

SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE 10TH LWEC PARTNERS' BOARD MEETING

22ND NOVEMBER 2011, FOREST RESEARCH, ALICE HOLT, SURREY

Item 1: Welcome and actions from last meeting

1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees and there was a round table of introductions. Apologies were received from MRC and LGA.

1.2 Mary Barkham reported that the reorganisation of the Directorate (requested by Partners at the last meeting) had taken place and advised Partners to be aware that the Directorate resource was now less and could therefore not respond to all of the requests for events, workshops etc. She added that the amendments to the formal Co-funding Partnership Agreement documents had been enacted as agreed, and the documents have now been sent to the Partner Support Unit (PSU) representatives for signature. She requested that they are returned as soon as possible.

1.3 John Rea reported that, as requested by Partners, a review of the LWEC Environmental Research Database (now renamed 'Envirobase') had been conducted. The Review Group concluded that there is value in Envirobase but the tool is vulnerable as it is currently not fully up-to-date. They recommended that Envirobase should be maintained with an immediate focus on updating and extending the records from LWEC Partners and also on encouraging greater use of the database through training and publicity. John added that the Review Group were content to be retained to provide an advisory function going forwards.

1.4 The Board **agreed** to endorse the recommendations of the Review Group, with the addition that a further review should be conducted after 12-18 months to evaluate whether the improvements have been achieved. A report on this should be brought back to the Partners' Board (PB) if there are any issues.

1.5 The Chair ran through the rest of the actions from the last meeting. Mary reported that the funding for the Climate Change Impacts Report Card was now in place, with two pilots ('Water' and 'Biodiversity') to be conducted initially.

1.6 The Board requested that information on the development of the Public Engagement Strategic Advisory Group and public engagement in LWEC generally should be circulated as it becomes available, rather than waiting until the next PB meeting in May 2012.

Action 1: Partners to ensure that the signed Co-Funding Partnership Agreement documents are returned to the Directorate as soon as possible

Action 2: LWEC SAG to circulate info on PE development as it becomes available, as well as reporting to the next PB meeting

Item 2: Business Advisory Board (BAB) report

2.1 Colin Drummond summarised the outcomes of the last two BAB meetings. The BAB are enthusiastic about the business opportunities that could arise from the National Ecosystem Assessment, and were pleased to see the action that LWEC has taken in the Resources Challenge area. They see recycle, resources and future cities as core areas that need to be taken forward, and are also interested in social/behavioural change research and biomass. The focus of the next BAB meeting (January) will be regulation, which Caroline Spelman is attending. The BAB will be interested to see

the outcome of the mid-term review. In his report Colin highlighted that the BAB would like to see LWEC develop a cooperative approach where, rather than simply providing foresight or showcasing ideas, objectives are shared with decision makers (business and government) with a view to developing new business or regulatory approaches or technologies. The BAB would like to aim for business input into LWEC accredited activities at an early stage.

2.2 The Board thanked Colin and the BAB for their efforts. They emphasised that the end goal should be for not only business but policy and social input into accredited activities. They suggested that more should be done to link the BAB with the Scottish 2020 group, and to identify how the BAB can help advise ongoing strategic development for LWEC. Colin advised that prioritisation is key, and that from a business perspective, two fundamental priorities would be to identify and focus the areas where a) there is a large future market (big money) and b) the UK can get a competitive advantage.

Action 3: Colin to speak to James Curran re. linking the LWEC BAB to 2020 group

Item 3: Progress with delivery against scorecard objectives

3.1 Mary highlighted that the new LWEC strategy has just been produced [tabled at the meeting] and that the intention is for this to be updated twice a year after the PB meetings as needed.

3.2 Mary advised that the Delivery Group have been very valuable in progressing LWEC business, especially with regard to the scorecards. She emphasised the importance of Partners taking ownership of the scorecard Objectives – especially the Outcome Objectives (1-4) – and asked Partners to let her know by the 30th November if they are unwilling to take up the suggested PB lead/critical friend roles.

