-being goals, there is a need to provide an overarching balanced approach to these across the Commercial Function and provide levers for growth and development.
5. The additional goal of the Commercial Strategy was to provide a framework for our business partners that feeds into the work they are already doing, using language they are familiar with, and concepts that resonate with them, and to offer a way to facilitate further improvements for long-term commercial sustainability; sustainability referring to income resilience, environmental improvements and green recovery and socio-economic returns.
6. The Strategy is not a plan, but a foundation, and is supported by the Commercial Development Actions Plans (C-DAP). These plans are active, multifunction documents that offer: tracking of current projects and evidence gathering activities, provide clear pathways and outline potential obstacles to future working, and record ideas and pilots that have been abandoned or are not currently applicable. The C-DAP also bring all service activities into one document for review at Commercial Business Board. They are dynamic documents that will reflect the ever-changing landscape and will assist Commercial within NRW to track progress.
7. *Considerations on key strategy principles:*
 - a) The first year of application is focussed around providing a base-line for measurement, developing good practice and instilling the correct culture of commercial evidence/market led approaches both internally and externally.
 - b) 3P approach: The measuring of commercial successes beyond income and fostering equality across commercial enterprise for people and planet, will need to be phased in to ensure we are bringing stakeholders with us. This work is starting in Q4 20/21 with the development of the Target Operating Model (TOMs) framework for Wales and the creation of the measurement principles. A working group which is a sub-group of the Commercial Business Board is meeting monthly to develop.
 - c) Circular Business Enabling and supporting our direct and indirect customers and suppliers to create networks and bridges that lead to better resource management across service sectors is a large piece of work and we are already talking to the Welsh Government about how to link up and deliver this.
 - d) The Development of the Commercial Network (CN) and the Sustainable Commercial Options Group (SCOG): one of the key facets of the strategy is our SOFT approach commitments to our stakeholders and a need to improve overall communication across sector areas. We have introduced a Commercial Network to aid engagement and to ensure that the delivery and rollout of the 3P approach is in collaboration and with a sense of ownership from our stakeholders and so we can begin the work of connecting our suppliers, customers and stakeholders in the

circular model. Internally we have set up a sub-board of the Commercial Business Board to group assess and investigate Commercial opportunities on the estate to ensure that we focus on priority and can-do areas of development and give burgeoning opportunities the chance to be fully investigated, partnership developed and end up with a robust and viable business case.

- e) For areas within NRW that do not sit within the Commercial Function and several smaller enterprise projects that don't fit comfortably within the current 'portfolio' areas highlighted by the strategy we have included a section about business growth.
8. A communications plan is currently being developed for releasing the strategy into the public domain. The communications plan is based on a drip feed approach and will centre on targeted messages across the portfolio areas. This is to ensure that it is a) achievable and b) moves alongside and helps to bring the culture change with it.
 9. *Engagement Summary:*
 10. A list of main engagement and consultation sessions is listed in Appendix A and B of this paper.
 11. Much of the internal engagement happened at the start of 2020, but an internal presentation around the Strategy also took place in November and was attended by over 230 staff members. The external engagement sessions went very well in general and were conducted over SKYPE due to current social distancing requirements.
 12. Acknowledging the slight limitations of engaging via the internet with a group of strangers, or in a large group, we extended feedback opportunities by offering an online survey that also allowed anonymous responses. Thirty-three responses were received and were overall positive about NRW's approach, with key support for the 3P approach, focus on governance agility, innovation openness and the partnership approach.
 13. What was very evident during the sessions was the range of readiness, both within and across different sector areas with regards to our proposal. Larger energy developers were keen on the approach because it matched some of what they are already doing, whereas communities and smaller businesses were keen on the principles and the phased enabling focussed application.
 14. Full responses to all questions raised at the engagement sessions are being drafted, and all comments in by the 20th December have been considered in the final draft content.
 15. Internal engagement, at all levels of the organisation, has resulted in widely differing views around ambition, deliverability, scope and language. Therefore, some comments and requests have not been accommodated, but the Strategy has tried to find a common ground to balancing the views and ensuring that work such as the Green Recovery, Green Marketplace and Timber Sales and Marketing Plan ambitions are not contrary to its overarching ambitions. It is important to note that the Strategy is not a static document and that we are reviewing it and measuring its success annually and that we will continue to engage in the furthering of its development in the years ahead.

Summary

16. After review at Board in January and final tweaks with Communications input the strategy is now ready for implementation and a public launch.

Recommendation

17. That Board approve the strategy for publication in April 2021.

Key Risks

18. The risks have not changed since the previous paper.

19. Much of what we are proposing is ambitious or requires new skills, or resources for delivery. It is therefore vital that the Commercial team is properly resourced and skilled to help deliver on the wider ambitions. At present there are vacancies in the team but the plan is to mitigate against that risk by completing recruitment in June/July.

20. There is a risk of our proposals/approach being superseded by policy or legislation in future. We have liaised with several members of the WG throughout this process and many of them attended the recent engagement sessions. We have not been told of any conflict and no direct concerns have yet been raised. Key to mitigating this risk is of course to remain talking to them and engage early on any proposals to ensure no conflict or easy transition.

21. The Commercial Strategy provides a framework for a new way of working which will require a culture shift in some areas, however the risk of not having that framework is the continuation of business as usual, which includes in some forms: a silo'd approach, reactive not proactive attitude, developer not partnership/local needs based focus, inability to innovate, and income stagnation.

22. Diversification for stronger portfolio options, and removal of over-reliance on sectors, reduces risk of revenue reduction or susceptibility to market fluctuations at a time when Brexit, Covid and competing demands are likely to negatively impact public spending. Any further delay on the strategy publication risks compounding the issue.

23. Some of the work required in the strategy in order to achieve the baseline metrics and develop new models of delivery or innovation is likely to require funding. If this funding is unavailable due to competing priorities this has no short term impact on BAU but does impact longer term prospects and potential for sustainable revenue in the future.

Next Steps

Date	Phase	Action
March	Present to Board	Present final strategy for full and final approval.

	Develop communications materials.	Finalise the launch communications plan
April 21	Launch	Depending on lockdown and pandemic conditions a later face to face public launch might also be arranged.

Financial Implications

24. There are no immediate financial implications to the publication of the Strategy over the short term as BAU actions will continue as planned over the first year.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

25. There has not been a direct EqIA for the Commercial Strategy and the principles included, as each commercial workstream detailed in the C-DAP is subject to its own EqIA.

Index of Annex

Annex 1 – v7.0 Commercial Strategy (Final)

Annex 2 – Consultation pre-May 2020

Annex 3 – Engagement post October 2020



Natural Resources Wales

Commercial Strategy 2021-2026

Published: xxxx.

Foreword

From how we work to how we play, Covid-19 has accelerated changes in the way we live our everyday lives that would have been unimaginable at the start of 2020.

Yet as Wales embarks on the road to recovery from the pandemic, businesses across the country are looking to capitalise on the opportunities to take a greener and more sustainable approach to their commercial activities.

NRW is perfectly placed to play a key role in the Welsh Government's efforts to rebuild Wales' post-Covid-19 economy, as we work across society to maximise our contribution to the national mission to create a more prosperous, green and equal future for the nation.

Taking a greener and sustainable approach to commercial activities can help us do more for the environment, people and economy of Wales for generations to come. Our vision to generate income for NRW through sustainable commercial activity, so that we can do more for Wales' environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being, is at the heart of our ambition.

We have a duty to ensure that all our commercial activity is underpinned by our organisational values and our obligation to ensure the sustainable management of natural resources, as well as our broader responsibility to Wales' well-being goals.

Set against the backdrop of EU exit and the ongoing climate and nature emergencies, the road to recovery offers challenges and opportunities that we must navigate successfully if we are to meet our commitment to future generations.

Now is the time to think and act differently. We must seize the opportunities and innovation emerging from our new normal, to work collaboratively to develop a uniquely Welsh approach to the nation's ambition for a truly circular economy.

Underpinned by our mission to deliver benefits for the planet, people and prosperity, NRW will be ambitious in our approach to our commercial activity in the future, exploring opportunities to work with new and existing partners. We are committed to being braver in our exploration of new markets, networks and developments.

This strategy supersedes our previous Enterprise Plan and outlines a high-level view of our ambition and priorities. We look forward to working with you to maximise the value of our natural resources, to benefit people and the economy, as well as the environment, for this generation and the next.

Sarah Jennings

Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial

The purpose of our commercial strategy

NRW is committed to undertaking all its commercial activities within the context of our wider obligations around the sustainable management of natural resources. Our focus will always be on supporting green and sustainable developments that allow us to increase our contribution to Wales' environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being.

This strategy sets out our approach to maximising revenue alongside our prioritisation of 'Planet' and 'People' through more commercial activity.

We are already managing commercial activities in the context of NRW's Well-being Objectives and within the remit to deliver against the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) principles.

But our aspirations are to do more, to be better, and to ensure Wales is at the forefront of tackling the nature and climate emergencies. While we do not aspire to be commercial simply for the sake of being commercial, our strategy is ambitious and does not shy away from big ideas and principles.

We recognise that we have an important role to play in Wales' green economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and believe that sustainable development and supporting a circular economy is key to Wales' recovery and future prosperity.

NRW faces pressures from increasing demands on our services, further constraints on our resources and therefore an increasing need to generate our own revenue.

With the right mechanisms and if our ability to retain income is permitted, commercial activity can help to alleviate reliance on Grant in Aid funding, allowing us to do more for the environment and the people of Wales.

This Commercial Strategy provides a new framework around long-term objectives and aspirations across the NRW portfolio. It is a living and breathing document, updated annually to ensure that the framework is agile and can evolve to align with current policy and legislation and an ever-changing commercial environment. It is supported by more detailed, sector-specific plans, that are better placed to consider industry-specific requirements and more immediate commercial considerations.

Feedback from our stakeholders and partners has highlighted a general consensus on what they would like to see from NRW's commercial activity in the next five years and we have taken this on board in our strategic approach:

- A growing need for planet and people to be weighted as equally as profit.
- Creation of a more business and customer friendly approach and more agile governance procedures.
- Pro-active not reactive culture.

- An emphasis on creating an ‘international’ Wales to encourage investment and improve the visitor economy.
- A more considered approach to place-based needs, requirements and opportunities.

So, as the context in which we operate changes and industry and external markets evolve, so too will this plan, taking into account the evidence base and by actively listening to our colleagues and our wider stakeholders.

Current context

Covid-19

As this strategy was being developed, Wales and the rest of the world was hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. The ultimate impact of this disease on the economy is yet to be fully determined and it will certainly impact different industries in different ways. NRW is committed to working smarter so that we can engage and contribute to the Welsh economy and focus on a green recovery. We also need to ensure that we are building resilience in our offering and markets, so that we can mitigate against future stresses to the economy.

EU exit

The UK’s exit from the European Union is likely to present both challenges and opportunities for commercial development in Wales. At the time of writing, it is still not clear how it will impact the services that NRW provides. It is possible that we will not know the full impact for several years. We believe that the best response is to continue with our core business and to not hold back on new developments or partnerships. NRW believes this to be a positive message for Wales and its businesses, many of whom in some industries are heavily dependent on the local supply chain. We will continue to monitor the situation and will continue to take guidance from the UK and Welsh Governments on the issue.

The context for commercial activity in NRW

Vision and values

Our vision and values are at the heart of who we are as an organisation and how we deliver our objectives. They outline what is important to us and the standards we live by.

Our vision is to ensure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, sustainably enhanced and sustainably used, now and in the future

Our #TeamNRW values are:

- We are passionate about the natural environment of Wales
- We care for each other and the people we work with
- We act with integrity
- We make a difference now and for the future
- We are proud to serve the people of Wales

Our well-being objectives

Underpinning all our work are seven well-being objectives.

These are:

- Champion the Welsh environment and the sustainable management of Wales' natural resources
- Ensure land and water in Wales is managed sustainably and in an integrated way
- Improve the resilience and quality of our ecosystems
- Reduce the risk to people and communities from environmental hazards like flooding and pollution
- Help people live healthier and more fulfilled lives
- Promote successful and responsible business, using natural resources without damaging them
- Develop NRW into an excellent organisation, delivering first class customer service.

Our roles

NRW has a very diverse and wide remit of responsibilities. Our commercial activity must work alongside these responsibilities, complementing and supporting our overall objectives and working in partnership across the organisation.

Our different roles can be described as:

Adviser: principal adviser to Welsh Government, and adviser to industry and the wider public and voluntary sector, and communicator about issues relating to the environment and its natural resources

Regulator: protecting people and the environment including marine, forest and waste industries, and prosecuting those who breach the regulations that we are responsible for

Designator: for Sites of Special Scientific Interest – areas of particular value for their wildlife or geology, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), and National Parks, as well as declaring National Nature Reserves

Responder: to some 9,000 reported environmental incidents a year as a Category 1 emergency responder

Statutory consultee: to some 9,000 planning applications a year

Manager/Operator: managing seven per cent of Wales' land area including woodlands, National Nature Reserves, water and flood defences, and operating our visitor centres, recreation facilities, hatcheries and a laboratory

Partner, Educator and Enabler: key collaborator with the public, private and voluntary sectors, providing grant aid, and helping a wide range of people use the environment as a learning resource; acting as a catalyst for others' work

Evidence gatherer: monitoring our environment, commissioning and undertaking research, developing our knowledge, and being a public records body

Employer: of almost 1,900 staff, as well as supporting other employment through contract work

Policy and legal framework

NRW's core purpose is to pursue the sustainable management of natural resources and meet our statutory duties in the exercise of our functions.

All NRW commercial activities must comply with applicable UK and EU laws and regulations, Welsh Government and NRW policies and procedures, and where appropriate, voluntary regulation such as the independent certification of the Welsh Government Woodland Estate (WGWE).

As a Welsh Government Sponsored Body (WGSB), any commercial activity undertaken by NRW has to satisfy the requirements set out for public bodies in the Government's "Classification of Public Bodies: Information and Guidance".

Although there are a number of acts and policies that apply to govern the work at NRW there are two Wales specific Acts: The Well-being of Future Generations Act (2015) and the Environment (Wales) Act (2016) that touch on all the work undertaken within the commercial team.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act requires public bodies in Wales to consider the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, and to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change. Each public body must develop a set of Well-being Objectives that are reviewed annually and published in a Well-Being Statement. You can find NRW's Well-Being Statement on our [website](#).

The Environment (Wales) Act 2016 aims to promote and apply the principles of Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) across Wales.

The two Acts are closely aligned, with the SMNR principles following the five ways of working set out in the Well-being of Future Generations Act:

- Thinking long-term
- Prevention
- Integration
- Collaboration
- Involvement

Throughout the development of this strategy NRW has been conscious of these five ways of working and each has been carefully considered when developing our overall objectives.

These two Acts do not entitle NRW to carry out any commercial activity we want, only those that are within our remit as set by the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government would either need to alter the legislation or provide NRW with the necessary delegated authority if we wanted to carry out any commercial activities outside our current legal powers, provided it was within the Welsh Government's authority to do so. In order to carry out any commercial activity, we must accommodate and work within all NRW's existing policies and strategies, ensuring consistency of approach and our overall contribution to the organisation's well-being objectives.

Some of the most relevant documents are:

- [Green recovery](#): exploring the environmental sector in Wales. A collective response to the Covid-19 pandemic that focusses on green recovery principles and collective values and priorities.
- [State of Natural Resources Report for Wales \(SoNaRR\)](#). A requirement of the Environment Act (Wales)(2016), this report assesses how Wales is performing in sustainably managing its natural resources.
- [Area Statements](#). Also a requirement of the Environment Act (Wales)(2016),, these statements adopt an area focussed approach to localised needs, splitting Wales into seven delivery areas.
- [Woodlands for Wales](#). The Welsh Government's Strategy for Woodlands and Trees in Wales, which is refreshed every five years.
- [Energy Wales: A Low Carbon Transition](#). This document sets out the Welsh Government's energy policy and approach to delivering on a low carbon economy.

Our commercial principles

The following principles will guide how we deliver this strategy.

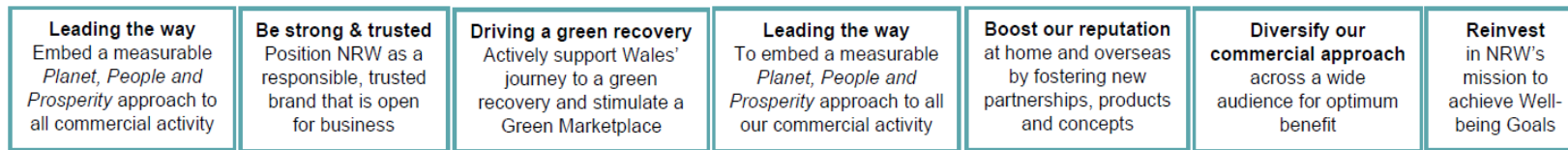
- NRW will give careful consideration to the right performance measures that will provide appropriate parameters for commercial activities to operate within.
- NRW will develop commercial programmes with an understanding of the markets in which they operate and engage appropriately with commercial sectors in which NRW operates and plays a significant role.
- Wherever NRW has *freedom of choice*¹ it will award contracts and other commercial agreements through fair and open competition using criteria clearly defined and transparently evaluated, avoiding unfair competition.
- NRW will proactively enable and facilitate opportunities and encourage competition by offering them at a range of scales where practicable, and actively encourage different delivery models where effective.
- NRW will avoid adversely impacting on business sectors through unfair competition and will work to always secure best value and timely full cost recovery.
- NRW will continue to comply with the UK's international obligations on subsidy control post Brexit through a combination of the above measures and by seeking advice when it is unclear, to avoid breaches.
- In situations where NRW is offering a unique service, NRW will not take advantage of a lack of competition and will ensure that charges relate to a reasonable margin. NRW does not hold a monopoly on any service and welcomes competition.
- NRW will ensure effective internal governance around the development of commercial activities and continuous assessment against financial and performance measures.
- NRW will ensure accuracy and integrity in the reporting of its performance measures and financial data. Financial reporting will identify net margin, but also other key financial indicators dependent on the operating model applied. Where performance measures lead NRW to provide additional public or environmental benefit, NRW will assess the cost of doing so in order to enable consideration of cost/benefit.
- When considering investment decisions and business cases for commercial activities, NRW will take a long-term, whole-life cost approach to include revenue, staff costs, and capital values.

1. In some circumstance NRW needs to work with third parties with an existing legal or contractual interest in land managed by NRW (or an adjoining land). There may also be situations where NRW is obliged to contract work out through Welsh Government framework contracts.

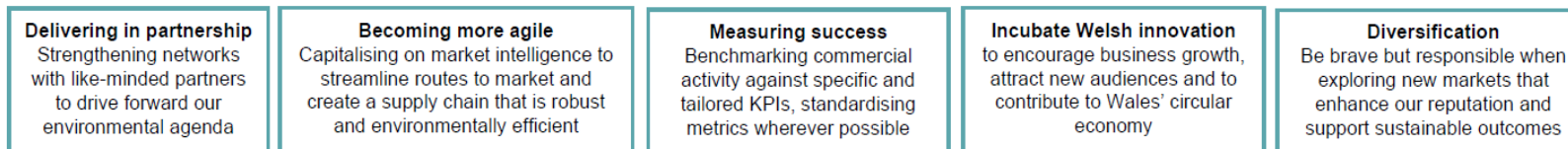
Our vision

Planet, People, Prosperity
 To generate income through green, sustainable commercial development increasing our contribution to Wales' environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being

Our strategic objectives



Our areas of focus



Our priority sectors



Our commercial vision and strategic objectives

Our commercial vision

Planet, People, Prosperity: to generate income for NRW through green and sustainable commercial development, allowing us to increase our contribution to Wales' environmental, social, economic and cultural well-being.

Circular Business

A circular business model articulates the logic of how an organisation creates, delivers, and captures value to its broader range of stakeholders while minimising ecological and social costs.

NRW Commercial has a responsibility to facilitate and enable our customers, suppliers and stakeholders to work together to find this resource efficiency and help to move Welsh businesses into a more circular business model.

Businesses applying circular principles and demonstrating a strong commitment to the People, Planet and Prosperity agenda, are working across their supply chains to reduce linear business modelling and have demonstrated greater resilience in times of crisis.

These companies are:

1. Sourcing from the economy and not ecological reserves
2. Adding value to existing materials, products and services.
3. Creating valuable inputs from businesses beyond customer

Through the formation of a Commercial Network, NRW Commercial will foster relationships across businesses between all sector areas and provide that essential enabling opportunity to encourage the circular approach.

Our commercial strategic objectives

In delivering our vision, we will focus on the following commercial strategic objectives:

- Lead the way in Wales and within the management of natural resources by embedding a measurable Planet, People and Prosperity approach (3P approach) across all our commercial activity.
- Create a strong position for NRW in commercial sectors, as a trusted brand that is open for business and a responsible commercial partner.
- Actively support Wales in its Green Recovery, and the generation of a Green Marketplace for Wales.
- Seek out new partnerships, products and concepts that will drive Wales forward and will bring a positive reputation for progress on the international stage.
- Diversify our commercial approach and secure maximum benefit across optimum reach.
- Use our income to re-invest in driving forward the Well-being Goals outlined in the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (2015) and in particular NRW's well-being objectives.

Our commercial approach and areas of focus

Our commercial approach

If we are to achieve our objectives and benefit Wales, NRW needs to ensure that we are innovative, modern, fit for purpose, and an attractive partner for those looking to invest in Wales.

There are seven sector areas within NRW that generate income or facilitate efficiencies, supporting our business to reinvest in doing more for the environment.

These sectors are:

- Energy
- Timber
- Tourism and Recreation
- Culture
- Analytical Services
- Procurement
- Other business development

Some of these sector areas are more established than others, and many have responsibilities that overlap or will work closely together.

This strategy links all these areas with overarching expectations, regardless of speciality.

There are also other areas of the business that generate income not situated in the commercial team such as our permissions and permits offering. These are out of scope of this strategy.

Our areas of focus

There are five where we want to improve, which we believe will be crucial to success.

Delivering in partnership

Delivering this strategy will require partnership-working across NRW and with external partners.

The need to address the climate and nature emergencies is the backbone of our strategic outlook. We are actively seeking partners who share our values and want to work with us to drive the green economy and our environmental agenda forward. It requires stronger networks across Wales and the sharing of best practice.

We already work with many partners such as the Welsh Government, which provide a cumulative opportunity for enabling development. But we want to do more to work collaboratively with new and existing partners to reach solutions and to share experiences on what works well. Widening our current networks and the data and information they bring will help to develop sustainable commercial activities and provide potential commercial extras that can enhance an offer and widen the benefit and impact.

In order to facilitate our partnerships, NRW Commercial pledges to abide by the following SOFT approach in all our transactions with stakeholders and customers:

Share: Sharing information inevitably leads to collaboration and innovation. So NRW Commercial will be more forthright in its sharing of information and feeding back our successes.

Open: Willing to consider and enable different approaches across our commercial development opportunities, working with stakeholders at all levels, including small and big businesses, community groups and third sector organisations.

Free: We will continue to ensure that the Welsh Government estate retains its free and open access for the people of Wales.

Trust: NRW will be transparent in its undertakings and be held accountable to the people of Wales when pursuing its commercial agenda.

Agility

We will develop more agile processes and governance within NRW to enable quicker delivery from concept to market while adhering to our legal obligations.

Improved routes to market are essential if we are to create a supply chain that is robust and reduces waste and carbon release. There is significant potential to create new products by building on what we already have and marketing this to either current or new markets. This is a key area for developing circular economies by using local supply chains and Wales-based operators.