Action 4: Board members to email Mary by c.o.p. on 30th November if they are unable to take up the suggested PB lead/critical friend role

3.3 The Board advised that Infrastructure UK should be sufficiently involved in the development of Objective 9, and that it could be helpful to consult HM Treasury on the possibility of their engagement.

Item 3.1: Objective 13: Revised terms of reference for the Partners' Board, LWEC evaluation and risk register

3.1.1 Mary reported that the revised ToR had been circulated to the PSU. The Board advised that the relationship between the Board and the Directorate should be more explicit in the document, and that there should be a reference to legacy.

Action 5: Directorate to consider the Boards' comments in redrafting the ToR, and then circulate a final draft to the PSU by 30th November

3.1.2 Mary summarised the proposal to bring forward the LWEC evaluation to occur as soon as possible (complete in 2012) to allow improvements to take effect. The evaluation will take a positive approach, focussing on whether the right processes are in place to ensure success; making improvements were needed and building on successes to date. An extra PB meeting would be organised for early July 2012 to discuss the outcomes of the evaluation. The project manager would be based in NERC and will work with the RCUK Evaluation Team and an independent panel to conduct the evaluation. Mary asked Partners to suggest nominations for the panel.

3.1.3 The Board advised that it would be important to have panel representatives who were able to evaluate process and management, not only science, and people who were well-versed in the area of knowledge exchange between research and policy sectors. An international representative should also be included, as could someone from the BAB or from the panel involved in a recent review of the RCUK Energy Programme. The Board suggested several specific names to add to the list. They also advised that consideration should be given to whether the panel members were paid for their time.

Action 6: Board members to submit any further nominations for the independent panel, or any comments on the current list, to the Directorate by c.o.p. on the 30th November

Action 7: Directorate to organise additional Partners' Board meeting for early July 2012 to consider outcomes of the LWEC evaluation

3.1.4 It was suggested that it would be useful for Partners to submit a statement on their intentions from LWEC, and what impact they would like the Partnership to deliver, to help guide the evaluation. Defra has already submitted such a statement, which will be circulated as an example, along with a template for the Partners to populate.

Action 8: Directorate to circulate template and Defra example of 'what impact would you like LWEC to deliver' statements to Partners

Action 9: Partners to submit their LWEC impact statements to the Directorate

3.1.5 The Board advised that the articulation of what additional value the LWEC Partnership has/is going to provide should be a key focus of the evaluation (and that it is key to remember that LWEC is a partnership rather than a programme). Some Partners felt that consideration should be given to the extent to which the science outputs are evaluated, and that this should not only be an evaluation of processes.

3.1.6 The Board **agreed** to delegate final sign-off of the plans for the LWEC evaluation to the Delivery Group.

Action 10: Delivery Group to enact Board comments re. LWEC evaluation and take any further action needed to support the evaluation

3.1.7 Mary asked Partners for their comments on the draft risk register. Partners suggested that:

- Other registers capture the fact that managing risk changes the probability levels – this could be introduced to the LWEC register.
- The register needs to include the importance of developing the 'LWEC brand' without diluting Partners individual organisational loyalty.
- A clear risk is that Partners do not receive added value messages about LWEC – a method needs to be found of sharing these effectively.
- The influence of current spending cuts on overall LWEC impact should be a stronger risk than yellow.

Action 11: Board members to submit any further comments on the draft risk register to the Directorate by the 30th November, which will then be considered by the Delivery Group

Item 3.2: Objective 11: Lessons learnt from Flooding Strategy/UKWRIF

3.2.1 Andrew summarised the lessons that Partners should learn from the development of the flooding strategy and the UKWRIF, which he advised Partners to consider when planning/conducting any further strategic framework exercises. Both initiatives are now progressing well.

3.2.2 The Partners welcomed this document as a helpful tool for future work. They advised caution however over the comment [Annex F, Section (B), point (c)] that ‘there is a need to differentiate clearly between strategy and delivery’ – if strategy and delivery are separated too much this can lead to a product that is not fit for purpose.