We will develop greater market intelligence by fully utilising available data sets and market trends internally and externally. While the world is incredibly data-rich, the challenge is to know what is available and where and how we can harness the information suited to our requirements. Cross correlation of datasets aimed at future forecasting will improve our ability to be proactive. It is also about finding ways to better present data and market intelligence, making it easier for people to understand and to facilitate decision-making.

Measurement

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are an essential tool for assessing both ongoing progress during developments and for establishing overall success of a project or commercial activity(ies). Picking the right KPIs for each development, ensuring that the KPI is measured correctly and standardising KPIs for cross-comparison against commercial developments in other sectors will give a really clear picture of what we are doing well, what needs to be improved and where projects are failing to hit some of our key objectives.

KPIs will also ensure we can act quickly to mitigate risk, improve efficiencies, make savings and ensure value for money.

We will explore alternative funding models and new contractual mechanisms that will offer more diversity and resilience across our estate and encourage new partners to engage with NRW and widen the ability for smaller groups to get involved in commercial opportunities.

Innovation

If NRW is to offer sustainable returns like other leading companies, it will need to consistently innovate and think creatively. New technologies, materials and service delivery models will be essential in supporting initiatives to tackle the climate and nature emergencies, especially in the development of an improved circular economy.

An innovative mindset will encourage business growth in Wales and stimulate the attractiveness of working in partnership with NRW. It will also achieve a wider ambition to draw the natural resources sector together to identify common issues and find operational solutions.

Cross-fertilisation of technology and ideas will be important to success. For example, technology with an intended use in one sector can be transferred to a new sector with a new use. Exploring other sector technologies can enhance and create commercial opportunity or offer a direct improvement.

In innovating, we will manage risks rather than avoid them. While some commercial developments can fail to deliver on expectations, this shouldn't deter us from considering a new technology or idea if we are aware of the risk and can manage it effectively.

We will aim to measure success against the three pillars of 'Planet, People and Prosperity', which will require us to innovate in this area.

We will support start-ups and investors, using our commercial arm to encourage and advise new business and to inspire new products and services to help grow the green economy.

Diversification

The commercial portfolio is already diverse covering timber, energy and analytical services. However, there is scope to diversify further into tourism and recreation, arts and culture.

In some cases, these new markets might be small and bring in small financial returns initially. However, the returns for people, for the planet and the contribution towards local economic growth could be far greater.

It is vital that we grow responsibly with projects that will offer sustainable benefits that support multiple outcomes.

Attaching special interest products and services with tangible future growth potential, to a core offering, can help attract investors and developers. It offers a unique selling point, the opportunity for additional benefits and profits that competitors may not have and in some cases, can reduce the overall risk of a development.

Positioning NRW as a commercially viable delivery partner is incredibly important. Potential partners need to see NRW not only as a public sector body or a natural resources regulator but as a commercial operator that is a champion for responsible development.

Priority sectors

These are the sectors of immediate interest to us, accompanied by some case-studies of some recent successes in these areas.

Energy: Green Future

NRW's energy programme has been designed in response to the Welsh Government's energy policy and targets including the aspirations that 70% of Wales' electricity is generated by renewables by 2030, and all new energy projects in Wales to have an element of local ownership from 2020.

NRW has been very successful in encouraging developers and investors to come to Wales and invest in onshore wind and energy projects on the WGWE.

The direction of travel from the Welsh Government is to seek to maximise the benefit of such investment to the people and economy of Wales.

These green energy schemes are vitally important in helping Welsh communities diversify their energy supply and reduce dependencies on fossil fuels. They create net zero greenhouse gas emissions, local jobs, develop skills and generate significant community benefit funds.

Through careful design and implementation of mitigation plans, the negative impacts of such developments on landscape and local ecological factors can be significantly reduced and largely offset.

NRW has significant experience of working with developers to deliver significant SMNR benefits through wind energy projects.

We will:

- Work with Welsh Government to identify preferred delivery models for energy projects and remove barriers to these models
- Undertake an assessment of the potential future scale and location of wind energy development opportunities
- Develop clear decision-making procedures for proactive tendering of opportunities and responding to developer-led proposals
- Look for more local partnerships and community developments to facilitate local ownership in the energy sector.

Case Study

Pen-y-Cymoedd Wind Farm, delivered by Vattenfall UK Ltd, is situated in the Afan Forest Park between Neath and Merthyr Tydfil and showcases the range of SMNR benefits brought to Wales by renewable energy.

The wind farm consists of 76 wind turbines, each 145m in height, that can generate 228 MW of electricity at maximum capacity. This means that it can provide power to around 188,000 homes and will displace the equivalent of 6.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide generated by fossil fuels over the lifetime of the project.

The project generates significant rental income to the Welsh Government.

In addition, the project has set up a £50million community benefit fund which is actively supporting local community initiatives and includes a £3million habitat management plan that is delivering large-scale peatland restoration.

Timber: A New Approach

NRW is responsible for the sale of timber from the Welsh Government Woodland Estate.

NRW currently offers an available timber harvest of 850'000m³ per annum or around two-thirds of the total Welsh market, which generates a typical gross income of approximately £20million.

Current timber sales range from 15m³ to 15000m³ per tender, including small firewood parcels.

The timber on the estate consists of Spruce (60%) and Larch (25%) and a mixture of other species in the remainder, but this can vary dramatically across areas.

Because trees take around 60 years to grow to maturity for market, NRW is able to provide a production forecast that allows us to establish what will be available for market over the long-term. However, NRW cannot predict how prosperous that market will be year on year.

The Timber Sales and Marketing team has identified a number of workstreams that can immediately feed into the Commercial Strategy overall vision.

These are:

- Strengthen resilience by developing a more diverse portfolio of timber products
- Consider alternative land management possibilities that offer long-term sustainable income generation
- Improve ICT processes and procedures across timber governance, sales and marketing, making our sites easier to use for external customers and more efficient for NRW
- Develop a 3P approach that ensures NRW is measuring sales transactions economically, environmentally and socially
- Increase the amount of Welsh timber used in building in Wales - enhancing the circular economy by keeping it local, in house-building and local products.

Case Study

A new Timber Valuation Tool has been developed by NRW to ensure a reliable, consistent, data-orientated approach to timber sales, across the NRW estate.

This tool assesses working costs, crop product, crop prices across species and accounts for differences in timber quality. Additional consideration is given to the location, to the nearest supply chain, and size of timber parcels.

Included in every valuation document is a narrative explaining how the tool was used, ensuring transparency in our approach and demonstrating we are achieving best value for money on our timber sale transactions.

The approach is also fairer to our suppliers and helps to maintain a reasonable level of competition in the market place; each sale can attract over 25 customers bidding against each other for each timber sale.

Another advantage is that this bottom-up budgeting approach to our timber valuations allows for just-in-time valuation adjustments to respond to an often volatile market place, ensuring that we attain the current market value for timber, and giving NRW confidence and assurance if we decide not to award a sale because the bids are not attractive.

Whilst we will avoid selling at any price, we do recognise the importance of a consistent supply chain of timber to the wood processing industry in Wales, and our commitment to offer and supply timber from the WGWE benefits the Welsh Government's ambition to promote and sustain a vibrant circular economy in Wales.

Tourism and Recreation: The place to be

Around 10-12% of the workforce in Wales is employed in tourism and recreation enterprises. These jobs are not only located in large towns, but also rural areas, providing essential local employment and revenue. Even though the sector has suffered terribly as a result of the pandemic, it remains one of the key enablers of a green recovery.

Many of the locations that NRW manages make a significant contribution to Wales' tourism and recreation offer, for both visitors and those living in Wales. Our sites offer captivating walks and hikes, adrenaline-fuelled adventures on world-beating mountain bike trails, adventure playgrounds, wild swimming, and the offer of exploring Wales' inspiring heritage and culture. NRW is keen to ensure that we grow our recreation offering; that we offer more choice, more experiences and more developments that provide something to suit every taste. We will do so while avoiding the pitfalls of over-tourism and negative impacts to the climate and nature emergencies.

Multiple studies have shown that access to the outdoors brings significant benefits to both physical and mental well-being. But many of these studies have also shown that there is an increasing disconnect between children and nature, therefore increasing access for all to green spaces offers well-being and social benefits as well as tourism benefits.

Concerns about 'over-tourism' and the pressure that puts on communities and the environment must be taken into careful consideration in developing tourism opportunities.

We want to be more innovative and data-driven in our approach to the work we do in this sector, taking care not to apply a 'one size fits all' approach to recreation. Instead, we must carefully consider the type of activity and developments that suit our sites and accept that change is not required at every site we manage.

We will:

- Use new market analysis of the tourism and recreation sector in Wales over the next five to 25 years to help assess investment possibilities, visitor and demand profiles and promote Wales. Some of this business intelligence will already sit with local partners such as VisitWales and National Trust

- Work with new partners to create more consumer options at our visitor centres and more opportunities for local businesses to engage with tourists and regular visitors
- Implement carbon mitigation plans for recreation events on the land we manage
- Promote domestic travel and the staycation economy
- Look at connecting sites and liaising with landlords in between sites for longer and safer hikes and cycle routes avoiding roads and seeing more of the Welsh landscape
- Explore ways of interacting with NRW sites through technology for an immersive and modern experience. This includes internal needs such as paperless trail inspections processes.

Culture: A Burgeoning Market Opportunity

NRW places significant importance on protecting and promoting our culture. Wales is blessed with a diverse arts, music, literature and heritage sector supported by its own language that gives the people of Wales a sense of belonging and identity.

Creative businesses generate over £2billion of annual turnover and employ around 50,000 people. Levels of attendance and participation or volunteering at cultural events in Wales is high, at around 80% and 40% respectively. There is sound infrastructure in place and heritage sites often offer cultural activities in both Welsh and English. However, many of these sites are concentrated in South Wales and unsurprisingly around key transport hubs. This accessibility offers key opportunities to attract visitors to Wales and to encourage local participation.

Although NRW's remit focusses on land management, we know that culture empowers and contributes to a number of well-being goals. NRW wants to use the sites we manage as a facilitator and enabler to promote and grow that culture.

The recent Covid-19 pandemic has hit this sector hard and left many independent artists and culture activities vulnerable, with the closure of theatre, music and film sets, disrupted material supplies and commission cancellations. We are also yet to know exactly what opportunities will be available in light of the UK's departure from the EU.

NRW Commercial has started to identify a number of possible developments that could mitigate some of issues. One year ago, our approach would probably have been very different but over the last year we have been working hard on exploring opportunities, looking not only at what is needed, and how NRW can contribute and various models of delivery, but also how we can do all this post Brexit and post Covid19.

NRW's contribution to culture aims to develop our vision to being 'unmistakably Wales' and our mainly outdoor locations are ripe for a post-Covid world where some restrictions may still apply.

We will do this through:

- The redevelopment of the NRW filming permissions process. The review will ensure the rates are market competitive and fit for purpose and explore ways to market our locations to the industry
- Developing outdoor spaces on our estate for work, learning, rest and play
- Offering pop-Up gallery space at recreation centres and tea rooms

- Developing three new medium-sized annual culture partnerships/events to be held across our sites
- Exploring the development of an arts space either as part of a current, or for a future visitor centre with a focus on local and visiting artists and practitioners
- Using artists and practitioners to support on NRW initiatives across all services whether helping to develop walks, marketing materials, education initiatives or events in general
- Offer an NRW 'artist in residence scheme'

Analytical Services: Evidenced Approach

Natural Resources Wales Analytical Services (NRWAS) is an environmental analytical laboratory accredited to ISO/IEC17025:2017 (the internationally recognised standard for laboratory competence, impartiality and consistent operation), with industry-leading expertise in complex freshwater and sediment analysis.

Since 2013 NRWAS has been providing evidence, guidance and analytical solutions to NRW, as well as providing analytical services for a wide range of clients across the UK including utility companies, local councils and not-for-profit organisations. The team relocated to Swansea University in 2017, offering an opportunity to expand its commercial opportunities and foster closer links with academia. The laboratory must always prioritise its organisational obligations, but by maximising the utilisation of its spare capacity and broadening its analytical portfolio it will be able to play a key role in the Green Recovery.

We will look at:

- The implementation of the new Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS) for better workflow management, for both our regulatory (routine) work as well as future commercial projects
- Broadening our analytical portfolio to encompass new and emerging contaminants alongside new monitoring tools
- Creating better value for the public purse through improved capacity mapping and using that capacity for commercial work
- Exploring new ways of working with our customers by forming closer connections with academia, as well as exploring partnerships with new and existing customers and counterpart organisations across the EU.
- The development of a new pricing system to ensure all costs are fully recovered for commercial projects, taking into consideration all aspects of the work, our customers and the market. This piece of work will also inform the costing of NRW's monitoring programme, ensuring greater financial control for the organisation.

Procurement: Sustainable Partnerships

The NRW procurement team is an essential component of the commercial team providing essential tools to ensure that our supply chain operates as effectively as possible, offering best value for money, increasing our supply options, simplifying processes, creating a transparent and fair playing field for bidders and supply partners, monitoring compliance, and providing effective supplier management.

There are currently two vital areas of consideration for the next two years:

- We do not know how the UK's withdrawal from the EU will alter procurement rules and processes
- We need to find an effective and meaningful way to ensure and facilitate de-carbonisation and well-being compliance across our suppliers.

The strategy will improve procurement knowledge across the commercial teams, to better communicate procurement options and procedures and to ensure that the procurement team itself has all the necessary knowledge and tools at its disposal in order to facilitate the main areas of consideration.

We will:

- Deliver a supplier toolbox aimed at helping SMEs through NRW's procurement processes
- Address carbon impacts across procurement activities and provide essential support to colleagues and customers and support positive carbon emission mitigations
- Apply the new Welsh Themes Outputs and Measures and facilitate the development of the social value portal within NRW procurement activities, which will be used to capture social value in relation to the well-being goals
- Implement a training plan to make sure we get the basics right and make it easier for staff to understand how to be compliant with procedures. This will include work across the website, intranet and guidance documentation
- Explore mechanisms to build better relationships with our suppliers
- Develop in-depth market analysis procedures to gain a better understanding of the markets we procure from and gain a deeper understanding of the risks associated with them
- Collate feedback from internal and external stakeholders on how to improve relationships and processes within formal procurement processes
- Create a best practice and lessons learnt process to improve accountability and compliance across general regulation, and for internal policy and procedures.

Case Study

NRW plants thousands of trees every year and we have just undergone an extensive £9m procurement exercise to find a supplier so that we can plant more!

As part of that procurement NRW wanted to ensure it was focussed on sustainability, helping to deliver on the well-being goals and the ambitions in the proposed circular economy strategy for Wales, Beyond Recycling.

NRW partnered with WRAP Cymru and Resources Futures to ensure that the procurement criteria encouraged suppliers to think about how they would support these goals.

We were particularly interested in the plastic film that is used on every tree to protect its young roots before planting. We wanted to know if there was a more sustainable product that could do the same job.

After extensive research and talking to suppliers, unfortunately this is not yet possible, but we have now set expectations that this is what we are looking for and many suppliers are working on it.

Whilst we have not met our ambition yet, we have set clear expectations and have made provision to continuously assess the situation so that we can switch to a more sustainable option as soon as it is available.

Business Development: Growth

Although there are areas of commercial activity that can be clearly defined by specific portfolio areas, NRW also undertakes a number of commercial activities that either do not fit succinctly into these portfolios, or do not sit directly with the commercial team but are activities carried out in other areas of the business.

This kind of commercial development currently includes, but isn't limited to, filming rights and permissions, permits for activities on our land, mineral mining and the green marketplace.

This strategy is also focussed on growth and resilience and ensuring that we develop the right opportunities for different areas of Wales, driving overall socio-economic benefits and promoting innovation. Therefore, we expect our business development growth to be increasingly varied in the future.

It is difficult to be clear what are plans are over the next five years, other than to emphasise the need to be quick to react to markets, but we have outlined some areas of immediate interest.

- Working in close partnership and encouraging green technology companies and start-ups
- Land purchase options for carbon capture and pension investment funds
- Diversification of green products available from the estate, such as improved venison offering
- Natural burial services
- Environment education and training.

Implementation and governance

The overarching aim of this strategy is to clearly set out the principles and overarching ambitions that the commercial team will deliver.

It is a blueprint that sets out how ambitious we will be in our quest for a more business-like, commercial culture across the organisation. Only by encouraging innovative and creative solutions to the challenges we face now can we achieve that ambition and make a strong contribution to tackling the nature and climate emergencies for future generations.

The NRW commercial team acknowledges that there is a lot of work to be done if we are to be more effective in our commercial approach. Our implementation plan builds on our existing strengths but also addresses the areas we need to develop.

As well as continuing to deliver on its current projects and its business as usual activities in 20/21, the team will need to work towards creating a commercial framework focussed on growth and sustainability.

We will develop a comprehensive commercial communications and marketing plan supported by more detailed portfolio focussed communications plans, such as the five-year Timber Sales and Marketing Plan.

The plan will outline how the commercial team will apply the SOFT principles to increase engagement and awareness both with internal and external stakeholders and interested parties. This will include NRW commercial participation at trade shows, public events (where possible) and will work to showcase the commercial opportunities to both local, UK and international communities.

Integral to this strategy is the communication of the message that NRW Commercial is 'Open for Business', and that we are actively looking for new potential partners and industries.

We will create a clear roadmap for potential partners on how to navigate NRW policies and procedures and the governance and compliance checks we must do. This will help to set expectations on what we can or cannot deliver.

We will commission a new markets report to drive forward our diversification strategy and help us spot new opportunities. This will feed directly into our commercial delivery plan that will track ongoing commercial opportunities over the next five years.

A real-time performance dashboard will ensure effective monitoring of the delivery plan and enhance the ongoing scrutiny of the commercial activity(ies).

NRW is a large, dynamic organisation so it is essential that the Commercial Strategy continues to fit succinctly with other areas of the organisation, avoiding contradiction, confusion or cross purpose.

NRW Commercial is overseen by the Head of Sustainable Commercial Development, who reports to the Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial. The Head of Sustainable Commercial Development is supported by the Commercial Business Board

(CBB), which includes senior staff from multiple departments including Land Stewardship, Evidence, Policy and Permitting (EPP), Finance and Legal Services.

Through the Commercial Business Board, we will connect regularly with other linked work streams and feed these into the Strategy and our Delivery Plan as required.

Examples include:

- The implementation of NRW's 2050 Vision
- The development of a NRW Green Market
- NRW place-based area statements
- Development of a 3P accounting approach.



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Annex 2: Internal Consultation Before June 20

Department/Team	Primary
Finance, Planning and Performance Committee	Presentation outlining approach and feedback from the group and individual board members.
Executive Team	Presentation delivered by Sasha Wyn Davies outlining approach and feedback received and considered
Commercial Business Board	Ongoing presentation outlining approach and feedback considered
Commercial Management Team;	Ongoing SME feedback and objective setting, materials and information provided.
Analytical Services	Presentation and discussion of commercial opportunities.
Finance	Discussions around Welsh Government Framework agreement and commercial requirements – still in discussion. We have therefore not included much around retention of income in the strategy.
Communications and Marketing; Various	Further discussion regarding launch and Communications and Marketing Plan
ICT LT	Was initially delayed due to flood priorities. Discussions regarding ICT opportunities, not included in strategy but will form part of action planning as appropriate
Land Stewardship LT	Presentation outlining approach and feedback.
Evidence Policy Procedure LT	Presentation outlining approach and feedback.
Place Based Teams	3-hour workshop and feedback on suggested approach.
Recreation Managers and Service Centre Managers	Team session held at Coed-y-Brenin
Integrated Evidence Group	Comment and review of possible commercial mechanisms.
Legal	Have been consulted on specific workstreams such as the Alternative Land Management Model – will input into action planning
Innovation Programmes	Initial discussion around support and avoiding duplication
Corporate Planning	Feedback and consideration
Green Markets Initiative	Feedback and discussion on cross working and opportunities. Will form part of each other's working groups going forward to ensure synergy.



Annex 3: External Consultation Nov/Dec 20

This consisted of a one hour presentation delivered by Elsie Grace and the Sector Lead, and then a one hour engagement session asking primarily two questions:

1. What did they think of the overall approach, how could it benefit you and what barriers or negatives might it pose to you?
2. What activities and actions would you like to see from NRW Commercial over the next five years?

Sector	Date
Energy	24 th November – 25 participants*
Internal session for all staff	24 th November – 230 participants*
Timber	26 th November – 11 participants* (including confor who were representing a wider group)
Tourism and Recreation	26 th November – 30 participants*
Timber	2 nd December – 18 participants*
Energy – REUK facilitated discussions	3 rd December – 30 participants*.
Energy	7 th December – 14 participants*
Tourism and Recreation	7 th December – 12 participants*

*participant numbers are estimated as some will have joined the call after it started and some may have dropped off during the engagement sessions.

Board Paper

Paper title:	Renewal Programme
Paper Reference:	21-03-B06
Paper sponsored by:	Rachael Cunningham, Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Services
Paper Presented by:	Ben Wilson, Senior Programme Manager – Covid Renewal
Purpose of the paper	Decision
Recommendation	Endorse the vision and strategic objective of the Renewal Programme and agree to the proposal for ongoing programme management

Issue

1. To provide an update to the Board on the progress and plans for the NRW Renewal Programme, and the decision taken by the Executive Team (ET) to progress to programme stage.
2. To allow the Board to advise NRW on whether the vision, objectives and workstreams proposed are sufficiently bold, clear and achievable.

Exec Summary

3. Covid-19 has had a dramatic impact on how NRW has functioned in the last year.
4. We have already learned from and embedded many lessons from our, our partners and society's response to the pandemic, much of which will naturally continue to improve the way that we work and to deliver benefits.
5. The Renewal Programme has gathered evidence on how we have responded, and highlighted the positive and negative impacts, as well as the threats and opportunities it presents.
6. We have set out a clear vision and strategic objectives which we can use to maintain new positive ways of working and drive further beneficial change in NRW, while supporting our partners, customers, and the economy and environment of Wales.

7. A co-ordinated programme management approach has been endorsed by ET, to ensure we deliver the full and aspirational potential of these lessons and avoid the risks associated with a potentially fragmented approach.
8. There are potential resource gaps in key work streams that will require filling.
9. Clear, bold and visible leadership, along with ongoing staff and customer engagement are key.
10. The Renewal Programme will need to align with, and inform, the NRW 2050 Vision, Corporate Plan and our operating model review.
11. ET endorsed the approach set out in this paper and requested further input from the People and Remuneration Committee (PaRC) and the Board.

Background

12. The Covid-19 pandemic has dramatically affected the way NRW has operated in the past year, with staff predominantly working from home, offices closed and restrictions on field-working arrangements.
13. We have continued to refine and adapt our response in line with Government guidance and changing levels of restrictions.
14. In July 2020 we started to consider how NRW would implement a recovery plan (or plans) to bring the organisation back to normal post Covid.
15. Given the complex and ongoing nature of the pandemic, we saw the need for recovery to focus on the short / medium term stabilisation of the business, which we achieved through our Covid incident response groups and business continuity planning processes.
16. We also saw the need to consider the long-term implications and opportunities arising from the pandemic and hence we initiated the Renewal Programme.
17. The core purpose of Renewal was to understand the impact, lessons and opportunities that arose from the Covid pandemic and identify how we can use this moment to support the culture and values of NRW to address climate and nature emergencies.
18. Mindful that the impacts of Covid and the evidence base for Renewal is evolving, the discovery phase of Renewal is essentially sufficiently complete, and we are ready to initiate a series of workstreams to start to make these outcomes real. Some of this work has already started.

Assessment

19. The Renewal Programme has been working with staff from across the organisation, liaising with partners and customers outside the business and listening to the views of public and private sector surveys and research findings.
20. We have explored the likely key recommendations for future ways of working and have considered the potential implications and benefits to NRW.
21. We have drawn on evidence from a wide range of internal and external sources which are included in the Renewal Evidence Pack (available on request).
22. The Evidence has been summarised using a SWOT type analysis, focusing on the Success (and strengths), Weakness (and drawbacks), as well as the Opportunities and Threats presented by a future approach to increased remote working.
 - a. Strengths - on the whole remote working during lockdown has been a **success for NRW and highlighted some core strengths.**
 - i. IT systems, the Windows 10 upgrade, Skype and now Teams, enabled us to rapidly and effectively send people home and has helped us remain connected and even improved connectivity in places.
 - ii. We have received excellent support from our ICT teams to make this happen, with HR, Facilities Management and WH&S teams playing a crucial role in enabling safe and effective home working.
 - iii. We have successfully recruited, kitted out and trained new staff throughout.
 - iv. We have reduced our travel and our carbon emissions, in work and in reduced commuting.
 - v. Whilst in lockdown we have still been able to operate effectively and deliver well against many of our core duties.
 - vi. We have found new ways to engage and work with each other and our customers.
 - vii. Most importantly we have been able to support staff, and each other, through flexible work arrangements, wellbeing advice and initiatives such as the wellbeing hour.
 - viii. We have demonstrated that for many staff, working from home provides significant wellbeing benefits
 - b. However, there have been obvious **down-sides** to remote working during lockdown.

- i. Pulse surveys have shown that staff have often struggled with isolation and how to manage the home / work life balance.
 - ii. There is a clear trend that work-load management is an issue.
 - iii. Sometimes our customers have not been able to access our services or have received inconsistent service.
 - iv. The reduction in operational fieldwork has down sides, e.g. less visible inspection of permitted sites may increase the risk of non-compliance.
 - v. External evidence suggests that some of the travel and emissions savings will have been displaced, e.g. to home heating.
 - vi. Our staff engagement has highlighted some existing concerns that staff are struggling with inefficient or unclear processes.
- c. **Opportunities** – there are some significant opportunities arising from the pandemic.
- i. Many of our staff have expressed a desire to continue to work from home, and this is in line with trends across the public and private sectors.
 - ii. Evidence suggests that remote and agile working benefits staff and organisations, helping drive staff satisfaction, productivity, recruitment, and staff retention. It seems likely that this would also help with increasing recruitment to rural areas that could benefit economically.
 - iii. The Green Recovery initiative, and Welsh Governments targets for home / close to home working, give us a clear steer towards supporting staff to work from home as well as supporting mechanisms to support this (e.g. Ystadau Cymru).
 - iv. By working differently, we can support local regenerative economic recovery in Wales, in part by helping support or even establish shared working hubs that support local community regeneration and town centre recovery.
 - v. We should be able to reduce our current office portfolio and to realise financial savings as a result.
 - vi. By continuing to travel less, and where we do so, doing it more efficiently, we will be able release savings from recued fleet mileage and maintenance costs.
 - vii. Remote and agile working could significantly help with reducing our carbon emissions.

d. Threats:

- i. Financial / Political - we don't yet know the long-term economic and political impacts of Covid-19, which may adversely influence our or Governments' priorities and ability to invest in change.
- ii. We need to acknowledge that Covid-19 is still a disruptive threat to our ways of working.

23. Based on this evidence we have identified a range of recommendations which will significantly impact on the way NRW functions, mostly with regards to where we work, how we use technology and how and when we travel.
24. The Renewal Programme comprises a set of proposed strategic outcomes and work streams, many of which will have strong interdependencies.
25. For example, the ICT workstream provides an enabling service to ensure that all staff can continue to work effectively in any work setting and how we can use technology to drive efficiency and improve customer service.
26. The HR (Supporting Staff) workstream provides a key service in helping determine the extent and degree to which remote and hybrid remote working will be adopted, by whom, for which roles and by when.
27. Importantly, however, there are significant implications on the way we practice leadership, manage teams and work planning as well as the way in which we work with partners and communicate with customers.
28. It is also important to recognise that, given the extent and duration of the pandemic, much of the learning is still ongoing and emerging, and the Programme will need to adapt to these as we move forward.
29. In order to take the programme forward, we have identified a unified Vision for the Renewal Programme and a set of strategic outcomes. We will establish a series of work streams that will deliver these.

Table 1. Renewal Vision and Strategic Outcomes and associated work streams

Vision: *We must act now to address the climate and nature emergencies. We will use this moment to refresh and reshape our ways of working so we can continue to be a mainly home and field-based organisation, that travels less and has a reduced reliance on offices. We improve delivery on the ground and provide an outstanding service to our customers and partners. We will work with partners and communities to lead in supporting a green and just recovery.*

Outcomes:

- *By default, most roles will be predominantly home based, and staff will have the opportunity to access agile office and collaborative meeting spaces when needed.*
- *We have the right technology that allows us to seamlessly and effectively connect with each other, our customers and partners.*
- *We travel less often and more efficiently, improving our environmental impact and leading the way for Wales to become carbon neutral.*
- *NRW building estate is streamlined and facilities designed to suit our needs and those of partners and is seen as an exemplar.*
- *We support the sustainable growth of the Welsh economy.*
- *We continue to provide clear, compassionate and effective leadership and support staff with clear guidance.*
- *We simplify processes and systems to make it easier to do our work well.*

Workstreams:

- *Supporting Staff*
- *Technology*
- *Travel*
- *Accommodation*
- *Commercial Opportunities*
- *Leadership*
- *Process Review and simplification*

- **Comms and Engagement**

30. Taking this vision forward will require workstream leads to work together to ensure that their work is coordinated, and that interdependencies and shared risk are managed.
31. There are three potential approaches to managing this programme delivery.
- Adopt the vision and strategic outcomes and rely on Business as Usual (BAU) teams to deliver against them, assuming that they would be responsible for most delivery anyway. Workstreams would need to be given sufficient priority and resource within the team. They would need to independently minimise the shared risk and interdependencies.
 - Adopt a centralised programme management approach where all the work streams are centrally coordinated and managed under a single programme team. This would require recruitment of a full programme team to focus solely on Renewal, detracting from BAU involvement and delivery. This would allow greater control of shared risks and interdependencies.
 - Adopt a hybrid programme management approach** where a centralised Programme Office, governed by a revised Programme Board (with Executive Team Chair) coordinates activities being delivered through BAU, projects and workstreams.
32. Given the need to manage risk and maintain focus, whilst ensuring BAU teams remain engaged, **Option C** was endorsed by ET.

Summary

33. NRW has already learned from and embedded many lessons from ours and society's response to the pandemic, much of which will continue to improve the way that we work and to deliver benefits.
34. The Renewal Programme sets out a clear vision and strategic objectives which we can use to deliver these benefits.
35. A co-ordinated programme management approach to ensuring we deliver the full and aspirational potential of these lessons and avoid the risks associated with a potentially fragmented approach.
36. There are potential resource gaps in key work streams that will require filling.
37. Clear bold and visible leadership, along with ongoing staff and customer engagement are key.

Recommendation

38. The Board are asked to consider, advise and endorse the Renewal vision and outcomes.

39. The Board are asked to provide advice on the implementation of Renewal.

Key Risks

40. The Renewal Programme has identified a wide range of risks, all of which can be managed to varying degrees through the appropriate governance and controls.

41. The Key Risks comprise:

- a. Lack of resources to deliver key work areas (especially HR and Accommodation).
- b. Return to normal – many of the changes we seek to make will happen naturally, as we have been forced to create new ways of working that are now habitual. However there remains a risk that some staff, managers and leaders (and customers) may expect to return to previous working patterns. There may also be resistance or organisational inertia that restrict our bolder aspirations. This will require visionary leadership.
- c. Equality and fairness – there is the potential that Renewal agile working will adversely affect some groups (internally and externally) or may be viewed as benefiting some groups more than others (see Equality Impact Assessment below).

Next Steps

42. Following the Board discussion and approval the Programme will proceed to Programme Definition stage.

43. Engagement with the Programme Management Office (PMO) to ensure sound programme management approaches (under way).

44. Build out workstream Project Initiation Documents to include work in progress, and what work needs to be started (as a Project or BAU).

45. Establish costs and benefits and develop Programme Brief (with named Senior Responsible Officer (SRO)).

46. Assurance and approval of Programme Business Case by agreed approver.

47. Establish formal Programme governance and resourcing through a project brief.

48. Engage with staff through follow up Pulse survey to clarify their current willingness to adapt agile working full time.

49. Ensure any BAU Recovery phase “opening up” of activities / offices access is managed, to reduce risk of return to normal.

50. Engage with partners more formally on home working and shared working opportunities.

51. Establish and roll out a series of agile working trials as proof of concept.

Financial Implications

52. Until we have worked through the individual project briefs in more detail the full costs and benefits are not clear.

53. There will likely be a need to secure additional resources to progress key work streams, especially in the supporting staff workstream (HR).

54. The potential savings are significant but may not be realised quickly.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

55. We have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment, which we will continue to review whilst the programme develops. This highlights that there may be positive and negative impacts we need to manage such as:

56. Staff members may not have access to suitable work areas at home, this could impact several groups.

57. Disability – some accessibility tools may not be agile / mobile compatible.

58. Mental health – stress and anxiety may be exacerbated by remote working isolation.

59. Welsh language – potential positive impact through more local neutral recruitment and closer working with local communities.

60. Gender – flexible working MAY benefit parents and carers working at home, a role more often fulfilled by women.

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Evidence Pack – This will be available by request

Board Paper

	Paper Details
Paper title:	Performance Report 2020/21 - Quarter Three
Paper Reference:	21-03-B07
Paper sponsored by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive
Paper Presented by:	Executive Team
Purpose of the paper	Scrutiny
Recommendation	<p>The Board is requested to scrutinise NRW performance for the third quarter of 2020/21 and specifically consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress against each measure reported on as an exception and the actions NRW is taking.

Issue

1. This performance report is based on the measures and targets that have been revised from Quarter 2 onwards as a result of the potential impact of Covid-19 on staff and their workloads. The report in Annex 1 sets out this year's third Business Plan Performance Dashboard for October – December 2020. Reporting in this Quarter is by exception, based on measures which were either red or amber in Quarter 2, or predicted to be red or amber by year end. The Board are invited to scrutinise the Quarter 3 Report.

Background

2. The Business Plan dashboard report is one of the Board's principal ways of scrutinising our delivery.
3. The performance report (Annex 1) was developed as part of the process to prepare the 2020/21 Business Plan with the Board, the Executive Team and the Finance, Planning & Performance Committee of the Board. It was revised from Q2 onwards as a result of Covid-19 and was re-approved by the Board in September.

4. The report format has undergone significant change since last year and consists of:
 - A **dashboard** providing an overview of performance against the 2020/21 measures set out by Strategic Priority as set out in the Business Plan.
 - A **table of strategic priorities and topics** to help navigate the report.
 - **Details for each measure by exception** – where current and/or year end position for the measure is red or amber, along with measures previously reflected as so in our last report. Other measures and topics are not reported upon for this Quarter only.
5. This is the third report against our Business Plan and Dashboard for 2020/21: it relates to our Corporate Plan to 2022.

Assessment

6. We revised our Business Plan and Dashboard for Quarter 2 as a result of the impacts of Covid-19. For Quarter 3, the Board agreed that for this Quarter only we would report by exception– for those measures which were either Red or Amber at the end of Quarter 2 or predicted to be Red or Amber by year end.
7. Our performance is summarised below:

	Quarter 1 (1 April – 30 June 2020)	Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 Sept 2020) Targets/ Milestones revised for Q2 onwards	Quarter 3 (1 October – 31 December 2020) By exception	Expected Year End (to 31 st March 2021)
Green	19	24	8	27*
Amber	13	11	7	8
Red	3	0	0	0
Grey (not reported)	0	0	20	0
Total	35	35	35	35

*Green measures include those in this quarter's exception reports predicted green at year end

8. The Board is requested to scrutinise the performance report, noting the following:
 - Much of our work relies on partners who have quite rightly needed to redirect their work as a result of Covid-19. This includes for example, our work with Welsh Government in several areas, and assessment for the Gold Corporate Health Standard.
 - Many of our staff have home schooling and caring responsibilities and as many as possible are still working at home.

9. Below we have briefly highlighted the findings from this report by Strategic Priority: details can be found in the report itself.

Responding to the climate emergency

- **Climate emergency action across NRW** is now rated **Green**: our requirement for this Quarter was to report on tonnes of carbon used in relation to our buildings and business travel. By the end of Q3 we had used 1,339 tCO₂e compared to 2,171 tCO₂e by the same point last year. This 38% reduction is due in part to reduced travel and increased home working during this year. We are further developing our plans to decarbonise our fleet, the built estate and procurement. We will also plan to use CoP26 in Glasgow to stimulate further climate action in Wales, particularly using Nature Based Solutions. We are currently on track to continue to be **Green** by year end.
- **Action undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands** is now rated **Green**. The first of four contracts to undertake a **survey to develop an evidence based approach to managing deep peat on the NRW managed woodland estate** has been awarded, with the remaining contracts being let by the end of January. The National Peatland Action Plan was officially launched by Lesley Griffiths MS at the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Forum on the 27th November. We will now continue to issue specifications and manage various groundworks and survey contracts and expect to continue to be **Green** by year end.
- **Maintaining flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition** continues to be rated **Amber**. We aim to maintain **98%** at target condition. We are at **97.1%** at the end of Q3, up from 96.7% for Q2. Current projections are that if all planned work progresses well, we will be close to the year-end target of **98%** and we may achieve Green. However, we are continuing to report a projected year-end **Amber** position as there may be Covid-19 related or other delays, as well as ongoing inspections giving rise to more assets identified as below required condition.

Responding to the nature emergency

- Progress in closing Corrective Action Requests (CARs) and observations (Obs) against our **most recent UKWAS audit** is currently **Green**. We completed closure of all 2019 CARs. Following the 2020 audit we have 1 Major CAR, 4 Minor CARs and 7 Obs. open at the end of this reporting period. We are disappointed with the major CAR in particular but we have fewer CARs and Obs. than after the 2019 audit so we continue to improve. Our key activities for the upcoming period are closing the CARs and Obs. arising from 2020 audit and preparation for the 2021 audit. We expect to be **Green** at year end.
- **Progress on our support for Welsh Government on Green Infrastructure** in urban areas is currently **Amber**. Our milestone activity for this period was to review guidance and advice. However, we have not completed this as we were not able to consult all

local authorities in Q3. We consulted planning authorities in January 2021, with the aim of finalising the guidance and getting it ready for dissemination by the end of March. We are currently on track to meet this and expect to be **Green** at year end.

- **Number of Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigations completed** is now rated **Green**. Our target for this quarter was for 151 (302 cumulative) investigations completed. We have completed 88 investigations this quarter to give a cumulative total of 345 over the year so far. Our target for year end is to complete a cumulative total of 505 investigations. We are currently on track, providing further Covid-19 restrictions do not impact on our work plan. As there is some uncertainty, we currently expect to be **Amber** at year end.
- **Progress of work to reduce pollution from metal mines** is currently **Amber**. Our milestone for this period was delivering pilot trials. All pilot trials for those projects proceeding have been delivered: we have a detailed programme of 17 projects with work progressing on all of them. However, there will be slippage due to this year's pandemic constraints and knock on effects, particularly with achieving permissions from land owners and local authorities. We will progress projects as much as possible – however we currently expect to be **Amber** at year end.

Developing and using our evidence with partners to advocate for and deliver SMNR

- **Creating a shared vision for the natural environment for 2050, building on our work for Green Recovery** is rated **Green** for this Quarter. We have completed final reports on the Green Recovery response to Covid-19, publishing two reports on our website at the beginning of December: Green Recovery - Priorities for Action and Green Recovery - Supporting the environmental sector in Wales. The Task and Finish Group has agreed to continue working together as a Green Recovery Delivery Partnership. Our year end milestone activity is to **begin initial 2050 Vision engagement sessions**. In view of Covid-19, we are reconsidering our timeline for engagement, which we will need to extend. Because of this, we currently expect we will be **Amber** at year end.

Developing NRW into an excellent organisation that serves the communities of Wales

- Our **response to 'high category' incidents within four hours** is currently **Amber**. We achieved 87% against a target of 95% in Quarter 3, down very slightly from 89% in Quarter 2. The overall trend over the last year has been upwards but has dropped slightly in the last quarter. There are ongoing pressures on incident management teams, with Covid-19 and EU Exit issues adding to incident workloads. We will continue to push for improvements in Quarter 4 and we expect performance to be **Amber** at year end.

- **Developing our approach to engaging and working with stakeholders** is currently **Amber**, with the summary of our State of Natural Resources Report going live on the website in December and a stakeholder launch and wider communications activity planned for January. Ongoing Covid-19 restrictions have required work reprioritisation and pausing of some external engagement. We currently expect we will be **Amber** at year end.
- Our **Number of employee near misses and lost time incidents recorded** measure is currently at **Amber**. There have been 48 employee near misses (compared with 63 in the same period 19/20) and 0 lost time incidents (compared with 1 in the same period 19/20). Reduced field/site work and reduced occupancy in offices means that it is difficult to compare directly with figures from last year. Our Wellbeing Health & Safety engagement packs will focus on the near miss reporting data and reiterate the need to report any incidents and near misses, especially at home. We currently expect to be **Amber** at the end of the year.
- Our **grant funding work** is currently rated at **Amber**. We have distributed grants via our Strategic Allocated Funds and Shared Outcome Requests funding mechanisms. We are in the process of transforming the grants team and we have an interim solution for the meantime. Whilst we are progressing this work, we currently expect we will be **Amber** at year end.

Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK Leaving the European Union, taking opportunities for a green recovery

NRW's contribution following EU Exit: this work is currently **Green**. We have worked closely with Welsh Government on the new duties to come to NRW and what this means in terms of our preparations, additional resource and skills needs. These new duties will transition into business as usual work over the medium and longer term. We continue to engage on the new oversight body: from January 1st 2021 we expect a significant number of complaints to come to NRW in the interim, requiring resource and expertise to resolve. We will review the details of the 24th December EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement to help NRW prepare for the changes ahead. We anticipate a significant increase in WG and UK Government consultations over the coming months and years. We will provide a further update next Quarter and currently expect to be **Green** at year end.

- Our **progress of NRW's preparedness for any potential incidents or issues following EU Exit** continues to be **Green**. Whilst the imminent risks that would have been associated with a No Deal EU Exit scenario did not materialise, there are risks that may still materialise and these are being tracked and managed. We currently expect to be **Green** at year end and we will continue with our preparedness activities and do not foresee major obstacles.

- Our measure for **implementing the Covid-19 Renewal programme is Green**. We have undertaken significant discovery work, including sessions with the staff engagement group, a customer survey, horizons scanning exercise and lessons learned survey. We will now be working through the draft recommendations to identify implications for staff and customers. We will then be beginning to implement the recommendations and currently expect we will be **Green** at year end.

10. The Quarter 4 End of Year performance reporting round will take place in April for submission to the Executive Team in June and to the July NRW Board. This will be a full report on all measures showing our position at the end of 20/21. This final Quarter's work will be critical in delivering our 20/21 Business Plan.

Recommendation

11. The Board is requested to scrutinise and agree the performance report for Quarter three prior to publication.

Key Risks

12. If the performance information provided does not accurately reflect progress towards delivery of the Business Plan, then the Board will be unable to fulfil their role to scrutinise NRW's delivery.
13. If we are affected by Covid-19, the implications of EU Exit and extreme weather events, staff may be completely overstretched, and we will have reduced capacity to respond. A more streamlined report for Quarter 3 has helped release some staff time to deal with these issues.

Next Steps

14. The performance report will be submitted to the Minister of Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs and it will be published on the Natural Resources Wales website.

Financial Implications

15. There are no significant financial implications in providing the performance report itself, however part of our quarterly review obviously considers allocation of our resources and the finance and performance papers are therefore closely linked.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

16. The relevant equality impact assessment covers our Well-being Statement, Business Plan 2020/21 and Corporate Plan up to 2022, and was updated in March 2020.

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Annex 1 – Quarter 3 Business Plan Performance Dashboard by Exception

Annex 1: Business Plan dashboard - to Q3 2020/21

Respond to the Climate Emergency

Latest	Measure	Year end	Page
Green	Climate emergency action across NRW	Green	5
Green	Verification of Glastir Woodland Creation grant scheme applications	Green	N/A
Green	Area of new woodland created on the NRW Estate	Green	N/A
Green	Actions undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands	Green	6
Green	Complete Natural Resources Wales' review of winter storms	Green	N/A
Amber	Maintain flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition	Amber	7

Respond to the Nature Emergency

Green	Biodiversity action across NRW	Green	N/A
Green	Priority actions undertaken on protected sites to improve condition of features	Green	N/A
Green	Actions undertaken on National Nature Reserves on NRW managed land to improve	Green	N/A
Green	Delivering targeted action for declining species or those on the edge of extinction	Green	N/A
Green	Number of UKWAS Corrective Action Requests and Observations open and progress...	Green	9
Amber	Support for Welsh Government on Green Infrastructure and advice on using Area Statements	Green	10
Green	Implement the Welsh National Marine Plan	Green	N/A
Green	Progress of Marine Protected Area network management actions	Green	N/A
Green	Number of Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigations completed	Amber	11
Amber	Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines	Amber	12
Green	Performance of regulated industrial, waste sites, and water quality discharges	Green	N/A

Developing and using our evidence with partners to advocate for and deliver SMNR

Latest	Measure	Year end	Page
Green	Delivery of the programme to create a shared vision for the natural environment for 2050...	Amber	14
Green	Publish State of Natural Resources Report 2	Green	N/A
Green	Use of Area Statements within NRW	Green	N/A

Developing NRW into an excellent organisation that serves the communities of Wales

Green	Incident Assessment (within 1 hour)	Green	N/A
Amber	Response to 'High category' incidents (within 4 hours)	Amber	16
Amber	Develop our approach to engaging and working with stakeholders	Amber	17
Green	Support Welsh Government's Tourism Action Plan by promoting...	Green	N/A
Green	Develop our NRW workforce plan, progressing priority actions	Green	N/A
Green	Review our Equality Impact Assessment process	Green	N/A
Green	Progress towards Corporate Health Gold Standard	Green	N/A
Amber	Number of employee near misses and lost time incidents	Amber	18
Green	Progress customer programme – increasing customer involvement	Green	N/A
Amber	Review and define all funding mechanisms available to NRW, ensuring alignment	Amber	19
Green	Publish NRW Commercial Strategy	Green	N/A
Green	Timber volume offered to market/sold/dispached	Green	N/A

Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK leaving the EU taking opportunities for a green recovery

Green	NRW's contribution following EU Exit	Green	21
Green	Progress of NRW's preparedness for any potential incidents or issues following EU Exit	Green	22
Green	Implement Covid-19 Renewal programme	Green	23

Key to Red / Amber / Green performance assessment: [see page 24](#). For this report, 'Latest' reflects the position to Q3, other than for greyed out lines, which reflect the position to Q2. 'Year end' reflects expected position for all measures.