Item 3.3: Objectives 5-10: Health Challenge

3.3.1 Andrew summarised the issues that had been encountered in trying to drive forward action in the Health Challenge. He explained that NERC have now offered to chair the Health Challenge Steering Group (CSG) and that the Challenge remit would be expanded to include wellbeing, which would link to the wellbeing approach taken in the National Ecosystem Assessment.

3.3.2 The Board agreed with the planned action for the Health CSG, but emphasised that this should only be a temporary measure to avoid overloading NERC’s resources. They highlighted the importance of linking this Challenge to the Societal and Ecosystems Challenges, and welcomed the inclusion of wellbeing into the remit. The Board added that this Challenge would need to coordinate with the ‘Lifelong health and wellbeing’ RCUK programme, and that the CSG should consider how business and third sector input could be involved.

Action 12: Health Challenge Steering Group to consider how best to involve business and third sector representatives in the Health Challenge work

Item 3.4: Objective 1: Contribution of LWEC to adaptation and mitigation

3.4.1 Mary asked Partners for their comments on the draft Objective 1 scorecard, asking them to advise particularly on the key things that the Partnership needs to do to deliver this Objective.

3.4.2 The Board advised that the deliverables should focus on what additional contribution LWEC can deliver over and above existing activities from the individual Partners and current cross-sector initiatives such as CCRA. This would therefore focus on current gaps/needs in knowledge, which are critical to identify to allow an adaptive management system to be put in place. They suggested that LWEC’s added value may not be directly energy related research for example – it could focus on applying a low-carbon energy system to the water system perhaps, or on the environmental impact of wind farms or biomass, or on low-carbon cities.

3.4.3 The Board commented that another key way for LWEC to add value would be to conduct mapping/collating of evidence to provide advice to policy-makers (e.g. the climate change impact report cards). The Board emphasised the importance of a demonstrable policy ‘pull’ in the deliverables, rather than just a research ‘push’, and thought that there should be a clear link between the accredited activities and the deliverables.

3.4.4 Mary emphasised that the Board needed to be clear on what they want to enable this action to occur. The Board **agreed** that Mary should finalise the deliverables of the Outcome Objectives with the relevant PB leads and the Delivery Group, and then circulate to the Board again for comment.

Resource is needed to enhance KE across accredited activities; a proposal will be circulated to Partners for two KE fellows.

Action 13: Directorate to finalise the deliverables of the Outcome Objective with the relevant PB leads and the Delivery Group, and then circulate to the Board again for comment

Action 14: Directorate to circulate a proposal for the knowledge exchange fellowships for Partner comments

Item 4: Prioritisation for LWEC

4.1 Simon Jackman introduced this item as a new way of thinking on whether specific areas should be identified for LWEC to focus on to allow the most impact to be achieved. He also highlighted the importance of translation of the LWEC Challenges to enable better communication with business and society.

4.2 The Partners generally welcomed the paper as a useful start, but made the following comments:

- There needs to be more structure around the method of identifying and defining ‘areas’. Some felt that the selected areas, while well-matched to research areas, were not so well-matched to policy. Perhaps it would be useful to conduct a review of policy areas and then focus on those instead, or perhaps a survey of what current policy requirements are.
- Some Partners queried why certain areas should be selected for a KE focus, as they felt this should be encouraged through the whole of LWEC.
- Need to define what is meant by ‘impact’.
- Construction is just a component of the built environment – rather use the latter terminology.
- In a time of dramatic change within the economic environment LWEC should be helping with Energy, Food and Green Economy & Jobs.
- Would like to see a process of prioritisation that led to a co-designed programme.
- Would be useful if the BAB could inform Partners of the key questions that require evidence provision, which would challenge funders to provide the necessary answers. It was noted that key challenges from a business perspective on any area would be whether the UK has the capability to provide the answers.
- There is not sufficient focus on the ‘Society’ part of the diagram.

4.3 The Chair summarised that the Board wanted greater clarity on the proposal, but the general feeling was positive towards the idea of some kind of prioritisation.