Priorities and Topics: We have structured our [NRW Business Plan](#) around five priorities and 21 topics. This report to Q3 summarises performance in relation to the measure/s, following a quick introduction of each. Direct topic links below:

Respond to the Climate Emergency	Respond to the Nature Emergency	Developing and using our evidence...	Developing NRW into an excellent organisation...	Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic...
Reducing Our Carbon Footprint (page 4)	Putting Nature at the Centre	Creating a Shared Vision for Natural Environment for 2050 (page 13)	Responding to and Managing Incidents (page 15)	Providing Advice and Guidance (page 20)
Creating New Woodland	Protecting Habitats and Species...	Improving and presenting evidence...	Benefitting Communities (page 15)	Being Ready for Change (page 20)
Restoring Peatland (page 4)	Managing Land Sustainably (page 8)	Work with Partners and communities using Area Statements	Developing our Organisation	
Managing Flood Risk (page 4)	Managing the Sea Sustainably		Well-being, Health and Safety (page 15)	
	Improving Water Quality (page 8)		Focussing on Customers (page 15)	
	Controlling Pollution (page 8)		Making the Most of Commercial Opportunities	

All greyed out Topics above are not reflected in this report to Q3. They will be part of this report again for Q4.

Priority: Respond to the Climate Emergency

Topic - Reducing our Carbon Footprint

- **Measure - Climate emergency action across NRW:** The measure will help us understand how we're doing to meet the 2030 carbon neutral ambition for the public sector, and in delivering our role as exemplar and support body for the wider public sector. The measure includes reporting on actions undertaken to reduce our carbon footprint in our buildings and transport and that we need to develop our carbon reporting in light of emerging Welsh Government guidance.

Topic - Restoring Peatland

- **Measure - Actions undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands:** This measure reflects actions taken to restore Welsh peatlands across Wales, including on the NRW estate (the Welsh Government Woodland Estate and National Nature Reserves directly managed by NRW). The peatlands of Wales support an outstanding biodiversity resource. The 90,995 ha of deep peat (with 11,345 ha on the NRW estate) also play an important role in regulating greenhouse gas emissions, with the peat profiles comprising our most important store of carbon nationally. Degraded peat is a source of current greenhouse gas emissions. We are embarking on a national programme of peatland restoration across Wales to ensure their ongoing sustainable management and in order to safeguard and recover their critical biodiversity resource, store carbon, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and ensure that Welsh peatlands play their important role as a component of Natural Flood Risk Management in Wales.

Topic - Managing Flood Risk

Measure - Maintain flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition: NRW owns and maintains over 3,900 flood risk assets which form part of the national flood defence infrastructure and provide benefit to 73,000 properties in Wales. As well as reducing the risk to life and providing protection to property and vital infrastructure, they also provide protection to several nationally and internationally designated sites such as SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest), SACs (Special Areas of Conservation) and SPAs (Special Protection Areas). It is vitally important that these assets are maintained and perform to their required condition. This measure is for the assets in our high-risk systems being at target condition. A system is typically a sub-catchment or stretch of river, and a poor condition asset anywhere within the system can impact that location – it is only as good as its weakest link. Our target is 98%; reflecting the impact of winter storms on our asset stock, and some repairs will take months to deliver.

Measure: Climate emergency action across NRW

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was to **report on tonnes of carbon in relation to our buildings / business travel**. This has been completed and we have used 1,339 tCO₂e by the end of Q3 2020 compared to 2,171 tCO₂e by the end 2019 which is a 38% reduction mainly due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- Mitigation measures undertaken include embedding consideration of carbon into procurement for two large contracts; commissioning detailed energy surveys and a costed pathway to low carbon for our main buildings; developing a business case for EV charging infrastructure; and enabling decarbonisation in SE Wales through delivering workshops and training for Climate Ready Gwent.
- On adaptation, NRW has been leading UK collaboration to develop a suite of Nature-based Solution (NbS) case studies and completion of a European-level summary of barriers to NbS delivery to inform our contribution to CoP26.

What we are doing next

- We are working to further develop our plans to decarbonise fleet, the built estate and embedding decarbonisation in procurement. Ongoing research will inform an options paper for carbon literacy training and action on behaviour change. We will develop plans for utilising CoP26 in Glasgow to stimulate further climate action in Wales, particularly NbS. Our year end milestone activity is to **report on implementation of the programme**. We are currently on track to meet this.

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins / Rhian Jardine

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Actions undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was to **commence survey to develop an evidence based approach to managing deep peat on the NRW managed woodland estate**. The first of four contracts to commence this work has been awarded with the remaining being let by the end of January.
- The National Peatland Action Plan was officially launched by Lesley Griffiths MS at the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Forum on the 27th November as part of the National Peatland Action Programme.

What we are doing next

- We will now continue to issue specifications and manage various groundworks and survey contracts.
- Our year end milestone activity is to have **up to 70% of programmed groundworks delivered through NRW direct delivery on NRW managed estate and up to 50% of the activities of partners**. We are currently on track to meet this. We currently expect we will be Green at year end.

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins / Dominic Driver

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Green	Amber	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Maintain flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our target for this measure is to maintain **98%** of flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition
- We are at 97.1% for Q3, up from the Q2 performance of 96.7%. The number of assets Below Required Condition (BRC) has decreased during Q3 from 110 to 101. To reach the target, we need to have no more than 70 assets Below Required Condition.

What we are doing next

- We have been implementing the action plan agreed by NRW Board (March 2020), following the Deep Dive into this measure. We have already seen improvements as a result of this work and will continue to work closely with the Operational teams to improve performance in line with the action plan.
- We are continuing to work on data quality improvements to make sure we are using the best available data to represent the condition of our Flood Risk Management assets, and this work will continue in Q4.
- We have developed our processes for understanding the flood risk consequences of BRC assets, so we can focus available resources on higher flooding consequence assets first. We will trial this process in Q4.
- Current projections are that if all planned work progresses well then we will be close to the year-end target of **98%** and we may even achieve Green. However, we can expect that there may be Covid-19-related or other delays and so we are continuing to report a projected year-end Amber position. In addition, there is always the likelihood that ongoing inspections may result in further BRC assets.

Measure owner/s: Jeremy Parr / Mike Evans

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Priority: Respond to the Nature Emergency

Topic – Managing Land Sustainably

- **Measure - Number of UK Woodland Assurance Standard (UKWAS) Major Corrective Action Requests (CARs), Minor CARs and Observations (Obs.) open on NRW managed land from most recent annual audit and progress in closing them:** Being certified to UKWAS shows we sustainably manage the Welsh Government Woodland Estate reaching Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) and Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) international standards. It means we can certify our forest products; we produce 60% of Wales' timber. Wales' state forests have been certified to UKWAS since 2001 and we aim to keep it that way. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) awarded the UK a “Gift to the Earth” for being the first country in the world to achieve certification of all its state forests.
- **Measure - Progress on our support for Welsh Government on Green Infrastructure in urban areas, developing guidance to help the production of Green Infrastructure Assessments (GIA) and advice on using Area Statements during the Local Development Plan making process:** Welsh Government's (WG) Natural Resources Policy, PPW (Planning Policy Wales) 10 and the draft National Development Framework identify Green Infrastructure as a key mechanism to deliver nature based solutions and multiple benefits. We are working with WG to develop guidance and best practice in relation to Green infrastructure, informed by our area statement evidence and key themes, to inform local green infrastructure assessments and their integration with the National Development Framework and Local Development Plans.

Topic – Improving Water Quality

- **Measure - Number of Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigations completed based on number required at start of year; this is this year's contribution to a multi-year target:** The objective of the Water Framework Directive is to aim to achieve good status in water bodies over 3 six-year cycles. River Basin Management Plans, set out a programme of local and strategic measures and investigations, and an ambition of 5% improvement to good status by 2021.

Topic – Controlling Pollution

- **Measure - Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines:** This measure reflects progress with the assessment and remediation of high risk sites, in line with our Metal Mine Strategy.

Measure: Number of UKWAS Major Corrective Action Requests (CARs), Minor CARs and Observations open on NRW managed land from most recent audit against UKWAS (UK Woodland Assurance Standard) and progress in closing them

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our key aim for this period was to close CARs and Observations (Obs.) arising from 2019 UKWAS audit and for fewer of these to be opened at the 2020 audit.
- We completed closure of all 2019 CARs. Following the 2020 audit we have 1 Major CAR, 4 Minor CARs and 7 Obs. open at the end of this reporting period. We are disappointed with the major CAR in particular, but we have fewer CARs and Obs. after the 2019 audit so we continue to improve.

What are we doing next

- Our key activities for the upcoming period is closing the CARs and Obs. arising from 2020 audit and preparation for the 2021 audit.
- We are also learning lessons from the 2020 audit for how we further embed UKWAS in our work on the NRW Estate.

Measure owner/s: Dominic Driver

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status (for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Progress on our support for Welsh Government on Green Infrastructure in urban areas, developing guidance to help the production of Green Infrastructure Assessments (GIA) and advice on using Area Statements during the Local Development Plan making process

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was to **review guidance and advice**.
- We have not completed this activity as we were not able to consult all local authorities in Q3
- We have produced a new version of the guidance document which has incorporated comments from the expert group, relevant Evidence Policy and Permitting staff and a small number of local authorities who were consulted informally during Q2

What we are doing next

- We will consult planning authorities on the guidance in January 2021, with the aim of finalising the guidance and getting it ready for dissemination by the end of March.
- Our year end milestone activity is to **sign off and disseminate new guidance and advice**. We are currently on track to meet this. We currently expect we will be Green at year end.

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins / Rhian Jardine

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Green	Amber	Amber	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Number of Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigations completed based on number required at start of year; this is this year's contribution to a multi-year target

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our target for this quarter was for **151 (302 cumulative)** Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigations completed
- We have achieved this by meeting the cumulative target. We have completed 88 investigations to give a cumulative total of 345 investigations.
- Completed investigations included water quality, physical chemistry and biology, and some expert judgement assessments.

What are we doing next

- We will now concentrate on more physical chemistry and biology investigations and some mitigation measures, more expert judgement assessments and some marine investigations for Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen. Some other investigations require outputs from the 2021 classification when completed.
- Our target for this measure in the next reporting period is **203 (505 cumulative)** investigations completed. We are currently on track to meet a significant proportion of the target providing further Covid-19 restrictions do not impact on our work plan. Further planning is required to meet all of the target. As there is some uncertainty we currently expect we will be Amber at year end.

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins / Sian Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Red	Green	Green	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was **Delivering pilot trials**
- We have a detailed programme of 17 projects with work progressing on all of them. All pilot trials for those projects proceeding are being delivered. Steps to continue work within the Government Covid-19 precautions and within Health and Safety aspects of the work have been implemented. Where funding was not required this financial year, excess monies have been handed back. We have bedded in the assistance from Project Delivery and the Coal Authority as planned, and have re-assessed the risks of each project given the effects of the pandemic (primarily slower planning decisions from Local Authorities) to re-profile our work. We have engaged with WG to identify future work in order to bid for the supporting Capex finance.

What we are doing next

- Our year end milestone is **assessing additional sites and catchments to provide a future programme.**
- There will be slippage in delivering all projects due to this year's pandemic constraints and the knock on effects particularly with achieving permissions from land owners and local authorities for work on particular sites. Work has commenced on most projects, with a small number slipping into next year. Our longer term programme is with Welsh Government for approval and expect confirmation of the funding early in Q4. We currently expect we will be Amber at year end primarily as we have reduced the programme in line of the delays that were outside of NRW's control (e.g. Local Authority permissions).

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins / Sian Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Priority: Developing and using our evidence with partners to advocate for and deliver SMNR

Topic – Creating a Shared Vision for Natural Environment for 2050

- **Measure - Delivery of the programme to create a shared vision for the natural environment for 2050, building on our work for Green Recovery**: This measure reflects progress in relation to the milestones achieved in developing a shared vision for the natural environment for 2050. The vision will play an important role in developing a shared understanding across Wales of the value and importance of our natural resources and drive action by everyone. The Climate and Nature emergencies underline the importance of this work. The vision will draw on socio-economic scenarios to illustrate how the use and management of natural resources in Wales in 2050 may change, and on the range of opportunities for action to drive multiple benefits.

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Measure: Delivery of the programme to create a shared vision for the natural environment for 2050, building on our work for Green Recovery

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our work on creating a shared vision for the natural environment and our milestone activity for this period was to **complete the final report on the Green Recovery response to Covid-19**. We have completed this milestone with two reports published on our website at the beginning of December related to:- 1) Green Recovery- Priorities for Action; 2) Green Recovery - Supporting the environmental sector in Wales. The Task and Finish Group, chaired by Sir David Henshaw, has agreed to continue working together through the formation of a Green Recovery Delivery Partnership and the set-up of a delivery office to support the development of and delivery of projects.
- We have also progressed our Vision 2050 work: Advisory Group meetings were held in October and December. We are developing our approach to stakeholder involvement via the web and have received grant funding from the Arts Council for Wales for a project that will help involve new audiences and collect new perspectives on nature and the environment, in partnership with National Theatre Wales and the cultural organisation Gentle / Radical.

What we are doing next

- Our year end milestone activity is to **begin initial 2050 Vision engagement sessions**. In view of Covid-19 and the January 2021 lockdown we are reconsidering our timeline for engagement.
- We currently expect we will be Amber at year end.

Measure owner/s: Sarah Williams

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Green	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status (for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Priority: Developing NRW into an excellent organisation that serves the communities of Wales

Topic – Responding to and Managing Incidents

- **Measure - Response to 'High category' incidents (within 4 hours):** For incidents we class as High Level (using our Incident Categorisation Guidance criteria), we aim to respond within four hours of being notified. This is to ensure we prioritise our efforts on the high impact incidents, and we act within a suitable timeframe to minimise harm and impact. Response may include physical attendance at the site, but also includes other activities, such as contacting professional partners.

Topic – Benefitting Communities

- **Measure - Develop our approach to engaging and working with stakeholders – both new stakeholders and those we know well:** Our relationships with stakeholders and partners are increasingly important as we aim to deliver better environmental outcomes through increased collaboration and closer working with communities of all kinds.

Topic – Ensuring Everyone's Well-being, Health and Safety

- **Measure - Number of near misses and lost time incidents:** This measure reflects the culture of the organisation - the principle being the more staff feel confident and able to report near misses the more likely we are to avoid more serious incidents because we will apply lessons from those near misses and as a result of this Lost Time Incidents decrease.

Topic – Focussing on Customers

- **Measure - Review and define all funding mechanisms available to NRW, ensuring alignment with our Grants Policy and focussing on customer needs:** The funding mechanisms available to NRW must be clearly defined and understood to ensure effective project and programme management that meets the needs of internal and external customers.

Measure: Response to 'High category' incidents (within 4 hours)

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our target for this measure is response to **95%** of 'High category' incidents within four hours.
- We achieved 87% in Q3, down very slightly from 89% in Q2. The overall trend over the last year has been upwards but has dropped slightly in the last quarter.

What we are doing next

- Performance information and support continues to be provided to reporting officers to promote accurate and timely reporting. This is requiring sustained effort to check records and chase non-reporting gaps. Through training and support we continue to drive for performance improvements such that timely and accurate reporting becomes the norm across all teams.
- We have made improvements to the Wales Incident Recording System (WIRS) to simplify the recording of response, with staff guidance produced and circulated. Awareness and use of these improvements will continue to be promoted.
- Whilst we have made improvements to systems and processes and performance has risen, we have also initiated a project to identify the further reasons behind performance issues and determine what steps can be taken to improve performance in the longer term and reduce reliance on checking records and chasing performance gaps.
- This measure is not cumulative and so depends on performance in the quarter. There are ongoing pressures on incident management teams, with Covid-19 and EU Exit adding to incident workloads. We will continue to push for improvements in Q4 but expect performance to be Amber at year end.

Measure owner/s: Lyndsey Rawlinson / Jeremy Parr

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Develop our approach to engaging and working with stakeholders – both new stakeholders and those we know well

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was to **Support the launch of Summary SoNaRR and secure increased advocacy through current and new partner channels**. We have partially completed this activity, in that Phase 1 went live on the website on 18 December.
- We have planned a stakeholder launch and wider communications activity for the 27 January, including media briefing, partner contributions, opinion editorials, case-studies and other activities.

What we are doing next

- We will now build in SoNaRR key messaging into other stakeholder work, e.g. Vision2050, Corporate Plan.
- The draft Customer Experience and Engagement strategy is going to Board for approval in January, to begin implementation during Q4.
- Our year end milestone activity is to **Undertake review of stakeholder perception via survey; appraisal of media coverage and advocacy; and evaluation of consultation feedback**. We are currently on track to partially meet this. We currently expect we will be Amber at year end, because the ongoing COVID restrictions are meaning that we are reprioritising work across the organisation and pausing some external engagement (e.g. Vision 2050) because of concerns that it would not land well.

Measure owner/s: Catrin Hornung

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Number of employee near misses and lost time incidents

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- This measure is currently assessed as amber as the number of near misses reported have decreased due to Covid-19 (with reduced field/site work being undertaken and with offices having reduced occupancy). Staff are encouraged to work from home due to recent firebreak and further lockdown. Whilst public areas of interest have now re-opened the number has increased slightly due to the lockdown measures being relaxed.
- There have been 48 employee near misses (compared with 63 in the same period 19/20) and 0 lost time incidents (compared with 1 in the same period 19/20).

What we are doing next

- We will continue to report the number of employee near misses and lost time incidents next period.
- Further communication to staff and line managers with the emphasis on the importance of incident and near misses reporting.
- Wellbeing health and safety engagement packs will focus on the near miss reporting data and to reiterate the need to report any incidents and near misses, especially at home.
- We currently expect we will be Amber at the end of the year, as a Tier 4 lockdown is currently in place.

Measure owner/s: Steve Burton

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Red	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status (for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Review and define all funding mechanisms available to NRW, ensuring alignment with our Grants Policy and focussing on customer needs

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was to **Provide update on Grants awarded.**
- Update on Strategic Allocated Funds (SAF):
 - Afonydd Cymru Capital Grant. Two claims have been paid with a third currently being processed.
 - Afonydd Cymru Alternative Mitigation. An award letter will be sent in the New Year with first payment in Q4.
 - Peatland Capital Grant. Brecon Beacons National Park Authority have submitted a claim: Snowdonia's is due
 - Public Services Boards (PSB) Grant (£25k per PSB) award letters were sent out in Nov/Dec
 - We are liaising with environmental NGO partners to address grant queries and impacts of Covid-19.
- Update on Shared Outcome Requests (SOR):
 - 32 Shared Outcomes Requests Grants have been awarded for this year and for the next 4 years.
 - 13 SORs are undergoing assessment totalling. Covid-19 impacts/resource may lead to underspend with these.

What we are doing next

- The grants team will be transformed and recruited to as approved by ET.
- We have agreed an interim solution while the Grants Team is transformed that involves employing contractors to ensure we can respond to year end grants monitoring and accruals requirements.
- Our year end milestone activity is to **report on progress of funding mechanisms undergoing process improvement and provide further update on the Grants awarded.** We are currently on track to partially meet this. We currently expect we will be Amber at year end

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Green	Amber	Amber	Amber

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Priority: Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK Leaving the European Union, taking opportunities for a green recovery

Topic – Providing Advice and Guidance

- **Measure - NRW's contribution following EU Exit including milestones on: i. Transfer of functions; ii. Environmental Principles, governance and the new oversight body; iii. New legislation (development of Agriculture and Fisheries Bills):** NRW must respond effectively to developing issues and changes for advice and guidance to staff, customers and stakeholders. To support our operations, policy and regulatory work it is essential that NRW maintains and updates advice and guidance effectively in response to issues and changes following EU exit. This will support effective customer engagement and enforcement and regulation of permits, licences, certificates and exemptions and support our wider role and remit in the pursuit of SMNR and Well-being of Future Generations.

Topic – Being Ready for Change

- **Measure - Progress of NRW's preparedness for any potential incidents or issues following EU Exit:** This measure specifically focusses on the incident response work we need to undertake as an organisation to plan and prepare NRW for what may happen as a result of the UK leaving the EU and the end of the transition period, which will occur on 31st December 2020. We are managing this through implementing the actions from Exercise Trident, managing our Covid-19 Risk Register and the incidents risk on our Strategic Risk Register. For EU exit specifically, we are ensuring our internal policies and procedures are in place to allow us to manage this as an incident if required, including using our business continuity planning tools and processes. We are liaising with external partners through the Local Resilience Fora.
- **Measure - Implement Covid-19 Renewal programme:** We have structures and governance in place to manage the Covid-19 response and recovery, including opportunities for green recovery and improved ways we might work within NRW in the future. This is a new measure introduced from Q2 which will update how we are progressing this work.

Measure: NRW's contribution following EU Exit including milestones on: Transfer of functions; Environmental Principles, governance and the new oversight body, and; New legislation (development of Agriculture and Fisheries Bills)

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone for this reporting period was to **provide an update** on NRW's contribution following EU Exit
- We have worked closely with Welsh Government (WG) to gain information on new duties to come to NRW and what this means in terms of our preparations, additional resource and skills needs. These new duties will transition into business as usual work to support our Corporate Plan over the medium and longer term. We continue to engage with WG and Devolved Administrations on the new oversight body and from January 1st 2021 expect a significant number of complaints to come to NRW in the interim, requiring resource and expertise to resolve.

What we are doing next

- On the 24th December the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement was confirmed. We will review the details of this agreement and the key areas of work and risks to be managed to help NRW prepare for the changes ahead. We anticipate a significant increase in WG and UK Government consultations over the coming months and years.
- Next period we will **provide an update**.
- We currently expect we will be Green at year end.

Measure owner/s: Ruth Jenkins / Isobel Moore

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status (for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Progress of NRW's preparedness for any potential incidents or issues following EU Exit

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our internal Strategic and Tactical Incident Response Groups have continued to provide oversight and co-ordination, and work through issues and risks we have encountered or identified.
- We have continued to maintain our additional incident response rotas to support attendance at multi-agency partner meetings (Strategic and Tactical), and also commenced the daily shared situational awareness reporting from 28 December, as requested by Welsh Government.
- Whilst the imminent risks that would have been associated with a No Deal EU Exit scenario did not materialise, there are risks that may still materialise with EU Exit and these are being tracked and managed.
- We are in Response mode, but our Recovery planning being worked on concurrently and is ongoing.

What we are doing next

- We will continue with the Response activities and structures until they can be stood down, continue with our planning and response to medium and long term EU Exit risks and continue with our planning for Recovery.
- We currently expect we will be Green at year end, in that we will continue with our preparedness activities and do not foresee major obstacles to our preparedness. However, as response is a dynamic activity depending on unfolding circumstances, there is always the potential for our response performance to be stretched beyond our capacity.

Measure owner/s: Jeremy Parr / Lyndsey Rawlinson

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
Green	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Measure: Implement Covid-19 Renewal programme

Latest position (to end of December 2020):

- Our milestone activity for this period was to **explore and identify opportunities arising from Covid-19 impacts on NRW.**
- We have undertaken significant discovery work, including sessions with the staff engagement group, a customer survey, horizons scanning exercise and lessons learned survey.
- We have identified a series of draft high level recommendations and indicative deliverables required to support them.

What we are doing next

- We will now be working through the draft recommendations with the Renewal Programme Board and the programme workstreams to identify what implication they will have on staff and customers
- Our year end milestone activity is to **begin to implement recommendations.** We are currently on track to meet this. We currently expect we will be Green.

Measure owner/s: Martin Parkinson

Q1	to Q2	to Q3	Expected year end
	Green	Green	Green

See [here](#) for key used for Red / Amber / Green status
(for all Business Plan dashboard measure reports)

Key: Red / Amber / Green ratings

The detail of how the Red / Amber / Green (RAG) measure status is determined for each measure in our Business Plan dashboard is shown below. We typically use a common RAG approach for each measure type (e.g. milestones or numeric targets). We only depart from this common RAG approach where necessary, for the specific measure being considered (e.g. using more specific RAG tolerances for numeric targets to be a fair reflection of performance, and to ensure alignment with long-standing performance reporting approaches for these).

Each quarter we report both a current position, and a year end expected position. The reported year end expected position is based on our measure leads' expert knowledge around the activity area. This typically includes reflection around action being undertaken, current or emerging issues and various categories of risk. As a result, during the year, the reported year end position is clearly subject to significant uncertainty in many cases, with this also being dependent on the nature of the individual measure being considered.

Some measures have no pre-set RAG categorisation in place. This is often the case for measures that are new/emerging work areas, or where a pre-set RAG approach would not make sense. RAG ratings for these measures are therefore based on a common-sense reflection approach in year – i.e. a fair reflection of the position at that time.

N.B. Reduced measure reporting set currently in place for Q3 – i.e. items below. Q4 report will reflect the full set.

Respond to the Climate Emergency

Page	Measure	Type	Red is...	Amber is...	Green is...
5	Climate emergency action across NRW	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete
6	Actions undertaken to restore Welsh peatlands	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete

				completed a month later than planned)	
7	Maintain flood risk assets in high risk systems at target condition	Numeric	Figure / target not achieved.	Within 30% of figure / target	98% (with integer rounding, i.e. $\geq 97.5\%$ would be green)

Respond to the Nature Emergency

Page	Measure	Type	Red	Amber	Green
9	Number of UKWAS Corrective Action Requests and Observations open and progress closing them	Numeric	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Red rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Amber rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Green rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position
10	Support for Welsh Government on Green Infrastructure and advice on using Area Statements	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete
11	Number of Water Framework Directive (WFD) investigations completed	Numeric	Figure / target not achieved.	Within 30% of figure / target	Figure / target effectively achieved.

12	Progress of our work to reduce pollution from metal mines	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete
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Developing and using our evidence with partners to advocate for and deliver SMNR

Page	Measure	Type	Red	Amber	Green
14	Delivery of the programme to create a shared vision for the natural environment for 2050	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete

Developing NRW into an excellent organisation that serves the communities of Wales

Page	Measure	Type	Red	Amber	Green
16	Response to 'High category' incidents (within 4 hours)	Numeric	Figure / target not achieved.	Within 30% of figure / target	95% (with integer rounding, i.e. $\geq 94.5\%$ would be green)
17	Develop our approach to engaging and working with stakeholders	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete
18	Number of employee near misses and lost time incidents	Numeric trend	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place,	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e.	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e.

			i.e. common-sense approach to Red rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	common-sense approach to Amber rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	common-sense approach to Green rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position
19	Review and define all funding mechanisms available to NRW, ensuring alignment	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete

Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic and the UK Leaving the European Union, taking opportunities for a green recovery

Page	Measure	Type	Red	Amber	Green
21	NRW's contribution following EU Exit	Text update	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Red rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Amber rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Green rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position
22	Progress of NRW's preparedness for any potential incidents or issues following EU Exit	Text update	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Red rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Amber rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position	No pre-set Red / Amber / Green rating approach in place, i.e. common-sense approach to Green rating applies, focused on fair reflection of position

23	Implement Covid-19 Renewal programme	Milestone	Activity reflected in milestone is not near completion	Activity reflected in milestone is near complete (e.g. expected to be completed a month later than planned)	Activity reflected in milestone is effectively complete
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DRAFT

Paper title:	Proposed changes to the Statutory and Legal Scheme (SaLS)
Paper Reference:	21-03-B08
Paper sponsored by:	Clare Pillman, Chief Executive Officer
Paper Presented by:	Colette Fletcher, Head of Governance & Board Secretary
Purpose of the paper	To seek approval for proposed changes to the Statutory and Legal Scheme (SaLS)
Recommendation	To approve the proposed changes to the Statutory and Legal Scheme (SaLS)

Issue

1. This paper presents for approval proposed changes to the Statutory and Legal Scheme (SaLS) from the business boards, which address gaps in coverage that were identified during the annual review 2020-21.

Background

2. When the Statutory and Legal Scheme (SaLS, the non-financial scheme of delegation) was introduced in September 2019 we committed to an annual review to ensure its accuracy and currency.
3. In September 2020 each of the business boards were asked to review their sections of the SaLS and their recommendations were then discussed by the Head of Governance & Board Secretary and the Head of Legal Services. Once any clarification or modifications were agreed, the finalised recommendations were sent to the CEO for approval. Our procedures state that any new lines or sections in the SaLS, or changes to the delegated authority affecting the CEO herself or Executive Team members, must also be presented to the Board for approval.

4. As part of this annual review the structure and format of the SaLS has been simplified considerably, and instead of 23 separate Word documents requiring translation into Welsh, we now have a single Excel document that will be translated.
5. This paper seeks approval from the Board for the new lines and sections that have been proposed by the business boards. The proposals were approved by the Head of Governance & Board Secretary, Head of Legal Services, and the Chief Executive in February 2021.

Assessment

6. During this annual review we received over 600 recommendations for changes. The vast majority could be approved by the Chief Executive, but there are 54 proposed changes that require Board approval.
7. Fifty three relate to new entries on the SaLS. One (ref 6.11) proposes a change to sign off levels for the approval of the draft SoNaRR report; previously this was the Head of Evidence, but it is proposed that it should now be the Executive Team. Responsibility for sign off of the final report continues to rest with the Board.
8. Annex 1 presents the 53 new entries and one change of delegation level to the Board for approval.

Key Risks

9. SaLS is an important part of our governance framework and if we do not keep it current there is a risk that it will no longer be fit for purpose. There would also be a risk if staff did not have clarity about their authorisation and delegation levels.

Financial Implications

10. There are no additional financial implications or considerations.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

11. The governance requirements affect all members of staff equally. No adverse effects are anticipated for any particular protected groups or characteristics.

Index of Annex

Annex 1 – NRW SaLS 2021 – for Board approval

Status	Num	REF	Category	Sub-Category	Function	Applicable Board(s)	Section of legislation	Delegated Level		Link to MoM	Function Comments	Section of Legislation comment	Delegated level Comments	Approved CEO
								Job Grade	Job Description					
Proposed	21	1.21	Access	Open Air recreation promotion	Approval of a communication strategy for providing or assisting provision of information and publicity relating to the countryside .	NRMBB	Counterside Act 1968 - Section 2 (2)	Grade 11	Head of Communications (Grade 11)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	40	3.15	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Issue the advice provided on Habitats Regulations assessment of strategic marine plans to Welsh Government or the Crown Estate including industry development plans	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	Grade 9	Sustainable Places - Land & Sea Manager (Grade 9)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	41	3.16	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Approve the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of a plan or project (other than an SSSI consent) in accordance with statutory nature conservation advice	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulations 63(5) and 65(2) and 105(2) or Reg 28 of the CoOMHSR	Grade 5	According to where the responsibility lies for agreeing the plan or project, having taken advice (Grade 5)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	45	3.20	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Decision to notify Welsh Ministers or Secretary of State of intention to authorise a plan or project on grounds of no alternative solutions and imperative reasons of over-riding public interest	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulation 64(5)	Grade 11	Head of Natural Resource Management (Grade 11) and Head of Operations (Grade 11)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	46	3.21	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Approval of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of an NRW-owned land use plan in accordance with statutory nature conservation advice	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulation 105(4)	Grade 7	Team Leader (Grade 7), according to where the responsibility lies for producing the land use plan concerned	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	47	3.22	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Approval of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of an NRW-owned land use plan otherwise than in accordance with statutory nature conservation advice (i.e. an escalated decision)	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulation 105(4)	Grade 11	Relevant "Head" (Grade 11) according to where the responsibility lies for approving the plan or Head of Natural Resources	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	48	3.23	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Approval to notify Welsh Ministers or Secretary of State of intention to give effect to a land use plan on grounds of no alternative solutions and imperative reasons of over-riding public interest	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulation 107(5)	Grade 11	Relevant "Head" (Grade 11) according to where the responsibility lies for approving the plan or Head of Natural Resources	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	49	3.24	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Decision to notify Welsh Ministers or Secretary of State of intention to give effect to a land use plan on grounds of no alternative solutions and imperative reasons of over-riding public interest	NRMBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Regulation 107(5)	Grade 11	Head of Natural Resources Management (Grade 11) and Head of Operations (Grade 11)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	78	3.53	Biodiversity (exc SSSI's)	Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)	Authority to write off HRA's	REGBB	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 - Regulation 55 of the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations		Permitting Officer 1	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	110	6.11	Evidence, information, Governance and Asset Management	State of Reporting	Prepare and publish a State of Natural Resources Report (SoNaRR). a.) Approval of the draft report one year in advance b.) Approval of the final SoNaRR report	EVIBB	Various European Directives transposed into UK and Welsh Legislation, Environment (Wales) Act 2016, Part 1 Section 8(1) Environment (Wales) Act 2016		a.) Executive Team b.) NRW Board	No				
Proposed	133	7.20	Fisheries (exc Cockle Fisheries)	Rod Licences	Approval to advertise proposed duties	NRMBB	Paragraph 3 Schedule 25 Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 -	Grade 11	Executive Director EPP and Head of Legal	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	134	7.21	Fisheries (exc Cockle Fisheries)	Rod Licences	Approval to apply to the Welsh Ministers for their approval of the proposed duties where objections are made.	NRMBB	Paragraph 4 Schedule 25 Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975 -	Grade 11	Executive Director EPP and Head of Legal	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	142	7.29	Fisheries (exc Cockle Fisheries)	Byelaws	Approval to abolish or alter fish passes where approval recommended by the Fish Passage Approval National Fish Pass Panel.	NRMBB	S10(2) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975	Grade 7	Environment Team Leader (Grade 7)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	143	7.30	Fisheries (exc Cockle Fisheries)	Byelaws	Approval to issue notice requiring a dam to be repaired or reconstructed it so as to restore a fish pass.	NRMBB	S12(2) of the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975	Grade 7	Environment Team Leader (Grade 7)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	382	16.9	Marine (inc Cockle Fisheries)	Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)	Approval of formal advice to WG on the creation of network of conservation sites and reporting	NRMBB	Part 5, section 123 124, MCZs, implied requirement	Grade 9	Marine Programme Planning and Delivery Group (to include Marine Services Manager, Grade 9, or Sustainable Places - Land & Sea Manager)	See Projects and Buying Goods, Works and Services sections	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	383	16.10	Marine (inc Cockle Fisheries)	Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)	Overall guidance on the approaches to conservation objectives and activity impacts on MCZs	NRMBB	Part 5, sections 125, 126, 127, Marine Conservation Zones duties on public bodies in relation to decisions, and advice and guidance by conservation bodies	Grade 9	Marine Programme Board (to include Operations Marine Service Manager, grade 9, or Sustainable Places - Land & Sea Manager, Grade 9)	See Projects and Buying Goods, Works and Services sections	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	384	16.11	Marine (inc Cockle Fisheries)	Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)	Sign off MCZ conservation advice packages	NRMBB	Part 5, sections 125, 126, 127, Marine Conservation Zones duties guidance by conservation bodies.	Grade 9	Marine Programme Planning and Delivery Group (to include Marine Services Manager, Grade 9)	See Projects and Buying Goods, Works and Services sections	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	385	16.12	Marine (inc Cockle Fisheries)	Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs)	Individual site advice on activities affecting MCZs and public body decisions	NRMBB	Part 5, sections 125, 126, 127, Marine Conservation Zones duties on public bodies in relation to decisions, and advice and guidance by conservation bodies	Grade 7 or 8	Grade 7 or 8 Marine team leader	See Projects and Buying Goods, Works and Services sections	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	420	18.19	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Issue Enforcement Notices	REGBB	CRC Order 2013 Article 69	Grade 6	Senior Permitting Officer (Grade 6)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	421	18.20	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Issue or modify Civil Penalty Notices	REGBB	CRC Order 203 Article 70 & 72	Grade 11	Head of Place (Grade 11) and Head of Legal Services (Grade 11)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	422	18.21	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Power to enter on to land and take steps to enforce felling licence conditions (as applied in Section 17c)	REGBB	Section 24 (3) The Forestry Act 1967		Approval for all Warrant Card will be in-line with other legislation and signed off by HoP/AT	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	423	18.22	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Power to enter land and survey to assess suitability for afforestation or to inspect timber or for any other purpose in connection with the Forestry Act 1967	REGBB	Section 48 (1) The Forestry Act 1967		Approval for all Warrant Card will be in-line with other legislation and signed off by HoP/AT	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	424	18.23	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Powers in certain circumstances to enter premises to examine, photograph or mark any part of the premises or objects on the premises; to take samples and to inspect or copy records.	REGBB	Article 30 The Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005		Approval for all Warrant Card will be in-line with other legislation and signed off by HoP/AT	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	425	18.24	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Powers in certain circumstances to enter premises and to take steps to destroy any pest or treat any relevant material to prevent spread of pests	REGBB	Article 32 The Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005		Approval for all Warrant Card will be in-line with other legislation and signed off by HoP/AT	No	NEW ENTRY			

Status	Num	REF	Category	Sub-Category	Function	Applicable Board(s)	Section of legislation	Delegated Level		Link to MoM	Function Comments	Section of Legislation comment	Delegated level Comments	Approved CEO
								Job Grade	Job Description					
Proposed	426	18.25	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Powers in certain circumstances to enter premises and take steps to ensure compliance with a Notice served under this order.	REGBB	Article 36 The Plant Health (Forestry) Order 2005		Approval for all Warrant Card will be in-line with other legislation and signed off by HoB/ILT		NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	427	18.26	Regulatory activities	Powers of entry	Power of entry by any person on land where it is suspected that work in relation to a relevant project is being carried out without consent or in breach of conditions	REGBB	Regulations 23 The Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999		Approval for all Warrant Card will be in-line with other legislation and signed off by HoB/ILT		NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	445	18.44	Regulatory activities	Reservoir regulation	Registration or removal of a large raised reservoir on the register (RA1975).	REGBB	Reservoir Act 1975 Sections, 2	Grade 8	Senior Specialist Advisor (Grade 8)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	483	18.82	Regulatory activities	Water Quality	Determination of a notification for transfer or surrender of a standalone water discharge activity or groundwater activity permit	REGBB	Regulations 21, 24(4) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 4	Permitting Officer 1 (Grade 4)		NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	485	18.84	Regulatory activities	Waste	Registration or renewal of registration of an exempt facility, excluding a Waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) operation	REGBB	Schedule 2 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 6	Customer Management Team leader (Grade 6)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	544	18.143	Regulatory activities	Waste	Determination of confidentiality claim.	REGBB	Regulation 51 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016		Permitting Team Leader or Place Team Leader	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	564	18.163	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Determine / adjust allocations of allowances	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Schedule 6 (2), (3), (5),(6) & (8), Schedule 6A (4), (7) & (9)		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	565	18.164	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Issue, modification or withdrawal of civil penalty notices	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Regulation 50		Head Operations and Head of Legal Services	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	566	18.165	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Notify changes to exclude installations	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Schedule 6A (3)		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	567	18.166	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Assess aviation emissions	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Regulation 28		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	568	18.167	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Issue and vary aviation emissions plan	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Regulation 34, 36 & 37		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	569	18.168	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Issue and vary aviation benchmarking plan	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Regulation 38, Schedule 7 (3) & (4), Schedule 8 (3) & (4)		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	570	18.169	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Detain and sell aircraft	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Regulation 39 and Schedule 9		Head of Operations and Head of Legal Services	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	571	18.170	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Submit data to SoS and Commission	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Schedule 7 (7), Schedule 8 (7)		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	572	18.171	Regulatory activities	Greenhouse Gas emissions permits	Recover allowances	REGBB	Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme Regulations 2005 Schedule 7 (11)		Senior Permitting Officer	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	590	18.189	Regulatory activities	Industry Regulation	Give notice to the local authority specifying the emission limit values or the conditions it considers appropriate for preventing or reducing emissions into water from the installation or mobile plant.	REGBB	Regulation 59(2) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 7	Permitting Team Leader (Grade 7)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	591	18.190	Regulatory activities	Industry Regulation	Preparation, revision and revocation of standard rules	REGBB	Regulations 26, 28, 29, 30 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 9	Permitting Service Manager (Grade 9)	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	592	18.191	Regulatory activities	Industry Regulation	Determination of an application of grant, transfer vary or surrender a permit or decision to make a regulator-initiated variation or consolidate or deconsolidate permit.	REGBB	Regulations 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27 and Schedule 5, Part 1 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 7	Industry Regulation Permitting Team leader (Grade 7)		NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	593	18.192	Regulatory activities	Industry Regulation	Notice requiring further information concerning application	REGBB	Schedule 5, Part 1, Paragraph 4 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 5	Permitting Officer (Grade 5)		NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	594	18.193	Regulatory activities	Industry Regulation	Notice of deemed withdrawal of application	REGBB	Schedule 5, Part 1, Paragraph 4 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 7	Industry Regulation Permitting Team leader (Grade 7)		NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	617	18.216	Regulatory activities	Enforcement	Decision to prosecute for fishing without a licence	REGBB	Regulations 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 27 and Schedule 5, Part 1 Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016	Grade 9	Operations Manager and Lawyer Gr 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	618	18.217	Regulatory activities	Waste	Restriction Notice	REGBB	Section 109A(1), 109A(2)(a), 109A(2)(b) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	619	18.218	Regulatory activities	Waste	Variation Notice	REGBB	109B(b) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	620	18.219	Regulatory activities	Waste	Cancellation Notice	REGBB	109B(a) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	621	18.220	Regulatory activities	Waste	Restriction Order	REGBB	109C(1) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	622	18.221	Regulatory activities	Waste	Extension of a Restriction Order	REGBB	109F(1) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	623	18.222	Regulatory activities	Waste	Variation Order	REGBB	109G(1) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	624	18.223	Regulatory activities	Waste	Discharge Order	REGBB	109G(2) Environment Act 1995 (as amended)	Grade 9	Operations Manager & Lawyer Grade 9	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	625	18.224	Regulatory activities	Waste	Notice Requiring Hazardous Waste Quarterly Returns	REGBB	Regulation 53 Hazardous Waste (Wales) Regulations 2005	Grade 6	Place Team Leader (Grade 6) or Hazardous Waste	No	NEW ENTRY			
Proposed	626	18.225	Regulatory activities	Waste	Notice Requiring Information	REGBB	Regulation 55 Hazardous Waste (Wales) Regulations 2005	Grade 6	Place Team Leader (Grade 6) or Hazardous Waste	No	NEW ENTRY			

Board Paper

	Paper Details
Paper title:	Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Annual Report
Paper reference:	21-03-B09
Paper sponsored by:	Prys Davies, Executive Director Corporate Strategy and Development
Paper presented by:	Steve Burton, Head of People Management and Rachael Holbrook, Lead Specialist Advisor, EDI
Purpose of the paper	Decision
Recommendation	<p>The Board are asked to note the progress of the EDI Annual Report 2020-21 made throughout 2020</p> <p>For Decision</p> <p>The Board are asked to approve the EDI Annual Report 2020-21 for publication</p>

Issue

1. The intention is to publish the EDI Annual Report 2020-21 for public reference on our website. The report outlines the achievements, challenges and statistics regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).
2. To update the Board in respect of external reporting for the Gender Pay Gap.
3. Provide update to the Board on the launch of the Strategic Equality Objectives and the EDI Consultation Project 2021.

Background

4. The report highlights work undertaken throughout the organisation over the last financial year in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

5. Further information:

- Our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020–2024 (Annex 2) which were drafted working in partnership with the Wales Public Body Equality Partnership launched by Jane Hutt MA on 1st March 2021. This was undertaken via a pre-recorded video shared across social media and our intranet. Please see below.

[Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Natural Resources Wales - Home | Facebook](#)
[Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru / Natural Resources Wales - Home | Facebook \(Welsh\)](#)

[Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru | Natural Resources Wales \(@NatResWales\) / Twitter](#)
[Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru | Natural Resources Wales \(@NatResWales\) / Twitter \(Welsh\)](#)

Assessment and Summary

Action plan 2020–2021

6. To support our shared Strategic Equality Objectives the Equalities Action Plan was developed to embed equality, diversity and inclusion. Given the restrictions with Covid-19 and the launch of the EDI Consultancy Project, we want to go the next step and develop the Equality Action Plan with the engagement of our staff, customers and our communities. Therefore, the original action plan has been integrated into the 2021-2024 Action Plan and we are focusing our resources on the EDI Consultancy Project 2021. The Action Plan will be published in September 2021 and help attain the objectives in our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020–2024 and those of people we consulted.

EDI Consultation Project 2021

7. The outcome of the project will help us understand and engage with our more diverse communities, with the following aspirations:
 - To attract a workforce representative of the diverse communities we serve here in Wales.
 - To articulate our EDI vision, principles and action plan in a meaningful way.
 - Develop a strategic plan for April 2021 to March 2024 that embeds diverse and inclusive ways of working.
 - An engagement strategy to support the 3-year action plan.
 - Create an organisation that is instinctively inclusive and diverse in nature.
 - The engagement and action plan must ensure that both internal and external are 'developed' coherently together to support in-service delivery, customer, internal representation of community and customer base.
8. This project will be completed by the end of June 2021 and will help identify objectives and an action plan to significantly enhance our EDI activities internally and externally.

9. We have an EDI sub-board and we consulted with the EDI Forum in February 2021. We have created a project board and agreed a governance structure. Part of the project will be consultation of staff and members of the public through focus groups and surveys.

Gender Pay Gap March 2020

10. Our Gender Pay Gap analysis reported that our headline figure was 2.5% at 31st March 2020. This figure is down from 5.3% reported in 2019. Analysis shows that 62% of males are in roles from upper grade 6 to grade 11 in comparison to 38% of females. Women earn 44p for every £1 that men earn when comparing median hourly wages. When comparing mean hourly wages, women's mean hourly wage is 2.5% lower than men. There has been improvement from 2018 however as we develop the EDI Consultation Project, further work will be undertaken to understand and improve the gap. We will continue to monitor our progress regularly with our pay scale review.

Recommendation

11. To approve the EDI Annual Report and Gender Pay Gap analysis for publication.
12. To support the EDI Consultation Project 2021. This will produce a report with recommendations to help in creating NRW's vision for EDI. The aim of the recommendations is to identify ways of engaging with the diverse communities and embed EDI into the heart of the organisation. The outcome will be working in an inclusive way for everyone and attracting a more diverse workforce for the future. The project will also draft an action plan for the next 3 years to achieve our Strategic Equality Objectives.

Key Risks

13. By not updating both ET and Board, we risk weakening governance in the sphere of equality, diversity and inclusion.
14. This work helps mitigate the risk of non-compliance with key legislation. The EDI Consultation Project 2021 will result in a report with recommendations for a way forward for us as an organisation. An action plan will be produced with measures to achieve our Strategic Equality Objectives 2020-2024, ensuring we are compliant with our Public Sector Equality Duties. The Equality and Human Rights commission (EHRC) regulate our compliance.
15. There is a risk that the EHRC may take several different approaches, depending on the particular circumstances they are trying to change. This ranges from guidance and assistance to investigations and court action.
16. We have mitigated the risks of data protection and GDPR issues by following all data protection requirements and procedures required through the procurement processes to use an external provider.

Next Steps

17. Once the Annual Report for 2020-21 is published, awareness will be cascaded on our social media accounts and internally through our intranet. The report will be available in accessible format and published on our website and intranet.

Financial Implications

18. The costs in relation to EDI are ongoing business as usual costs.
19. The EDI Consultation Project 2021* has an approved budget of £32,500 for Stage 1 and £35,000 for Stage 2.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

20. The Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the Equality Policy in place as part of the development of the policy.
21. The Equality Impact Assessment was carried out on the Strategic Equality Objectives by the Wales Public Bodies Equality Partnership during their development. The findings of which, with agreement by the Board in 2020, were the basis of the EDI Consultation Project 2021.