Action 15: Simon Jackman to discuss and agree with Andrew Watkinson, Lord Selborne, Colin Drummond and Miles Parker how to move forward with the prioritisation idea

Item 5: Emerging programmes under LWEC including a new Securing Tree Health Initiative

5.1 Andrew Watkinson gave an overview of some activities that Partners are starting up and encouraged Partners to share information as early as possible to allow collaborative efforts and efficient knowledge exchange to take place.

5.2 Partners welcomed the attempt to share the information and advised that in future it would be most helpful to group around the six LWEC Challenges and provide contact details in each case. Partners mentioned additional activities:

- Upcoming health conference (see tabled DH update)
- Hadley Centre is to compose reports on the climate change impacts experienced by G20 countries

Action 16: Partners to continue to provide updates on potential new activities (research, KE) for each meeting using a template to be provided by the Directorate

Item 6: NERC National Capability Integration: what it means for LWEC Partners

6.1 Patricia Nuttall gave a presentation to the Board on the NERC National Capability Integration Programme and encouraged Partners to think about any issues and opportunities that may arise for the LWEC Partners as a result.

6.2 The Board thanked Patricia for her interesting presentation, and made the following specific comments:

- The concept of a single Environmental Science Innovation Centre is similar to a single environmental body that is being considered in Wales
- Social, economic and cultural aspects are key. Society and households data could be useful – ESRC would like to discuss this further.
- Policy should also feature on RHS of diagram.
- The ability to connect to all NERC Centres via one channel, rather than going to them each individually, would be a welcome increase in efficiency, however the ability to access specific expertise must not be compromised.

Item 7: Any other Partner business

7.1 Steven Wilson informed Partners of a new Climate Resource Centre proposal that would be circulated to them after the meeting. It focuses on the need to ensure climate-related information is available for Partners to access as needed from an independent source. He asked Partners to consider the proposal then reply with whether or not they feel it is necessary and are able to contribute.

Action 17: Directorate to circulate information on Climate Resource Centre proposal to Partners after the meeting

Action 18: Board members to reply re. Climate Resource Centre proposal by 7th December

Summary of Actions arising from 10th LWEC Partners' Board meeting, Nov 22nd 2011

Action Number	Agenda item	Action
1	1	Partners to ensure that the signed Co-Funding Partnership Agreement documents are returned to the Directorate as soon as possible
2	1	LWEC SAG to circulate info on PE development as it becomes available, as well as reporting to the next PB meeting
3	2	Colin to speak to James Curran re. linking the LWEC BAB to 2020 group
4	3	Board members to email Mary by c.o.p. on 30 th November if they are unable to take up the suggested PB lead/critical friend role
5	3.1	Directorate to consider the Boards' comments in redrafting the ToR, and then circulate a final draft to the PSU by 30 th November
6	3.1	Board members to submit any further nominations for the independent panel, or any comments on the current list, to the Directorate by c.o.p. on the 30 th November
7	3.1	Directorate to organise additional Partners' Board meeting for early July 2012 to consider outcomes of LWEC evaluation
8	3.1	Directorate to circulate template and Defra example of 'what impact would you like LWEC to deliver' statements to Partners
9	3.1	Partners to submit their LWEC impact statements to the Directorate
10	3.1	Delivery Group to enact Board comments re. LWEC evaluation and take any further action needed to support the evaluation
11	3.1	Board members to submit any further comments on the draft risk register to the Directorate by the 30 th November, which will then be considered by the Delivery Group
12	3.3	Health Challenge Steering Group to consider how best to involve business and third sector representatives in the Health Challenge work
13	3.4	Directorate to finalise the deliverables of the Outcome Objective with the relevant PB leads and the Delivery Group, and then circulate to the Board again for comment
14	3.4	Directorate to circulate a proposal for the knowledge exchange fellowships for Partner comments
15	4	Simon Jackman to discuss with Andrew Watkinson, Lord Selborne, Colin Drummond and Miles Parker how to move forward with the prioritisation idea
16	5	Partners to continue to provide updates on potential new activities (research, KE) for each meeting using a template to be provided by the Directorate
17	7	Directorate to circulate information on Climate Resource Centre proposal to Partners after the meeting
18	7	Board members to reply re. Climate Resource Centre proposal by 7 th December