Index of Annex

Annex 1 EDI Report

Annex 2 Public Body: Strategic Equality Objectives (This document to be merged into the final version of the EDI report prior to publication)

* The overview of the EDI Consultation Project 2021 is available on request from the Board Secretariat.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2020 – 2021

This report is available in both English and Welsh on our website at

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2020 to 2021](#)

If you require a hard copy of the report or a copy in a different format for example large print, audio version please contact:

Email address: Equalities@naturalresourceswales.co.uk

Content

Executive Summary

Welcome to the summary of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report for 2020 to 2021. This report focuses on how we have implemented our policies and developed our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020 – 2024 by working collaboratively with eleven other public organisations in the spirit of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

This report sets out the work that we have done over the last financial year in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

Some of the highlights over the year have been:

- Publishing and launching our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020 - 2024
- Our partnership with The Wales Public Body Equality Partnership
- Equality and Diversity Project 2021
- Ensuring our website and intranet is accessible
- Becoming members of the national Employers for Carers Network
- The development of our new Neurodiversity Network
- Celebrating and raising awareness of diverse days throughout the year
- Taking part in the Pride online event
- Renewing our Disability Confident assurance

As an organisation we work across the whole of Wales, working with other organisations, members of the public, communities and partners daily. We want to ensure everyone has a say in the work we do, valuing their contribution and ensuring that their opinions are reflected in the decisions we make.

We have an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Forum with staff representatives from across the organisation. The Forum is Chaired by the Executive Director of our Corporate Services Directorate. The Forum includes one of our Board Members and Executive Team EDI Champion and Trade Union representatives.

We have seven staff Networks in place who meet regularly, providing support to staff and proactive in promoting their Network. Covid-19 has been testing for the majority and our Networks have provided essential support to their members, ensuring that there is someone to talk and support through difficult times.

Over the next year, to ensure that we are working with a more diverse audience, we will be developing our work in this area with our Equality Diversity Inclusion Consultancy Project 2021. As part of the project we will underpin The Strategic Equality Objectives and create an action plan for 2021 – 2024. See **Annex 1** of this report for our shared Strategic Equality Objectives. The EDI Consultation Projects purpose will be to engage with our staff our stakeholders, and customers ensuring we get to the heart of every community in Wales helping people understand who we are, what we do and how they can contribute to our work.

Background

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public bodies to consider the effect our work, policies and services we deliver including can have on others, this includes in our own workplace. In summary public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Equality Act 2010 makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with a “protected characteristic”. The protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

We are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duties Wales as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011, noting that listed bodies will undertake:

- Annual Monitoring Reports
- Strategic Equality Plans
- Setting Objectives
- Collect and Analyse Equality Information
- Service Users Equality Information
- Workforce Equality Information and Workforce Pay Differences
- Consultation and Engagement
- Assessing Impact
- Staff Training
- Procurement
- Accessibility

There are no duties to promote and use the Welsh language included within the Equality Act, instead these duties are set in the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011. Our Welsh Language Standards require that the language is considered in all our decision-making processes and is included as a consideration in our Equality Impact Assessment ensuring that both languages are treated equally.

Strategic Equality Objectives 2020 – 2024

Our new high-level strategic objectives were developed working in collaboration with eleven other public organisations as part of The Wales Public Bodies Equality Partnership. We worked together to develop high level shared equality objectives in line with recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commissioner and Welsh Government.

Working in partnership to develop our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020 – 2024, is in the spirit of the five ways of working outlined in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The eight shared strategic aims will help address inequalities across Wales identified by the Equality and Human Rights Commission report “Is Wales Fairer 2018?”

The objectives were approved by NRW Board in September 2020 and were published on our website in line with our Public Sector Equality Duties. Due to Covid-19 the planned public launch of the objectives was cancelled. The objectives were launched by Deputy Minister, Jane Hutt MS, on 1st March 2021 in an online event. We supported this launch by delivering an aligned promotion on our social media accounts including a week of articles across our intranet, this launch also linked to events for staff and our communities to engage with NRW on the EDI Consultation Project 2021.

Public Sector Wales Equality Partnership

Along with developing our high-level Strategic Equality Objectives with the eleven other organisations, there are plans to work more collaboratively on other projects in the future, sharing good practice, ideas and ways of working to further embed EDI into our working practices. The Task and Finish Groups which the partnership have agreed to working on for 2021 – 2022 are:

- HR – Diversity and Gender Pay Gap
- Procurement
- Data Group
- Insight

Strategic Equality Action Plan 2020 - 2024

The Board wish to significantly further our work in EDI having recently launched our values, as an organisation; we want to move beyond the generally accepted approach to equality diversity and inclusion. See **Annex 2** of this report for our Values. We recognise that a true diverse organisation will be more innovative, productive, and successful for employees and for the people of Wales. This work will support our other aims e.g. our Sustainable Management of Natural Resources aims and objectives, by communicating openly in various formats with all members of the public in the future.

Working across the whole of Wales, we consult with the public regularly, but we wish to engage with a wider and more diverse audience and want to find ways to actively engage with under-represented groups, by inviting them to have their say in our work.

EDI Consultation Project 2021

To help us to achieve our aims and find better ways of engaging with a diverse audience who represent the make-up of Wales, over the next six months we will be embarking on our EDI Consultation Project 2021 with support from an external provider. The project will help in developing an action plan to embed and drive equality, diversity and inclusion into the heart of the organisation, inclusivity becoming our normal way of working. The outcomes will help us understand and engage with our more diverse communities, with the aspiration to attract a workforce representative of the diverse communities we serve here in Wales.

The objectives of the project are to:

- articulate our EDI vision, principles and action plan in a meaningful way.
- Develop a strategic plan for April 2021 to March 2024 that embeds diverse and inclusive ways of working.
- Develop an engagement strategy to support the 3-year action plan
- Create an organisation that is instinctively inclusive and diverse in nature.
- Develop an engagement and action plan must ensure that both internal and external are 'developed' coherently together to support in-service delivery, customer, internal representation of community and customer base.

This project will be completed with objectives and action plan end of June 2021 and will help identify objectives and an action plan to significantly enhance our EDI activities internally and externally

Equalities Action Plan 2020 – 2022

The Equalities Action Plan was developed to support our Strategic Equality Objectives to help embed equality, diversity and inclusion into more of our work and our commitment to equality. Given the restrictions with Covid-19 and the launch of the EDI Consultation Project, we want to go the next step and develop the equality action plan with the engagement of our staff, customers and our communities. Therefore, the original action plan has been integrated into the 2021-2022 action plan and we are focusing our resources on the EDI Consultation Project 2021. The action plan will be published in September 2021 and help attain the objectives in our Strategic Equality Objectives for 2020 – 2024 and those of people we consulted.

Policies

Each of our policies are reviewed on a regular basis, this also forms part of our work in submitting our Workplace Equality Index with Stonewall to ensure that we use appropriate wording and phrases within our policies, procedures and guidance.

Website Accessibility

As a public sector organisation, we were required to meet the Web Accessibility Regulations 2018 by September 2020. Our compliance with the regulations will be monitored by The UK Government Digital Service (GDS) and any non-compliance will be published with our name and a copy of their decision.

The Digital Communications Team audited most of the website and an external company has provided a report on accessibility issues they found with our website. There will be further improvements over the next 12 months to make our website more accessible.

Guidance is available in accessible format for publishing on our website with templates and forms. Word 2010 has an accessibility checker feature built in which highlights non accessible information with hints and tips in making the work fully accessible.

As an organisation we wish as many people to access our website as possible, this work means that people with, blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities or cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities or photosensitivity, improving the website usability for all our customers.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum

This forum brings our staff together from across NRW, with commitment from the Board, Executive and Leadership Teams, all Directorates, Staff Networks and Trade Unions. The Forum group meet quarterly with additional meetings as and when required for tasks.

Forum members consist of:

- Chair (Executive Director Corporate Strategy and Development)
- NRW Board member
- Executive Team E&D Champion
- One representative from each directorate:
- One representative for all the Trade Unions
- One representative from each Staff Network

Over the last year the Forum has welcomed new members from across the organisation with Forum members working together on projects relating to EDI. A group of Forum members are involved in reviewing the Equality Impact Assessment and providing feedback from their areas of the business.

The Equality & Diversity Forum aims to:

- Promote a positive culture around equality, diversity and inclusion
- Celebrate and promote the successes of a diverse range of staff both internally and externally, promoting NRW as an employer of choice
- Act as a consultation forum in development for new and existing policies and procedures
- Promote and develop a trusting environment where staff can disclose confidentially
- Find ways to better engage with our customers and communities we serve
- Provide networking opportunities for personal and professional development

Staff Networks

The Networks are run by staff for staff and bring together people from all areas of the workplace who identify with others from a similar background or group.

Staff Networks fulfil various functions including providing opportunities for social interaction, peer support and personal development. Staff networks can also contribute to the development of our policies and working practices.

We recognise the value of self-organised groups in creating an environment that respects the diversity of staff and enables them to get the maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the workplace.

We aim to support these networks by:

- Encouraging managers to release employees to participate in them
- Promoting the Networks to new and existing employees
- Listening constructively to any employee concerns raised through the staff networks
- Taking part in initiatives developed by the staff network

We currently have 7 staff networks as follows: -

- Assisted User Groups (ICT and Telephony)
- Calon LGBT+
- Christian Fellowship
- Cwtch (Carers Network)
- Dementia Friends
- Muslim Network
- Neurodiversity

One member from each Network attends the EDI Forum meetings, providing an update and a forward look on what the Network is involved with.

Over the next year we will work on developing a more coordinated approach to how NRW staff networks are run and supported, e.g. having a Network calendar for promoting events and channels on Microsoft Teams to make working together easier and developing a more structured way in working together.

Starting from January 2021, each of our Networks has been invited to give a presentation at the Induction course for new members of staff. This is an important step in ensuring that new staff are aware of which Networks we have here, and the support in place at an early stage in their career with us. This will help in supporting diversity within the organisation and helping new staff to have a sense of belonging within the organisation.

Information on each of our networks and their purpose can be found in **Annex 3** of this report.

NRW Support and Raising Awareness Days

The staff Networks were actively involved in raising awareness on some activities listed below.

	During Covid-19 we experienced of number of changes to our normal ways of working and raising awareness in 2020. We understood the sensitivities to our staff and availability during this time. However, we continued to raise awareness quarterly instead of per month. In 2021 our aim will be to gradually increase participation and organise events in line with the well being of our staff.
Q2	International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia 17th May Pansexual Day of Visibility 25th May 8 – 14th June Carers week with supported talks, carers cuppa sessions 19 – 21st June 2020 Virtual Tour of a Mosque
Q3	Sponsored and participated in Pride Cymru’s Big Online Week event – August 2020
Q4	Trans Day of Remembrance 20th November National Carers Rights Day – 26th November 2020 and we joined the Employers for Carers National Network on that same day Elf Day – December 2020 raising awareness about dementia with a coffee morning and dementia friends awareness session as well as raising money
2020	Cancer, Mental Health to Non smoking days

Equality Impact Assessment Review

Our review of the Equality Impact Assessment ensures we have a more robust assessment in place setting out clearly and help us in meeting our public sector equality duties. With the implementation of the Socio-Economic Duty within the Equality Act 2010, it was timely that we reviewed our Equality Impact Assessment to include this Duty. We are not a named public body required to enact Sections 1 to 3 of the Duty to reduce inequalities of outcome that result from socio-economic disadvantage but voluntarily carry out impact assessments to guide decisions to evidence delivery of the Duty.

Also included are considerations to be given to Human Rights and Children and Young people who have specific human rights guaranteed by the United Nations on the Rights of the Child (UNRC). It encourages public services across the country to commit to the UNRC and to improve how they plan and deliver their services.

The reviewed assessment is more robust in ensuring that:

- The purpose of the policy change/decision/work is clearly set out
- That those affected have been involved and their views taken into consideration from the start
- Potential positive and negative impacts have been identified
- Plans put in place to alleviate or reduce any negative impact
- Any positive impacts as a result of the policy change/decision/work
- Plans to monitor the impact of the proposal

We will be embedding further awareness over the coming months of the need to carry out an assessment which has also been raised in our regular monthly briefing to managers. 22 Equality Impact Assessments have been carried out within the last year.

Stonewall Workplace Equality Index

Due to Covid-19 in 2020 Stonewall paused the Workplace Equality Index submissions for 2021. This year as part of the EDI Consultation Project we will be reviewing how best to support our staff through equality. We hope that as a result of the work we are doing on

EDI within the organisation there will be further involvement with Stonewall in some format in the future.

Disability Confident Employer

“Disability Confident” is a scheme that is designed to help us recruit and retain disabled people for their skills and talents. This ensures that those with disabilities are guaranteed an interview when applying for vacancies within our organisation when they meet the minimum skill criteria requirements for the role. Due to Covid-19, the Government employer scheme was paused in 2020. We will be working with the scheme leaders towards re-accreditation in May 2021. Membership to the scheme allows us to access a wider talent pool and benefitting from their skills.

Self-Disclosure

We request that our staff voluntarily self-disclose their personal details such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, faith, belief or no belief and caring responsibilities confidentially and record in our central HR system. This information helps us to understand how our workforce represents the diversity of the people of Wales. To date 68.4% of our staff have self-disclosed, the percentage appears to be lower than last year but the number of staff who have self-disclosed is up by 94 people due to the increase in the head count over the last year.

We will aim over the next year to increase the number of staff that self-disclose, by engagement from the EDI Consultation Project 2021 and improving communication and guidance across managers and staff. This will not only help us in fulfilling our Public Sector Equality Duties but also ensure that we have the robust inclusive policies here in place, and inclusive support and staff Networks. New Staff are encouraged to self-disclose as part of the EDI presentation at their Induction course.

Self-Disclosure Completion Rates – January 2021

Directorate Disclosure Stats	Number Completed Disclosure	Number Not Completed Disclosure	Total	Percentage Completed Disclosure	Percentage Not Completed Disclosure
Operations	858	425	1283	38.40%	19%
Evidence, Policy & Permitting	408	172	580	18.20%	7.70%
Finance & Corporate Services	119	55	174	5.30%	2.50%
Communication Customer & Commercial	74	32	106	3.30%	1.40%
Corporate Strategy & Development	71	23	94	3.20%	1.00%
Total	1530	707	2237	68.40%	31.60%

Recruitment

From the 1st April 2020 until 31st January 2021, we received 3554 applications to vacancies across NRW. As part of our commitment to the EDI strategic objectives and the EDI Consultation Project 2021, our aim will be to attract applications across our

communities to best reflect the diversity of our population in Wales. In **Annex 4** there is break down of recruitment statistics for the period above.

Induction for New Staff

A presentation is given at each Induction course for new staff on Equality Diversity and Inclusion. This presentation focuses on what EDI means to us as an organisation rather than the legislation in place: how important attracting a more diverse workforce is in bringing together people from diverse backgrounds, culture, with different skills, ideas, new ways of working, beliefs, abilities, disabilities, health needs and ideas to help us in fulfilling our role and responsibilities as an organisation. This will also help us in having a workforce which is more representative of our diverse communities here in Wales, ensuring we gain a better understand their needs and in turn provide a better service for the people of Wales.

Our inclusion policies are explained, emphasising how an inclusive workplace makes for a happy workplace where everyone feels valued and has a sense of belonging, treated fairly, given the same opportunities and support to carry out their role.

Staff Analysis

The analysis shows that as an organisation there is a need for workforce planning to anticipate change and plan to ensure that skills, experiences and competencies are in place for the right jobs for the future. The Senior Specialist Advisor, Organisational Development is currently working on the second iteration to support workforce analysis and planning. We have recently reviewed our Recruitment, Secondment and Fixed Term Appointment policies and procedures. EDI formed part of the process and an Equality Impact Assessment was carried out for each one to help identify if there were any discrimination or disadvantage to anyone with a protected characteristic in our policies and procedures. Our EDI Consultation Project 2021 will focus on key areas regarding the demographics of our current staff population and how best to ensure we reflect the communities across Wales in the future.

February 2021: Staff 2237	
Female 45.2% Male 54.8%	The overall data for NRW offers general balance. From Grade 7 to G11 there are fewer females.
Age demographic 29.6% (663) are aged between 45-55	Largest proportion of population regarding age in NRW. For this demographic of staff, they will have differing priorities for: Work life balance Remuneration and benefits
Full-time employed 84.9% Part-time employed 15.1% The breakdown of which: Full-time Female 33.5% Male 51.4% Part-time Female 11.7% Male 3.4%	For this size of organisation across UK government there is a higher proportion of part-time staff in comparison to NRW. This may indicate that further efforts to enable Flexible working could be explored. For most of the part-time workers further analysis is required to understand what the need is for NRW and how it can attract and retain talent that requires flexible working and reflects our communities.
Caring responsibilities 24.2%	Nearly a quarter of staff have identified as undertaking caring responsibilities. Further analysis is required to understand the best way to support our staff in NRW. We currently have: Caring for carers week June 8-14 Wellbeing, health and safety team Carers guidance Flexible working policy Regular Care First webinars Employee assistance programme Cwtch network Buddy system Carers information and communication internally on the intranet and Yammer
BAME ethnicity 1.5% Fluent Welsh speakers 24% Sexual orientation 2.36% self-disclosed as gay woman /man, bisexual or other	In the next three groups in NRW, the proportion of staff reflecting the population across Wales is lower than in relation to our communities The EDI Consultation Project is undertaking bi-lingual public and staff surveys, focus groups across Wales; reaching diverse communities to enable informed recommendations to be agreed with Board. One of the aims of the project is to improve opportunities in NRW to attract applications that best represent our communities across Wales.

Gender Pay Gap 31 March 2020

Our gender pay gap information is captured on 31st March each year to comply with The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 methodology.

Our Gender Pay Gap analysis carried out reported that our headline figure was 2.5% at 31st March 2020. This figure is down from 5.3% reported in 2019.

According to the Office for National Statistics the UK pay gap for this same time was 15.5%, this is down from 17.4% in 2019.

Summary of NRW Gender Pay Gap

	2019 % Difference	2020 % Difference	2020 Results			
			No of Employees		% of Employees	
			Male	Female	Male	Female
Lower Quartile	-10.20%	-13.50%	267	231	54%	46%
Lower Middle Quartile	-1.20%	-12.80%	265	231	53%	47%
Upper Middle Quartile	-14.60%	-7.40%	257	238	52%	48%
Upper Quartile	-51.40%	-38.40%	307	189	62%	38%

	Basic fte Hourly		Basic % Difference	Total fte Hourly		Total % Difference
	Male	Female		Male	Female	
Mean	£17.82	£17.43	-2.20%	£17.92	£17.48	-2.50%
Median	£17.68	£17.14	-3.20%	£17.68	£17.14	-3.10%
Count	1096	889				

Based upon the HRMC definitions of female and males in regards Gender Pay Gap, analysis shows that 62% of males are in roles at from upper grade 6 to grade 11 in comparison to 38% of females.

Women earn 44p for every £1 that men earn when comparing median hourly wages.

When comparing mean hourly wages, women's mean hourly wage is 2.5% lower than men.

There has been improvement from 2018 however as we develop, further work will be taken to understand and improve the gap. We will continue to monitor our progress regularly with our pay scale review.

Complaints

Over the last year we received three complaints in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion as follows, two in relation to the same matter: -

1. Two complaints were received from members of the public on the use of a name associated with a mining tool which also has links to racist educational segregation in USA on a section of our mountain bike trail.

Due to the concerns raised we made the decision to remove the name plaque from the trail section and find a more suitable alternative reflecting the mining history and culture of the area will be used for the section head. As an organisation we strive to be free from prejudice and discrimination and are passionate about making equality and diversity one of our top priorities.

2. One complaint received regarding the law which prohibits the fishing for salmon with bait was a direct discrimination against a section of disabled anglers, taking away the option to fish due to their disability.

Following careful consideration of the issues before and during consultation, NRW amended its proposal the overall effect is to maintain opportunities for anglers who can only fish with bait. In NRW's view this makes the impacts of the All-Wales Byelaws on less physically able anglers proportionate and objectively justified.

Conclusion

The findings of this report shows that Covid-19 has impacted many areas that would be associated with EDI across the business, for example our work with external accreditations and events to promote and embed equality further was reduced to support wider programmes to ensure the well-being our staff.

The networks are gaining momentum and the EDI forum collectively are looking ahead to plan how we can support staff in 2021.

The Equality Impact Assessment review is being aligned to the EDI Consultation Project 2021 ensuring that it will support staff and managers in working with an inclusive approach for both internally and externally to ensure that no one is discriminated or disadvantaged due to our work.

Our Gender Pay Gap has reduced following the Organisation Change Programme which saw an increase in the number of females who were successful in gaining more senior roles than previously within the organisation. To reduce further, females need to secure roles at ET and Leadership roles within the organisation.

The findings of our staff analysis show that the diversity of our workplace needs further analysis via the EDI Consultation Project to help us reflect the diversity of our communities where some of our largest offices are located. The EDI Consultation Project 2021 will help us to identify any barriers there may be in our communication methods to engaging with our more diverse and harder to reach communities and help us attract a more diverse workforce for the future. A report with recommendations and an action plan will be presented to Board in Summer 2021.



Annex 2

NRW Network Updates

Assisted User Groups (IT and Telephony)

The network brings together staff from across the organisation who use assistive software allowing them to access the standard NRW applications. Staff who use assistive software may have mobility or visual restrictions, hearing loss or other individual needs that require specialist software or adjustments.

The Assisted User Group is a forum for sharing knowledge between users and NRW's ICT department by ensuring applications are accessible to users for now and in the future. The network test the applications used by current assisted users for accessibility and additional technology which may be needed by assisted users. The network also links users of assistive software together and work to promote and gain a better understanding of the use of assistive software.

Currently there are 28 assisted users across the organisation who meet on a monthly basis.

A training course was arranged for Assisted Users in the use of the newly introduced "Microsoft Teams" package which has recently been launched across the organisation. This helped in identifying some issues for the users which ICT were able to address ensuring that assisted users were not disadvantaged and able to have full use of the package. The network is also involved in testing ICT software regularly before introduction to ensure that they suit user needs.

All new staff and current staff who have identified as requiring assisted user technology are given training for their particular user need.

Over the next year the network will continue to meet every other month, and test any new applications, or applications that have been purchased and need to be tested to see how they work with Assistive technology, to ensure they suit user needs.

Muslim Network

The network was launched for anyone in the organisation that is a practicing Muslim or would like to find out more about the Islamic faith, meet new people and simply show support as an ally.

Diversity and inclusion are an important part of the way we work, and we are committed to making our organisation as diverse as the environment around us.

There are currently 8 members but due to limited Muslim NRW employees only one active member of the group raising awareness of the Muslim faith generally within the

organisation. We hope that the network presentation as part of our Induction programme will help increase membership.

A video was created for NRW Fest on the wearing of the Niqab and face coverings in Covid-19. This explained to staff the significance of wearing the Niqab for Muslim women.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions a Virtual Mosque Tour link was made available to NRW Staff on Yammer. This gave staff the opportunity to have a virtual tour of the inside of Mosque's across the UK and gain a better understanding of the Muslim faith for men and women. Positive feedback was received from those who attended.

A presentation has been drafted to provide an awareness session for NRW Board and Senior Managers on "Belief and Natural Resources in Islam"

Cwtch (Carers Network)

The Cwtch Network was established in Autumn 2019 with the aim of doing more to recognise, support and value our colleagues who care for others and loved ones.

Membership is open to both Carers and those interested in supporting colleagues. The Network meets online every 6 weeks, with between 25 – 30 attending each meeting which is chaired by one of our Leadership Group members.

Cwtch has links with our Dementia Friends, Wellbeing time to talk groups and also part of the EDI Forum. With an active Yammer group with 60 or so members and an intranet page with guidance, information on welfare and benefits for Carers and explaining the support available from NRW.

The group has spent its first few months thinking about topics such as:

- The importance of declaring carer interests – why might people choose not to register as a carer – for example do people feel being seen as a carer is a negative thing and makes them seem less reliable or professional, do people prefer to keep home and work lives separate, do people always realise when they are a carer as this can be a gradual change, or an intermittent requirement? And how might we be able to support people to recognise this role and remove any barriers?
- How we can make carers and caring more visible (creating a safe space while respecting confidentiality) – using intranet blogs, Yammer posts, signposting new starters to the group as part of their induction, carers week and so on.
- How we can support our carers emotionally and practically – this might be through formal routes such as our policies, flexible working, and linking to the Equality Strategy, and through more informal arrangements such as virtual 'carers cuppa' tea breaks and buddying system. We also have good links to the Mental Health First Aiders group.
- 8-14 June 2020 was Carers Week, the first one since the Cwtch Network was formed. During that week the network had a strong intranet presence letting people know about the network and promoting daily sessions which included a discussion on NRW's support for carers, a talk from Swansea Parent Carer Forum, session on dementia and technology, and carers cuppa sessions (caring for elders and the "A" word). With carers blogs on the intranet and people shared their personal experiences of caring and balancing this with their working lives. During that week NRW made a public pledge to continue to provide a supportive place in NRW whereby we can recognise those in our

organisation who care for their loved ones for a variety of reasons and provide further opportunities for those that may wish to find out more.

- On 26th November to coincide with Carers Right's Day we became members of the Employers for Carers UK wide Network and are now part of the Wales hub along with other public organisations. Employers for Carers support employers in supporting employees with caring responsibilities and create carer-friendly workplaces. This enables the Network and organisation to have access to their guidance and training materials and courses.
- The Network have an ongoing communications plan and forward look, which has focussed on events such as Carers Week and Carers Rights Day but is now expanding to reflect other activities and to think how the Network can reach everyone that might benefit from membership. During 2021 the Network will explore how to bring the 'Employers for Carers' benefits to those Carers in NRW and looking at whether to adopt the Carers Passport as part of our policies and procedures.

Dementia Friends

Despite lockdown over 140 have become new dementia friends in NRW between March and December 2020 by running virtual sessions linked to both our new starter induction programme and our #TeamNRW staff webinars. The virtual dementia friend information sessions have been linked to our NRW induction programme and now all of our new starters attend a session during their first few months with us.

Two sessions have been run on Dementia Friends Awareness and a short session about NRW's journey to becoming a Dementia Friendly Community, the resources that are available to staff and the expectations we have of them to be 'Dementia Friendly' in their work.

There are now 5 accredited NRW Dementia Champions who are able to deliver information sessions either face to face or using the new virtual format.

Dementia Friends work continues to be represented at our EDI Forum meetings and a 'caring for elders' virtual cuppa formed part of our recent Cwtch network week of events.

As some of projects re-commence, we will once again be able to incorporate dementia friendly characteristics into our work, for example:

Cwmcarn Forest Drive – landscaping works are underway to develop 8 recreational areas located along Cwmcarn forest drive. Accessible features have been incorporated throughout the scheme including accessible paths and picnic areas, circular walking routes, a selection of accessible play furniture, accessible toilets and dementia friendly braille signage for the exterior and interior of each toilet building.

Ely dementia garden – following a joint Health Board meeting NRW are funding and helping to design a sensory garden in Ely, Cardiff with an application due shortly for 'Strategic outcome request funding'.

We have published details of our Dementia Friendly Community work on a new suite of Intranet pages:

<https://cyfoethnaturiolcymru.sharepoint.com/en-gb/our-organisation/equality-and-diversity/dementia-friendly-community-project>

NRW has joined a Wales-wide 'blue light' dementia group to share learning and best practice. This is co-ordinated by the ambulance service and includes representation from police and fire. Attendance has obviously been impacted this year however going forwards forum members will provide updates about their dementia friendly initiatives and share best practice.

NRW Executive Team have supported NRW in becoming a project partner in a proposed new "citizen science" dementia friendly project being coordinated through Bangor University.

Bangor based researchers are submitting a research bid to UKRI to develop a "citizen science" model for people with dementia and their carers to assess and provide feedback on a range of sites and settings throughout Wales over a 3-year period. Small groups of people living with dementia and their carers will use a specially developed app on a phone or a tablet to rate indoor and outside spaces, generating summary reports for discussion between site representatives and the participants to review the feedback, identify priorities and plan and implement any improvements (where this is possible). The principles of the project focus on community networks and continuous learning. This ties in perfectly with the work we have already started inviting feedback on our visitor centre facilities.

The project group have a health care setting signed up (Tremadog hospital), an urban setting (C&C Swansea), a rural community (Porthmadog) and now NRW as an organisation that manages access to outdoor space, linked to wellbeing.

Along with the other project partners we will ensure that Covid-19 compliance and public and staff safety are number one priority if the project does go ahead – and there are a range of options in terms of dates and methods of gathering data over the 3-year project period to enable this. We are waiting to hear whether the funding bid has been approved.

Calon LGBT+

The Calon LGBT+ Network provides support, guidance and networking opportunities for NRW's LGBT+ staff members and allies who wish to support LGBT+ equality

Currently there are 50 formal members, with 120 staff following the Calon Yammer page. There are no formal meetings, but ad hoc calls throughout the year.

We commemorated Trans Day of Remembrance (20/11/20), sponsorship of Pride Cymru's online week (August 2020), encouraged staff to partake in Stonewall's LGBT Action Plan for Wales survey (August 2020), Pansexual Day of Visibility (26/5/20), International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHoBiT) (17/5/2020).

The Network plan to publish guidance on use of personal pronouns in the organisation, celebrating other International Days of visibility, contributing to Stonewall's Workplace Equality index submission which was put on hold due to Covid-19.

Christian Fellowship

Over the last year the Network have continued to enjoy fellowship and mutual support within the staff network via our Yammer group pages, which is a private group by invite – merely to avoid others in Yammer being flooded through auto-feed which distract from the main “business” purpose of Yammer. Membership is open to those who are active participators and observers with an interest in what the Network do. Meetings are held on a fortnightly basis over lunchtime.

In meetings the Network share mutual support through Bible study, discussion and prayer. Many have never met face to face but feel connected as colleagues through this. The Network have also found it important to pray for the wellbeing of our organisation and staff really appreciate NRW’s contribution to staff wellbeing in the workplace by allowing Staff Networks to operate in this way and thus create a happy and diverse workforce where staff can be “who they are” and let others be “who they are”.

This year has been a very different and difficult year for everyone with the challenges of dealing with the ongoing impact on our lives due to Covid-19 pandemic. For the Christian Fellowship Staff Network the continued support given by NRW has been more important than previously.

Currently there are 30 members, a slight increase, however as a result of enforced homeworking this has facilitated an increase in numbers of members participating in the meetings held. The Monday morning 20 minute “prayer coffee break” which was a face-to-face meeting with a handful of attendees in a meeting room in Aberystwyth has now become a larger virtual meeting allowing us to gather from across Wales for prayer/worship and mutual support which has been a lifeline to all in enforced isolation. Again, more people are attending the fortnightly lunchtime meetings. Without this staff network the last 10 months would have a much more difficult time. The Network give a massive thank you once again to NRW for contributing to the wellbeing of staff and facilitating these Staff Networks. The Networks hearts and prayers go out to everyone in NRW who have suffered loss or illness and severe disruption to their lives as a result of this pandemic.

Neurodiversity

This is a new network which was set up in October 2020 following much interest and activity on the Neurodiversity Yammer group.

A group of neurodivergent staff started the network to give other neurodivergent colleagues, their managers and colleagues who have neurodivergent family members access to useful information and a place to ask questions. The network is open to all staff.

The aim of the network is to help become a more inclusive workplace and put into practice NRW’s commitment to diversity and inclusion, reduce the stigma around neurodivergent and make staff feel safe, empowered and informed.

To date there are 21 members of the network who meet on a monthly basis.

A member of the network has been raising awareness of neurodivergent conditions online as part of our Wednesday webinar sessions, these have been very popular with a number of managers attending, helping them in gaining a better understanding of the condition and

what as a manager they can do to help staff and reduce stress in any way.

A two-hour Introduction to Neurodiversity course was held at the beginning of December, 15 staff attended the online course and feedback was positive with attendees having a better understanding of the different ways we all think and understand and the different skills we all have which are so important in an inclusive and diverse workplace.

The Network are in the process of drafting a calendar of their work for the next 12 months. The Network are in discussion with Digital Communication in creating a page on the intranet with useful and supportive information for staff and managers.

Annex 3

Self-disclosure stats 2020 – 2021

Age Analysis

	Jan 17			Jan 18			Dec 18			Feb 20			Jan 21		
<25	47	2.5%		57	3.0%		56	2.9%		62	3.1%		73	3.3%	
25-35	337	18.2%		345	18.1%		329	17.0%		401	19.9%		429	19.2%	
35-45	596	32.2%		596	31.3%		582	30.0%		605	30.0%		654	29.2%	
45-55	594	32.1%		596	31.3%		628	32.4%		619	30.7%		663	29.6%	
55-65	264	14.3%		291	15.3%		324	16.7%		309	15.3%		385	17.2%	
65+	11	0.6%		17	0.9%		20	1.0%		18	0.9%		33	1.5%	
Total	1849	100%		1902	100%		1939	100%		2014	100%		2237	100%	

	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
Age Profile: Full time and Part time staff										
Part time										
<25	8	0.4%	4	0.2%	4	0.2%			1	0.0%
25-35	27	1.5%	26	1.4%	37	1.9%			38	1.7%
35-45	127	6.9%	124	6.5%	111	5.7%			111	5.0%
45-55	89	4.8%	90	4.7%	98	5.1%			105	4.7%
55-65	49	2.7%	53	2.8%	62	3.2%			72	3.2%
65+	5	0.3%	8	0.4%	7	0.4%			10	0.4%
Total	305	16.5%	305	16.0%	319	16.5%			337	15.1%
<25	39	2.1%	53	2.8%	52	2.7%			72	3.2%
25-35	310	16.8%	319	16.8%	292	15.1%			391	17.5%
35-45	469	25.4%	472	24.8%	471	24.3%			543	24.3%
45-55	505	27.3%	506	26.6%	530	27.3%			558	24.9%
55-65	215	11.6%	238	12.5%	262	13.5%			313	14.0%
65+	6	0.3%	9	0.5%	13	0.7%			23	1.0%
Total	1544	83.5%	1597	84.0%	1620	83.5%			1900	84.9%
Total Overall	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%			2237	100%

Disability Analysis	Jan 17			Jan 18			Dec 18			Feb 20			Jan 21		
	No	1043	56.4%		1164	61.2%		1217	64.0%		1230	61.1%		1329	59.4%
Yes	46	2.5%		55	2.9%		62	3.3%		65	3.2%		70	3.1%	
Prefer not to say	760	41.1%		683	35.9%		660	34.7%		719	35.7%		838	37.5%	
Total	1849	100%		1902	100%		1939	102%		2014	100%		2237	100%	
Gender Analysis	Jan 17			Jan 18			Dec 18			Feb 20			Jan 21		
	Male	1055	57.1%		1071	56.3%		1079	55.6%		1099	54.6%		1225	54.8%
Female	794	42.9%		831	43.7%		860	44.4%		915	45.4%		1012	45.2%	
Total	1849	100%		1902	100%		1939	100%		2014	100%		2237	100%	
Female in Leadership Roles	9	29%		11	36.7%		10	34.5%		12	48%		10	50.0%	

Sexual Orientation Analysis	Jan 17			Jan 18			Dec 18			Feb 20			Jan 21		
	% of Workforce identifying as LGB	39	2.1%		42	2.2%		47	2.4%		48	2.4%		53	2.4%
Heterosexual/Straight	944	51.1%		1058	55.6%		1101	56.8%		1115	55.4%		1214	54.3%	
Prefer not to say	866	46.8%		802	42.2%		791	40.8%		851	42.3%		970	43.4%	
Gay woman/Lesbian	10	0.54%		13	0.68%		15	0.77%		12	0.60%		15	0.67%	
Gay man	9	0.49%		10	0.53%		11	0.57%		12	0.60%		11	0.49%	
Bisexual	12	0.6%		9	0.5%		11	0.6%		12	0.6%		17	0.8%	
Other	8	0.4%		10	0.5%		10	0.5%		12	0.6%		10	0.4%	
Total	1849	100%		1902	100%		1939	100%		2062	100%		2237	100%	

Race or Ethnicity Analysis	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
	% of staff who identify themselves as Black, Minority Ethnic	28	1.51%	29	1.52%	27	1.39%	29	1.44%	34
White	1068	57.8%	1196	62.9%	1253	64.6%	1272	63.2%	1371	61.3%
Prefer not to say	753	40.7%	678	35.6%	660	34.0%	713	35.4%	832	37.2%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	11	0.6%	10	0.5%	10	0.5%	12	0.6%	14	0.6%
Asian/Asian British	12	0.6%	11	0.6%	10	0.5%	10	0.5%	14	0.6%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%
Other ethnic group	3	0.2%	5	0.3%	4	0.2%	5	0.2%	4	0.2%
Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%	2014	100%	2237	100%

Religion, belief or non-belief Analysis	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
	% of staff who identify their Religion, belief or non-belief	521	28.2%	561	29.5%	579	29.9%	565	28.1%	587
Have no faith or belief	375	20.3%	430	22.6%	455	23.5%	463	23.0%	515	23.0%
Have a faith or belief	521	28.2%	561	29.5%	579	29.9%	565	28.1%	587	26.2%
Prefer not to Say	953	51.5%	911	47.9%	905	46.7%	986	49.0%	273	12.2%
Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%	2014	100%	2237	100%

Caring Responsibilities Analysis

	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
Have no Caring Responsibility	575	31.1%	661	34.8%	692	35.7%	684	34.0%	739	33.0%
Prefer not to Say	862	46.6%	783	41.2%	770	39.7%	836	41.5%	956	42.7%
Have a caring Responsibility	412	22.3%	458	24.1%	477	24.6%	494	24.5%	542	24.2%
Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%	2014	100%	2237	100%

Of those with a Caring Responsibility	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
Primary carer of child/children (under 18)	286	69.4%	319	69.7%	324	67.9%	339	68.6%	369	68.1%
Secondary carer	60	14.6%	65	14.2%	71	14.9%	73	14.8%	82	15.1%
Multiple caring responsibilities	31	7.5%	39	8.5%	42	8.8%	44	8.9%	47	8.7%
Primary carer of older person (65+)	14	3.4%	15	3.3%	21	4.4%	20	4.0%	25	4.6%
Primary carer of disabled child/children	11	2.67%	10	2.18%	9	1.89%	8	1.62%	10	1.85%
Primary carer of disabled adult (18 and over)	10	2.4%	10	2.2%	10	2.1%	10	2.0%	9	1.7%
Total	412	100%	458	100%	477	100%	494	100%	542	100%

Welsh Language Ability	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
	Staff who have completed MyNRW Welsh Language Level declaration	1558	84.3%	1738	91.4%	1758	90.7%	1873	93.0%	2128
% of staff who have declared they are able to communicate in Welsh at various levels	1488	80.5%	1667	87.6%	1694	87.4%	1811	89.9%	2041	91.2%
Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	662	42.5%	739	42.5%	745	42.4%	801	44.2%	915	40.9%
Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	345	22.1%	394	22.7%	391	22.2%	405	22.4%	438	19.6%
No return completed	291	15.7%	164	8.6%	181	9.3%	141	7.0%	109	4.9%
Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	213	13.7%	229	13.2%	232	13.2%	267	14.7%	310	13.9%
Fluency in spoken Welsh	169	10.8%	193	11.1%	198	11.3%	204	11.3%	225	10.1%
Able to discuss some work matters confidently	99	6.4%	112	6.4%	128	7.3%	134	7.4%	153	6.8%
No understanding of Welsh	70	4.5%	71	4.1%	64	3.6%	62	3.4%	87	3.9%
Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%	2014	110%	2237	100%

Welsh Language by Directorate

Jan-21	Total	OPS	FCS	CCC
0 No understanding of Welsh	87	50	9	6
1 Able to pronounce basic Welsh phrases and names	915	524	72	23
2 Able to construct basic Welsh sentences	438	224	38	18
3 Able to discuss some work matters confidently	153	85	12	6
4 Fluency in spoken Welsh	225	141	19	11
5 Fluency in spoken and written Welsh	310	189	18	35
None	109	70	6	7
Total	2237	1283	174	106

National Identity Analysis

	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20	Jan 21	
Prefer not to say	690	37.3%	619	32.5%	597	30.8%		766	34.2%
Welsh	542	29%	599	31.5%	640	33.0%		701	31.3%
British	499	27%	551	29.0%	566	29.2%		612	27.4%
English	65	3.5%	74	3.9%	81	4.2%		90	4.0%
Other	35	1.9%	42	2.2%	39	2.0%		48	2.1%
Scottish	14	0.8%	13	0.7%	13	0.7%		16	0.7%
Northern Irish	4	0.2%	4	0.2%	3	0.2%		4	0.2%

Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%		2237	100%
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Working Arrangements

	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
Full-time	1544	83.5%	1597	84%	1620	84%	1690	84%	1900	84.9%
Part-time	305	16.5%	305	16%	319	16%	324	16%	337	15.1%
Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%	2014	100%	2237	100%
Of those who disclosed Working Arrangement										
	Jan 17		Jan 18		Dec 18		Feb 20		Jan 21	
Full-time - Male	992	53.7%	1007	52.9%	1017	52.4%	1028	51.4%	1150	51.4%
Full-time - Female	552	29.9%	590	31.0%	603	31.1%	662	32.9%	750	33.5%
Part-time - Male	63	3.4%	64	3.4%	62	3.2%	71	3.5%	75	3.4%
Part-time - Female	242	13.1%	241	12.7%	257	13.3%	253	12.5%	262	11.7%
Total	1849	100%	1902	100%	1939	100%	2014	100%	2237	100%



Annex 4

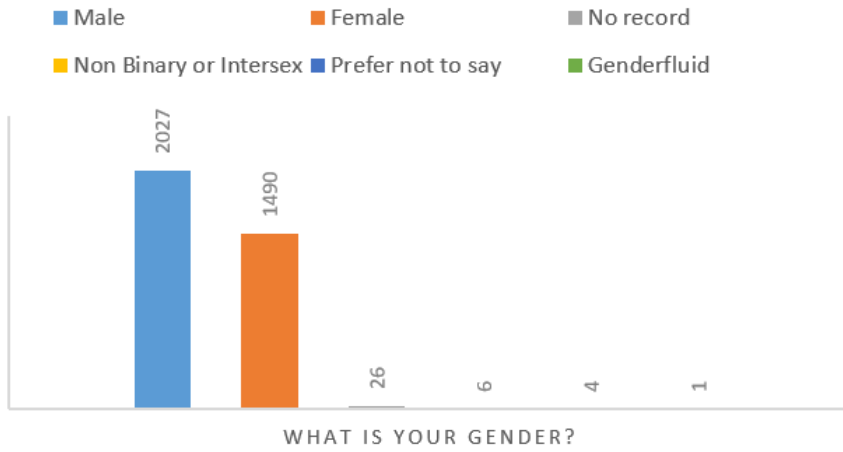
Recruitment Statistics

From the internal recruitment there were 312 applications, 4 requested a guaranteed interview and 3 received a guaranteed interview. Their EDI demographics are counted in the overall staff analysis.

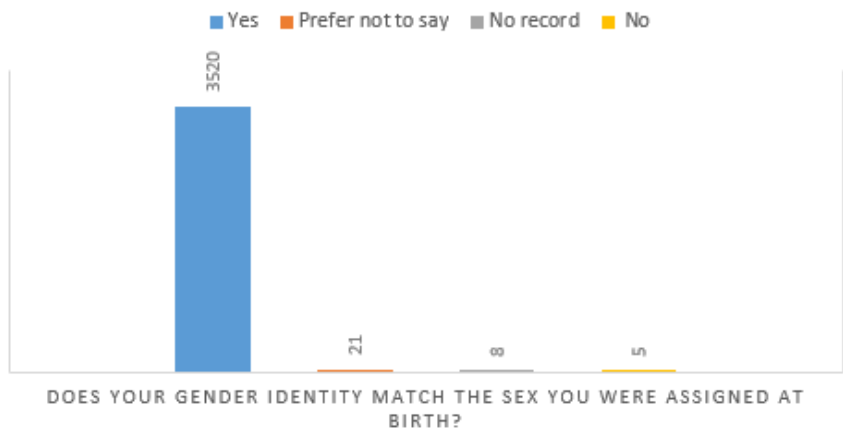
This data is based upon 3554 applications to vacancies from the period of 1st April 2020 to the 31st January 2021

The topics are based upon the questions asked on the NRW external application form in the section titled “Equalities Monitoring Form Recruitment”

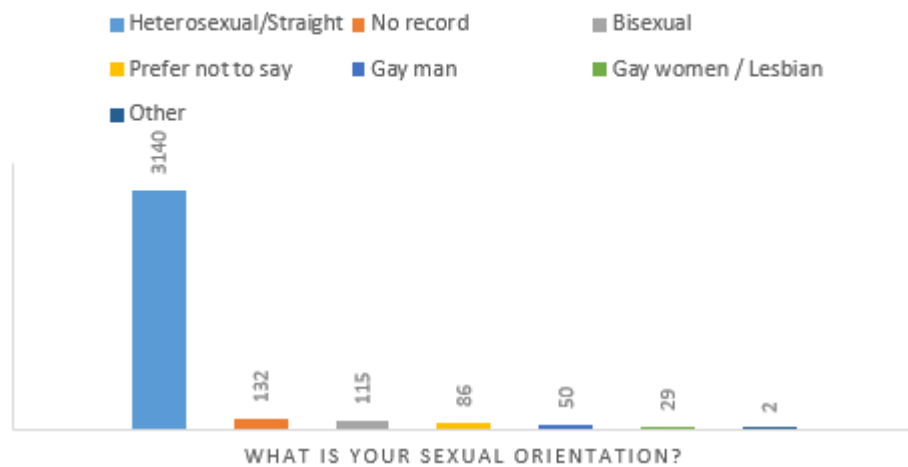
GENDER



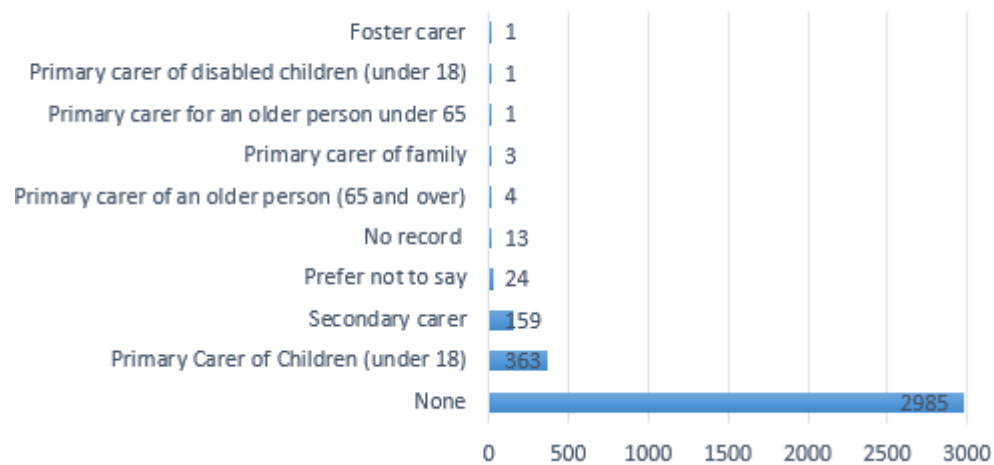
GENDER IDENTITY



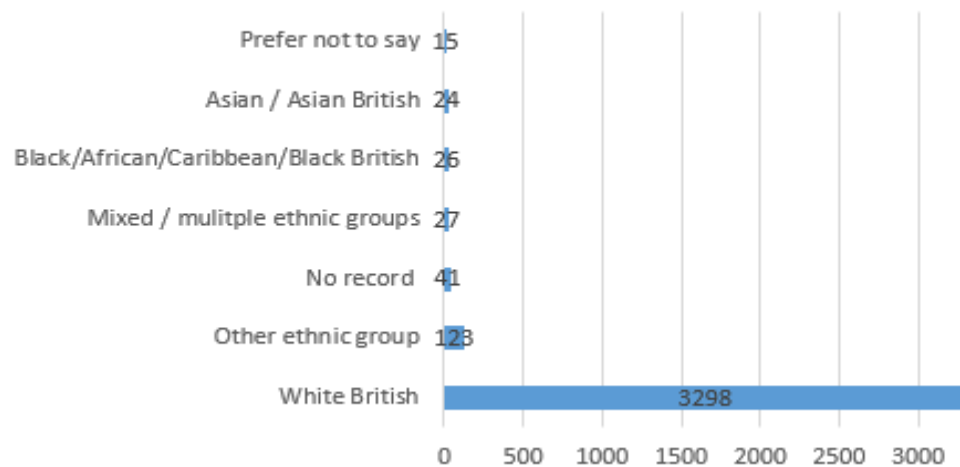
SEXUAL ORIENTATION



What caring responsibilities do you have?

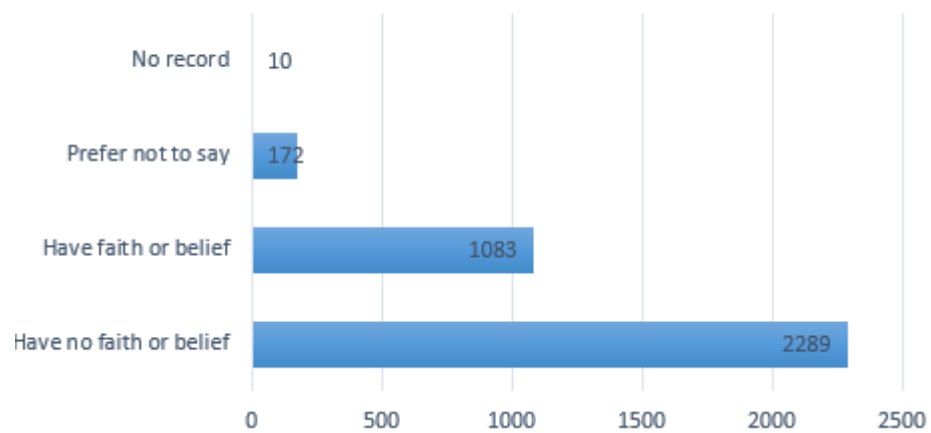


What is your race?

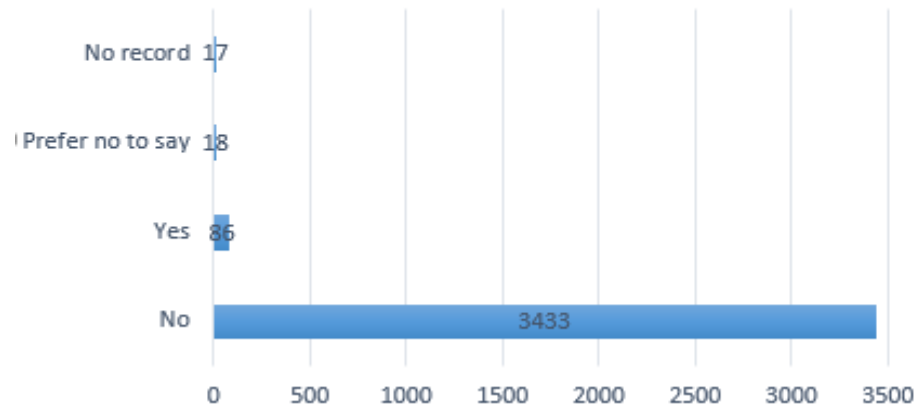


What is your religion, belief or non-belief?

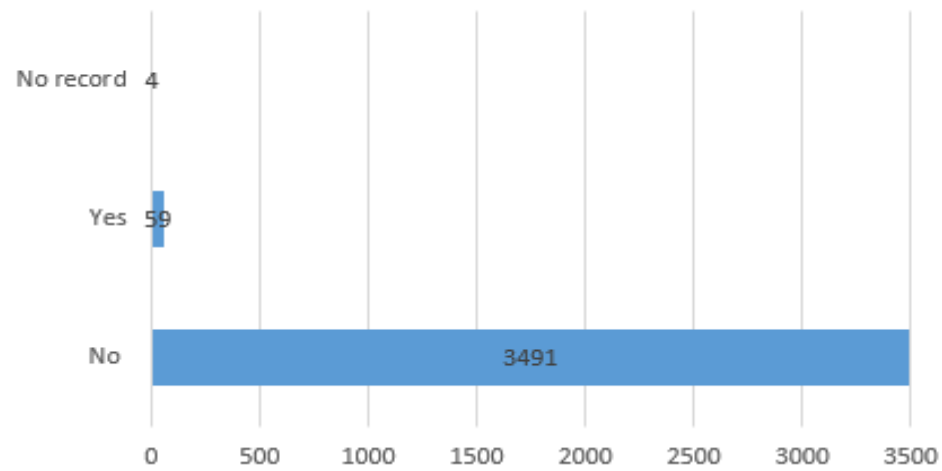
We will report on belief or non belief for EDI 2020 report



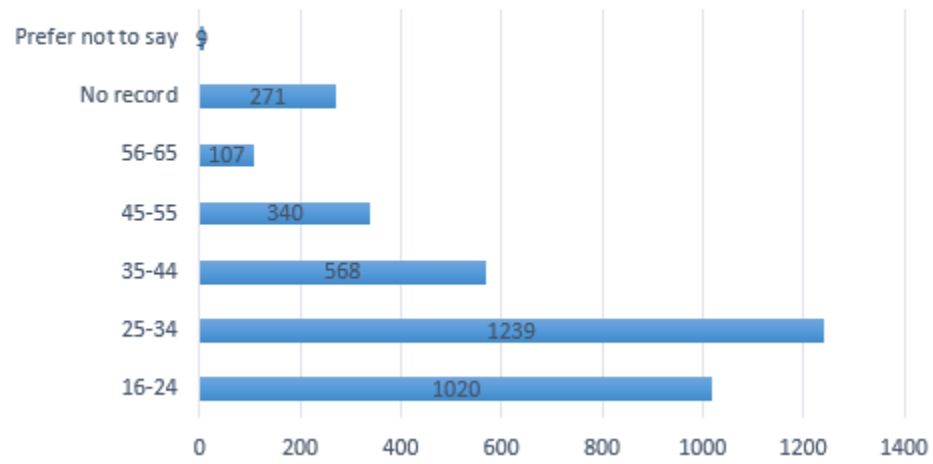
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



Guaranteed Interview Requested



What is your age group?





Cyngor Cyllido Addysg
Uwch Cymru
Higher Education Funding
Council for Wales



Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)



Ymddiriedolaeth GIG
Prifysgol Felindre
Velindre University
NHS Trust



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board



Wales's Public Body Equality Partnership Strategic Equality Objectives 2020-2024

Foreword

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires listed bodies to review their existing equality objectives at least every four years.

In line with recommendations from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and The Welsh Government, the duty represents an opportunity for public sector bodies in Wales to work together to recognise and collectively impact against the challenges set out in the Equality and Human Rights Commission ['Is Wales Fairer report, 2018'](#).

The Wales Public Bodies Equality Partnership represents a group of public bodies committed to working together to unite behind shared equality objectives. This approach promotes smarter working and creates opportunity for shared engagement, learning and intervention to achieve greater impact across the public sector and public services in Wales, contributing significantly to delivering equality.

Emma Tobutt,

Chair - Wales Public Bodies Equality Partnership

Shared Intent: 'A Fairer Society and a More Equal Wales'

Wales Public Body Equality Partnership - Long Term Objectives

Shared long term objectives: we will work together to:	Contribution to Welsh Government long term aims (Currently these are draft)
<p>1. Increase workforce diversity and Inclusion</p>	<p>Aim 1 - Elimination of inequality caused by poverty. Aim 2: Strong and progressive equality and human right protections for everyone in Wales. Aim 4- Wales is a world leader for gender equality. Aim 5: Elimination of identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying. Aim 7 - Everyone in Wales is able to participate in political, public and everyday life. Aim 8 - The Welsh public sector leads the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers.</p>
<p>2. Eliminate pay gaps</p>	<p>Aim 1 - Elimination of inequality caused by poverty. Aim 2: Strong and progressive equality and human right protections for everyone in Wales. Aim 4- Wales is a world leader for gender equality. Aim 8 - The Welsh public sector leads the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers.</p>
<p>3. Engage with the community</p>	<p>Aim 1 - Elimination of inequality caused by poverty. Aim 2: Strong and progressive equality and human right protections for everyone in Wales. Aim 3 - The needs and rights of people who share protected characteristics are at the forefront of the design and delivery of all public services in Wales. Aim 4- Wales is a world leader for gender equality. Aim 5: Elimination of identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying. Aim 6 - A Wales of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal. Aim 7 - Everyone in Wales is able to participate in political, public and everyday life. Aim 8 - The Welsh public sector leads the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers.</p>

<p>4. Ensure equality is embedded into the procurement / commissioning process and is managed throughout delivery</p>	<p>Aim 1 - Elimination of inequality caused by poverty. Aim 2: Strong and progressive equality and human right protections for everyone in Wales. Aim 4- Wales is a world leader for gender equality. Aim 5: Elimination of identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying. Aim 8 - The Welsh public sector leads the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers.</p>
<p>5. Ensure service delivery reflects individual need</p>	<p>Aim 1 - Elimination of inequality caused by poverty. Aim 2: Strong and progressive equality and human right protections for everyone in Wales. Aim 3 - The needs and rights of people who share protected characteristics are at the forefront of the design and delivery of all public services in Wales. Aim 4- Wales is a world leader for gender equality. Aim 5: Elimination of identity-based abuse, harassment, hate crime and bullying. Aim 6 - A Wales of cohesive communities that are resilient, fair and equal. Aim 8 - The Welsh public sector leads the way as exemplar inclusive and diverse organisations and employers.</p>






Strategic Equality Plan - Outcomes and Outcome Measures

Shared Long Term Objective	Long Term Outcome	Intended Outcome By 2024	Outcome Measure	Steps That We Will Take To Meet The Intended Outcome
<p>1. Increase workforce diversity and inclusion</p>	<p>Our organisations will reflect a fair and inclusive environment, where all people feel valued and can have equal opportunities to fulfil their potential within their organisation.</p>	<p>By 2022, we will have aligned our own employment data reporting to match that of the Welsh Government in both format and reporting dates. By 2024 we will have evidence of how we reach out to minority groups and those living in poverty to gain employment with us.</p>	<p>Employment data Engagement profile data</p>	<p>Standardise data collection to enable benchmarking to ensure consistency of analysis and reporting of data.</p> <p>Remove barriers and enhance recruitment & selection policies, procedures and practices through the lens of equality.</p> <p>Ensure values & behaviours promote a fair, equal and inclusive environment throughout the organisation.</p> <p>Develop shared initiatives to target unrepresented groups to increase employability e.g, work experience, mentoring opportunities, apprenticeship, academy, and internships.</p>
<p>2. Eliminate pay gaps</p>	<p>Disclosure of information is part of organisational culture, staff understand why data is collected, ensuring that necessary data is only collated (GDPR)</p>	<p>Accurate data across the public sector which provides analysis across protected characteristics.</p>	<p>Employment profile data Pay gap methodology and analysis.</p>	<p>Share and standardise systems for collating and analysing data across bodies, supporting staff to disclose information.</p>

			<p>Professional Development opportunities</p> <p>Uptake of different work patterns at different levels.</p>	<p>Agree a standard methodology for defining and collating pay gaps, interpreting/ communicating.</p> <p>Standard rounding methodology.</p> <p>Share strategies for workforce planning.</p> <p>Join together to create workforce development opportunities.</p> <p>Joint management and leadership training (HR Group).</p> <p>Share practice on work patterns and ways of working.</p>
3. Engage with the community.	<p>Diverse communities throughout Wales will be actively engaged in our organisations' work. Strategies, policies, and decisions will be co-produced with diverse individuals. People's experiences and views will shape our organisations</p>	<p>By 2024 we will be able to demonstrate and evidence co-production of our strategies, policies, service changes and decisions</p>	<p>Engagement profile data.</p> <p>Consultation and engagement - protected characteristic data is produced/published, including supplementary evidence such as surveys, and case studies as appropriate</p>	<p>Offering shared events and engagement opportunities.</p> <p>Engage directly with diverse communities to enable representation at shared events</p> <p>We will explicitly identify contributions from our engagement and co-production in our strategies, policies and decisions. (you said- we did)</p>

<p>4. Ensure equality is embedded into the procurement / commissioning process and is managed throughout delivery.</p>	<p>Equality is embedded into procurement principles which are operational and evidenced.</p>	<p>Principles are in place with updated organisational policies. Procurement data will be in place and will evidence diversity of procurement.</p>	<p>Publish agreed procurement principles and procurement data</p>	<p>Agree a set of procurement principles for organisations to commit to.</p> <p>Revising organisational policies to reflect principles.</p> <p>Work together to train and support staff to deliver the principles.</p> <p>Share practice.</p>
<p>5. Ensure service delivery reflects individual need.</p>	<p>People and shared good practice actively influences delivery of services to meet individual needs.</p>	<p>By 2024, we will be able to evidence operational systems and ways of working that ensure individual needs are understood and respected whilst accessing and receiving services.</p> <p>By 2024 we will have collaborative systems in place for co-producing.</p> <p>A framework for adopting and sharing good practice.</p>	<p>We will monitor and report complaints, concerns and feedback from people using our services to identify areas for improvement.</p> <p>Surveys</p> <p>Questionnaires</p> <p>Citizen Journeys</p> <p>Co-production evidence.</p>	<p>Share learning and examples of positive changes to services, demonstrating dignity, respect and understanding of communication and access needs.</p> <p>To have in place shared mechanism for co-production.</p> <p>To have in place a framework for recording examples of and sharing and adopting good practice.</p> <p>Offer collaborative awareness training around understanding service users.</p>

Application of the 5 Ways of Working - Well-being of Future Generations (Wales)

Ways of working	How this has been applied
 <p>Prevention</p>	<p>The objectives have been informed through understanding inequality insight evidenced through ‘Is Wales fairer’ – The state of equality and human rights, the Equality and Human Rights Commissions review of the public sector equality duty, 2019 and information from our collective organisations. The consultation process included engagement with people from a range of diverse communities and backgrounds.</p>
 <p>Long term</p>	<p>The high-level objectives are recognised as long-term objectives that will exist beyond the four-year cycle of the SEP. Organisations uniting behind the objectives will achieve greater impact for future generations in enjoying a fairer society and more equal Wales</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p>	<p>Public Bodies will unite behind shared objectives and are committed to working together to meet the objectives. Partnership bodies have signed a ‘memorandum of understanding’ which outlines their commitment to collaborative working.</p>
 <p>Integration</p>	<p>The high-level objectives have been informed through insight, they align to Welsh Government long term equality aims and contribute to a more equal Wales (FGA) and a fairer society (Equality act, 2010). Application of the five ways of working has supported integration across duties. Each of the partnership bodies will integrate the shared objectives within their own strategy and planning.</p>
 <p>Involvement</p>	<p>Stakeholders and recipients of public services were involved in the development of the objectives. Through the delivery of the objectives the partnership has committed to engage with people and communities in the design of services that will ensure equality of outcome and services that meet peoples needs.</p>



Paper Title:	Learning Lessons from Flood Risk Management Projects
Paper Reference:	21-03-B10
Paper Sponsored By:	Gareth O’Shea, Executive Director of Operations
Paper Presented By:	Mike Evans, Head of Operations South Wales Central

Purpose of Paper:	To inform the Board of how NRW is learning lessons in community and stakeholder engagement from its delivery of flood risk management projects, notably the Roath and Dinas Powys schemes.
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Issue

1. In recent years we have noted a shift in the public landscape when we deliver capital flood risk management (FRM) schemes. This seems to coincide with a greater emphasis on and identification of local community, an increasing role of social media, and a progressive change in our approach to managing flood risk, where we have moved further away from reactionary investment in flood-hit communities to a more predictive risk based method.
2. Two of our recent schemes (Roath, 2017; Dinas Powys, 2019) have encountered significant issues during different stages of delivery due to public opposition to our proposals. We identified the proposals as potentially controversial as we recognised that they would have, and be perceived to have, an impact on local communities and environments (e.g. parks, ancient woodland, rural amenity).

Our engagement journey

3. We are evolving as we embed the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources (SMNR) principles and ways of working (notably collaboration and engagement and public participation) in our staff and integrate them to our project delivery, alongside the new leadership and direction. This is leading us to a better place, as we grow to be a better organisation that delivers better outcomes for the people and environment of Wales. The issues that have arisen on recent projects, whilst challenging, present opportunities for us to learn and develop.
4. This is already happening, for example revisiting the options appraisal and engagement on the Dinas Powys project, as we realised that engagement may not have been as effective as was needed. This resulted in us changing our preferred option, as the

previous choice was potentially unviable. We are also utilising the services of the National Flood Forum to help us engage more effectively with flood-affected residents in Dinas Powys. We have learnt lessons and taken a more effective approach on recent flood schemes such as Llyn Tegid (Bala) and Ammanford.

5. In terms of community and stakeholder engagement when delivering flood schemes, we have historically taken a “Doing to” approach (ref Figure 1 below). In recent years we have moved to “Doing for”, primarily through consultation, but with some engagement in some project instances. We are looking to strengthen our approach to engagement and develop a “Doing with” attitude and approach. We are aware that it may be challenging to co-design and co-produce new infrastructure in some circumstances and that our approach needs to be proportionate, as a co-design approach will not be necessary on every project.

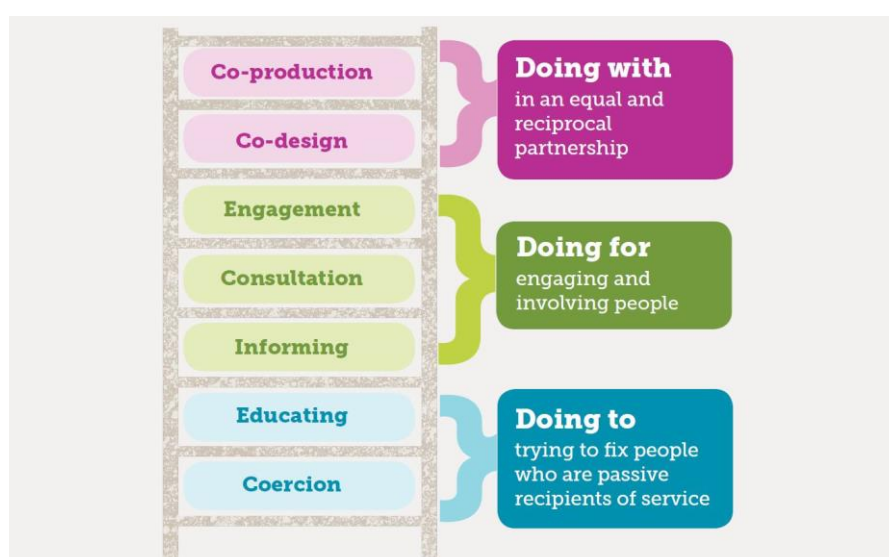


Figure 1: The ladder of engagement

Lessons we are learning

6. Through project team workshops and post-project reviews, including listening to stakeholder feedback, we have identified the following key engagement lessons from recent flood risk management projects. We have been sharing and learning these across the programme for other projects.

Lesson we're learning	How we are learning and improving
When to engage – it is possible to engage too early as well as too late	<p>Programme level / Flood Awareness Wales engagement when flood risk is identified ref Communities at Risk register. Manage expectation and earliness to avoid consultation fatigue.</p> <p>Project engagement early for input to project / objectives / outcomes and influence our decisions.</p> <p>Be clear on project stages and processes – misunderstanding causes conflict where it is perceived we are further ahead than we are.</p> <p>Consult on options (e.g. draft Outline Business Case) – not on a preferred option, as viewed as unchangeable done deal.</p>

	Some consultees will not be forthcoming until options (even preferred option) are presented – so refresh engagement at each stage. Consultation should have an increasing trajectory through a project.
Do not assume community support for a flood scheme / option (avoid complacency)	Identify stakeholder groups – include those affected but not benefiting. Consider specific community issues – what do they value, feel protective of? Put ourselves in the community, be visible – don't consult in a nearby village hall, get into the heart of the community – e.g. bring back the 'big pink trailer' and knock doors. Note change in engaging due to pandemic, with limited face-to-face events, moving to virtual engagement – e.g. use of Citizen Space (Stephenson Street). Change our mindset: don't think "no one has objected", think "no one has read our consultation" – undertake further work to engage people. The public is not a single entity, they are a disparate group of various individuals to be treated broadly. Unlikely to obtain "public support". Use elected representatives to build community links and messaging. Opposition can be populist; support can be unpopular.
Unengaged engagement – ignoring / not reading information	Share messages in more innovative, accessible and understandable ways. Consider use of local champions and social media paid pushes. Good engagement takes time and money – assign resources and consider dedicated comms / media support on complex / contentious projects.
Distrust of NRW, spread of false information	Embedded distrust of NRW (Welsh Government body, other unrelated local issues). Seek to build trust (ref above) – community problem (or perception thereof), not NRW solution. Be proactive and robust to dispel mistruths and present evidence-based facts, sharing in innovative, accessible and understandable ways. Try to understand behavioural issues, as can not always persuade people with evidence.
Overarching FRM comms strategy	Deliver wider, broader, communications strategy on NRW's Flood Risk Management (FRM) programme, to raise profile, provide public resources and demonstrate NRW's good practice and outcomes delivered (i.e. show trustworthy).

Way forward

7. We are raising awareness of the importance of community and stakeholder engagement amongst our project teams and have seen improvements and evidence of best practice across the programme. We are also upskilling our project teams, providing sessions on the principles of SMNR applied to project delivery, discussion of Participation Cymru principles, involving Place-based Comms colleagues more in project teams, embracing use of new online engagement tools such as Citizen Space (as well as developing this tool to give us more value), providing training by Co-Production Network for Wales, seeking to incorporate the new Customer Experience Strategy to project delivery and involve the Consultation Institute. We shall continue to identify, record and share lessons and best practice on community and stakeholder engagement across the programme and teams, including with suppliers through the Next Generation Frameworks. Finally,

we are also supporting our staff to ensure their personal resilience and well-being when they are placed in difficult situations.

8. These changes are crucial as our teams deal with increasingly complex and contentious issues. For example, developing capital schemes rapidly and deploying individual flood resilience measures in post-storm flood recovery communities, asset maintenance and withdrawal, or coastal adaptation and the protection of agricultural land.
9. We appreciate the Board's ongoing public and political support for our strategic flood risk work and decisions, that helps deliver projects for communities most at flood risk.

Equality impact assessment (EqIA)

10. No issues have arisen to date with the equality of our consultation, as this is considered in each Communications Strategy and shall continue to be so.